

## The Commentary Tradition ON THE *ILĀHIYYĀT* OF THE *SHIFĀ'*

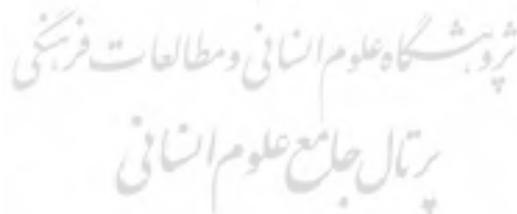
AN HISTORICAL AND BIBLIOGRAPHICAL SURVEY

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### Abstract

This article reviews the commentary tradition around the *Metaphysics* of Avicenna's *Shifā'* as it evolved in the lands that belonged to Avicenna's own cultural horizon, most of all in Iran. From this overview it emerges that this tradition is characterized by a keen interest in textual criticism and a solid philosophical grasp of Avicenna's metaphysical doctrines. This interest is reflected in the variety of writings that this tradition produced. The scope and quality of the surviving material are such that any future edition of Avicenna's *opus major* will have to give this tradition its fullest consideration.

**Keywords:** *Avicenna, Shifā', Ilāhiyyāt, Commentaries, Iran.*



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## I. Introduction\*

Philosophical works are notoriously difficult. This is not because philosophers want them to be this way, but because the reader often fails to grasp the author's reasoning and its underlying assumptions.<sup>1</sup> It is for this reason that the followers of philosophical schools have always tried to explain the assertions of their founders by bringing their various writings into play. In the case of Aristotle, for example, there is the collection of Greek commentaries on the Corpus Aristotelicum (the CAG series) which comprises around fifteen thousand pages in print.<sup>2</sup> In order to give a clear structure to their analysis of Aristotle's works, the Greek commentators started by dividing them into esoteric and exoteric writings, adding that the only texts to have survived are the esoteric, that is, the most difficult ones. With this classification in mind, they composed commentaries on what they regarded as the essential works: the *Categories*, *Posterior Analytics*, *Metaphysics*, *Physics*, *On the Soul*, the *Nicomachean Ethics*, and the *de Caelo*.

There can be no doubt that the commentators of Aristotle contributed significantly to his heritage; in quantity and, by elucidating his doctrines, also in quality. Nevertheless it is also true to say that their commentaries do not always shed light on Aristotle's doctrines and in some cases, even increase the abstruseness of the text. For instance, Aristotle's doctrine of the Active Intellect, which I regard as the most compressed account that he has ever written, has led to all kinds of interpretations, from Alexander of Aphrodisias (fl. ca 200) and Themistius (d. ca 388) onwards to Ibn Sīnā (d. 428 AH, hereafter Avicenna), Ibn Rushd (d. 595 AH, hereafter Averroes), and Thomas Aquinas (d.1274).<sup>3</sup>

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\* I would like to thank Dr Joep Lameer from The Netherlands for his generous assistance in the writing of this paper. I would also like to thank Dr Hossein Masoumi Hamedani for reading my paper and for his valuable comments. Finally, I thank Dr Amos Bertolacci of the Scuola Normale Superiore in Pisa for inviting me to deliver an earlier version of this paper at the colloquium 'The Manuscript Tradition of Avicenna's *Kitāb al-Shifā'*', held in Pisa in 2010.

As a result of the translation movement in Baghdad and the subsequent availability of Aristotle's works in the Muslim world, eminent thinkers such as al-Kindī (d. ca 252 AH), Abū Naṣr Fārābī (d. 339 AH), Abū al-Ḥasan al-ʿĀmirī (d. 381 AH), Avicenna, Abū l-Barakāt al-Baghdādī (d. 547 AH), Ibn Bājjā (d. 533 AH), Averroes, and Suhrawardī (d. 587 AH) have all been influenced by Aristotle's thought. Avicenna's *Shifā'* has played a special role in this connection because it greatly contributed to the dissemination of Aristotle's doctrines throughout the Muslim world.

The *Shifā'* is a philosophical encyclopaedia in which Avicenna engages in a detailed account of the sciences from an Aristotelian viewpoint: logic, physics, mathematics, and metaphysics.<sup>4</sup> Juzjānī (d. 438 AH), who was a student of Avicenna and who wrote his biography, says in the opening passages of the Introduction to the *Shifā'* that his master wrote the whole of the *Metaphysics* in twenty days without having recourse to any work of reference.<sup>5</sup> This statement by Juzjānī caused some people to ascribe this to Avicenna's phenomenal memory, while others saw the short time of composition as the cause of the abstruseness of the text. However this may be, the two views are not incompatible in as much as each group considered a different feature of one and the same work.

The commentary tradition on Avicenna's *Shifā'* revolves for the most part around the *Categories*, *Demonstration*, *Physics*, *On the Soul* and the *Metaphysics*. From among these, the *Metaphysics* (*ilāhiyyāt*) takes pride of place, followed by the *Physics* (*ṭabīʿiyyāt*). Given that most of the surviving texts contain comments on the *Metaphysics*, I have decided to restrict the following inventory to these, while deferring a study of similar writings on the *Physics* to some future point in time.

The works belonging to the commentary tradition take on different literary forms: the translation (*tarjama*), the summary (*talkhīṣ*, *mukhtaṣar*), the commentary (*tafsīr*, *sharḥ*), and glosses (*taʿlīqāt*, *ḥawāshī*).<sup>6</sup> In the sections below, I shall review the major texts within each of these groups one by one.

