

Contents

Acknowledgements — VII

Abbreviations and Dates — XV

Introduction: Who Are the Barāhima? — 1

- 1 Introducing the Barāhima's Dilemma — 2
- 2 Modern Scholarship on the "Barāhima's Enigma" — 5
- 3 Three New Ways of Approaching the Barāhima — 11
- 4 The Structure of Our Investigation — 17
- 5 An "Epistemological Turn" in Muslim Debates on Prophecy? — 20

Section A The Prehistory of the Barāhima's Dilemma

Chapter One: The Brahmins in the Antique and Late Antique Imagination — 23

- 1 Orientalism, Negative Ethnocentrism, and the Indian Sage — 23
- 2 Brahmins in the Greco-Roman Tradition — 26
- 3 Brahmins in the Early Christian Tradition — 45
- 4 The Brahman-Gymnosophists: An Enduring Motif — 70

Chapter Two: The Brahmins in Translation: A Survey of the Early 'Abbāsīd Histories, Legends, and Pseudepigrapha — 71

- 1 Identifying Relevant Arabic Sources — 71
- 2 The Arabic Alexander Tradition — 74
- 3 The Arabic Hermetic and Neoplatonic Pseudepigraphic Tradition — 92
- 4 The Brahman-Gymnosophists in Translation — 103

Chapter Three: The Brahmins as Ethnographic Subjects: A Survey of Early 'Abbāsīd Travel and Geographical Literature — 106

- 1 Early Arabic Sources on India: Geographies, Histories, and Doxographies — 107
- 2 Common Motifs in Early Arabic Writing on Indian Society and Religion — 110
- 3 The Barmakid Report and the Ethnography of Prophecy-Denial — 119
- 4 Igniting the Spark of the Barāhima *Topos* — 140

Section B The Maturation of the Barāhima's Dilemma

Chapter Four: Situating the Barāhima Among the Prophetological Controversies of the Early 'Abbāsīd Period — 149

- 1 Restoring the *Kitāb al-Zumurrud* to its Discursive Context — 149
- 2 The Evolution of the Evidences for Prophecy (*dalā'il al-nubuwwa*) — 153
- 3 Epistemological Concerns around Prophecy and Revelation — 169
- 4 The Conceptual Foundations of the *Kitāb al-Zumurrud* — 205

Chapter Five: The Epistemological Role of the Barāhima in the *Kitāb al-Zumurrud* — 208

- 1 The Scholarly Contribution of Ibn al-Rāwandī — 208
- 2 Excavating the *Kitāb al-Zumurrud* — 230
- 3 The Arguments Based on the Self-Sufficiency of the Intellect — 245
- 4 The Epistemological Challenge of the *Kitāb al-Zumurrud* — 267

Section C The Repercussions of the Barāhima's Dilemma

Chapter Six: The Aftermath of the *Kitāb al-Zumurrud* — 273

- 1 The Direct Reception of Ibn al-Rāwandī's *Kutub Mal'ūna* — 273
- 2 The Indirect Reception of the *Kitāb al-Zumurrud* — 277
- 3 The Bahshamī Reaction to the *Kitāb al-Zumurrud* — 295

Chapter Seven: The Contradiction Horn: The Bahshamī Defence of the Rationality of Revelation — 303

- 1 Characterising the Barāhima's Principal Challenge — 303
- 2 The Rational Necessity of God Sending Prophets — 306
- 3 The Rational Necessity of Adhering to Revealed Laws — 320
- 4 Responding Directly to the Barāhima's Objections — 332
- 5 Departing from Historic Foundations: The Mixed Legacy of Abū 'Alī al-Jubbā'ī — 356

Chapter Eight: The Superfluous Horn: The Bahshamiyya on the Problem of Prophetic Futility — 359

- 1 Placing Revelation beyond the Reach of Reason — 359
- 2 Marshalling the Epistemic Gap — 365
- 3 Rejecting Alternative Justifications of Prophecy — 382
- 4 Breaking with Tradition: A New Mu'tazilite Prophetology — 399

Conclusion: The Legacy of the Barāhima in Early Islamic Thought — 402

Appendices — 410

Bibliography — 419

List of Tables — 437

List of Appendices — 438

Index — 439