

Alexander Orwin

Assistant Professor, Louisiana State University, 2017-

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Political Science Department, LSU
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EDUCATION

PhD, University of Chicago, Committee on Social Thought, Spring 2015

Dissertation Title: “Caught Between City, Religion, and Empire: Alfarabi’s Concept of the Umma (Nation).”

Dissertation Committee: Nathan Tarcov (chair), Ralph Lerner, James Robinson (all University of Chicago), Sari Nusseibeh, (Professor of Philosophy, al-Quds University, Jerusalem)

Postdoctoral Fellow, Program on Constitutional Government, Harvard University, 2015-16 (Visiting Fellow, 2016-17)

MA, University of Chicago, Spring 2012

Masters-level courses at the Sorbonne (with Remi Brague) and École des Hautes Études en Sciences Sociales (with Pierre Manent), Paris, 2008-2009

Studied Egyptian Arabic at the International Language Institute, Cairo, 2007-2008

Studied Arabic Language and Literature at Hebrew University, Jerusalem, 2006-2007

Undergraduate studies: University of Toronto (2000-2003), Tel Aviv University (2003-2004). B.A., University of Toronto (2005), Greek and Latin Classics, Minors in Political Science and South Asian Studies

WORK EXPERIENCE

Assistant Professor, Louisiana State University, 2017-

RESEARCH INTERESTS

Islamic political thought, from medieval through modern times

Comparative political theory, in particular the comparison of Islamic political thought with ancient Greek and modern European political thought

TEACHING INTERESTS

Political Theory, Ancient, Medieval, and Modern

Islamic Political Thought

Comparative Political Theory (Especially Islamic and Western).

PUBLICATIONS

Books

Redefining the Muslim Community: Ethnicity, Religion, and Politics in the Thought of Alfarabi (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2017)

Edited Volumes:

Plato Across Civilizations: Novel Perspectives on Averroes' Commentary on Plato's Republic. University of Rochester Press, 2022. Editor, translator (from Hebrew) of article by Shlomo Pines, and author of two chapters along with the introduction

Peer Reviewed Journal Articles

“From Guardianship to Reason: Alfarabi’s Creative Application of Plato’s Poetic Education.” To be published in the proceedings of the Farabi World Congress, [Farabi World Congress \(farabicongress.ir\)](http://farabicongress.ir)

“City, Poetry, and Song: Averroes’s Subjection of Music to Politics in his Commentary on Plato’s “Republic.” To be published in the *Political Science Reviewer*, 47 (1), 2023

“The Double Life of Ibn Bajja: A Platonic Political Philosopher among the Potentates of his Time.” *Polis: The Journal of Ancient Greek and Roman Political Thought*, 39 (2), 2022, 368-90

“Dawla and Leviathan: Ibn Khaldun and Hobbes in Defense of State Authority.” *Ibn Haldun Kalismari Dergisi*, Fall 2018, <http://journal.ihu.edu.tr/index.php/ihu1/article/view/48>

“In Search of the Comprehensive Science: The Way to Philosophy of Alfarabi’s Plato.” *Interpretation*, vol. 44 (2), 2018

“A Greek City that Dislikes Greeks: The Paradoxical Relationship Between Magnesia and its Fellow Hellenes in Plato’s *Laws*.” *History of Political Thought*, vol. 36 (3), 2015, 401-18.

“Democracy Under the Caliphs: Alfarabi’s Unusual Understanding of Popular Rule.”
Review of Politics, 77 (2), 2015, 171-90

“Can Humankind Deliberate on a Global Scale? Alfarabi and the Politics of the Inhabited World.” *American Political Science Review* 108 (4), 2014, 830-39

Invited and Peer Reviewed Contributions (Academic Presses)

“Proclaiming Dangerous Teachings to the World: Why did Leo Strauss Reveal the Religious Heterodoxy of the Falasifa?” Invited and accepted at *Leo Strauss on Religion: Texts and Interpretations* (SUNY University Press), expected Winter 2024

“Introduction.” In *Plato’s Republic in the Islamic Context: New Perspectives on Averroes’ Commentary*. Ed. Alexander Orwin (Rochester, NY: University of Rochester Press, 2022), 1-18

“Imposing Alfarabi on Plato: Averroes’s Novel Placement of the Platonic City.” In *Plato’s Republic in the Islamic Context: New Perspectives on Averroes’ Commentary*. Ed. Alexander Orwin (Rochester, NY: University of Rochester Press, 2022), 19-39

“Philosopher-Kings and Counselors: How Should Philosophers Participate in Politics.” In *Plato’s Republic in the Islamic Context: New Perspectives on Averroes’ Commentary*. Ed. Alexander Orwin (Rochester, NY: University of Rochester Press, 2022), 253-74

“Submission to Peace, and Polygamy: Should the French Acquiesce to Houellebecq’s Dream of a New Islam?” *Michel Houellebecq: The Cassandra of Freedom*. Ed. Michael Kochin and Alberto Spectorowski (Brill Academic Press, 2021), 141-58