## II. Translations

By “translations” only Persian translations of the *Shifā*’ are meant. Manuscript catalogues consulted so far make mention of at least three translations:

- 1) In the library of Tehran University there is a translation of the *Metaphysics* of the *Shifā*’<sup>7</sup> that was made by ‘Alī ‘Urayāī Imāmī of Isfahan, a student of Āqā Ḥusayn Khwānsārī (d. 1098 AH). The catalogue of the library of the Majles-i Shūrā-yi Eslāmī, likewise in Tehran, mentions an “anonymous” translation of the *Metaphysics* of the *Shifā*’.<sup>8</sup> After comparison of this translation with the one in Tehran University, it became clear that it is the same one, done by ‘Alī ‘Urayāī.
- 2) In addition to the above, the catalogue of the Āṣefiye Library in Ḥaydarābād Deccan (India) mentions a translation of the *Metaphysics* of the *Shifā*’ that was made by certain ‘Alī Riāq Ṭarze’ī, whom I could not identify so far. But given that the manuscript in question was completed in Kabul in 1048 AH, Ṭarze’ī made his translation no later than this date.<sup>9</sup>
- 3) A third translation was made in thirteenth century AH by Mirzā Ḥusayn ‘Alī, better known as Muḥaqqiq-i Khalkhālī, a student of Mirzā Abū al-Ḥasan Jilwah (1201-1275 AH solar).<sup>10</sup> It is not clear whether the translation by Muḥaqqiq-i Khalkhālī only comprises the *Metaphysics* of the *Shifā*’ or also other parts of it.<sup>11</sup>

## III. Summaries

Themistius seems to have been among the first to employ the summary in a systematic way in the field of philosophy. This form can only be used by authors who are thoroughly acquainted with the original text, whose major subjects they then recapitulate. In

connection with the *Shifā'*, the following two summaries may be mentioned here:

- 1) The first summary of the *Shifā'* is none other than Avicenna's own *Kitāb al-Najāt*.<sup>12</sup>
- 2) The other summary of the *Shifā'* that has come down to us was written by Bahā' al-Dīn Muḥammad Iṣfahānī, also known as Fāaql-i Hindī (1062-1137 AH), and entitled '*Awn Ikhwān al-Ṣafā' fī talkhīṣ al-Shifā'*'. This text has been edited in the form of an MA thesis.<sup>13</sup> There is an article containing an account of the way in which the edition was carried out, but the text itself remains unpublished.<sup>14</sup>

#### IV. Commentaries

- 1) Abū l-'Abbās Lawkarī (d. 517 AH) wrote an independent work entitled *Bayān al-ḥaqq bi-ḍamān al-ṣidq*, which appears to be a commentary on the *Shifā'*. The *Eisagoge* and part of the *Metaphysics* of this work have been edited and published,<sup>15</sup> while the whole *Metaphysics* has also been edited in the form of an unpublished doctoral dissertation.<sup>16</sup> There exists a copy of Lawkarī's work in the library of Tehran University, dated 610 AH.<sup>17</sup>
- 2) Ḥasan Ibn Yūsuf Ibn al-Muṭahhar, better known as 'Allāmeḥ Ḥillī (648-726 AH), a pupil of Khwājeḥ Naṣīr al-Dīn Ṭūsī (d. 672 AH), composed a commentary entitled *Kashf al-khafā' fī sharḥ al-Shifā'*. Of this work, only the part dealing with the *Categories* has remained.<sup>18</sup>
- 3) Seyyed Aḥmad 'Alawī (d. 1060 AH), a student of Mīr Dāmād (d. 1041 AH), has written a commentary entitled *Miftāḥ al-Shifā' wa-l-'urwa al-wuthqā fī sharḥ ilāhiyyāt al-Shifā'*.<sup>19</sup>

- 4) Mahdī Naraqī (d. 1209 AH) also wrote a commentary on the *Metaphysics* of the *Shifā'*, entitled *Sharḥ al-ilāhiyyāt min kitāb al-Shifā'* which only runs until the beginning of the second chapter of the second treatise. This work has been edited twice: the first edition was prepared by Mehdī Mohaghegh, but stops at the end of the first chapter of the first treatise,<sup>20</sup> the other edition, by Ḥāmid Nājī Iṣfahānī, is complete.<sup>21</sup>
- 5) 'Alī Ibn Faḍlallāh Jīlānī (alive in the 11<sup>th</sup> cent. AH), too, has a work entitled *Tawfiq al-taṭbīq*, which is a commentary on the tenth Treatise of the *Metaphysics* of the *Shifā'* and which was printed in Egypt.<sup>22</sup>

## V. Glosses

The bulk of the commentaries on the *Shifā'* written by scholars in later times has the character of glosses. These glosses were sometimes written while lecturing on the original text. In the following, I shall be concerned with the *Metaphysics* of the *Shifā'* alone by reason of the importance that this text acquired. It is worth mentioning that the number of authors of glosses on the *Shifā'* referred to in some listings exceeds the amount mentioned here. This is because in this article, only those authors are referred to whose writings have special importance and, in addition, have been preserved.

