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CONTENTS

Editor's note	ix
Georges Hazai (Budapest): <i>Hungary and the Orient</i>	xi
I. PHILOSOPHY AND THEOLOGY	1
John Burton (St. Andrews): <i>The interpretations of Q 43,81 and the techniques of the exegetes</i>	3
Alfonso Carmona González (Murcia): <i>La actitud de los ulemas andalusíes ante el juego y la diversion</i>	13
Michael G. Carter (New York): <i>Predication tests, copula, and a possible link with Aš'arism</i>	23
Alfred L. Ivry (New York): <i>Philosophical commentaries and popular culture in Islam</i>	37
Johannes J. G. Jansen (Leiden): <i>The preaching of šayḥ aš-Ša'arāwī: Its political significance</i>	51
Nana V. Kiladze (Tbilisi): <i>On the Terminology of the Liber de Causis</i>	61
Joaquim Chorão Lavajo (Évora): <i>Sources du dialogue islamo-chrétien hispanique</i>	75
Wilferd Madelung (Oxford): <i>A treatise on the imamate dedicated to sultan Baybars</i>	91

Miklós Maróth (Budapest): <i>The Ten Intellects Cosmology and its origin</i>	103
Tilman Nagel (Göttingen): <i>Inwieweit ist das Theorem der Säkularisierung auf die islamische Geschichte anwendbar?</i>	113
Ulrich Rudolph (Göttingen): <i>Kalām im antiken Gewand: das theologische Konzept des Kitāb sirr al-ḥalīqa</i>	123
Mübahat Türker-Küyel (Ankara): <i>Le philosophie d'Ibn Sīnā et son éthique</i>	137
Gösta Vitestam (Lund): <i>at-Ṭabarī and the seeing of God</i>	147
II. POPULAR CULTURE IN ISLAM	157
J. M. S. Baljon (Leiden): <i>Indian 'ulamā's views on popular culture</i>	159
Giovanni Canova (Venice): <i>Remarques sur l'histoire de 'Azīz ben Ḥāleḥ du cycle epique hilalien</i>	173
Maribel Fierro (Madrid): <i>The celebration of 'āšūrā' in Sunnī Islam</i>	193
Alexander Fodor (Budapest): <i>Popular Religion and Politics in the Middle East (Miracles in Muslim and Coptic Egypt)</i>	209
O. B. Frolova (St. Petersburg): <i>Koran Quotations in the "Dictionary of Common People" by Yūsuf al-Maḡribī</i>	221
Expiración García (Granada): <i>Normas dietéticas a través de los calendarios andalusies</i>	227
David A. King (Frankfurt): <i>Applications of folk astronomy and mathematical astronomy to aspects of Muslim ritual</i>	251

- Ulrich Marzolph (Göttingen): *Popular narratives in Ġalāloddin Rumi's Maṣnavi* 275
- Yordan Peev (Sofia): *Des influences preislamiques dans une légende hagiographique turque* 289
- Louis Pouzet (Beirut): *Vision populaire de la femme en Syrie aux VI^e et VII^e / XII^e et XIII^e siècles* 295
- Urbain Vermeulen (Leuven): *‘Unaytara, la fille de ‘Antar* 305
- Jacques Waardenburg (Lausanne): *Popular and official Islam: Contemporary developments with special reference to Iran* 313

EDITOR'S NOTE

The present volume is the first part of the *Proceedings of the Congress of the Union Européenne des Arabisants et Islamisants* (U.E.A.I.) held in Budapest between 29th August – 3rd September 1988, and organized by the Chair for Arabic Studies, Eötvös Loránd University and the Cso-ma de Kőrös Society under the auspices of the Hungarian Academy of Sciences. It contains twenty-six papers read at the Congress in two sections: 'History and Philosophy' and 'Popular Culture in Islam'. The original divisions, however, have slightly been changed. Papers dealing with philosophy and theology found their way into this volume, while those treating history will be incorporated in the second volume together with papers on linguistics and literature. No contributions were received from the original 'Art and Archaeology' section.

