

Teaching and Learning the Norms of Life and Faith

Edited by
Catalin-Stefan Popa



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26



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Pedagogues, Educators, and their Heritage
in Abrahamic Religions

Edited by
Catalin-Stefan Popa

Mohr Siebeck

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Introduction

CATALIN-STEFAN POPA

Pedagogy has always been a fascinating and sometimes enigmatic topic within the historical culture of religious communities. What inspired us to undertake this editorial project is the scarcity of volumes that offer a complementary approach of pedagogical values and educational principles shared across Judaism, Christianity, and Islam.¹

Throughout history, it has been predicted and proven that education possesses the power to improve the world and significantly benefit humanity. Most religious communities agree that education enlightens and fosters intellect and creativity, while also nurturing the body and soul for physical and spiritual growth. We use the term “Abrahamic” to refer to the three religions that trace their origins to the patriarch Abraham. Although the term circulates more or less as “a product of tradition,”² making it “imprecise, perhaps even ahistorical,” it also argues for a “common inheritance,” with renditions that can reveal “a continuum.”³ The concept of “Abrahamic faiths” inspires a collective memory that substantiates and connects the religious education of different beliefs. Abraham is claimed and recognized by each major monotheistic religion as a prophet, ancestor, teacher, and religious symbol, providing a “common ground”⁴ for these faiths while also illustrating a “pedagogy of difference”⁵ for the transmission and development of their beliefs. Following this line of thought, one can argue that educational pedagogy shares foundational principles across Judaism, Christianity, and Islam, contributing to a common religious heritage. For some this statement can be a finding, for others just a rhetorical question. Despite its limitations, we retain the term “Abrahamic” to avoid ranking the three major monotheistic religions, but however to

¹ A few recent works partially focused on comparative approaches: Gemeinhardt 2019; Martin Hogan, Goff, and Wasserman 2017; Brooke and Smithuis 2017; Freire 2000; Waghid 2011; Günther 2020; Günther 2006; Burton 2013; Sahin 2013. A recent comprehensive work on the history of education is Rury, Tamara Eileen 2019.

² Zelazko 2022. See also Thompson, 1974; Van Seters 2014.

³ Alexander 2024, 83–84.

⁴ Or as Rémi Brague argues “To accept such an Abraham would be for each religion to renounce a dimension of its faith.” Brague 2015, 88–105, especially page 97. See also Dodds 2009, 230–253.

⁵ For “Pedagogy of the Sacred and Pedagogy of Difference” see Alexander 2024, 82–105, especially pages 101–102; Alexander and Ben Peretz 2001, 34–47.

emphasize a shared legacy among them. This perspective allows us to view these religions, on one hand, as equal contributors to the enrichment of human educational culture and pedagogy, and, on the other hand, as interconnected traditions that have collectively shaped the development of science across time, rather than as isolated or disjointed faiths.

It can be historically argued that education has been a dominant theme from the late antiquity and medieval periods to modern times, notably for its role in preserving faith, advancing knowledge, and applying that knowledge in practical ways. Each tradition has developed educational institutions and processes, marked by notable individuals who exemplified how to learn and teach the norms of life and faith or in other words how to live a life in virtue and erudition. Since late antiquity, religious figures have been instrumental in expanding on classical pedagogical culture and adapting this legacy to fit their religious institutions. It remains a broadly valid observation that each of the major monotheistic religions engaged with classical culture in a cross-cultural manner, with each contributing to its reception as a foundation for educational principles.⁶ Each Abrahamic religion adapted and integrated classical elements in its own way into its formative pedagogical agenda.⁷ Our examples will demonstrate that not only those closest to classical Greek culture, engaged with philosophical arguments, but also Syriac Christians, who developed texts on rhetoric, and other Christian cultural figures. Additionally, Muslim intellectuals, legal scholars, and Jewish actors such as Maimonides critically engaged with classical culture, often adapting and integrating key aspects of the ancient classical heritage into their educational frameworks. These approaches have challenged and continue to shape their modern educational systems and core beliefs, helping to sustain their identities through knowledge and customs.

This volume does not aim to explore all these extensive directions and transformations but remains centered and anchored within specific boundaries. It investigates the intertwined history of educational procedures and the acquisition of intellectual, moral and spiritual skills through outstanding individuals from the late antique and medieval period to the modern era.