- 1) As an example, one could mention the exemplar of the *Metaphysics* of the *Shifā'* in which Mīr Dāmād, during his lectures on it to Ṣadr al-Dīn Shīrāzī, wrote his own views on various subjects in the margin.<sup>23</sup>
- 2) At other times, these notes were written in an independent manner, and concerned those parts of the *Shifā'* that were at the disposal of a particular scholar. As an example one can mention Ṣadr al-Dīn Shīrāzī's glosses on the *Metaphysics* of the *Shifā'*.<sup>24</sup>

A point worth mentioning here has to do with the custom, among scholars, to correct the readings in their manuscripts on the basis of collation with other manuscripts. Given that some scholars had access to a number of copies of the *Shifā'*, they would mention different readings in other manuscripts in a note on the copy that they owned. Two important examples regarding revisions of the text concern copies that were in the personal possession of Naṣīr al-Dīn Ṭūsī and Mīr Dāmād:

- 3) The exemplar owned by Naṣīr al-Dīn Ṭūsī. This manuscript is located in the library of the Madrase-yi Namāzī in Khūy.<sup>25</sup> On the first folio of this manuscript we find the following: “The glosses in *naskh*<sup>26</sup> found in the margin of this copy of the *Ilāhiyyāt* and also of the *Ṭabīʿiyyāt*, and which are <placed> on the outside in revision of the text itself, are in the handwriting of...Naṣīr al-Ḥaqq wa-l-Milla wa-l-Dīn al-Ṭūsī...”
- 4) The exemplar owned by Mīr Dāmād. This manuscript is located in the library of Tehran University.<sup>27</sup> On the folio that faces the last folio of this manuscript, an *Ijāza* by Mīr Dāmād on behalf of his student Ṣadr al-Dīn Shīrāzī has been added, an *ijāza* in which Mīr Dāmād states that he has taught his student some of his own works, such as *al-Ṣirāṭ al-Mustaqīm*, *al-Ufuq al-Mubīn*, and *al-Taqdīsāt*, and also *al-Ishārāt wa-l-tanbīhāt* of Avicenna with Khwājeh Naṣīr al-Dīn Ṭūsī's commentary on it.
- 5) Ghiyāth al-Dīn Maṣṣūr Dashtakī (866-948 AH), who is a descendant of Ṣadr al-Dīn Dashtakī (828-923 AH). In the supplement to his philosophical work called *Riyāḍ al-Riḍwān*, he tries to solve some difficult passages from the *Shifā'*. He named this supplement the *Shifā' al-qulūb*. In this treatise, we find glosses on the *Metaphysics* of the *Shifā'*, first treatise up to and including chapter six, and a *Summary* of the *Metaphysics*

of the *Shifā'*, second treatise, chapters two and three, third treatise, chapters eight and nine, and fourth treatise, chapter two.<sup>28</sup> Besides, he is also the author of glosses on Avicenna's *al-Ishārāt wa-l-tanbīhāt*.<sup>29</sup>

- 6) Mollā Ḥabībollāh Baghnavī (ca 930-994/5 AH). He is considered to be a representative of the School of Shiraz and lived for some time in Kāzerun and Transoxania. According to Dāneshpazhūh,<sup>30</sup> there remain glosses on part of the *Metaphysics* of the *Shifā'* by this author<sup>31</sup>. On closer inspection, these glosses turned out to be on miscellaneous subjects such as the division of being into the necessary and the possible, on matters pertaining to the one and the many, on the universal, the particular and their parts, on the examination of the genus, the differentia, the species, their interrelations and how they exist in the outside world, and on the division of being into substance and accident. As yet, I am by no means certain that these *hawāshī* are indeed on the *Shifā'*.
- 7) Ṣadr al-Dīn Shīrāzī (979-1050 AH). Ṣadr al-Dīn Shīrāzī, also known as Mollā Ṣadrā, wrote glosses on treatises one to six of the *Metaphysics* of the *Shifā'*.<sup>32</sup> In view of the fact that he, in these glosses, bases himself on the *al-Asfār al-arba'a*, *al-Shawāhid al-rubūbiyya* and *al-Ḥikma al-'arshiyya*, it would seem that they were written after all of these works. Shīrāzī's glosses can be regarded as a fine example of annotations on the *Metaphysics* of the *Shifā'* in which Avicenna's viewpoints are explained on basis of his other writings, such as the *Logic* and the *Physics* of the *Shifā'* itself, the *Najāt*, *al-Ishārāt wa-l-tanbīhāt*, the *Ta'liqāt* and the *Mantiq al-mashriqiyyīn*. In this work, Shīrāzī criticizes in detail the views of Suhrawardī, Fakhr al-Dīn Rāzī and in some places, of Jalāl al-Dīn Dawwānī (d. 908 AH).



- 8) Āqā Ḥusayn Khwānsārī (1016-1098 AH). In the rational sciences, he was a student of Mīr Abūlqāsim Fendereskī (970-1050 AH) and in the traditional sciences of 'Allāmeḥ Muḥammad Taqī Majlisī (1003-1070 AH). Āqā Jamāl al-Dīn Khwānsārī and Mīr Muḥammad Ṣāliḥ Khātūn Ābādī were among his students. He has two sets of glosses on the *Shifā'*, the first of which is in depth and runs to the end of the eighth treatise, chapter three.<sup>33</sup> In these glosses he gives a critical appraisal of the glosses of Dashtakī, Mīr Dāmād and Ṣadr al-Dīn Shīrāzī. The second set of glosses is concise and was written in answer to criticisms voiced by Muḥammad Bāqir Sabzawārī.<sup>34</sup>
- 9) Muḥammad Bāqir Sabzawārī (1017-1090 AH). He was a contemporary of Āqā Ḥusayn Khwānsārī and like him, a student of Mīr Fendereskī. His glosses were written in criticism of the glosses of Khwānsārī. In Sabzawārī's glosses we can detect the influence of Ṣadr al-Dīn Shīrāzī's views as expressed in his own glosses on the *Metaphysics* of the *Shifā'*,<sup>35</sup> in the same way in which this can be noticed in the work of Āqā Ḥusayn Khwānsārī referred to above. A small part of Sabzawārī's glosses has been published through the efforts of Seyyed Jalāl al-Dīn Ashtiyānī and comprises the glosses on chapters one and two of the first treatise and on part of the second chapter of the sixth treatise.<sup>36</sup>
- 10) Jamāl al-Dīn Raḡawī's (alive in the 12<sup>th</sup> cent. AH) glosses on the *Metaphysics* of the *Shifā'*.<sup>37</sup> In the introduction to his glosses, Raḡawī says that he had seen many glosses by others, notably the ones by Ṣadr al-Dīn Shīrāzī. In spite of the fact that Shīrāzī had clarified many of the known objections to Avicenna's philosophical positions, Raḡawī was of the opinion that his glosses left many issues unexplained, which is why