Owing to circumstances mainly beyond our control, the publication of the *Proceedings* suffered a more than usual delay. Though the authors were given the possibility to update their articles with bibliographical references if they wanted, the articles as a whole reflect the state of research in 1988.

Although uniformity was aimed at throughout in the matter of transliteration – which is that of *The Arabist* –, deviation was allowed when it served the needs of certain studies, as in the case of dialectal linguistics, Ottoman Turkish, Indian Islam and Persian. The handling of references and footnotes was, however, not unified but left to the discretion of the authors according to the practice of the previous *Proceedings*.

The Editor wishes to take this opportunity of expressing his special thanks to the *Union Européenne des Arabisants et Islamisants* for its generous contribution towards the costs of this volume of the *Proceedings*, and particularly to Gautier Juynboll and John Mattock, former presidents of the Union, and to Arne Ambros and Hilary Kilpatrick, former treasurers; to the Hungarian Ministry of Culture and Education Research & Higher Education Fund; and, of course, to the authors themselves, for their patience, their enthusiastic response and ready cooperation after all these years that have elapsed since the Congress.

HUNGARY AND THE ORIENT*

Georges Hazai

Hungarian Academy of Sciences

It was a number of months ago that I received with pleasure the request to give a presentation at the opening of this conference. I agreed to the request with great satisfaction since it provides me with an opportunity to greet the participants of this scholarly conference, the aims and subjects of which are so dear to me. My own field of expertise, Turkology, and, within it, Ottoman Studies, has many points of contact with the disciplines covered by this conference. Nevertheless, I feel that I am perhaps better serving the cause of mutual understanding among Orientalist endeavours, if I choose a topic from another area.

The participants have an excellent grasp of not only the present state of their discipline, but also of its past. They are aware of the European history of Oriental, and within it, of Islamic Studies, of these disciplines' historical and cultural aspects and of the ways in which information concerning them has been disseminated. They are also familiar with the institutions of these disciplines which have evolved over the centuries, undergoing many reforms, sometimes falling victim to modern bureaucracy. Here I am referring to those scientific workshops where generations of scholars have followed one another, each enriching Oriental Studies in unique ways.

It is well known that the scientific understanding of the Orient and the birth of the scientific disciplines are linked by many common, universal characteristics. At the same time, there are at least as many features particular to individual disciplines involved in this development. We note the duality between features common to all disciplines and

* The opening lecture of the Congress, delivered by the President of the Csoma de Kőrös Society.

those specific to given disciplines, in studying each area either in its space or time relationship.

I hasten to assure my esteemed audience that I do not wish to pursue this analysis since its details are well known to everyone present. There is a whole series of studies outlining and analyzing these relationships. It is precisely the research of recent years, and the debates they have given rise to, which have shown us clearly and unequivocally the lessons of previous work, and its impact on the present and the place it has in the new intellectual context. I do not wish to merely hint at things here; I have in mind the exchange of views that has taken place concerning the works of E. Said and B. Lewis, more precisely, the authors' concepts of the history of science.

Again I do not intend to dwell on this topic, which to this day can lead to impassioned debates. Allow me to merely state that for us Hungarian Orientalists, given that we were not and are not in the mainstream, this debate provided a powerful impetus. The questions were interesting, indeed, provocative for us too. We had to account to ourselves too concerning the evolution of our intellectual, scientific contact with the Orient, and what we have in common with the rest of Europe and what are the differences.

This brings me to what I wish to discuss. I am aware that I have said nothing new so far, but perhaps by addressing the topic of the history of Hungarian Oriental Studies and what has made its development unique, I can provide my esteemed audience with some new information.