“Jihad for the City: How Alfarabi Encourages, and Discourages, Death in Battle.” *Political Philosophies of Aging, Dying, and Death*. Eds. Erin Dolgoy, Kimberley Hurd, Bruce Peabody (Routledge Press, 2021), 141-50

“Democracy in Muslim Spain: Averroes’s Domestic Account of Popular Rule.” *Democracy in the History of Political Thought*, ed. Stephen Sims, Patrick Cain, Stephen Block (Lexington Press, 2021), 133-48

“Democracy without Elections: Popular Rule According to Alfarabi.” in *Democratic Moments*. Eds. Xavier Marquez, J.C. Davis, John Morrow (Bloomsbury Academic Press, 2017), 41-48

Other Articles, non-Academic Journals

“In Search of the Vanished Caliphate: From Ibn Khaldūn to Hizb at-Tahrir.” *Current Trends in Islamist Ideology*, Summer 2016
(<http://www.hudson.org/research/12781-in-search-of-the-vanished-caliphate>)

Translations

Pines, Shlomo. "Notes on Averroes's Political Teaching." Translated from Hebrew by Alexander Orwin. In *Plato's Republic in the Islamic Context: New Perspectives on Averroes' Commentary*. Ed. Alexander Orwin (Rochester, NY: University of Rochester Press, 2022), 133-59

In Progress

Book on Plato's *Republic* in Islamic philosophy (including Alfarabi, Ibn Bajja, and Averroes)

Book Reviews (Academic and non-Academic Journals)

Rasoul Namazi, "Leo Strauss and Islamic Political Thought," *Interpretation*, 49(3), 2023, 441-45

"How the Jews Came under Socrates' Spell." Review of Yehuda Halper, *Jewish Socratic Questions in an Age Without Plato*. Mosaic Magazine, June 2022

Andrew March. *The Caliphate of Man: Popular Sovereignty in Islamic Political Thought*. Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2019. *Review of Politics*, 82 (4), 2020, 669-71

Jacob Howland: "Glaucou's Fate: History, Myth, and Character in Plato's Republic" *Interpretation* 46 (1), 2019, 131-35

Gary Wills: "What the Quran Means, and Why it Matters." *Claremont Review of Books*, Fall 2018

"Reforming Islam: Progressive Voices from the Arab Muslim World." *Online Journal of Law and Liberty*, <http://www.libertylawsite.org/book-review/islam-the-self-critical-version/>

Joshua Parens: "Leo Strauss and the Recovery of Medieval Political Philosophy." *Interpretation* 43 (1), 2016

Pierre Manent: "Beyond Radical Secularism: How France and the Christian West should Respond to the Islamic Challenge." *Weekly Standard*, Fall 2016

Carlos Fraenkel: "Teaching Plato in Palestine: Philosophy in a Divided World." *Claremont Review of Books*, Fall 2015

SELECTED PRESENTATIONS AND CONFERENCES

“Alfarabi’s Unphilosophical Rulers.” APSA Conference, Los Angeles, August 31, 2023

“From Guardianship to Reason: Alfarabi’s Creative Application of Plato’s Poetic Education.” Iranian Farabi Congress, [کنگره جهانی فارابی و فرهنگ و تمدن اسلامی \(farabicongress.ir\)](http://farabicongress.ir), March 2, 2023

“Proclaiming Dangerous Teachings to the World: Why did Leo Strauss Reveal the Heterodox Views of the Falasifa?” Tulane University, Jan. 28, 2023

“Plato Comes to Baghdad and Cordoba: Three Islamic Interpretation of the *Republic*.” LSU Political Science Workshop, Nov. 18, 2022

“Noah in the Bible and Quran.” LSU, Apgar Workshop on Teaching European Civilization, Nov. 18, 2022

“Mind over Matter: Averroes’s Innovative Discussion of Gender Equality.” University of Houston, February 25, 2022

“Alfarabi and Maimonides on War and Death.” Yeshiva University, Mar. 10th, 2021

“Averroes on Music.” SPSA Conference, Jan. 7th, 2021

“Solitude, Philosophy, and Transcending the Body: Ibn Bajja’s Apolitical Admiration of Platonic Politics.” Given at Tulane University, Jan. 12th, 2020.

“Victory, Domination, and Fear: The Origin of Government in the Thought of Ibn Khaldun and Thomas Hobbes.” At the Hebrew University Political Theory Workshop, Jan. 1, 2020.