he decided to write his own. In his glosses Raḡawī critically reviews the viewpoints of many of his predecessors: Mīr Dāmād, Ṣadr al-Dīn Shīrāzī, Fakhr al-Dīn Rāzī, Najm al-Dīn Kātībī Qazwīnī (d. 675 AH), Sirāj al-Dīn Urmawī (682 AH) and Jalāl al-Dīn Dawwānī (d. 908 AH).

## VI. Writings indirectly inspired by the *Shifā'*

These writings are interesting in as much as they may contain quotations or otherwise unknown readings from or interpretations of Avicenna's *Shifā'* that can be decisive for our understanding of a particular passage in any future edition of Avicenna's works. Thus they are mentioned here as an additional, secondary resource whose potential importance should not be underestimated.

- 1) Bahmanyār Ibn Marzubān (d. 458 AH). The *Kitāb al-Taḡṣīl* by Avicenna's student Bahmanyār Ibn Marzubān may be the first work to have been indirectly influenced by the *Shifā'*.<sup>38</sup> This work is more concise than the *Shifā'* but more detailed than the Avicenna's own *Najāt*. He wrote it for his mother's brother, Abū Maṣṣūr Bahrām Ibn Khurshīd Ibn Yazdiyār. It is organized in a way similar to Avicenna's *Dānishnāme-yi 'Alā'ī*, and in composing this book he took all of Avicenna's works, even his conversations with him, into account. The *Taḡṣīl* is divided into three books: logic, metaphysics, and matters pertaining to the physics, while missing a section on mathematics. The *Metaphysics* or *Ilāhiyyāt* of the *Taḡṣīl* has six treatises, with each of these treatises divided into several parts. In some notes to the text, the editor of this work has shown which topics from the *Shifā'* have found their way into the *Taḡṣīl*.
- 2) Abū l-Barakāt al-Baghdādī (d. ca. 561 AH). A famed Jewish philosopher, he is the author of an important work entitled *al-Kitāb al-Mu'tabar fī l-ḥikma*.<sup>39</sup> It comprises three books on

logic, physics, and metaphysics, while the sections of each book are organized in various treatises and chapters. In his work, Abū l-Barakāt took a critical approach to Avicenna's views, also in metaphysics.

- 3) Shihāb al-Dīn Suhrawardī (549-87 AH). In spite of the fact that he is considered as the founder of Illuminative Philosophy (*ḥikmat al-ishrāq*), he wrote a lot of treatises in the style of the Peripatic thinkers, expounding issues in logic, physics and metaphysics along those lines. In the present context, the metaphysical parts of works like his *Kitāb al-Mashārī' wa-l-Muṭārahāt*, *al-Talwīḥāt*, and *al-Muqāwamāt* are of special interest.<sup>40</sup>
- 4) Fakhr al-Dīn Rāzī (d. 606 AH) wrote commentaries on Avicenna's *Kitāb al-Ishārāt wa-l-tanbīhāt*<sup>41</sup> and *'Uyūn al-Ḥikma*.<sup>42</sup> He also wrote a book entitled *al-Mabāḥith al-Mashriqiyya*,<sup>43</sup> in which he was also much inspired by the *Shifā'*.
- 5) Shams al-Dīn Shahrazūrī (7<sup>th</sup> cent. AH). He was a student of Suhrawardī who wrote his own encyclopaedic work under the title *al-Shajara al-Ilāhiyya*.<sup>44</sup> This work contains five treatises: the division of the sciences, logic, ethics, physics, and metaphysics. In this book, Shahrazūrī mostly draws upon the views of Avicenna and Fakhr al-Dīn Rāzī.
- 6) Saqr al-Dīn Shīrāzī (979-1050 AH). Saqr al-Dīn Shīrāzī's most important work is entitled *al-Ḥikma al-muta'aliya fī l-asfār al-arba'a al-'aqliyya*. This work has been published in nine volumes and saw several printings.<sup>45</sup> Because it became part of the (philosophical) curriculum in later times, various glosses were written on it. Mollā Hādī Sabzawārī, Mollā 'Alī Nūrī (d. 1246 AH), Mudarris Zunūzī (1234-1307 AH), and

‘Allāmeḥ Ṭabāṭabāī (1321-1402 AH) are among those who composed glosses on this work. All these glosses are contained in the edition of the *Asfār* referred to here.

