

enology, moral psychology, and theories of perception (p. 392). For example, the argument that imagination is a base for cognitive flexibility fits with discussions in cognitive science about mental representation and modal reasoning.

Still, her contact with contemporary theories, such as phenomenology, from scholars like Shaun Gallagher or Alva Noë remains cursory at best. More extensive interactions between disciplines would further elevate the potential applicability of her Kantian framework to modern contexts.

Matherne's method distinguishes itself by close text analysis and impressive familiarity with Kant's oeuvre. Although the integration of Anthropology and lecture notes amplifies her exegesis, it simultaneously opens these to critical consideration about the validity of using them to determine Kant's considered positions (p. 124). In addition, her integrative approach, at times, obscures the tension found in many of Kant's works, such as the one between empirical and transcendental uses of imagination.

Samantha Matherne's *Seeing More: Kant's Theory of Imagination* is a contribution of major importance to the Kantian scholarship: a richly textured account of imagination's centrality across theoretical, aesthetic, and practical domains. Occasionally, her interpretations overstretch toward the unifying goal but, in doing so, open new pathways into how to explore Kant's imagination both in historical and contemporary contexts. Future work may take her reflections a few steps further, perhaps by investigating imagination's function in cross-disciplinary contexts, such as in cognitive science and aesthetics. Matherne's monograph is essential reading for scholars seeking an intensified understanding of how imagination has insinuated itself across Kant's work.

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A HISTORY OF THE MUSLIM WORLD: FROM ITS ORIGINS TO THE DAWN OF MODERNITY. By Michael A. Cook. New York: Princeton University Press, 2024. 960 pp.

Michael Cook's *A History of the Muslim World* is a broad narrative of Islamic history, ranging over fourteen centuries and a geographical scope from Morocco to Mindanao. This work of historical synthesis tries to make sense of the vast and complicated history of the Muslim world for the broadest readership possible. This review critically examines Cook's main arguments, methodological decisions, and contributions to the field of historiography, as well as the implications of the work for both scholars and the general reader.

Cook's overarching argument is that Islam has been a transformative force in history, shaping societies in ways that have created discontinuities with pre-Islamic traditions. He states, "A commitment to Islam makes a difference: wherever a society and its rulers have come to be Muslim, sooner or later this has led to a major discontinuity with the society's pre-Islamic past" (p. xix). This assertion is the foundation for his exploration of state formation, cultural adaptation, and regional variations.

Cook underscores Islam's ability to build a unified cultural and political identity among heterogeneous societies. For instance, he examines the spreading of Arabic and Islamic legal concepts as contributing factors to cohesiveness in the initial caliphates (pp. 174-186). His discussion of these phenomena reveals Islam's dualistic role as both a religious and a civilizational project. Nevertheless, Cook's emphasis on discontinuity may be refined by a heightened focus on the continuities that exist with pre-Islamic traditions, including the lasting impact of Persian administrative systems.

A significant contribution made by Cook is his analysis of the ways in which Islamic states adjusted to local circumstances. He elucidates how the Abbasid Caliphate assimilated Persian bureaucratic customs and promoted cultural amalgamation (pp. 129-136). Similarly, his discussion of Ottoman administrative reforms illustrates the adaptability of Islamic governance over time (pp. 466-472).

While Cook's insights are compelling, his focus on elite institutions leaves the dynamics of non-elite actors underexplored, as he himself acknowledges, stating, "This book gives disproportionate voice to the articulate and the opinionated to the virtual exclusion of the silent, the tongue-tied, and the anonymous mass of the population" (p. xxi).

Another strength of the book is Cook's treatment of regional differences. His methodologically sound regional approach allows him to trace the different trajectories of Islamic societies. For instance, his chapters on India (pp. 521-578) and Africa (pp. 653-713) are of immense value for tracing the spread of Islam beyond the Arab heartlands. On the other hand, the uneven treatment of certain regions, such as Southeast Asia, points out the need for more balanced coverage. He describes the interaction of Islam with the local traditions across different contexts—from North African Berber revolts (pp. 196-218) to the spread of Islam in maritime Southeast Asia (pp. 624-646). The emphasis on this particular region exemplifies the dual centrifugal and centripetal forces that have significantly influenced Islamic history. As noted by Cook, "A historian of the Muslim world accordingly has to do justice to the historical reality of both the centrifugal and the centripetal pulls" (p. xxvii). Nonetheless, a more profound exploration of how these variations have impacted the wider Islamic thought and identity would enhance the book's contribution.

Cook describes his approach as "old-fashioned in a good way" (p. xxviii). He prioritizes narrative history and focuses on state formation and cultural shifts. This methodological choice reflects his commitment to making history accessible while maintaining academic rigor.

Cook's focus on elites and political frameworks represents both an advantage and a drawback. He recognizes this predisposition, stating, "The single most consistent and pervasive bias in this book is of a different kind: it gives disproportionate voice to the articulate and the opinionated" (p. xxiv). Although this concentration facilitates a coherent examination of statecraft and governance, it frequently neglects the experiences of marginalized communities, including women and non-Muslim groups.

