

THE NEW CAMBRIDGE HISTORY OF

ISLAM

\*

VOLUME 4

Islamic Cultures and Societies to the End of the  
Eighteenth Century

Robert Irwin's authoritative introduction to the fourth volume of *The New Cambridge History of Islam* offers a panoramic vision of Islamic culture from its origins to around 1800. The chapter, which highlights key developments and introduces some of Islam's most famous protagonists, paves the way for an extraordinarily varied collection of essays. The themes treated include religion and law, conversion, Islam's relationship with the natural world, governance and politics, caliphs and kings, philosophy, science, medicine, language, art, architecture, literature, music and even cookery. What emerges from this rich collection, written by an international team of experts, is the diversity and dynamism of the societies which created this flourishing civilisation. Volume 4 of *The New Cambridge History of Islam* serves as a thematic companion to the three preceding, politically oriented volumes, and in coverage extends across the pre-modern Islamic world.

ROBERT IRWIN is senior research associate of the history department, School of Oriental and African Studies, University of London. His previous publications include *For lust of knowing: The Orientalists and their enemies* (2006), *Night and horses and the desert: An anthology of classical Arabic literature* (1999) and *The Arabian Nights: A Companion* (1994).

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*The New Cambridge History of Islam* offers a comprehensive history of Islamic civilisation, tracing its development from its beginnings in seventh-century Arabia to its wide and varied presence in the globalised world of today. Under the leadership of the Prophet Muḥammad the Muslim community coalesced from a scattered, desert population and, following his death, emerged from Arabia to conquer an empire which, by the early eighth century, stretched from India in the east to Spain in the west. By the eighteenth century, despite political fragmentation, the Muslim world extended from West Africa to South-East Asia. Today Muslims are also found in significant numbers in Europe and the Americas, and make up about one-fifth of the world's population.

To reflect this geographical distribution and the cultural, social and religious diversity of the peoples of the Muslim world, *The New Cambridge History of Islam* is divided into six volumes. Four cover historical developments, and two are devoted to themes that cut across geographical and chronological divisions – themes ranging from social, political and economic relations to the arts, literature and learning. Each volume begins with a panoramic introduction setting the scene for the ensuing chapters and examining relationships with adjacent civilisations. Two of the volumes – one historical, the other thematic – are dedicated to the developments of the last two centuries, and show how Muslims, united for so many years in their allegiance to an overarching and distinct tradition, have sought to come to terms with the emergence of Western hegemony and the transition to modernity.

The time is right for this new synthesis reflecting developments in scholarship over the last generation. *The New Cambridge History of Islam* is an ambitious enterprise directed and written by a team combining established authorities and innovative younger scholars. It will be the standard reference for students, scholars and all those with enquiring minds for years to come.

*General editor*

MICHAEL COOK, CLASS OF 1943 UNIVERSITY PROFESSOR  
OF NEAR EASTERN STUDIES, PRINCETON UNIVERSITY

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HISTORY OF  
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of the Eighteenth Century

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*Edited by*  
ROBERT IRWIN



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## Contributors

SAÏD AMIR ARJOMAND is Distinguished Service Professor of Sociology at the State University of New York at Stony Brook and is the founder and president (1996–2002, 2005–8) of the Association for the Study of Persianate Societies. His books include *The shadow of God and the Hidden Imam: Religion, political organization and societal change in Shi'ite Iran from the beginning to 1890* (Chicago, 1984), *The turban for the crown: The Islamic Revolution in Iran* (Oxford, 1988) and *Rethinking civilizational analysis* (London, 2004; ed. with Edward Tiryakian).

ÇİĞDEM BALİM HARDING is the Director of Graduate Studies and Director of Language Instruction at the Department of Near Eastern Languages and Cultures, Indiana University. She is the Middle East Regional Editor of the journal *Women's Studies International Forum* (Elsevier Publications). Her previous publications include, as co-author, *Meskhetian Turks: An introduction to their history, culture, and US resettlement experience* (Washington, DC, 2006), as co-editor, *The balance of truth: Essays in honour of Geoffrey Lewis* (Istanbul, 2000) and *Turkey: Political, social and economic challenges in the 1990s* (Leiden, 1995).