Allow me to begin with our title: Hungary and the Orient, Hungarian ties with the Orient. Let us see what lies behind this relationship. Depth and dimension in ancient and modern history, essentially speaking to the present age. A series of contacts, events, ad hoc meetings and co-existence. A vast and unpredictable mass of influences and reciprocity. Everything that happened in the course of the centuries and what today are historical facts, the impact of which we carry within ourselves unconsciously. When did the scientific discovery of all this begin and where does it lead, along what paths? When did the first endeavours

begin which we may view as the first manifestation of a scientific approach?

I think that an objective critique of the history of science will support the notion that we designate the Ottoman centuries of Hungarian history as the origins of information-gathering on a scientific level. Let us keep in mind that we are referring to the 16th century. We are past the Renaissance, when the intellectual rebirth and self-knowledge of Man triumphed. This was the age of the Reformation, which took giant strides toward freeing human consciousness from artificial restrictions. This was the age when greater demands were placed on knowledge, when the interrelationships became important and when emphasis was placed on everyday practice. Everything pointed toward the need for more profound understanding, the systematization of knowledge, that is, toward scholarship and science.

In the Ottoman period of Hungarian history, in the 16th-17th centuries, we note such endeavours and the creation of works which bear the stamp of this scientific approach.

When the first Hungarian poet, Bálint Balassa, who fought the Turks with sword in hand and died in battle, wrote down lines of Turkish poetry that he heard from Turkish prisoners of war, it was only a case of interest shown by a literary person. The content and melody of the Turkish poems caught his attention as he felt some sort of kinship with them. However, when about eighty years later, the erudite Jakab Nagy de Harsány, who had spent seven years as ambassador of Transylvania and Brandenburg to the Porte, wrote down his linguistic and historical observations and his everyday experiences and analyzed the political issues of the period in a bulky volume, he had bequeathed us a source work of major value. With this work we feel that we are in the presence of scholarship.

The influences of the Ottoman period of Hungarian history and the Hungarian-Ottoman ties that followed in its wake continued in the course of later centuries. We could continue listing the works born during those times. But the real beginnings of the birth of scientific Oriental Studies in Hungary is not to be sought here.

The real locus is in the 19th century, during the period of rebirth, the formation of nationhood, the incipient self-awareness and renewal.

Let us turn our attention to a few historical facts.

The year 1526 marks the date of the Battle of Mohács which was a major milestone in Hungarian history. It marks the end of the Hungarian Kingdom which had been such a force in Eastern Europe for four centuries. This country was rent into three parts within a few decades. One part was under Turkish rule, another under the Habsburgs, while only Transylvania remained independent as a Hungarian political entity. At the end of the 17th century, the country became free of Ottoman rule, but continued to be under Habsburg domination. The war of liberation of the early 18th century failed and a century and a half had to pass before another attempt was made to attain national independence.

The 18th century and the first half of the 19th was spent gathering strength and the increasing articulation of national endeavours. It is impossible here to outline even this lengthy, multi-dimensional and complex process. We must be satisfied with concentrating on one aspect which is closest to us, namely, the endeavour to attain a national identity and to clarify our place in the world.

Among Hungarians living under foreign domination, surrounded by peoples speaking different languages, the question was naturally raised as to what is our place in this world, given that everyone has linguistic and cultural roots. If there are no linguistic and cultural ties that link the people to the present – that is to say, the present of the 19th century – perhaps we ought to search for our roots in the East, in Asia.

This was the spark that kindled fires in the minds of scholars. The idea had only to find individuals who would take it upon themselves to turn the idea into scholarly fact.

From the point of view of science and scholarship, truth becomes bifurcated at this point. Some scholars followed the branch of Finno-Ugrian, while others the Turkic languages as they began the journey East. In both cases the motives were identical. And let us add that both proved correct and both enriched Hungarian and international scholarship.

However, we Orientalists, and especially in the context of the present, are mainly interested in the latter line of investigation. Allow me to concentrate on this aspect.

