CHICAGO JOURNALS

Articles from 2013 and after are now only accessible on the Chicago Journals website at JOURNALS.UCHICAGO.EDU

Review
Author(s): Colin Paul Mitchell
Review by: Colin Paul Mitchell
Source: *Journal of Near Eastern Studies*, Vol. 67, No. 4 (October 2008), pp. 317-319
Published by: The University of Chicago Press
Stable URL: http://www.jstor.org/stable/10.1086/596092
Accessed: 11-05-2016 18:13 UTC

Your use of the JSTOR archive indicates your acceptance of the Terms & Conditions of Use, available at

JSTOR is a not-for-profit service that helps scholars, researchers, and students discover, use, and build upon a wide range of content in a trusted digital archive. We use information technology and tools to increase productivity and facilitate new forms of scholarship. For more information about JSTOR, please contact support@jstor.org.

The University of Chicago Press is collaborating with JSTOR to digitize, preserve and extend access to *Journal of Near Eastern Studies*

the Balkans (chap. 3) and Arabia (chap. 4); we find a wide range in terms of Naqshbandī appeal and success in these areas, with numerous *tekke*s being established in Bursa and Kurdistan and arguably marginal activity in the *ḥaramain*. This last point is a small preoccupation for Le Gall, and she suggests that the notable lack of Naqshbandī presence in the Hijaz has less to do with confessional boundaries in the central Islamic lands—arguably a modern, scholarly construct—but is more reflective of the collision of Naqshbandī Ḥanafī predilections with the Shāfiᶜī-minded communities of Mecca and Medina.

The second half of the book ("Politics and Culture of a Tariqa") is dedicated to navigating a multitude of discourses that preoccupied the Naqshbandī community in Istanbul and its various capillary *tekke*s in the Ottoman provinces. Chap. 5 ("Devotional Practice and the Construction of Orthodoxy") is focused chiefly on the issue of silent *dhikr* and the orthopraxic/theosophical implications of internalizing rituals that normally have a strong performative quality. Le Gall delves into this debate of ritual piety with considerable dexterity and argues convincingly that Naqshbandīs indeed subscribed to traditional Sufi pietistic practices such as *dhikr*, *murāqaba*, and *rābiṭa*, but, by and large, these were governed by the principle of *khalvat dar anjuman* ("solitude within society"). Thus the Naqshbandīs negotiated a middle path that allowed them to internalize the traditional ascetic impulse associated with Sufism, while concurrently interacting with civil society through a "Sharīᶜa-minded sobriety" (p. 119). Of course, this all speaks to the traditional characterization of the Naqshbandīs as conservatives who worked occasionally in tandem with Ottoman authorities to vilify Shīᶜite and *ghuluww* movements in the Anatolian eastern peripheries. To this point Le Gall dedicates her sixth chapter ("Politics of Sunnism, Battles over Orthodoxy"), on two of the more prominent "political" battles of this period: the purported Naqshbandī involvement in the suppression of the Qizilbāsh heresy and the later spate of conservative moral activism of the 1620s under the leadership of Kāḍīzādeli Meḥmed Efendī. In both cases, we find that Naqshbandī association with such "orthodox" elements is less than clear, and any suggestion of a concrete partnership between the Naqshbandīs and the Ottoman state seems to be a later construct of modern historians. Here, Le Gall takes particular aim at Irfan Gündüz, who posited a "mobilization of the Naqshbandīs" against the Qizilbāsh and their Safavid sponsors in eastern Anatolia (p. 140).

Lastly, Le Gall examines the organizational framework of the Naqshbandiyya phenomenon in the early modern Ottoman context (chap. 7—"Organizational and Cultural Modes") and the degree to which such organization was governed by traditional Sufi *irshādī* leadership rationales. The scope and intensity with which Naqshbandīs proselytize, establish new *tekke*s, and maintain contacts with the state are all underscored by the principle of nonhereditary succession among generations of Sufi shaikhs. This nonhereditary ethos permitted a level of peripateticism and dynamism that few Sufi *ṭarīqa*s could rival, and, as a result, the Naqshbandīs emerge as significant transmitters of such features as Ottomanism and Perso-Islamic literary culture.

Dina Le Gall has produced a monumental work in *The Culture of Sufism*. Her industrious reading of a wide range of underused manuscript and archival sources has opened a new chapter not only in the Naqshbandī narrative but in early modern Ottoman studies as well. Her conscientious footnoting and an enviable writing style combine to make this particular work a must-read for students/scholars of both Sufism and Ottoman history.