JONATHAN BERKEY, Professor of History at Davidson College in North Carolina, is the author of several books on medieval Islamic history, most recently *The formation of Islam: Religion and society in the Near East, 600–1800* (Cambridge, 2003).

MICHAEL BONNER is Professor of Medieval Islamic History in the Department of Near Eastern Studies, University of Michigan. He received his Ph.D. in the Department of Near Eastern Studies, Princeton University, in 1987. His recent publications include *Jihad in Islamic history: Doctrines and practices* (Princeton, 2006), and *Poverty and charity in Middle Eastern contexts*, co-edited with Amy Singer and Mine Ener (Albany, 2003). He has been a Helmut S. Stern Fellow at the University of Michigan Institute for the Humanities, and has held the position of Professeur Invité at the Institut d'Études de l'Islam et des Sociétés du Monde Musulman, École des Hautes Études en Sciences Sociales, and of Chaire de l'Institut du Monde Arabe, also in Paris. He was Director of the University of Michigan Center for Middle Eastern and North African Studies in 1997–2000 and 2001–3, and Acting Chair of the Department of Near Eastern Studies in 2007–8.

JONATHAN BLOOM holds both the Norma Jean Calderwood University Professorship of Islamic and Asian Art at Boston College and the Hamad bin Khalifa Endowed Chair of

*List of contributors*

Islamic Art at Virginia Commonwealth University. Among his most recent publications are *Arts of the city victorious: Islamic art and architecture in Fatimid North Africa and Egypt* (New Haven and London, 2007) and *Paper before print: The history and impact of paper in the Islamic world* (New Haven, 2001). He is also the co-editor of the three-volume *Grove Encyclopedia of Islamic art and architecture* (Oxford, 2009).

JULIA BRAY is Professor of Medieval Arabic Literature at the University of Paris 8–Saint Denis. Her previous publications include, as editor, *‘Abbasid belles-lettres* (Cambridge, 1990) and *Writing and representation in medieval Islam* (London and New York, 2006).

SONJA BRENTJES is Senior Researcher in a Project of Excellence of the Government of Andalusia at the Department of Philosophy and Logic, University of Seville. She has taught and done research in several European countries and the USA, and is currently on a visiting professorship to Sabanci University, Turkey. She has studied mathematics, Arabic and Near Eastern history and has focused on the history of mathematics, institutions and cartography in Islamic societies as well as the transmission of knowledge between different cultures in Asia, Europe and North Africa. Her previous publications include ‘Euclid’s *Elements*, courtly patronage and princely education’ (*Iranian Studies* 41 (2008)) and ‘Patronage of the mathematical sciences in Islamic societies: structure and rhetoric, identities and outcomes’ (in Eleanor Robson and Jackie Stendall (eds.), *The Oxford handbook of the history of mathematics* (Oxford, 2008)).

RICHARD W. BULLIET is Professor of History at Columbia University in New York City. His publications include *The patricians of Nishapur* (Cambridge, MA, 1972), *The camel and the wheel* (Cambridge, MA, 1975), *Conversion to Islam in the medieval period* (Cambridge, MA, 1979), *Islam: The view from the edge* (New York, 1994), *The case for Islamo-Christian civilization* (New York, 2004), *Hunters, herders, and hamburgers* (New York, 2005), and *Cotton, climate, and camels in early Islamic Iran* (New York, 2009).

MICHAEL COOPERSON is Professor of Arabic at the University of California, Los Angeles. He is the author of *Classical Arabic biography* (Cambridge, 2000) and *al-Ma’mun* (Oxford, 2005), a co-author of *Interpreting the self* (Berkeley, 2001), and the translator of Abdelfattah Kilito’s *The author and his doubles* (Syracuse, 2001).