A young Székler-Hungarian scholar from Transylvania was stirred to action by these ideas in the first decades of the 19th century. His name was Alexander Csoma de Kőrös. It was in the College of Nagye-nyed in Transylvania that he had first heard of the Asiatic origins of the Hungarians. Later, when he was studying in Göttingen, he learned of the Eastern historical sources, which he had hoped would yield data about the Hungarians too. A remark by one of his professors concerning possible links between Hungarians and the Uigurs of Inner Asia led him to decide to attempt to discover traces of this, to engage himself in Oriental studies.

After returning to Transylvania, Csoma again set out from Nagye-nyed in 1818, to seek the ancestors of the Hungarians in the East. He reached Northern India via Beirut, Teheran, Buchara and Kabul. His plans took an unexpected detour at this point. Recognizing the service it would provide to knowledge of Inner Asia, Csoma decided to immerse himself in the study of Tibetan language and culture.

He became involved heart and soul in the project. The many hardships and tribulations notwithstanding, he compiled the first dictionary of the Tibetan language and wrote many articles on Tibetan linguistics and culture.

To Csoma this was but an episode in his life. The desire to find the ancient homeland of the Hungarians continued to be his major concern. At the age of 58 he set out on the journey into Inner Asia with unflagging enthusiasm, certain that he would succeed. He still had visions of the ancient homeland while racked by the fever that eventually killed him in the Himalayas.

We know, of course, that Csoma was mistaken regarding his destination. Yet his commitment to the great cause of scholarship led him to the peaks of achievement. His attainments remain works of inestimable value.

We can sum up his achievement by simply stating that he founded a new discipline of Oriental studies.

Barely a few decades later, another youthful researcher set out for the East in search of Hungarian-Turkic links and to thereby contribute to our knowledge of the Hungarian past. His career is a text-book example of a scholar attaining the peaks of scholarship. His childhood is a sad tale of orphanhood, physical disability, poverty and ostracism. Nevertheless, his energy, ambition and will led him to triumph.

It is no exaggeration to claim that Ármin Vámbéry's career is almost without equal in international Oriental Studies. His fame made him well known throughout Europe as an intrepid traveller, outstanding scholar and an expert on Eastern politics, who was also a political insider, to use a modern expression.

His commitment to scholarship, more exactly to Oriental Studies, began early in his life. In the course of his initial stay in Turkey, which lasted four years, it became clear to him once and for all that he wanted to devote himself to a study of the Turkic peoples and languages and the Asiatic past of the Hungarians and their links to the Turkic peoples. Given this interest he naturally sought to familiarize himself with Central Asia. The khanates of that region tried to preserve their rule by hermetically sealing off their domain from the outside world. Intruders, especially Europeans, who were suspected of spying for the Russians or the British, could expect short shrift. They were tortured and killed. However, his trips which were so fraught with danger, were successful and brought him fame.

Vámbéry's subsequent work eventually grew to embrace practically every field of Turkic Studies. He was rightly recognized as the polymath of the discipline. He did pioneering work in a number of areas. His publications of linguistic records and texts were major achievements in his day, which opened new paths for subsequent generations of Turkologists. Vámbéry's work provided the basis for the better explication of linguistic records and for the better understanding of the facts of Turkish linguistic history. And it is undeniably one of his foremost merits that he turned the attention of European Turkology, which was

engaged in Ottoman Studies, towards the Eastern branch of Turkic peoples and their cultures.

His work brought many results and was a great influence on the study of Hungarian-Turkish linguistic-historical relationships, and, in fact, it marked the birth of Hungarian Turkology.

To summarise, in the course of the 19th century, the endeavour to discover the Eastern roots of the Hungarians' origins, as part of the need to seek out our national identity, is embodied in the work of Alexander Csoma de Kőrös and Ármin Vámbéry. Both men left behind works of enduring value, recognized by international scholarship.