## VII. Major characteristics of the commentary tradition

So far, I have discussed the extent of the influence of the *Metaphysics* of the *Shifa’* in Islamic philosophy as borne out by the variety of writings that it inspired and that I all subsume under the commentary tradition. This tradition does not only show that the *Metaphysics* of the *Shifa’* has always attracted the interest of scholars as a classical philosophical text, but on top of this, one can see that many philosophical discussions unfolded in the light of this very same tradition, leading to new insights and the diversification of philosophical positions. It may therefore be helpful to sum up the major features of the commentary tradition around the *Metaphysics* of the *Shifa’*.

### Commenting on Avicenna’s views while using other works, by him.

One of the interesting characteristics among the commentaries on the *Metaphysics* of the *Shifā’* is the explanation of Avicenna’s statements on the basis of his other writings. The commentators made an effort to clarify the *Metaphysics* of the *Shifā’*, which is a condensed and difficult text, with the help of other parts of this work, such as the *Eisagoge*, the *Categories*, *Demonstration*, the *Physics* and the *Soul*. As an example one can mention Ṣadr al-Dīn Shīrāzī’s annotations mentioned earlier, where he, whenever the need occurs, quotes from other parts of the *Shifā’*. In some cases, these quotations even span more than two paragraphs of five lines each.<sup>46</sup> It should be added that the commentators did not restrict themselves to other parts of the *Shifā’*; indeed they relied on Avicenna’s other writings as well, such the *Ta’līqāt*, *Risālat al-ḥudūd*, *al-Ishārāt wa-l-tanbīhāt*, ‘*Uyun al-ḥikma*, the *Risāla Aḍḥawiyya*, and the *Manṭiq al-mashriqiyyīn*. From

among Avicenna's predecessors, only Fārābī and two of his works, the *Kitāb al-Ḥurūf* and the *Ta'līqāt* receive any mention.

**The defense of Avicenna against criticism by others.** Apart from clarifying Avicenna's views, the commentators also tried to answer some of the criticisms voiced against him, especially by Shihāb al-Dīn Suhrawardī and Fakhr al-Dīn Rāzī, both criticized Avicenna on the basis of their own views. As an example, I refer to the discussion on the place of the science of arithmetic (*ilm al-ḥisāb*) in the first treatise of the *Metaphysics* of the *Shifā'*. Avicenna consigns arithmetic to the realm of mathematics. Suhrawardī, on the other hand, regards numbers as being part of "being qua being"; and being is either One or Many, while number, too, comes under the many. Therefore, the subject of arithmetic being number, arithmetic belongs to First Philosophy or metaphysics. In his defense of Avicenna, Shīrāzī observes that, had Suhrawardī taken the beginning of the Logic of the *Shifā'* into consideration, he would have understood the distinction between the subject of arithmetic (number) and the Many (which is one of the subjects of the First Philosophy).<sup>47</sup>

**Codicology.** If we cast a close look at manuscripts that go back to the lifetimes of Islamic thinkers in one of the famous libraries around the world (e.g. Mashhad, Milan, Oxford, Leiden), we see that these manuscripts contain all kinds of deletions and corrections. These are the traces of men at work: sometimes this was the author himself, but in most cases these traces belong to later generations of scholars who took a serious interest in understanding the work and in transmitting the knowledge contained therein. In the manuscripts owned by Ṭūsī and Mīr Dāmād mentioned earlier, one can see that they made an effort to correct the mistakes of the scribes in the margins. Of course, commentators such as Dashtakī, Shīrāzī, 'Alawī, Khwānsārī and Narāqī, too, referred to variant readings in other manuscripts while writing their (own) annotations on the *Metaphysics* of the *Shifā'*. From time to time, they also state which

manuscript contains the correct reading. Thus, the study of the commentary tradition on the *Metaphysics* of the *Shifā'* can also be looked at as a method to contribute to a critical apparatus to the text.

**Textual criticism.** Another characteristic of the commentary tradition is formed by the attempts made by some of the commentators to determine the grammatical status of the words in a sentence or the correct vocalization (*i'rāb*) as part of that process.<sup>48</sup> It should be pointed out that a philosopher is not (usually) concerned with words and grammar *per se*. Rather, it is with a view to bringing the reader closer to a precise understanding of the text, that he is concerned with these. Today, these clarifications are usually found in foot- or endnotes and the reader can easily distinguish the essential from the incidental. But in those days, philosophical and philological annotations were not clearly distinguished from one another and that is why the reading of these texts is so important.

### Conclusion

In the preceding pages I have given a general outline of the commentary tradition around the *Metaphysics* of Avicenna's *Shifā'* mostly in Iran. As has been shown, this tradition represents an invaluable source of information for textual criticism and the philosophical analysis of what is arguably Avicenna's most important philosophical work. In my opinion, it will therefore hardly be possible to bring out an authoritative edition of the *Metaphysics* of the *Shifā'* without giving this tradition its fullest consideration.

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### Endnotes

- 1 Because philosophers usually transcend the world of the senses toward a discussion of universals, their discourse may seem elusive to those who are not familiar with the philosophical approach. Practice mostly does away with this difficulty.