FARHAD DAFTARY is Associate Director and Head of the Department of Academic Research and Publications at the Institute of Ismaili Studies, London. He is a consulting editor of *Encyclopaedia Iranica*, co-editor of *Encyclopaedia Islamica*, as well as the general editor of the Ismaili Heritage Series and the Ismaili Texts and Translations Series. An authority on Ismaili history, Dr Daftary’s publications include *The Ismā‘īlīs: Their history and doctrines* (Cambridge, 1990; 2nd edn, 2007), *The Assassin legends* (London, 1994), *A short history of the Ismailis* (Edinburgh, 1998), *Ismaili literature: A bibliography of sources and studies* (London, 2004), *Ismailis in medieval Muslim societies* (London, 2005) and (with Z. Hirji) *The Ismailis: An illustrated history* (London, 2008). Dr Daftary’s books have been translated into Arabic, Persian, Turkish, Urdu and numerous European languages.

*List of contributors*

DICK DAVIS is Professor of Persian and Chair of the Department of Near Eastern Languages and Cultures at Ohio State University. His publications include a number of translations of major works of Persian literature, including Ferdowsi's *Shahnameh*, Gorgani's *Vis and Ramin* and Attar's *Conference of the birds* (with Afkham Darbandi, winner of the AIIS Translation Prize) as well as scholarly works on medieval Persian literature.

SURAIYA N. FAROQHI teaches Ottoman history at Bilgi University, Istanbul. Her publications include *Approaching Ottoman history: An introduction to the sources* (Cambridge, 1999) and *The Ottoman empire and the world around it* (London, 2004). A collection of her articles was published in *Stories of Ottoman men and women: establishing status, establishing control* (Istanbul, 2002). *Artisans of empire: crafts and craftspeople under the Ottomans* is in the course of publication (London, 2009).

SHAMSUR RAHMAN FARUQI, Urdu critic, literary theorist, poet, fiction writer and translator, is best known for his *Early Urdu literary culture and history* (New Delhi, 2001), a four-volume study, in Urdu, of the eighteenth-century Urdu poet Mir Taqi Mir (1723–1810), and an ongoing study, in Urdu, of the Urdu oral romance called *Dastan-e Amir Hamza*. Three of the projected four volumes have been published. More recently, his voluminous historical-cultural novel in Urdu called *Ka'i Chand The Sar-e Asman* was published to wide acclaim in both India and Pakistan. A retired civil servant, Faruqi lives in Allahabad, India.

LI GUO received his Ph.D. from Yale University (1994) and is currently Associate Professor at the University of Notre Dame, Indiana. He is the author of *Early Mamluk Syrian historiography: al-Yūnīnī's Dhayl Mir'āt al-zamān* (Leiden, 1994) and *Commerce, culture, and community in a Red Sea port in the thirteenth century: The Arabic documents from Quseir* (Leiden, 2004).

GOTTFRIED HAGEN is Associate Professor of Turkish Studies in the Department of Near Eastern Studies at the University of Michigan. He received his MA in Islamic Studies from the University of Heidelberg (1989) and his Ph.D. in Turkish Studies from Free University in Berlin (1996). He is the author of *Ein osmanischer Geograph bei der Arbeit: Entstehung und Gedankenwelt von Kātib Čelebis Ğihānnümā* (Berlin, 2003), as well as numerous articles on Ottoman and Islamic geography, cartography, historiography and religious literature.

WAEEL B. HALLAQ is a James McGill Professor of Islamic Law, teaching at the Institute of Islamic Studies, McGill University. He is author of over sixty scholarly articles and several books, including *Ibn Taymiyya against the Greek logicians* (Oxford, 1993), *A history of Islamic legal theories* (Cambridge, 1997), *Authority, continuity and change in Islamic law* (Cambridge, 2001), *The origins and evolution of Islamic law* (Cambridge, 2005), *An introduction to Islamic law* (Cambridge, 2009) and *Shari'a: Theory, practice, transformations* (Cambridge, 2009).