It is one of the paradoxes of life how scholarly thought and result are divided in the two oeuvres. Csoma de Kőrös was never to succeed in discovering the Eastern roots of the Hungarians. He left behind unique and lasting works in another field. Nevertheless, he was the forerunner of whom everyone travelling this path was aware. And among his followers it was Vámbéry, his first heir in this regard, who managed to realize Csoma's goal. It was one of his great merits to have shown the relationship in a number of concrete respects, especially in terms of the Hungarian-Turkish contacts, that indeed the past of the Hungarians does lead East. Let us remark here that his work is not free of contradictions, for which he was duly criticized by his own contemporaries.

Such was the background to Hungarian Oriental Studies, reaching back to the 19th century. Today, we consider it only natural that these scholarly streams soon widened into broad rivers.

As a result of continuous research, ever new facts came to light and increasing numbers of areas became linked to the ongoing work.

In addition to the ancient history of the Hungarians, the centuries spent wandering in the steppe and its Eastern contacts, studies began to focus on such links during the Middle Ages and more recent times. Allow me to merely outline these research domains. For example, we have the problem of the Pechenegs and Kumans who were of Turkic origins and who invaded Hungary and settled here. Then we have the centuries of conflict with the Ottoman Empire from the end of the 14th to the mid-18th century, which includes the 150 years when a part of

Hungary was under Ottoman rule. Then there are the contacts of the 19th and 20th centuries among which I would mention the Turkish period of the Kossuth emigration. The list of contacts is long. All of them were accompanied by innumerable linguistic and cultural influences as a result of which we find in the Hungarian language many loan-words of Turkish origins and Hungarian culture shows a number of Turkish influences. There are a great number of Eastern, primarily Turkish, historical sources concerning this, which only an Orientalist can properly evaluate for the researchers of the Hungarian past.

The recognition that the research of many aspects of Hungary's past is impossible without Oriental Studies is the merit of the 19th-century scholars. It was as a result of their work and endeavours that Oriental Studies became an organic part of Hungarian national scholarship.

In the 20th century, Hungarian researchers of our links to the East could work on the basis of solid foundations. Allow me to mention only the most outstanding personalities here, who are no longer with us, but whose work continues to be a major influence. In the various branches of Turkology there were Gyula Németh and Lajos Fekete, and concerning Inner Asia Lajos Ligeti wrote works of major importance and founded a scientific school. The establishment of most institutions at Hungarian universities and at the Hungarian Academy of Sciences, with the exception of the Chair of Turkology, which looks back upon a nearly 120-year history, are all linked to these men of science. The same thing can be said concerning the well-known publications, *Acta Orientalia Hung.*, the *Bibliotheca Orientalis Hungarica*, and so on.

All of us working today in Hungary in Oriental Studies are either directly or indirectly their pupils. We are very conscious of this intellectual heritage, which motivates and obliges us to continue researching the ancient links of the Hungarians with the East. It is also a part of their intellectual bequest which always emphasized the need to place this national obligation within the context of international scholarship. We had often heard them tell us and the norms they had set also point in this direction that in our everyday work we must apply the methodological guideline according to which a particularly Hungarian program makes

sense only when the method meets international standards and expectations, if the results attained also enrich international scholarship. This means that the study of this area merely for its own sake would be provincialism and this is why we need to constantly strive to keep pace with international developments in the field.

Let us hope that we have done right by this intellectual heritage. It is, of course, not up to us Hungarian Orientalists only to pass judgement.

You have no doubt noticed, my esteemed colleagues, you who are internationally recognized experts in Arabic and Islamic Studies, that although I am already discussing the present, I have yet to mention Ignác Goldziher, although he is rightly considered a giant, whose work continues to be a major influence to this day. This was not an oversight on my part, but quite intentional. Let me explain.

You would be quite justified to view it as inexcusable incompetence if I were to attempt at this forum to outline Goldziher's extraordinary qualities as a human being and as a scholar and to try to provide even just a glimpse of the highlights of his work and its significance for Oriental Studies. My task can only be to address myself to the ties between Goldziher, his heritage and Hungarian scholarship.