The articles provide a comprehensive exploration of the educational and intellectual histories of the three major monotheistic religions. The primary aim is not to draw direct comparisons, as the scope of the material is expansive and would make such comparisons challenging. Instead, the reader is encouraged to make comparisons independently, beginning with the fundamental elements of the educational processes unique to each of these three religions, which are linked here through the shared figure of Abrahamic commonality.

The most significant contribution of this volume lies in its emphasis on diversity and the importance of understanding the distinctive aspects of each

⁶ See Georges et al. 2015.

⁷ See Fialová et al. 2023; Alon 1977; Rosenthal 1992.

tradition. These aspects should not be reduced to “monolithic wholes”⁸ but rather should be read within the context of the particular religious or confessional tradition to which they belong. While Judaism seems deeply rooted in its textual tradition, Islam centers its educational process on the relationship between master and disciples, and Christianity places significant emphasis on education’s role in safeguarding the true faith through the church fathers as its foundational pillars.

The focus is less on institutions but more on articulated individual characters, promoting valuable images of a distant or recent past where teachers and pedagogues were cherished for guiding their students and disciples toward knowledge. The contributions primarily focus on the conceptualization of educational strategies in Eastern religious cultures, traditions, and languages, emphasizing their evolution and associated challenges. The volume brings to a broad readership cases that shift our understanding of how specific Jewish, Christian and Islamic traditions built their educational ideals and developed in learned communities, how literate elites cultivated and manifested their pedagogical vocation, and how they initiated students into their curricula. It also examines how classical knowledge and patristic authority were transmitted and expanded and how relevant the didactic legacy was in shaping religious faiths for achieving spiritual perfection. Finally, it explores how education was part of the social and religious crises of the time.

Divided into three sections, the work can serve as a theoretical and practical guide for both students and readers seeking a broader understanding of the phenomenon by reading stories about individual actors and addressing specific questions from all major monotheistic religions. The collection of essays offers insights into the enduring legacy and evolution of pedagogical values – primarily religious, though at times secular as well – within Jewish, Christian, and Muslim cultures across different historical periods. It does so through profiles of influential teachers, learned rabbis, Church Fathers, exegetes, mystics, pastoral leaders, jurists, polymaths, and others. The volume is organized into sections arranged chronologically, beginning with a focus on the Jewish tradition.

The first chapter, authored by Matthew Goff, explores the complex reception of the book of Ben Sira in rabbinic literature, focusing on its status, transmission, and interpretation in Jewish communities of late antiquity and beyond. It challenges the notion of a uniform Jewish canon by examining varied rabbinic attitudes towards Ben Sira’s writings, ranging from acceptance to outright rejection. The discussion highlights how early Christian and rabbinic sources differ in their inclusion of Ben Sira within authoritative scriptures, suggesting a fluid understanding of Jewish scripture during this period. The paper also delves into the textual variations and anthologizing of Ben Sira’s sayings in rabbinic texts, illustrating diverse interpretations and uses of his teachings.

⁸ A term used by Nongbri 2016, 4.

Ultimately, it argues that Ben Sira occupies a unique and debated position in Jewish intellectual history, influencing both scholarly discourse and religious practice long after the canonization of the Hebrew Bible.

Andrei Orlov's essay pays attention to the concept of "negative Pedagogy" in the *Apocalypse of Abraham*, a late antique Jewish mystical text, focusing on Abraham's visionary revelations of evil entities as cosmic adversaries and their actions. Contrasting with traditional ascension motifs in Jewish apocalyptic literature, Abraham's revelations involve a descent into the realm of evil, where he witnesses and learns from the transgressions of figures like Azazel and the false messiah. This unconventional pedagogical approach serves as a formative precursor to later Jewish mystical traditions, emphasizing the acquisition of divine knowledge through exposure to darkness. The study explores how Abraham's visionary descent reshapes understandings of moral instruction and spiritual initiation in ancient Jewish thought. The work's cultic dynamics extend to eschatological idols and offer insights into Jewish mystical evolution, bridging ritualistic concerns with apocalyptic themes.

