terpretation of the persecution of the Ash'airaites in Khorasan after 445/1053 (p. 126.), for instance, repeats the old Ash'irite-inspired tale of al-Kandari's jealousy which has long been dis- missed by scholars. The importance of this event for al-Jawwani's political and theological work is overlooked. Historical mis- takes are frequent. Khorasan was not, as stated on p. 26, gov- erned by "Ahmad al-Buwayhi" (Muzaffar al-Dawla?) until 434/ 1042, but was from 398/999 part of the Ghurawid empire and before that ruled by the Samanids. One page later we read that the social life of the time was dominated by "the ethnic factor." This is not further explained, except by the statement that "so- ciety was a result of a blend of many races, societies, and cul- tures." (p. 29). The religious policy of the early Seljuk empire is characterized in just one sentence which says simply that many schools were opened under the reign of Nizam al-Mulk and Alp Arslan (p. 31). Current myths are frequently repeated, like the one that al-Farabi was the leading philosopher of his day (p. 32, quoting Majid Fakhry), although his name does not figure prominently in the middle of the fourth/tenth century and his philosophical fame was established only half a century later.

The neglect of secondary literature is most evident in the translations from the Arabic. Theological works are always tricky and difficult to translate, but in the case of early Ash'irite texts this difficulty is increased by a lack of lexicographical aids. Only recently, Samih Dughaymin's dictionary of kalim terms (Beirut: Librairie du Liban, 1998) offers some help. Safi's translations show a clear lack of precision. For instance, on p. 16 adillat al-ajwal is rendered as "mental arguments," and one might ask how al-Jawwani distinguished a mental argument from a non-mental one? The arguments in question here are rather of a kind that is convincing by the force of deductive reasoning.

Safi presents al-Jawwani to us as a lonely man. While Nagel presents al-Jawwani as an existing writer, deeply concerned with the intellectual and political problems of his time, Safi's al-Jawwani remains a boring author concerned with seemingly centuries-old questions of bloodless Islamic theology. Nagel may have stretched the limits of his analysis of al-Jawwani too far when he put him into the service of a much broader inquiry into the "triumph and failure of Islamic rationalism." Safi, however, never attempts to look beyond the writings of his au- thor, and he nowhere tries to assess al-Jawwani's part in the shaping of the Seljuk empire or his role in the history of Islamic theology.

All these flaws could have been addressed in the initial stage of the dissertation. The considerable number of misprints and hasty mistakes—see the bibliography—for instance, is spelled in three different ways in the bibliography—make the additional shortcomings of this dissertation's research evident.

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Al-Ghazâli's Mishkât al-anwar has often been considered his most esoteric book. Regarding as one of his latest writings, it is also seen as the one most inspired by Sîdîm. In an interpre- tation of the Light Verses, Koran 24:35, al-Ghazâli lays down how the text of the revelation provides guidance for the soul that seeks ascent to the highest level of human perfection. Al- Ghazâli's distinction between the 'âlam al-shahâda and the 'âlam al-malikîs, and his conclusion that every verse in the Ko- ran has, corresponding to the apparent meaning, an inner sense, opens the way to long and sometimes farfetched expo- sitions about the inner meaning of Scripture, which have few parallels in al-Ghazâli's other works. As if this were not enough, earlier Western scholars writing on the Mishkât were puzzled by a seeming contradiction in his oeuvre. In the third chapter of the book a mutâ', "one who is obeyed," appears and figures as the first creature below God. The mutâ' has indeed very much the same function as the demiurge of Neoplatonist cosmology. This "Ghazâli-problem," as W. H. T. Gumbser named it in 1914, prompted W. M. Watt to consider the corresponding part of the Mishkât a spurious work not written by al-Ghazâli himself. Yet since then, our understanding of al-Ghazâli's multifaceted styles of writing and of both his rejection as well as his incorporation of elements from firdawsî and Imsâdîfs has increased considerably. But even if now there seems to be reconciliation for passages in al-Ghazâli's work that earlier analysts deemed blatantly contradic- tory, the Mishkât still remains a book that challenges even the boldest understanding of al-Ghazâli as a multi-layered writer.

David Buchman's new translation of the Mishkât, published in what appears will become one of the most respectable series of translations of Islamic texts, will surely draw renewed atten- tion to this esoteric book. Buchman, like many readers of the Mishkât, comes from Sîriî studies and is only marginally con- cerned with the Mishkât's place in al-Ghazâli's oeuvre. His account of al-Ghazâli's life follows an often repeated Sîriî reading of al-Ghazâli's autobiography and has been challenged for more than fifty years now. According to this narrative, al- Ghazâli was in his youth a bloodless màsîkhâlîm concerned entirely with the dry practice of jurisprudence until his vividly narrated "tawâba" in 488/1095 that paved his way to Sîdîm. The alleged existence of a conversation in the middle of al- Ghazâli's life also conveniently solves problems of inconsis- tency in al-Ghazâli's books, albeit at the cost of jumbling the chronology. The ìlam al-lawm, a work of kalâm literature, is quoted by Buchman as a witness for his early period (p. xix), although its completion is dated in the colophon of two ms. to 505/1111, only days before al-Ghazâli's death. The dating of the Mishkât to the end of al-Ghazâli's life is far less certain. The text itself only mentions other books that can
be dated to around 490/1097. The main argument for a much later dating of the Miskhaṭ is still Bouyges' reasoning that it represents "le développement le plus avancé de son sifisme, et qui, par conséquent, fut écrit l'un des derniers" (Maurice Bouyges, *Etudes de chronologie des oeuvres de Al-Ghazāli (Alqazāl),* ed. M. Allard [Beirut: Imprimerie Catholique, 1950], 55f.). This judgment has been supported by al-Ghazālī's silence on this book in his autobiography (assuming that it was composed afterwards), and by George Hourani's far-reaching interpretation of a list of books in Ibn Rustah's al-Khayf "an manāhīl. All this seems less convincing now than it was during the twentieth century, and a cautious assessment should acknowledge that the Miskhaṭ could have been written any time between the first and al-Ghazālī's death.