COLIN PAUL MITCHELL

Dalhousie University

Historical Dictionary of Sufism. By JOHN RENARD. Historical Dictionaries of Religions, Philosophies, and Movements 58. Lanham, Maryland: The Scarecrow Press, 2005. Pp. xliii + 351 + 21 figs. $70.

As universities continue to develop their Middle East/Islamic Studies programs and their course offerings become more sophisticated, the academic study of Sufism seems destined to grow by leaps and bounds. In terms of standardized reference works on Sufism, however, little exists for undergraduate students and the public at large to consult. While there are seminal studies offered by Nicholson, Trimingham, and Schimmel, and certainly those are a must for students of Sufism, there has been a noticeable dearth of pragmatic reference materials. Thanks to John Renard, this lacuna has been addressed with his publication of the *Historical Dictionary of Sufism*. With its extensive list of entries, detailed glossary, and quite possibly the most comprehensive bibliography of Sufi studies assembled to date, I imagine that Renard's dictionary will soon be a standard feature on syllabi for university classes on mystical Islam. The author provides a very helpful introduction on the history of Sufism wherein we learn of the various historiographical categories that Sufi groups have occupied since the eighth century: self-isolating ascetics, circles of intellectuals and philosophers, guild organizations and corporate confraternities, and, lastly, cells of anti-Western colonial resistance.

Entries introduce and define briefly important historical personalities, core Sufi concepts, and various rituals and practices associated with popular mysticism. Of course there are listings for central Sufi figures such as Ibn ʿArabī and Rābiʿah al-Adawīyah, but lesser known figures are also given profiles, such as Liu Ching in seventeenth-century China and Bawa Muhaiyaddeen, the twentieth-century Sri Lankan Sufi who eventually established a mystical Islamic center in Philadelphia in the 1980s. While dyed-in-the-wool theosophists comprise the bulk of the personality entries, there are also notes for Sufi-inspired poets (e.g., Niẓāmī), philosophers (e.g., Suhrawardī), and rulers (e.g., Dārā Shikūh). This dictionary will also be of service with respect to the panoply of Sufi Orders (*ṭarīqah*s) that have emerged; standard ones such as the Naqshbandīs, the Qādirīs, and the Chishtīs are included, while less-profiled movements such as the Sammānīs and the Uwaysīs are also given space. Expected Sufi concepts such as *fanāʾ* (annihilation of the ego in the presence of the Divine) and *walāyah* (sainthood) are addressed as are less-discussed phenomena such as *marthiya* (threnody), which is a poetic genre designed to express the grief one experiences when separated from the Beloved (*maʿshūq*). Readers will be impressed by the considerable scope of Sufi-related terms, which are rendered in transliterated Arabic and cross-indexed helpfully with English translations (e.g., *Wajd*/Ecstasy, *Quṭb*/Pole, *Faqīr*/Dervish). Should students find themselves reading a technical essay on Sufism, Renard's *Dictionary* will almost certainly be of service, as it provides entries on core theories and abstractions, including, among others, *Mukāshafa*/Unveiling, *Jawānmardī*/Ethics, *Tawakkul*/Trust, and *Waḥdat al-wujūd*/Ontological Unity. Perhaps equally notable is the international flavor of this dictionary with terms for individuals, languages, and *ṭarīqah*s from not only across the Middle East but also sub-Saharan Africa, South Asia, Central Asia, Europe, and North America. Specialists will note the medieval and early modern contribution of Indonesian and Chinese Muslims to the spread of popular and intellectual varieties of Sufism, with entries on Ḥamza Fanṣūrī, Nūr al-Dīn Rānīrī, Shams al-Dīn Samaṭrānī, Ma Qixi, Ma Zhenwu, and Wang Daiyu.