Mădălina Vartejanu-Joubert's contribution focuses on *Pirkei Avot*, a seminal text in Jewish tradition that has been extensively studied, deeply revered, and frequently incorporated into prayer books and liturgical practices. Her essay examines whether the ethical principles espoused in *Pirkei Avot* align with the ideal of moderation. This shift toward moderation is illustrated by the rabbinic emphasis on the "right way" (*derech tova*) and Maimonides' later endorsement of the golden mean, influenced by Aristotelian philosophy. The treatise underscores the delicate balance between thought and action, advocating for a moderate path that steers clear of extremes and preserves both social and cosmic order. This conceptualization of moderation not only resonates with Greek philosophical traditions but also reflects distinctive rabbinic interpretations, highlighting *Pirkei Avot*'s enduring influence on Jewish ethical thought.

Hagith Sivan's essay delves into Rabbinic perspectives on female education and societal roles in Late Antiquity, contrasting them with Christian theological perspectives. She argues that Rabbinic texts from Roman Palestine, such as the *Mishnah* and *Talmud*, depict a paradigm where girls were excluded from formal Torah study but were expected to adhere to purity rituals and domestic duties. The *Mishnah*'s tractate "Nashim" and discussions on menstruation ("Niddah") illustrate this emphasis on bodily purity and familial roles for Jewish women. Unlike Christian counterparts, who advocated for female literacy and spiritual leadership (e.g. Jerome advocated for Christian girls' comprehensive biblical education to cultivate ascetic and scholarly virtues), Rabbinic literature reflects a societal structure that limited formal education for women. The study examines the implications of these divergent educational philosophies on gender dynamics and religious practices in ancient Mediterranean societies, highlighting how Rabbinic Judaism shaped female identity through

exclusion from scholarly pursuits while emphasizing adherence to legal and ritualistic norms within the domestic sphere.

Jennifer Hart Weed engages in her essay with the foremost intellectual actor of medieval Jewish heritage, Rabbi Moses ben Maimon (Maimonides). She examines the pedagogical methods as demonstrated in Maimonides' "The Guide of the Perplexed". The contribution encapsulates the main points of Maimonides' pedagogical strategies and their relevance to teaching Jewish norms of faith and life. Maimonides tailored his teachings to address his student, Joseph ben Judah Ibn Sham'un and his intellectual curiosity and preparedness, navigating the tensions between Jewish tradition and philosophical inquiry. Key pedagogical principles elucidated include assessing student readiness, employing an orderly curriculum, fostering critical reasoning skills, and promoting lifelong learning. Maimonides' approach serves as a model for teaching norms of faith and life within Judaism, emphasizing engagement with philosophical frameworks and rigorous textual analysis. His guidance aimed to reconcile Joseph's perplexity, especially regarding kalam theology, through logical reasoning and textual interpretation rooted in Jewish tradition.

Ephraim Kanarfogel contributes an essay that highlights the pivotal role of Jacob b. Meir Tam (Rabbenu Tam) as a leading Tosafist scholar in 12th-century France. The essay explores his profound influence on Talmudic interpretation and Jewish law, emphasizing his methodical approach to textual analysis and his innovative use of dialectical questioning. Rabbenu Tam's impact extended beyond scholarship; he served as a rabbinic judge and influenced communal ordinances across northern France and Germany. His ability to inspire and train students, such as Isaac b. Samuel (Ri) of Dampierre, fostered a generation of Tosafists who spread his teachings throughout Europe. The study discusses a period of separation between Tosafist communities in France and Germany post-Rabbenu Tam, attributing it to his pedagogical legacy and the subsequent transmission of his methods by his students in their respective regions. The contribution concludes by linking these developments to broader educational trends in medieval Europe, suggesting parallels with contemporary Christian scholarly institutions.

Jon A. Levisohn's essay examines contrasting perspectives in educational philosophy, expanding the concept of Jewish education beyond the traditional emphasis on Torah study in the *beit midrash*. He critiques the conventional model of Jewish education, which centers exclusively on Torah learning in the study hall, arguing that this view is overly narrow and historically limited. His contribution explores alternative settings where Jewish culture is created and transmitted, challenging the assumption that Jewish education is confined solely to Torah study. Case studies illustrate this broader perspective: first, the role of women in burial societies (*hevrot kadisha*), where they not only performed sacred duties but also engaged in leadership roles and economic activities; second, the home as a site of cultural transmission through child-rearing

practices, including the teaching of Jewish language and customs; and third, Sephardic women's contributions to preserving and transmitting Sephardic songs, which enriched cultural identity in new social contexts. The examples advocate for a more dynamic and inclusive approach and highlight that Jewish education encompasses diverse practices beyond textual study, necessitating a broader framework to encompass the richness and variety of Jewish cultural expression and transmission.

