The present work is a revised edition of Kalin's doctoral dissertation at George Washington University (2002) carried out chiefly under the supervision of Seyyed Hossein Nasr, who, alongside the late Henry Corbin, inaugurated Sadrian studies in the West. This book attempts to accomplish two tasks, namely, examine Şadrā's acute knowledge of the history of philosophy in the Greco-Islamic context, and his analyze his audacious (successful?) attempt to recast knowledge in terms of existence and its various modalities against the backdrop of Avicennan philosophy and the kalām tradition. The work is appended with a translation of a short treatise on the unification of the intellect and the intelligible, Risāla fi ʾittihād al-aqıl wa-l-maʿqūl, that illustrates Şadrā's critiques of Avicenna's notions of knowledge as abstraction and representation, as well as the "theological corrections" Şadrā made to avoid the pernicious results of the representational theory of knowledge, in which God's detailed knowledge is posterior to His essence.

The work is thus comprised of three chapters and an appendix. Chapter 1 is divided into two parts. The first part considers the Greco-Alexandrian context and traces the history of the unification argument from Plato to Plotinus Islamicus. Starting with Plato, Kalin does well to highlight Plato's explanations of the relation between eidos and nous as primary agent of intellection, thus laying the foundations (at least according to Şadrā's readings of Plato) for a relation of sorts between forms and intellect and, consequently, depending on the credibility of Şadrā's 'hermeneutical appropriations,' making knowledge a mode of participation in the intelligible realm, viz., the Platonic Forms.

In reading the 'first teacher,' Mullā Şadrā, like his medieval predecessors, presents Aristotle as the author of the Uthulūjiya and a disciple of Plato, who blends in with Şadrā's reformulations.
of philosophy as being illuminated by *mishkāt al-nubuwwa*. Ṣadrā makes no attempt to explain convincingly how he managed to overlook Aristotle's rejection of Platonic forms, temporal origination of the cosmos, and eternity of the soul; however, Ṣadrā highlights excerpts from the *De Anima* that appear to support the notion of unity between the intellect and the intelligible and thereby lends support to the unification argument. The reader, however, is left with at least one unanswered question: how does Ṣadrā manage this instance of hermeneutical appropriation by reconciling Aristotle's claim that knowledge is abstraction and Ṣadrā's claim that knowledge is presence?

The next section considers Alexander of Aphrodisias' influence on Ṣadrā's predilections for existence as the ontic ground for *sensibilia* and *intelligibilia*, which, like much of Ṣadrā's cosmology, is 'separated' by existential intensity or diminution. Alexander's deliberations on the unity of the intellect and the intelligible is discussed and quoted in Ṣadrā's treatise on the subject; though Ṣadrā makes no valid excuse for placing Alexander within a Neoplatonist tradition. Alexander was, in fact, committed to Aristotelian noetics and had no obvious inclination toward Neoplatonism. The section is concluded with a discussion Ṣadrā's relationship with Plotinus' corpus that features explicit endorsements of the unification argument upheld by Ṣadrā.

The second part of chapter 1 highlights Ṣadrā's struggle to make a case for the unification argument against the backdrop of its rejection (at least in instances other than the case of God) by Muslim Peripatetics. Ṣadrā was perhaps unaware of al-Kindī's treatise entitled 'On the Intellect'; a treatise that makes clear that his position on the unification argument was ambivalent. It is probable that al-Kindī deliberately avoided passing personal judgement on the problem of unification on religious grounds because of its far reaching implications. As for al-Fārābī, there are two possible readings into how he deals with the problem of unification. In one reading, al-Fārābī appears to reject the unification argument while accepting its vocabulary; in another reading, al-Fārābī appears to partially endorse unification based on his six-fold construction of the intellect. On this last, Ṣadrā appears to make another opportunistic attempt to construct a genealogy for his own goals by amplifying al-Fārābī's limited acceptance of unification. Kalin would have
done well to explore this hermeneutical appropriation technique favored by Šadrā.

Avicenna's erudition and philosophical acumen was held in high esteem by later philosophers, including Mullā Šadrā, who often referred to him as the 'chief master.' While there is valid evidence to suggest Avicenna's acceptance, albeit hesitant, of the unification argument in the case of God, he vehemently rejects it elsewhere and warns of its serious ramifications. In Avicenna's view, acceptance of the unification argument not only departs from traditional philosophy, but also amounts to metaphysical deception and sophistry, a mere poetical interplay of words to claim that something becomes identical with something else without either the former or the latter being destroyed. Interestingly, Avicenna later appears to contradict himself by endorsing unification in the case of self-knowledge and divine intellection, an eventuality that lends itself to Šadrā's argument.

Suhrawardi is the last figure taken up in chapter 1. From the outset he appears to echo the Peripatetic position by rejecting the unification argument because of the impossibility of substantial identification. The major problem for Šadrā in this case is Suhrawardi's development of a theory of knowledge that circumvents the unification argument; a theory that was later adopted by Šadrā with some slight modifications. In response to Suhrawardi's theory of knowledge, Šadrā has recourse to his theory of 'gradation-in-existence'. In an attempt to respond to Suhrawardi's imperviousness to unification, Šadrā argues that the difference between them stems from different ontologies.

Chapter 2 presents a comprehensive examination of Šadrā's theory of knowledge and its similitude to existence. In fact, Šadrā makes it clear that knowledge is an exercise in ontology based on a symmetrical relationship between ontological intensity and epistemic credibility; moreover, in relation to the soul's epistemic standing, disembodiment becomes a condition of intelligibility, and intelligibility is closely correlated to higher levels of existence, thus echoing mystical themes in which knowledge, existence, and axiology are synonyms for the same reality.

After discussing Šadrā's critiques of the four theories of knowledge found in the major works of the Peripatetics, the chapter is brought to a close with an excellent set of deliberations on self-knowledge and God's knowledge of things as paramount examples
of Ṣadrā’s unification argument. Kalin notes one inconsistency and makes a strong case to point out the tension between the unification argument and the Peripatetic notion of the active intellect that is upheld by Ṣadrā. Kalin is correct to suggest Ṣadrā could have developed his theory of knowledge without requiring the active intellect of the Peripatetics.

Chapter 3 explores the implications of Ṣadrā’s onto-epistemological model that highlights Ṣadrā ‘rational mysticism’ as a basis for knowledge. In Ṣadrā’s thought, the meaning of things is revealed to the knower through his unification with the intelligible world on the one hand, and with the world of separate spiritual realities, on the other. All this hinges upon releasing oneself from material limitations. The chapter is concluded with a discussion on Ṣadrā’s doctrine of ‘ontological vitalism,’ according to which beings interact with the world through various modalities of existence marked by intensity or diminution.

The appendix is a translation of Ṣadrā’s treatise in defense of the unification argument and a point-by-point response to Avicenna’s rejections of unification. While the Risāla echoes many points made in the Asfār, it remains, nonetheless, an important treatise in post-Avicennan philosophy. The translation of the text contained in the work is fluent and reads well; neologisms and ambiguous terms are discussed as necessary.

Kalin’s work is a welcome contribution to Ṣadrā studies. Useful translations of texts and clarity in exposition makes this contribution invaluable to anyone working in the field of Islamic philosophy.