Reference publications such as this, however, can be notoriously tricky to compile, since scholars will often disagree as to what should be included and what should be passed over, and, to be fair to Renard, we must remember that one cannot be all things to all people. This caveat aside, however, I was surprised by certain omissions and inconsistencies for such a comprehensive dictionary of Sufism. For instance, while we have entries for the Safavids and the Ottomans, none exist for the Timurids or the Mongols; indeed, the Ilkhānid Mongol dynasty of Iran and its promotion of popular Sufi veneration was arguably the impetus for the rapid spread of Sufism in the eastern Islamic world under the Turkmen and Timurid dynasties of the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries. Likewise, while relatively marginal languages such as Pashto and Swahili are given entries, more profound languages in terms of Sufi activity (Gujarati, Tamil, Chaghatāʾī Turkish, and Bengali) are ignored. Hinduism and its historical connection with Sufism earns an entry, but equally important traditions such as Judaism, Christianity, Ismāʿīlism, Sikhism, and Zoroastrianism are passed over. Surprisingly, no entries exist for the Indian mystical tradition par excellence of Bakhtism and its greatest adherent, the fourteenth-century poet Kabīr. Likewise, one would expect a listing for the medieval Neoplatonist movement of Ikhwān al-Ṣafā (Brethren of Purity) and their mystically inspired text, the *Rasāʾil ikhwān al-ṣafā* (Epistles of the Brethren of Purity). In this vein, Suhrawardī and the Illuminationist tradition (*ḥikmat al-ishrāq*) are discussed, but the critical transmission of Gnostic-inspired Peripatetic philosophy of later thinkers such as al-Davānī, Mullā Ṣadrā, and Shaikh Bahāʾī is not mentioned. Although entries for contemporary Russian theosophists such as Ouspensky and Gurdjieff are interesting to read and note, surely the great twentieth-century luminaries Henry Corbin and ʿAllāmah Ṭabāṭabāʾī deserve as much, or perhaps more, recognition.

These points aside, *The Historical Dictionary of Sufism* will undoubtedly be a helpful addition to the growing corpus of scholarly Sufi materials. The bibliography is especially impressive (listing publications in Arabic, Persian, English, French, and German), and students and scholars alike will appreciate its division into utilitarian categories such as "General and Comparative Studies," "Primary Sources" (originals and translations), "Focused Studies" (individuals, thematic studies), "Historical Studies by Geographical Region" (from the U.S. to Southeast Asia), and a miscellany section on Sufism with respect to society, politics, the arts, and gender.

COLIN PAUL MITCHELL

Dalhousie University
Halifax, Nova Scotia

The Age of Beloveds: Love and the Beloved in Early-Modern Ottoman and European Culture and Society. By WALTER G. ANDREWS and MEHMET KALPAKLI. Durham: Duke University Press, 2005. Pp. xiii + 425. $24.95.

To introduce readers to a "particular view of love, sex, and eroticism" is how Walter Andrews and Mehmet Kalpaklı describe their ambitious effort at reexamining Ottoman literature of the long sixteenth century, ca. 1453–1622 (p. 11). The period is remarkable for the efflorescence of lyric love poetry. Yet we know little about the social context in which it flourished. Andrews and Kalpaklı set out to fill that major gap in our understanding. As they convincingly show, the literary boom at the time radiated out from a vibrant urban entertainment culture that featured a host of young men who captured the hearts and the imagination of Ottoman elites. And it became fashionable among Ottoman elites to express their attachments by means of poetry. This fashion, Andrews and Kalpaklı argue, reflected a larger trend wherein power relations of all sorts were eroticized.

The great strength of their book is that it does not sidestep the thorny issue of homoerotic, or same-sex, desire. Andrews and Kalpaklı are careful not to equate it with homosexual practices in the society at large. At the same time, they insist that the presence of male beloveds in the love poetry cannot be construed as being purely metaphorical or spiritual in makeup, as scholars specializing in Ottoman literature are all too prone to do. Instead, Andrews and Kalpaklı demonstrate that the poems, mostly *ghazal*s, register more or less eroticized but actual interactions between men. They, in turn, stress the importance of genre in the shaping of those very interactions. That is, the love acted out is a "love scripted by poetry" (p. 55). To a considerable degree, then, their book is an attempt, historicist in approach, to articulate a cultural poetics of same-sex desire, of one kind of "male bonding" that is often intense but rarely explicitly sexual.

Their book, however, as the title makes plain, is not limited to presenting a uniquely Ottoman cultural poetics. To articulate that further, Andrews and Kalpaklı adopt a comparative framework, drawing parallels from Europe, specifically Italy and England, for the same period. The result is informative and insightful. For instance, Andrews and Kalpaklı observe that the praise of love in early modern writing, both Ottoman and European, is mixed with the fear that "too much focus on women" is a sign of effeminacy (p. 133). Likewise, they note that Renaissance poets and their Ottoman contemporaries are "always ready to invoke the 'Neoplatonic' argument in favor of homoerotic passion" (p. 134). In drawing these parallels and others, Andrews and Kalpaklı make the case that early modern Ottoman and European attitudes about love, desire, and sexual behavior, if not quite the same, are scripted in a similar pattern.