Judd Kruger Levingston's contribution concludes the section devoted to Jewish tradition. The paper explores the intersection of Jewish tradition and contemporary educational practices, emphasizing the evolving role of teachers in fostering moral development through playful learning. Drawing on a few ancient Jewish texts, empirical fieldwork in diverse Jewish day schools, and theoretical perspectives on play, Levingston argues that playful inquiry enables students to better envision their role in social, cognitive, and moral development. Illustrating various empirical data, the study examines how verbal, numerical, kinesthetic, ritual, and fantasy plays foster skills such as teamwork, creativity, empathy, and resilience and advocates for integrating playful activities into curricula to cultivate identity, ethics, and community values, echoing historical reverence for teachers while adapting to modern educational challenges.

The section on Jewish pedagogical culture illustrates approaches based on pivotal texts and analyses, which reveal, on the one hand, the fluidity of the canon and the divergence and complexity of its reception within the Jewish tradition. On the other hand, it highlights enduring constants in Jewish education. These include, for example, the mystical role of apocalyptic literature and the connection between rabbinic ideals and classical Aristotelian philosophy, viewed through the lens of the ethics of moderation. Additionally, the contrasting approaches to female education – such as rabbinic restrictions versus Christian models that promoted female literacy – are explored as themes that remain relevant to both ancient societies and contemporary discourse. The exploration draws upon essential texts and educational strategies, including Maimonidean pedagogy and other significant currents. Examples include the contributions of the Tosafist teachers, such as Rabbenu Tam with his innovative Talmudic methodologies. Finally, the section addresses changing educational horizons that advocate for the expansion of Jewish education beyond the traditional study of Torah.

The second section of the volume centers on Christian tradition. Martin Meiser's opening essay offers a comprehensive and integrative analysis of both divine and human education in ancient Christianity. He argues that education served a dual purpose: to assert Christian moral superiority over Greco-Roman society while fostering cohesion within the Christian community. This was crucial during periods of external threat and internal doctrinal disputes. Meiser points out that the goals of education include moral virtue, theological

knowledge, and preparation for eternal life. Methods of education range from biblical study to philosophical debate, integrating both Christian and non-Christian sources. Educators, including church fathers, clergy, and ascetics, play pivotal roles in transmitting these teachings. Overall, ancient Christian education aimed to differentiate Christians from non-Christians while cultivating a morally and spiritually upright community dedicated to God's teachings and principles.

Samuel Fernández' essay explores the Arian crisis through a pedagogical lens, focusing on how theological teachings were disseminated and received in early Christian Alexandria. The article highlights the crucial influence of pedagogical principles in shaping theological discourse and reinforcing community cohesion. It advocates for a delicate equilibrium between doctrinal fidelity and the responsible transmission of theological teachings. Fernández examines the Arian crisis, that challenged the conventional narrative of a clear-cut conflict between orthodoxy and heresy over Christ's divinity. A frequently overlooked aspect of the controversy lies in the educational foundations that shaped the conflict between Arius and his bishop, Alexander of Alexandria. This dispute rapidly expanded into a broader theological and institutional crisis, exacerbated by divergent interpretations of Origen's teachings. As Fernández demonstrates, the Arian controversy was not merely a theological dispute, but also a reflection of deeper tensions between public education and scholarly discourse.

Jonathan Farrugia's essay explores the homilies of the influential church father Gregory of Nyssa, emphasizing his role as a teacher through his lesser-studied works, rather than his more famous treatises. The essay highlights Gregory's efforts as a bishop to instruct his congregation in the Christian faith and moral conduct, drawing from homilies delivered on feast days, saints' commemorations, funerals, and ethical topics. Gregory's teachings on key theological themes, such as the Trinity and the divinity of Christ, are examined, showcasing his focus on clarity and accessibility in preaching. His homilies address both the baptized and potential converts, emphasizing the transformative power of the sacraments and the obligations of Christian discipleship. Farrugia illustrates how Gregory combines theological depth with pastoral care, guiding his listeners toward a life of faith and virtue.