2. The scholarly community owes an enormous debt of gratitude to Hermann Diels and Richard Sorabji, as well as to all those who cooperated with them over the years, for the editions of the Greek texts and their translations into English.
3. In connection with the discussions on the place of the intellect among Islamic philosophers and the historical background of these discussions, cf e.g. H.A. Davidson, *Alfarabi, Avicenna, and Averroes on Intellect* (Oxford: Oxford University Press 1992), 7-43.
4. On the structure of the *Shifā'* as a whole, cf. J. Lameer, *Conception and Belief in Ṣadr al-Dīn Shīrāzī* (ca. 1571–1635). *Al-Risāla fī l-taṣawwur wa-l-taṣdīq* (Tehran: Iranian Institute of Philosophy, 2006), 146, note 1. Of the *Metaphysics* of the *Shifā'* there exist the following editions: 1. *Al-Ilāhiyyāt min al-Shifā' li-l-shaykh al-ra'īs Abī 'Alī...Ibn Sīnā...ma'a Ta'līqāt Ṣadr al-Muta'allihīn...al-Shīrāzī wa ta'ālīq ukhar* (Qom: Bīdār, n.d.), 266-567 (reprint of lith. edit. Tehran, 1303 AH); 2. I. Madkour et.al. ed., *Ibn Sīnā, Al-Shifā', al-Ilāhiyyāt*, 2 vols, Cairo: al-Hay'a al-'amma li-shu'ūn al-maṭābī' al-amīriyya, 1960; 3. H. Ḥasanzādeh Āmulī ed., *Al-Ilāhiyyāt min Kitāb al-Shifā'. Al-Shaykh al-ra'īs Ibn Sīnā*, Qom: Būstān-e Ketāb, 1387 AH solar; 4. H. Nājī Eṣfahānī ed., *Al-Shifā' (al-Ilāhiyyāt) wa ta'līqāt Ṣadr al-Muta'allihīn 'alayhā*, vol. 1, Tehran: Anjoman-i Āthār wa Mafākhir-i Farhangī, 1383 AH solar (this edition is incomplete, on which cf. below, V.2).
5. G. Sh. Qanawātī et al. ed. *Ibn Sīnā, al-Shifā', al-Manṭiq 1, al-Mudkhal* (Cairo: al-Maṭba'a al-Amīriyya, 1952), 2-3.
6. In this connection see D. Gutas, "Aspects of Literary Form and Genre in Arabic Logical Works", in *Glosses and Commentaries on Aristotelian Logical Texts. The Syriac, Arabic, and Medieval Latin Traditions*, ed. Ch. Burnett (London: University of London, 1993), 29-76. Even though Gutas limited himself to logical texts, his account is of great value in the present context as well.
7. M.T. Dāneshpazhūh, *Fehrest-i Ketābkhāne-yi Ehdā'i-yi Āqā-yi Seyyed Moḥammad-i Meshkāt beh Dāneshgāh-i Tehrān*, vol. III.1 (Tehrān: Enteshārāt-i Dāneshgāh-i Tehrān, 1332 AH solar), 199-201, MS # 251.
8. A. Ḥā'irī, *Fehrest-i nosakh-i khatti-yi ketābkhāne-yi Majles-i Shūrā-yi Eslāmī*, vol. 5 (Tehran: Enteshārāt-i Majles, 1345 AH solar), 402-04 # 1840, 404 # 1912.
9. T.Ḥ. Kantūrī, , *Fehrest-i mashrūḥ-i ba'q-i kutub-i nafīse-yi qalami-yi makhzūne-yi kutubkhāne-yi Aṣefīye-yi Sarkār-i 'Ālī*, vol. 3 (Ḥaydarābād

Deccan: Dār al-ṭab‘ Sarkār-i ‘Ālī, 1347 AH solar), 492 # 431.

10. F. Ardebilī, *Tārīkh-i Ardebīl wa Dāneshmandān*, vol. 1 (Mashhad, n.p., 1357 AH solar), 201. I owe this information to the kind assistance of M. Ṣadūqī Sohā.
11. Apart from the old translations in manuscript above-mentioned, the following Persian renditions of (parts of) the *Ilāhiyyāt* of the *Shifā’* have recently been published: 1. M. Moṭṭaharī, *Darshā-yi Ilāhiyyāt-i Shifā’*, in M. Moṭṭaharī, *Majmū‘e-yi Āthār-i Shahīd Moṭṭaharī* (Tehran: Ṣadrā, 1382 AH solar), vol. 7, 225-586, and vol. 8; 2. M. Mohammadī Gīlānī, *Tarjome-yi Ilāhiyyāt-i Shifā’*. *Fann-i sīzdahom. Maqālāt 1-4*. Qom: Būstān-i Ketāb, 1379 AH solar; 3. M.T Meṣbāḥ Yazdī, *Sharḥ-i Ilāhiyyāt-i Shifā’*. Qom: Imam Khomeini Res. Cent., 1382 AH solar; 4. I. Dādījū, *Ilāhiyyāt az Ketāb-i Shifā’*. Tehran: Amīr Kabīr, 1388 AH solar; 5. M. Ṣ. Ḥā’irī Māzandarānī, “*Naṣṣ-i kalām-i Sheykh dar Shifā’ dar mawqu‘-i elāhiyyāt-i ‘āmmeh bā tarjomeh wa taḥqīq*”, in idem, *Ḥekmat-i Bū ‘Alī Sīnā* vol. 1 (Tehran: Enteshārāt-i ‘Elmī, 1362 AH solar), 85-102; 6. ‘A. Ḥaqq ol-Yaqīn ed., *Sharḥ-i Ḥaqq ol-Yaqīn-yi Shifā-yi Bū ‘Alī Sīnā wa Sharḥ-i Mathnawi-yi Mowlāvī mamzūjan*, Tehran: Enteshārāt-i sa‘ādat-i bashar, 1316 AH solar.
12. M.T. Dāneshpazhūh ed., *al-Najāt min al-gharq fi baḥr al-qalālāt. Ebn-e Sīnā*. Tehran: Enteshārāt-i Dāneshgāh-i Tehrān, 1364 AH solar.
13. M. Qorbān-niyā Mīrak Maḥalleh, *Taṣḥīḥ-i Talkhīṣ al-Shifā’*. Unpubl. MA Thesis. Mashhad: Razavī University, 1380 AH solar.
14. A. Awjabī, “*Awn ikhwān al-ṣafā’ ‘alā fahm Kitāb al-Shifā’*”, *Āyene-yi Mīrāth* 22 (1382 AH solar): 167-172.
15. I. Dībājī, ed., *Bayān al-ḥaqq bi-qamān al-ṣidq. al-Mantiq, al-Mudkhal*. Tehran: Enteshārāt-i Dāneshgāh-i Tehrān, 1364 AH solar; I. Dībājī, ed., *Bayān al-ḥaqq bi-qamān al-ṣidq. al-‘Ilm al-ilāhī*. Tehran: Enteshārāt-i Dāneshgāh-i Tehrān, 1373 AH solar.
16. M. Muḥammadī, *Taṣḥīḥ wa taḥqīq-i Bayān al-ḥaqq bi-qamān al-ṣidq, Bakhsh-i Ilāhiyyāt, az Abū al-‘Abbās Lawkarī*. Tehran: Dāneshgāh-i Tehrān, 1373 AH solar.
17. M.T. Dāneshpazhūh, *Fehrest-i Ketābkhāne-yi Ehdā’i-yi Āqā-yi Seyyed Moḥammad-i Meshkāt beh Dāneshgāh-i Tehrān*, vol. III.1 (Tehrān: Enteshārāt-i Dāneshgāh-i Tehrān, 1332 AH solar), 162-166, # 250.
18. Arthur J. Arberry, *The Chester Beatty Library. A Handlist of Arabic Manuscripts*, vol. 7 (Dublin: Hodges, Figgis & Co., 1964), 50-51, # 5151;