S. NOMANUL HAQ is on the faculty of the School of Humanities and the Social Sciences at the Lahore University of Management Sciences and is General Editor of the Oxford University Press monograph series *Studies in Islamic Philosophy*. Until recently he remained Scholar-in-Residence at the American Institute of Pakistan. His first book,

*List of contributors*

*Names, natures, and things: The alchemist Jābir ibn Ḥayyān and his Kitāb al-ahjār (Book of stones)* (Boston, 1994), was a textual study of an enigmatic medieval Arabic alchemical school. Since then he has published widely in multiple fields of the history of Islamic philosophy and of science, religion, cultural studies and Persian and Urdu literature.

ROBERT IRWIN is Senior Research Associate of the History Department, School of Oriental and African Studies, London University. His previous publications include *For lust of knowing: The Orientalists and their enemies* (London, 2006), *Night and horses and the desert: An anthology of classical Arabic literature* (Harmondsworth, 1999) and *The Arabian Nights: A Companion* (London, 1994).

HUGH KENNEDY is Professor of Arabic at the School of Oriental and African Studies, University of London. He is the author of numerous books on Islamic history, including *The Prophet and the age of the caliphates* (London, 1986; new edn Harlow, 2004), *The court of the caliphs* (London, 2004) and *The great Arab conquests* (London, 2007).

ALEXANDER KNYSH is Professor of Islamic Studies at the University of Michigan at Ann Arbor. He has published extensively (in English, Russian and Arabic) on Islamic intellectual and political history and various manifestations of Islamic religiosity in local contexts from Yemen to the Caucasus. Recent English publications include *Islamic mysticism: A short history* (Leiden, 2000), *al-Qushayri's Epistle on Sufism* (Reading, 2007) and *Islam in historical perspective* (Reading, 2009).

BRUCE LAWRENCE is Nancy and Jeffrey Marcus Humanities Professor of Religion and Professor of Islamic Studies at Duke University. He is currently the Director of the Duke Islamic Studies Center. His publications include *Muslim networks from Hajj to hip hop*, co-edited with Miriam Cooke (Chapel Hill, 2005), *Messages to the world: The statements of Osama bin Laden* (London and New York, 2006) and *The Qur'an: A biography* (London, 2007).

MANUELA MARÍN is a Research Professor at the Consejo Superior de Investigaciones Científicas (Madrid). She is the author of *Mujeres en al-Andalus* (Madrid, 2000), and of 'Disciplining wives: a historical reading of Qur'an 4:34' (*Studia Islamica*, 97 (2003)).

MARCUS MILWRIGHT is Associate Professor of Islamic Art and Archaeology in the Department of History in Art, University of Victoria, Canada. He is the author of *The fortress of the raven: Karak in the middle Islamic period (1100–1650)* (Leiden, 2008) and is preparing a book on Islamic archaeology for the New Edinburgh Islamic Surveys series.

ROBERT G. MORRISON is Associate Professor of Religion at Bowdoin College. He is the author of *Islam and science: The intellectual career of Nizām al-Dīn al-Nīsābūrī* (London and New York, 2007). He has also published articles on astronomy texts in Judaeo-Arabic and on the astronomy of Qutb al-Dīn al-Shīrāzī.

FRANCIS ROBINSON is Professor of the History of South Asia in the Department of History, Royal Holloway, University of London. His publications include *Islam and Muslim history in South Asia* (Delhi, 2000), *The 'ulamā' of Farangī Maḥall and Islamic culture*



*List of contributors*

in *South Asia* (Delhi, 2001), *Islam, South Asia and the West* (Delhi, 2007) and *The Mughal emperors and the Islamic dynasties of India, Iran and Central Asia 1206–1925* (London, 2007).

WARREN C. SCHULTZ is Associate Professor of History and departmental chair at DePaul University in Chicago. He is the author of ‘The monetary history of Egypt, 642–1517’ in *The Cambridge history of Egypt*, vol. I (1998), as well as several articles on Mamlūk monetary history.

