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The Character of Christian-Muslim Encounter

Essays in Honour of David Thomas

Edited by

Douglas Pratt
Jon Hoover
John Davies
John Chesworth

MADDE YAYIMLANDIKTAN
SONRA GELEN DOKÜMAN

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Yahya b. Adi

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CHAPTER 5

Yahyā ibn 'Adī, Disciples and Masters: On Questions of Religious Philosophy

Emilio Platti

Introduction

The ongoing multi-volume work *Christian-Muslim Relations: A Bibliographical History* (hereafter CMR) is certainly a fantastic achievement due to the initiative of Professor David Thomas.¹ We now have a much better overview of the history of Christian-Muslim relations than before, and authors can be easily linked to others so that a more contextual approach to scholarship is possible. For example, when discussing "Islamic Philosophy," it is common to jump from al-Kindī (d. 870) and al-Fārābī (d. 950) straight to Avicenna (d. 1037), forgetting about "the circle of al-Kindī,"² the early years of al-Fārābī and his neo-platonic masters,³ and what is called "the School of Baghdad," the Baghdad Peripatetics, including the most prominent representative, the Christian Jacobite philosopher and theologian Yahyā ibn 'Adī (d. 974), his Christian and Muslim masters, his disciples, and in particular 'Īsā ibn Zur'a (d. 1008) up to Abū al-Faraj ibn al-Ṭayyib (d. 1043). Thanks to CMR, we are now much better able to understand how, between 750 and 1050, interaction between Christian, Muslim and Jewish scholars was very common on philosophical and theological questions and, in particular, on questions of "religious philosophy."

This contribution in honor of Professor David Thomas is a bibliographical addendum to the article on Yahyā ibn 'Adī written in 2008 and published in 2010 in CMR 2.⁴ That article for CMR reported on scholarship on Yahyā's *theological*

- David Thomas et al., eds., *Christian-Muslim Relations. A Bibliographical History* (hereafter CMR), 7 vols. to date (Leiden: Brill, 2009-), also available in an online format at <http://referenceworks.brillonline.com/browse/christian-muslim-relations>.
- Gerhard Endress, "The Circle of al-Kindī: Early Arabic Translations from the Greek and the Rise of Islamic Philosophy," in *The Ancient Tradition in Christian and Islamic Hellenism*, ed. Gerhard Endress and Remke Kruk (Leiden: Brill, 1997), 43-76.
- Philippe Vallat, *Farabi et l'École d'Alexandrie. Des prémisses de la connaissance à la philosophie politique* (Paris: Vrin, 2004).
- Emilio Platti, "Yahyā ibn 'Adī," CMR 2:390-438.

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