Harri Huovinen's essay deals with John Chrysostom, a representative figure of early Christian teaching, and emphasizes the spiritual vision in his catechetical homilies as a metaphorical concept for understanding and experiencing God. Chrysostom employs the rhetoric of vision to guide new converts towards a deeper spiritual understanding, focusing on three main aspects: First, he explains the Christian path to perceiving God through auditory instruction and scriptural exposition, emphasizing the role of grace in illuminating divine truths. Second, he discusses how believers should perceive and portray the attributes of God, balancing divine anger with abundant grace and love. Third,

he portrays Christians themselves as objects of vision, radiating spiritual transformation to others and even to spiritual beings like angels and the devil. Chrysostom's pedagogy aims not just at knowledge but at transformative spiritual experience and witness.

Ephrām Givi Lomidze's contribution explores the historical significance of Georgian monastic centres of learning during the medieval period and their relevance today. It highlights how Georgian monasticism with its once vibrant educational institutions from the 9th century onwards has largely lost this role in modern times despite efforts to revive it since the 1990s. The chapter traces the origins and development of monastic educational centres within Georgia, such as the Iqalto and Gelati Academies, known for their extensive curriculum including philosophy, theology, and sciences. Additionally, it discusses Georgian monks' influence abroad, notably in Mount Athos, Jerusalem, Syria, and Bulgaria, where they founded monasteries and contributed to cultural and educational exchange. The article concludes by reflecting on the broader implications of these historical legacies for contemporary Georgian society and the Georgian Orthodox Church, advocating for a renewed focus on education, culture, and spiritual development inspired by these medieval traditions.

Mara Nicosia's chapter discusses Antony of Tagrit, a prominent figure in ninth-century Syriac rhetorical education, focusing on his treatise "On Rhetoric." Antony integrated various literary traditions into his teachings, blending Greek rhetorical models with Christian and Syriac influences. Particularly notable is his use of patristic quotations, especially from figures like Gregory of Nazianzus, Basil of Caesarea, Dionysius the Areopagite, or Evagrius Ponticus to illustrate rhetorical norms. Antony's approach underscores the synthesis of classical rhetoric with Christian teachings, reflecting the cultural and educational milieu of Syriac centers in Abbasid Iraq. The paper explores Antony's pedagogical methods within the broader framework of Syriac rhetorical theory, highlighting the significant influence of patristic literature alongside Greek and Syriac texts in shaping his instructional approach. His integration of these writings with both secular and other religious texts illustrates the comprehensive and interdisciplinary nature of his educational philosophy, which encompassed a wide range of religious and secular genres within the Syriac literary tradition.

Catalin-Stefan Popa's essay explores monastic training and ascetic life in the 10th-century East Syriac tradition, focusing on Joseph Busnaya, a key ascetic figure whose influence extended beyond the monastery into wider society. The hagiographic text suggests that ascetic education follows an ancient Christian pattern, emphasizing the importance of spiritual authority, guidance, and the imitation of virtuous saints. Joseph Busnaya's life exemplifies ascetic practices, highlighting three paths for monks to achieve spiritual enlightenment: solitude and prayer in their cells (*šelyā*), engagement in teaching (*yulpānā*) and church services, and physical labor (*pulḥānā*) within the monastery. Ultimately, Popa's essay, drawing on hagiographic literature, contrasts

ascetic education with secular learning, arguing that the former is the true path to spiritual enlightenment and virtue.

Mane Ghevondyan's chapter explores Armenian Christian textbooks from the 17th and 18th centuries, emphasizing their central role in shaping Armenian educational and religious traditions. Known as *Qristone'akan*, these manuals underwent substantial transformation, both in content and structure. While early editions concentrated on core Christian doctrines such as the Trinity and Christology, later versions integrated educational reforms and visual elements. Drawing on ancient catechetical traditions with a question-and-answer format, the *Qristone'akan* provided instruction for both children and adults. As Ghevondyan argues, these textbooks were crucial in promoting Christian literacy and moral education, encouraging memorization, practical application, and critical engagement with religious ideas. They skillfully combined traditional methods with evolving pedagogical strategies and doctrinal interpretations to meet the educational needs of their time.