Goldziher himself makes it redundant to list here the milestones of his career given that his diary provides a clear picture of the twists and turns in his life, which we can only acknowledge in stunned silence. The explanation is to be sought in the social circumstances of his time, which, however, does not alter our unequivocal judgment.

At this time I wish to mention just one aspect taken from the history of science. All that I have said in the foregoing on the origins of Hungarian Oriental Studies and their organic relationship to national disciplines, and which I had justly termed positive in the development of scholarship, were in this case, in that of Goldziher, undeniably negative factors. This concerns that unfortunate situation whereby intellectual life could only accept what it had in some way regarded as being of a national character. Whatever was beyond or outside of this was met with total incomprehension.

We cannot alter the facts. Nevertheless, it must be stated, even though it may seem ahistorical, that Hungarian Oriental Studies would have been even richer, would have developed into an even more organic whole, had the young Goldziher been able to found a school in his own country. The fact that this was not to be created a major vacuum and was a serious setback in Hungarian Oriental Studies.

Hungarian Turkological research has won broad recognition. Nevertheless, we are amply aware that it is precisely in the area of Islamic Studies that we have certain weaknesses, one of the reasons for which is that in the second half of the 19th century this field of scholarship was deprived of the most eminent scholar doing research in this area.

However, let us not just speak of the past and of its wrongs. Hungarian Islamic Studies is a most active branch of scholarship today under the leadership of Professor Károly Czeglédy. Let it be added that a positive role was played here by the good relationship Hungary enjoys with the Arab countries, with which we have fruitful cultural and scientific contacts. This allows Hungarian Arabists excellent opportunities for research and study. I believe that the fact that this conference is being held in Budapest is itself a sign of interest and recognition on the part of international scholarship.

It is a tremendous pleasure for us that the congress accepted the invitation of Hungarian Arabists and Islamic Studies scholars. This international conference will most certainly have a major impact on Hungarian research. For us it means a greater awareness of our debts, the meeting of which is the task of the present and future generations of scholars.

I. PHILOSOPHY AND THEOLOGY

THE INTERPRETATIONS OF Q 43,81
AND THE TECHNIQUES OF THE EXEGETES

John Burton

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The Muslims had difficulties with many Qur'ān verses. With others, they appear to have created problems for themselves, or rather, had problems created for them by the accumulating exegetical tradition.

There may seem at first glance to be nothing very problematical about Q 43,81, but in its interpretation we sample a range of the strategies adopted by the exegetes.

Q 43, *az-Zuhruf*, is a sustained diatribe against all association of any beings with the one unique Deity. The *sūra*'s denunciation of *širk*, or the ascription of offspring to God, are bracketted by verses showing that, when asked who created heavens and earth even Muḥammad's contemporaries would reply "God"¹. But these same unbelievers also allege that the angels are 'the daughters of God', although they themselves disdain to have female offspring². To annoy Muḥammad, they raise questions about the nature of Christ deliberately seeking to confuse him, for they are an argumentative and stiff-necked people of extravagant belief and behaviour³. Christ was a mere creature to whom God had shown signal favour, but no more than to other chosen men⁴. If God had desired, He would have made men angels, peopling the earth with them⁵. Muḥammad is ordered to state that, if God did have off-

¹ Q 43,9; 87.

² vv. 16-17.

³ vv. 57-58.

⁴ v. 59.

⁵ v. 60.

spring, Muḥammad would be the first to worship: *qul: in kāna li-rahḥmān waladun fa-anā arḥwalu l-ʿābidīna*.