AMNON SHILOAH is Emeritus Professor of the Department of Musicology, Hebrew University of Jerusalem. His research interests involve history and theory of Arab and Jewish Near Eastern musical tradition and medieval writings. His magnum opus includes the two volumes of *The theory of music in Arabic writings* published in the RISM series (Munich, 1979–2003), and two volumes of essays published in Ashgate’s Variorum collected studies series. The French translation of his book *Music in the world of Islam* won the 2003 Grand prix de l’Académie Charles Cros: Littérature musicale.

RICHARD C. TAYLOR of the Philosophy Department at Marquette University works in Arabic philosophy, its Greek sources and its Latin influences. He has written on the *Liber de Causis*, Averroes and other related topics. He has a complete English translation of Averroes’ *Long Commentary on the ‘De Anima’* of Aristotle forthcoming.

DAVID WAINES is Emeritus Professor of Islamic Studies at the Department of Religious Studies, Lancaster University. His recent publications include *Introduction to Islam* (2nd edn, Cambridge, 2003) and *Patterns of everyday life* (Aldershot, 2002).

DAVID J. WASSERSTEIN is Professor of History and Eugene Greener Jr. Professor of Jewish Studies at Vanderbilt University. He is the author of *The rise and fall of the party: Kings, politics and society in Islamic Spain, 1002–1086* (Princeton, 1985), *The caliphate in the West: An Islamic political institution in the Iberian Peninsula* (Oxford, 1993) and (with the late Abraham Wasserstein) *The legend of the Septuagint, from Classical Antiquity to today* (Cambridge, 2006).

ANDREW M. WATSON is Professor Emeritus of Economics at the University of Toronto. His research includes many projects on the economic and agricultural history of medieval Europe and the Islamic world. Among his publications is *Agricultural innovation in the early Islamic world: The diffusion of crops and agricultural techniques, 700–1100* (Cambridge, 1983; repr. 2008, also published in Arabic by the Institute for the History of Arab Science, University of Aleppo, and in Spanish by the University of Granada).

### *Note on transliteration*

The transliteration of Arabic and Persian words is based on the conventions used by the *Encyclopaedia of Islam*, second edition, with the following modifications. For the Arabic letter *jīm*, *j* is used (not *ḏj*). For the Arabic letter *qāf*, *q* is used (not *ḳ*). Digraphs such as *th*, *dh*, *kh* and *sh* are not underlined.

Words and terms in other languages are transliterated by chapter contributors according to systems which are standard for those languages.

Place-names, many of which are familiar, appear either in widely accepted Anglicised versions (e.g. Cairo), or in most cases without diacritical points (e.g. Baghdad, not Baghdād).

## Abbreviations

AI	<i>Annales Islamologiques</i>
BAR	British Archaeological Reports
BGA	<i>Bibliotheca geographorum arabicorum</i> , 8 vols., Leiden, 1870–1938
BSOAS	<i>Bulletin of the School of Oriental and African Studies</i>
DLB:ALC	<i>Dictionary of literary biography</i> , vol. CCCXI: <i>Arabic literary culture, 500–925</i> , ed. M. Cooperson and S. M. Toorawa, Detroit, 2005
EAL	<i>Encyclopedia of Arabic literature</i> , ed. J. S. Meisami and P. Starkey, 2 vols., London and New York, 1998
EI <sub>2</sub>	<i>Encyclopaedia of Islam</i> , 2nd edn, Leiden, 1960–2009
IJMES	<i>International Journal of Middle East Studies</i>
ILS	<i>Islamic Law and Society</i>
JAOS	<i>Journal of the American Oriental Society</i>
JESHO	<i>Journal of the Economic and Social History of the Orient</i>
JNES	<i>Journal of Near Eastern Studies</i>
JRAS	<i>Journal of the Royal Asiatic Society</i>
JSAI	<i>Jerusalem Studies in Arabic and Islam</i>
SI	<i>Studia Islamica</i>
ZDMG	<i>Zeitschrift der Deutschen Morgenländischen Gesellschaft</i>
ZGAIW	<i>Zeitschrift für Geschichte der Arabisch-Islamischen Wissenschaften</i>