“Averroes’ Imitation of the Platonic Regime” (in Hebrew). At Bar Ilan University, Department for Jewish Thought, at Conference Titled Plato’s State, from Averroes to the Present Day, Dec. 30, 2019

“The Lost Land: The Role of Israel in Houellebecq’s *Submission*” (in Hebrew). Tel Aviv University Political Theory Workshop. Dec.23, 2019

“Averroes Rethinks the Platonic City: Why Philosophers Should Participate in Politics.” Given at Tulane University, May 2019 and in Munich, August 2019

Organized Panel on Averroes at MPSA in Chicago, 2019, and served as a respondent on this panel and another on Aristotle

“Updating Plato: How Averroes Inserts Alfarabi, Just War, and Andalusian Politics into the *Republic*.” Given at Tulane University, Dec. 2018

“Dawla and Leviathan: Ibn Khaldūn and Hobbes in Defense of State Authority.” 4th International Ibn Khaldūn Symposium, Istanbul, May 2017

“In Search of the Comprehensive Science: The Way to Philosophy in Alfarabi’s Plato.” Lecture given at Boston College, April 2017

“On Alfarabi’s Plato.” At MIT Program on Engineering, Ethics and Entrepreneurship. January 2017

“Alfarabi and Global Politics.” Presentation at the Seminar in the History and Theory of International Law, New York University School of Law, Oct. 10, 2016

“Could Professors Really be Seduced by Polygamy? A Comment on Michel Houellebecq’s novel *Soumission*.” APSA, September 3, 2016

“How Alfarabi Read Plato’s *Laws*.” Workshop at Claremont MacKenna College, March 10-12, 2016

“From Chicago to Jerusalem, and Back: Alfarabi’s Teaching on the Umma.” Doctoral Lecture, Committee on Social Thought, May 2015

“Alfarabi and Aristotle on Nations and Cities.” Presented at Aristotle and the Peripatetic Tradition, Dominican University, Ottawa, Oct. 16-17, 2014

NEH Conference on Teaching Medieval Political Philosophy. Gonzaga University, June-July 2014. See <http://medievalpoliticalphilosophy.gonzaga.edu/general-description/>

“Alfarabi on the Civilization of the Umma.” Tulane University, May 2014

“Another Kind of Ummah: The Origin, and Mission, of the Islamic Umma.” University of California at Davis Political Theory Workshop, May 24, 2013

“Two Kinds of Umma: Ethnic and Religious.” Middle Eastern History and Theory Graduate Student Conference, University of Chicago, May 4, 2013

“How Greek are the Platonic Cities? Ethnic Identity in Plato’s *Republic* and *Laws*.” Political Theory Workshop, University of Chicago, November 12, 2012

“Alfarabi on Philosophy and Literature.” Literature and Philosophy Workshop, University of Chicago, May 29, 2012

Miller Foundation Conference on American Political Thought, Pasadena, August 2011

Winston Churchill Society Conference, Chicago, April 2010

TEACHING EXPERIENCE

At LSU:

Pol 7990: Hobbes and Ibn Khaldun

Pol 7990: Seminar on Various Philosophic Commentaries on Plato (Averroes, More, Voegelin, Strauss)

Pol 7981: Alfarabi

Pol 4996: Independent Reading Course on Plato and More

Pol 4090: American South: Politics and Literature in Four Great Southern Novels (Twain, Faulkner, Warren, Ellison)

Pol 4090: Introduction to Islamic Political Thought (Alfarabi, Avicenna, Ibn Tufayl, Ibn Khaldun, Afghani, Abd al-Raziq, Iqbal, Mawdudi, Qutb)

Pol 4090: Bible and Quran (A close comparison of intersecting themes in both scriptures).

Pol 4081: Makers of the Modern World (Bacon, Descartes, Swift, Hobbes, Montesquieu, Rousseau, Smith, and Marx)

Pol 4081: Social Contract Theory: Hobbes, Spinoza, Rousseau for, Machiavelli, Montesquieu, and Hume against

Pol 4234: Three Great American Novels on Race (Twain, Faulkner, Ellison)

Pol 2060: Introduction to the History of Political Thought (Plato, Aristophanes, Aristotle, Machiavelli, Locke, Tocqueville, Marx, Nietzsche)

Prior to LSU:

Plato in Medieval Islamic Political Thought: An undergraduate course of my own design centered around Averroes' *Commentary on Plato's Republic*, University of Chicago, Spring 2014

Instructor. Social Sciences Core Course, Classics of Social and Political Thought (Plato, Aristotle, Aquinas, and Machiavelli): University of Chicago, Fall 2012

Teaching Assistant. Social Sciences Core Course, Classics of Social and Political Thought, University of Chicago, Fall 2011- Spring 2012, Plato through Du Bois: taught two sessions each quarter

PROFESSIONAL AFFILIATIONS/ACTIVITIES

Member, American Political Science Association, Midwest Political Science Association

Fellow, Jack Miller Center

Reviewed submissions for *APSR* (2013, 2021), *Review of Politics* (2017), *Perspectives on Politics* (2017), Edinburgh University Press (2018), *Canadian Journal of Political Science* (2019), *Interpretation* (2017, 2019), *Epoche* (2020), *Political Science Reviewer* (2021), *Political Research Quarterly* (2022)

LANGUAGES

English: native

Hebrew: fluent in reading, speaking, and writing

French: fluent in reading, speaking, competent in writing

Arabic: classical, Modern Standard Arabic, Egyptian colloquial: fluent in reading, some proficiency in speaking and writing

German: some proficiency in reading, speaking, and writing

Latin: classical and medieval, reading only

Greek: classical, reading only

Sanskrit: completed 4th year at University of Chicago, can read simpler texts