- S. Schmidtke, *Andīshehā-yi kalāmi-yi 'Allāme-yi Ḥillī* (= *The Theology of al-'Allāma al-Ḥillī*) (Tarjome-yi A. Namā'ī. Mashhad: Mu'assase-yi chāp-i Āstān-i Quds-i Raqawī, 1378 AH solar), chapter II.3, 64.
19. M.T. Dāneshpazhūh, *Fehrest-i nosakh-i khaṭṭi-yi ketābkhāne-yi Markazi-yi Dāneshgāh-i Tehrān*, vol. 16 (Tehran: Enteshārāt-i Dāneshgāh-i Tehrān, 1357 AH solar), 239, # 6308.
20. M. Mohaghegh ed., *Sharḥ al-Ilāhiyyāt min Kitāb al-Shifā'*. Mehdī Naraqī. Tehran: Mo'assase-yi moṭāla'āt-i eslāmi-yi Dāneshgāh-i McGill sho'be-yi Tehrān, 1365 AH solar.
21. H. N. Eṣfahānī ed., *Sharḥ al-Ilāhiyyāt (al-Shifā') az ḥakīm Mollā Moḥammad Mehdī Naraqī*. Qom: Kongreh-i bozorgdāsht-i Mollā Mehdī Naraqī wa Mollā Aḥmad Naraqī, 1380 AH solar.
22. M.M. Ḥilmī, *Tawfīq al-taṭbīq fī ithbāt anna l-shaykh al-ra'īs min al-Imāmiyya al-Ithnā 'Ashariyya*. Cairo: Dār iḥyā' al-kutub al-'arabiyya, 1953.
23. M.T. Dāneshpazhūh, *Fehrest-i nosakh-i khaṭṭi-yi ketābkhāne-yi Markazi-yi Dāneshgāh-i Tehrān*, vol. 9 (Tehran: Enteshārāt-i Dāneshgāh-i Tehrān, 1340 AH solar), 923, # 2278.
24. N. Ḥabībī ed., *al-Ta'liqāt 'alā l-Ilāhiyyāt min al-Shifā'*. 2 vols. Tehran: Bonyād-i Ḥekmat-i Eslāmi-yi Ṣadrā, 1382 AH solar. Through the efforts of Dr Nājī Eṣfahānī, a new edition of the *Ilāhiyyāt* of the *Shifā'* was published recently in Iran (mentioned above in section I), accompanied by the annotations of Mollā Ṣadrā and also by a summary and a selection of notes and glosses by other authors. Now even though this represents an important step forward in our understanding of the commentary tradition on the *Ilāhiyyāt* of the *Shifā'*, Dr Isfahani's work is only concerned with the first and second treatises of the *Ilāhiyyāt*. It is therefore to be hoped that the other parts will also be published in the none too distant future. Since Dr Nājī Eṣfahānī's book is referred to as "volume 1", there is reason to believe that the publication of further volumes is indeed foreseen by the editor.
25. A. Ṣadrā'ī Khū'ī, *Fehrest-i Ketābkhāne-yi Namāzi-yi Khūy* (Tehran: Anjoman-i Āthār wa Mafākhir-i Farhangī, 1376 AH solar), 127, # 247.
26. *Naskh* is a certain style of writing which in today's language could be called a "font".
27. For bibliographical references concerning this manuscript, see above under V.1.