The section dedicated to Christian texts reveals a shared focus among the authors on how knowledge and pedagogical methods were used to reinforce the faith, morals, and cohesion of Christian communities. This focus is broad and integrative, with each author highlighting the interplay between Christian teachings and external influences, such as Greco-Roman, Syriac, and Georgian educational traditions. These essays illustrate how Christianity adapted and incorporated non-Christian elements into its educational practices to transmit both knowledge and Christian values. Moreover, the contributions demonstrate that moral and spiritual objectives were central to the educational emphasis – not merely as a means of intellectual development, but as a vital tool for fostering the believer's inner growth. Additionally, Christian authors showed how rhetoric and pedagogy were essential for effectively conveying church doctrine, preserving and defending the faith, and nurturing Christian belief across generations, as exemplified in Armenian textbooks.

The third part of the volume consists of chapters focused on Islamic tradition.

Luca Patrizi's contribution explores the *ādāb al-ṣūfiyya*, a genre within Sufi literature that focuses on the codes of conduct expected of disciples toward God, their spiritual masters, and fellow practitioners. Originating in the early ascetic phases of Sufism, this genre evolved into a set of formalized rules governing both individual behavior and communal practices. Key figures like Ibn al-ʿArabī and al-Sarrāj contributed foundational texts outlining these rules, influenced by Islamic teachings and resembling Christian monastic codes. The literature emphasizes inner spiritual discipline (*adab al-bāṭin*) alongside external behaviors (*adab al-zāhir*), aiming for harmony between outward actions and inward devotion. Later works by al-Qushayrī, Ghazālī, and others expanded on these themes, illustrating their application in various aspects of Sufi life such as retreat, travel, and spiritual gatherings. Patrizi focuses also on ʿAbd al-

Wahhāb al-Shaʿrānī, a significant figure in post-medieval Sufism who profoundly shaped the literature of *ādāb al-ṣūfiyya*. His work profoundly influenced subsequent Sufi literature and practices, establishing him as a key figure in Sufi scholarship and spiritual guidance.

Essam Ayyad's contribution provides a thorough examination of the relationships between medieval Muslim scholars (shaykhs) and their students, highlighting the respect and authority accorded to teachers in educational settings such as madrasas and mosques. It emphasizes the dual role of teachers as both spiritual guides and academic mentors, demonstrating their profound influence on their students' learning, behavior, and moral development. Ayyad clearly argues that the literature on *ādāb al-ʿālim wa-l-mutaʿallim* (the etiquette of teachers and students) stresses the importance of respect, obedience, and humility from students towards their shaykhs. The chapter draws on a range of historical and literary sources that prescribe these etiquettes, attributing them to prominent figures such as al-Zarnūjī and Ibn Jamāʿa.

Keren Abbou Hershkovits's chapter surveys scholarly perspectives on women's roles in early Islamic history, focusing on their contributions to healthcare and education. It challenges traditional narratives by highlighting figures such as Shifāʿa bt. ʿAbadallah, who practiced healing through incantations and instructed others, including Muhammad's wives. The chapter also discusses Zaynab, a renowned physician, and Kuʿayba bt. Saʿd, who treated wounded soldiers. Hershkovits contends that historical records often overlooked or marginalized women's roles in medicine and education. Despite scant documentation, she calls for a reassessment of women's contributions to medical knowledge and scholarship in early Islamic societies, urging broader recognition of their impact beyond traditional narratives.

Mujadad Zaman's chapter focuses on the 14th-century pedagogical text by the Mamluk jurist Badr al-Dīn Muḥammad Ibn Jamāʿa al-Kinānī al-Ḥamawī (d. 1333), which embodies an amalgamation of intellectual and spiritual insights concerning education. The composition titled 'A Memorandum to the Listener and the Speaker on the Etiquette of the Scholar and the Learner' (*Tadhkirat as-Samiʿ wa'l-Mutakallim fi Adab al-ʿĀlim wa'l-Mutaʿallim*), examines the subtleties of classroom dynamics, emphasizing how pedagogical interactions nurture the potential of both teachers and students. The chapter concludes with a broader exploration of Islamic educational philosophy, its intersections with medieval Christian learning paradigms, and its implications for contemporary discourse on the objectives and outcomes of education.

Ali Balaeilangroudi's essay presents a 14th-century writing course book authored by ʿAbd-allāh Ṣayrafī from Tabriz, focusing on Arabic script calligraphy. The chapter explores the historical and educational significance of the book, outlining its structure and contents. It includes praise for God, a preface by Ṣayrafī, and an introduction claiming that Adam was the first to write in Hebrew. This instructional manual reflects Ṣayrafī's perspectives on the

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