Cook's reliance on secondary sources is candidly addressed: "For most of the ground covered in this book I am accordingly dependent on the work of historians who have grappled directly with the sources" (p. xx). While this approach enables him to synthesize a vast body of scholarship, it raises questions about the originality of his interpretations. Besides that, his selective engagement with primary sources might limit the depth of thoroughness of his analysis in some areas, primarily intellectual history, which he explicitly excludes from consideration (p. xxi). Cook's work is rich in merits, particularly with regard to its narrative clarity and wide scope. His ability to condense complex historical dynamics into a coherent framework is laudable. However, the book has several significant drawbacks. Cook's writing style is very engaging, and his narrative structure is well-organized, making it accessible to both academic readers and lay readers. A major strength of this work is its contribution to the field of Islamic historiography, presenting Islam as a force that is both unifying and diversifying, thereby providing a sophisticated viewpoint that enhances current discussions. In addition, the analysis of regional differences improves our understanding of the complex nature of the Islamic world. However, the text does have its weaknesses. Compared with Marshall Hodgson's *The Venture of Islam*, the scholarship of Cook reflects a more limited thematic scope—a limitation he explicitly recognizes (p. xxi). In contrast to Hodgson's more extensive cultural and intellectual history through an interdisciplinary framework, Cook focuses predominantly on political and cultural changes, thus offering a much briefer and therefore accessible narrative that complements quite well Hodgson's significant work. However, the book is very brief in the treatment of non-Muslim communities under Islamic rule, although they played an important role in shaping the Islamic societies. Also, although Cook discusses cultural synthesis, much of his analysis is still state-driven and not well-represented grassroots cultural exchanges.

Cook's *A History of the Muslim World* is a major work in the Islamic historiography, giving a clear, comprehensive overview of the Muslim world's history. The book's concentration on the processes of state formation and cultural adaptation yields significant insights; however, its

prioritization of elite perspectives and inconsistent regional representation constrains its overall scope. For both academic audiences and the general populace, this work functions as an intriguing and intellectually stimulating primer on the historical narrative of the Muslim world. Subsequent investigations might enhance Cook's framework by integrating a broader range of viewpoints from underrepresented communities and delving deeper into the intellectual and economic histories.

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CAVELL, WILLIAMS AND THE QUESTION OF STYLE IN PHILOSOPHY. By Paolo Babbioni. London: Palgrave Macmillan, 2024. 304 pp.

Paolo Babbioni's *Cavell, Williams and the Question of Style in Philosophy* is an academically ambitious and methodologically scholarly work that challenges the common supposition that style in philosophy is superficial. Babbioni argues that, for Stanley Cavell and Bernard Williams, style is an integral part of the nature of thinking, shaping not just the form of their thinking but also the philosophical thought they put forward. In the union of close reading and digital humanities methodology, he argues forcefully for the importance of style in the philosophy field. His main argument is stated clearly at the outset: "I will be interested in other contemporary philosophers who, similarly to Wittgenstein, have tried to emphasize the importance of style in philosophy; stylistically self-conscious authors, who have used style in many ways, and have tackled different 'problems of style'" (p. ix).

The text is structured so that it increasingly develops the reader's understanding of this claim. After an introduction placing his work within the current debates over philosophical style, Babbioni conducts a comparative analysis of Cavell and Williams. He then outlines a distant reading strategy to trace the repetition of certain stylistic features in their work. The final chapter addresses the broader implications of these findings for the discipline of philosophy. "One author will be better illuminated by the background of the other, and vice versa" (p. ix), he explains, offering an explanation for his comparative analysis decision.

Babbioni's interpretation of Cavell is especially convincing. For him, Cavell's writing is marked by what he calls "lingering," a stylistic device that resists the strictures of analytic philosophy and instead invites the reader to indulge in a process of self-reflection. "Cavell discovered his own ways in philosophy, which share a common spirit—and this is a spirit that is revealed through its digressive, lingering parts" (p. 141). He puts a lot of stress on Cavell's use of parentheses, seeing them not as so-called incidental asides but an integral part of Cavell's thinking. By looking to their appearance and placement, Babbioni shows that "the massive presence of parentheses after a mark (which open to another self of the text, in counterpoint to the main body); the use, within normal parentheses and parentheses after a mark, of pronouns such as 'you' or punctuation marks such as '?'. Moreover, I also briefly observed how the lingering movement of the parenthesis is expressed by dubitative and concessive formulas such as 'perhaps' or 'though'; or by the negation ('not') of alternative ways (which are excluded but at the same time remembered in parentheses); or by the massive use of 'or', which contributes to increase the ambiguity and multiplicity of dimensions to which Cavell's writing refers (as pointed out, among others, by Mahon)." (p. 237-238) This quantitative evidence testifies to the thesis that Cavell's writing not only describes Emersonian perfectionism but actually performs it instead.

By contrast, Williams's stylistic strategy is marked by what Babbioni calls "compression," a rhetorical device for the transmission of massive meaning with laconic words. He shows how Williams,