28. 'A. Nūrānī ed., *Moşannafāt-i Ghiyāth al-Dīn Manşūr Dashtaki-yi Shūrāzī* (Tehran: Enteshārāt-i Ketābkhāneh, Mūzeh wa Markaz-i Asnād-i Majles-i Shūrā-yi Eslāmī, 1386 AH solar), vol. 2, 377-487. There is another edition of the *Shifā' al-qulūb*, contained in A. Aharī ed., *Ganjīne-yi Bahārestān. Hekmat* (Tehran: Anjoman-i Āthār wa mafākhīr-i farhanjī, 1379 AH solar), 185-287.
29. Nūrānī ed., *Moşannafāt-i Ghiyāth al-Dīn Manşūr Dashtaki-yi Shūrāzī*, vol. 2, 491-590.
30. Dāneshpazhūh, *al-Najāt*, lxxvi.
31. A. Anwār, *Fehrest-i nosakh-i khattī-yi Ketābkhāne-yi Mellī-yi Īrān* vol. 7 (Tehran: Enteshārāt-e Wizārat-i Farhang wa honar, 1356 AH solar), 94 #101.
32. Ḥabībī ed., *al-Ta'liqāt 'alā l-Ilāhiyyāt min al-Shifā'*.
33. For the edition of these glosses see Ḥ. Nājī Eşfahānī ed., *al-Ḥāshiya 'alā l-Shifā'. Ta'liq Āqā Ḥusayn Khwansārī*. Qom: Dabīrkhāne-yi Kongre-yi Āqā Ḥusayn Khwansārī, 1378 AH solar.
34. There are two manuscripts of this ḥāshiya in Iran: 1. Tehran, Majles # 10112, 2. Qom, Mar'ashī # 13454. Cf M. Derāyatī ed., *Fehrestwāre-yi Dastneveshtā-yi Īrān*, vol. 4 (Tehran: Ketābkhāne, Mūzeh wa Markaz-i Asnād-i Majles-i Shūrā-yi Eslāmī, 1389 AH solar), 310, ## 94017, 94018.
35. There exist at least eight copies of this ḥāshiya in Iran. As an example I refer to Dāneshpazhūh, *Fehrest-e Ketābkhāne-yi Ehdā'i-yi Āqā-yi Seyyed Moḥammad-e Meshkāt beh Dāneshgāh-i Tehrān*, vol. III.1, 241 # 263.
36. J. Ashtiyānī ed., *Montakhabātī az āthār-i ḥokamā-yi elāhi-yi īrān. Az 'aşr-i Mīr Dāmād wa Mīr Fendereskī tā zamān-i ḥāqīr* (Qom: Būstān-i Ketāb, 1378 AH solar), 546-615.
37. Ḥā'irī, *Fehrest-i nosakh-i khattī-yi ketābkhāne-yi Majles-i Shūrā-yi Eslāmī*, vol. 5, 178-180 # 1786.
38. M. Moţţaharī ed., *al-Taḥşīl*. Tehran: Enteshārāt-i Daneshgāh-i Tehrān, 1349 AH solar.
39. Anon. ed., *al-Kitāb al-mu'tabar fī l-ḥikma. Sayyid al-ḥukamā'...Abī l-Barakāt...al-Baghdādī*, 3 vols. Ḥaydarābād: Jam'iyat dā'irat al-ma'ārif al-'uthmāniyya, 1357-58 AH. About twenty years ago, a reprint of this work was published by the University of Isfahan. As a courtesy to the readers, each of the Logic, Physics and Metaphysics of the *Mu'tabar* was provided with a separate index. Cf. *al-Kitāb al-mu'tabar fī l-ḥikma li...Abī l-Barakāt...al-Baghdādī*. Isfahān: Dāneshgāh-i Eşfahān, 1373 AH solar.

Photomechanical reprint.

40. Cf. H. Corbin ed., *Şihābaddīn Yahyā as-Suhrawardī Opera Metaphysica et Mystica*, vol. 1. Bibliotheca Islamica vol. 16a. Istanbul: Maarif Matbaası, 1945. Reprinted as: H. Corbin ed., *Shihaboddin Yahya Sohravardi Oeuvres philosophiques et mystiques*, vol. 1. Téhéran, Paris: Bibliothèque iranienne, 1976.
41. 'A. Najafzādeh ed., *Sharḥ al-Ishārāt wa-l-tanbīhāt*. 2 vols. Tehran: Anjoman-e āthār o mafākher-e farhangī, 1384 AH solar.
42. A.Ḥ.Saqā ed., *Sharḥ 'Uyūn al-Ḥikma*. 3 vols. Cairo: Maktabat al-Anglū al-Miṣriyya, 1400 AH.
43. M.M. Baghdādī ed., *al-Mabāḥith al-Mashriqiyya fī 'ilm al-ilāhiyyāt wa-l-ṭabī'iyyāt*. 2 vols. Beirut: Dār al-kitāb al-'arabī, 1410/1990.
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46. Cf. e.g. Ḥabībī, *al-Ta'līqāt 'alā l-Ilāhiyyāt min al-Shifā'*, vol. 1, 6-7 and 11-12.
47. *Ibid.*, 14-15.
48. By way of example I refer to the Jamāl al-Dīn Raqawī's Glosses in the manuscript Majles 1786 folios 3-4 referred to in section V.10 above.

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4. Anwār, 'A. *Fehrest-i nosakh-i khaṭṭi-yi Ketābkhāne-yi Mellī-yi Īrān* vol. 7.

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- Tehrān, 1373 AH solar.
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