Theological presumption guaranteed that, for the majority of the exegetes, this daring piece of rhetoric was too bold to grasp. Muḥammad's faith in the transcendence of the Deity had been too firm to permit him, even for debating purposes, to appear ever to compromise it. God would certainly never have permitted him to. It was for the Muslim unthinkable that Muḥammad could ever have brought himself to speak of worshipping other than God Who alone had created and Who alone was Master of Heaven and Earth and of all created things and beings. Yet, the verse uses the word "if": "If God has offspring, then I shall be the first worshipper". The conditional sentence seems to imply doubt which Muḥammad could not be conceded to have ever experienced. His monotheism had been too single-minded and too deeply implanted in his very being to have ever been capable of the slightest measure of dilution. Muḥammad could never have said, "If God has offspring". The nature of this condition is such that it was thought to imply a degree of probability. That being the case, the verse must not be interpreted in strict accordance with what appears in the text [*az-zāhir*]. Nor would Muḥammad ever have used the expression "I shall worship" of anything but God alone. The verse can, however, be made meaningful by emendation – but outside the text, that is, by *ta'wīl*. "Say, Muḥammad, 'if – [as you allege] – God has offspring, then I am the first true believer in God's unique divinity to deny these allegations of yours.'"⁶ But to leave the particle "if", as this interpretation does, although it interpolates expressions calculated to distance Muḥammad from the appearance of concession and transfers any doubt or weakening of strict monotheism to his unbelieving opponents, was not enough for some Muslims who remained anxious about even this slight degree of concession. "If" does seem to imply something less than outright rejection. Conditional sentences may be organised in a hierarchy

⁶ The technique was attributed to Muḡāhid, at-Ṭabarī, 25,54; cf. al-Buḥārī, 6,130; *Fath*, 10,188.

showing a decreasing scale of probability for the proposition conveyed in the protasis: 1. If it rains, I shall not go out. 2. If it were to rain, I should not go out. 3. If it had rained, I should not have gone out. In the first sentence, the probability of rain is equal to the probability that it will not rain; in the second sentence, the probability that it will rain is somewhat reduced. In the third sentence, the implication of the syntax is clearly negative. There was, in fact, no rain. Some therefore thought it expedient to move the Q 43,81 sentence down a grade in the scale of concession. Hence the *ta'wīl* ascribed to as-Suddī⁷: *qul: law kāna li-r-rahmān waladun la-kuntu awwala l-'ābidīna*. "Say: 'Were God to have offspring, I should be the first to worship God on the basis that He had offspring.'" This, as I say, has been transmitted on the basis that it was *ta'wīl*. There is never any suggestion that that was how as-Suddī actually read the passage.

Given the theological, especially the prophetic pressures, an even more satisfactory exegetical procedure was to read this particle *in*, not as the conditional "if", but as an outright negative particle meaning, in fact, 'not'. *Luġa* is summoned to the aid of *tafsīr*. Sībawayhi listed the various functions of the particle *in*: its *asl*, or basic function is as a conditional particle. In certain circumstances, its *ġazā'* must be prefixed by *fa*; it may be used *li-t-ta'kīd* in a quasi-oath, in which case, it is *muhaffafa*, or the 'lightened' form of *inna*; or it may be a negative particle, the equivalent of the negative *mā*⁸. The interpretations reported as from Ibn 'Abbās, Qatāda, Zayd b. Aslam and his son, are thus based on the quite correct assertion that in Q 43,81 *in* may be a negative⁹. *Qul: in kāna li-r-rahmān waladun fa-anā awwalu l-'ābidīna*. "Say: 'God had no offspring, as I am the first to testify.'" I say, here, "God had" for reasons which will shortly be made clear.

⁷ aṭ-Ṭabarī, *loc. cit.*; *Fath*, *loc. cit.*, 189.

⁸ *al-Kitāb*, 1,475.

⁹ aṭ-Ṭabarī, *loc. cit.*

The exegetes also engage in verse-comparison. Thus, Q 43,81 may be said to be 'like' Q 67,20: *in il-kāfirūna illā fī ġurūr* – “the unbelievers follow nothing but error”¹⁰. The comparison drawn by Ibn Zayd with Q 14,46 was less fortunate, for the latter verse has attracted its own crop of reading problems¹¹, although at-Ṭabarī can quote Ḥasan’s dictum: ‘The Qur’ān uses *in* as the equivalent of *mā* in four contexts: Q 14,46; Q 21,17: *law aradnā an nattahida lahwan la-ttahadnāhu min ladunnā in kunnā fā’ilīna* – that is *mā kunnā fā’ilīna*; Q 43,81 and Q 46,26: *wa-la-qad makkannāhum fī-mā in makkannākum fīhi* – that is, *mā makkannākum fīhi*.

