

T. G. Tumanian

IVAN PLATONOVICH KUZMIN:
AS A HISTORIAN OF ARAB-ISLAMIC PHILOSOPHY
(TO THE 130TH ANNIVERSARY OF HIS BIRTH)

It is well known that the majority of the works of the pre-revolutionary Russian researchers of the medieval Islamic world were predominantly dedicated to history, philology, and source studies. Sometimes these were the works whose authors were initially interested in the philosophical interpretation of medieval authors. However, this was extremely rare. Among those who consistently studied Arab-Islamic philosophy was Ivan Platonovich Kuzmin (1893–1922). His commitment to investigate the philosophical heritage of the medieval Islamic East became evident as early as during his time at Saint Petersburg University. Kuzmin's interest in the religious philosophy of Islam prompted him to participate in the workshops and seminars of eminent professors N. Vvedensky, I. Lapshin, N. Lossky. After the graduation from the university, he dedicated himself to the history of medieval philosophy under the supervision of Professor D. Mirtov. His deep knowledge of the subject is evident already in his early student work "The Question of Predetermination and Freedom of Will in the Qur'an" [1, p. 177]. I.P. Kuzmin's scholarly interest in the Arabic intellectual traditions was also expressed in his subsequent studies. In 1920, the young scholar published the translation of the treatise "*Ḥayy ibn Yaqzān*" [The Living Son of the Wakeful One] written by Arabic philosopher Ibn Ṭufayl (1110–1185). According to Ignatius Krachkovsky (a member of the Academy of Sciences, 1883–1951), this "philosophical novel" was dedicated to "the origin and development of human intelligence and intuition beyond the usual framework of the human environment and traditional upbringing" [1, p. 178].

Ibn Ṭufayl's book was well known not only in the medieval Islamic East but also became early acknowledged in Europe, where it was translated into several languages.

The work on the translation of *Ḥayy ibn Yaqzān* did not exhaust I. Kuzmin's interest in Ibn Ṭufayl; later on, the philosophical heritage of the Arabic philosopher became a subject of his dissertation. Unfortunately, despite a keen interest in Ibn Ṭufayl's literary heritage, Kuzmin's projects have never been fully realized, as this talented and promising scholar passed away at a young age. His works on the philosophy of Ibn Ṭufayl haven't been published during his lifetime. Ignatius Krachkovsky who had taught I. Kuzmin and knew him well noted with regret that "a thorough examination of the Arab philosophy, his good knowledge of the Greek language... were promising that his work would become one of those books that could equally satisfy a philologist and philosopher, one of those monographs that could ever create a true history of the Arab philosophy, Arab thought" [1, p. 178–179]. Besides the research work, I. Kuzmin was also engaged in pedagogical activity. He was the first to read lectures on the history of Arab religious philosophy at Petrograd University.

References / Литература

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Author / Автор

Tumanian Tigran G. — DSc., Professor, Chair of the Oriental Philosophy and Cultural Studies Department, St. Petersburg State University.

Туманян Тигран Гургенович — доктор философских наук, профессор, заведующий кафедрой философии и культурологии Востока Института философии Санкт-Петербургского государственного университета.

E-mail: tumt@mail.ru