In his introduction Buchman limits himself to a presentation of the English secondary literature on the Miskhaṭ that is mainly concerned with the question of reconciling this book with al-Ghazālī's criticism of falsafa and Ismā'īlism. The parallel Arabic text in his book and his translation are based on 'Aṣrif's edition of 1964 "with minor changes." This edition is, despite Buchman's claims, not critical. 'Aṣrif used only two manuscripts, one of which must be considered unidentified. It is not, as 'Aṣrif claims, ms Istanbul, Şehid Ali Paşa 1712, which was copied less than five years after al-Ghazālī's death. Such a thin basis for the text could have easily been improved by taking additional (preferably older) prints or easily accessible manuscripts from Western libraries into account. The number and the character of Buchman's changes to 'Aṣrif's text are nowhere indicated.

Otherwise, Buchman has made good much of 'Aṣrif's neglect in his brief apparatus. Qur'ānic references and adḥābat have been checked and listed, the translation of difficult passages is explained, and references to comparable passages in Islamic literature are given. The great improvement over Gairdner's English translation of 1934 is Buchman's mostly convincing rendition of the technical vocabulary of Muslim theology and Shi'ism. Buchman's translation is much more literal than Gairdner's and thus more precise, albeit sometimes less readable. The references of the Arabic personal and possessive pronouns, for instance, are not always clear in the English translation, where Buchman has rendered them at times too literally. The text, however, benefits fully from the progress made during the last decades of Şifvit studies and translations. Translating 'ajā'il as "rational faculty" and 'ilm darāri as "self-evident knowledge" is adequate in Şifvit's content. There are, however, a number of choices taken that can be contested. The Arabic hasqāpliant still appears, as in many contemporary translations, indiscriminately as "realist," although very little sense can be made out of it. Most often it is used as a linguistic term describing the true denotation of a word. To discover what the word "light" really denotes is, for instance, the aim of the Miskhaṭ's first chapter. This is not a quest for lights "realities" but for its "real meaning." Arabic naṣṣur is not "consideration," but rather "speculation" or simply "theology." To translate 'arīf as "gnostic" follows a custom in English Şifvit texts, but the usage of "gnostic" is reserved to a particular tradition that al-Ghazālī, for instance, has little to do with. The same applies to "gnostic science" in mu'atta fi and "gnosis" for 'arīfs. Buchman's rendering of 'ilm al-malikāt as "the world of dominion" sounds odd, but gets nevertheless closer to most of the associations that come with the Arabic term. Corrections to Buchman's translation include the third sentence in 520 of p. 9: "But you should know that these people have imaginations, fancies, and convictions, and that they assume the judgments of these three are the judgments of the rational faculty. But the errors are indeed connected to the three lower faculties."

1 'Aṣrif did not claim to use the Istanbul ms itself but he used the microfilm no. 3659 respectively 3660 tatāwuf at the Dar al-Kutub in Cairo. Although the original ms from which this film is taken has been copied by the same nāṣrīk as the Istanbul, Şehid Ali Paşa 1712, the Cairo film is not made from this Istanbul ms. The ms Şehid Ali Paşa 1712 does not contain the Miskhaṭ al-anwar. It contains three different texts by al-Ghazālī and none of them is on the microfilm in Cairo.

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Maimonides (1135–1204) a figure of enlightenment? Well, not exactly in the sense of the eighteenth-century Enlighteners, but as a popular instructor who brought "some basic notions of philosophy within the ken of ordinary men and women" (p. 11).

It is Maimonides' educational work addressed to a popular readership that Ralph Lerner interprets in a 95-page monograph followed by 109 pages of English translations. The writings discussed are the "Epistle to Yemen," the "Mishneh Torah," the "Treatise on Resurrection," the "Letter on Astrology," and the "Guide of the Perplexed." Lerner also interprets a work by the thirteenth-century Maimonidean Shem-Tov ben Joseph Ibn Falaquera, and Joseph Albo's "Book of Roots" of 1425. Some of the translations are provided by other authors and are thus reprinted from their earlier or future publications, such as Joel L. Kramer's translation of the "Epistle to Yemen," Hillel G. Fradkin's of the "Treatise on Resurrection," and Steven Harvey's translation of Shem-Tov's "Epistle of the Debona." Lerner himself provides the translations of the introduction and the first book of the "Mishneh Torah" and the "Letter on Astrology." (the