It is highly relevant to our present concerns that occasionally a fifth verse is added to this list, Q 10,94: *fa-in kunta fī šakkin mimmā anzalnā ilayka...*¹²

In Q 43,81, God commands Muḥammad to declare that he is the first to worship God on the basis that He had no offspring. This is the contrary of as-Suddī’s *tafsīr*: “Were God to have offspring, I should be the first to worship Him on the basis that He had offspring” – but, of course, God has no offspring, nor is it fitting that He have. Some of the exegetes who adhered to the view that in Q 43,81 *in* is a conditional particle, offered as their interpretation of *fa-anā awwalu l-‘ābidīna*, “I am the first to repudiate any suggestion that God has offspring”. The interpretation rests upon an assertion that there is an Arabic verb ‘*abida ya‘badu*’ meaning ‘to reject’, alternatively, ‘to be angry’. Evidence in support of this contention is adduced from poetry.

- a. *a-lā hawaytu Umma l-Walīdi wa-aṣbahat
li-mā absarat fī r-ra’si minnī ta‘badū*

¹⁰ al-Aḥfaš, 1,289. an-Naḥḥās, 4,122.

¹¹ a. *wa-in kāna makeruhum la-tazūlu minhu l-ġibālu.*
b. *wa-in kāna makeruhum li-tazūla minhu l-ġibālu.*
a. was thought to be ‘confirmed’ by a ‘variant’:
wa-in kāda makeruhum la-tazūlu minhu l-ġibālu.

¹² at-Ṭabarī, 13, 145-148.

- b. *matā mā yašā'u dū l-wuddi yašrimu ḥalīlabū
wa-ya'badu 'alayhi lā mahāyata zālīman...*¹³

The assertion can, unusually in this instance, be further supported by evidence drawn from a *ḥadīth* text¹⁴. aṭ-Ṭabarī expresses his preference for the procedure adopted by as-Suddī: the verse's *in* is a conditional, not a particle of negation, for the use of a mere negative would not adequately express Muḥammad's nor God's repudiation of the notion that God had ever at any time had offspring. The Arabic expression: *mā kāna li-r-raḥmān waladun* would exclude only some, not all portions of time (!)¹⁵. There could remain the theoretical possibility of arguing that, following a time when God had, indeed, no offspring, there came a time when He acquired some offspring. The use of a mere negative would not sufficiently deprive Muḥammad's unbelieving opponents of the opportunity of making their blasphemous allegations, since they had not claimed that God's offspring were, like Him, necessarily eternal. God has explained to us that what they did say was that, at first, He had no offspring until He created the *ḡinn* to whom He became related and so, through them acquired descendants (!). Further, God would not furnish His Prophet with arguments that were not fool-proof. So long as any loop-hole remained in the divine denial of offspring, it would be better by far, in aṭ-Ṭabarī's view, to take *in* in this verse to be a conditional particle. Muḥammad is being ordered to say to his compatriots: "You allege that the angels are 'the daughters of God'. Well, if God had, as you claim, offspring, I should worship them before you did"¹⁶. On the contrary, God has no offspring, and it is not fitting that He should have. In this declaration, there is no element of doubt on the part of the Prophet. The verse provides a statement as subtle as that conveyed in Q 34,24: *wa-innā aw iyyākum la-ʿalā budan aw fī ḍalāl*

¹³ aṭ-Ṭabarī, 25,55; cf. al-Buḥārī, *loc. cit.*; *Fath*, *loc. cit.*, 189; *Baḥr*, 8,28.

¹⁴ aṭ-Ṭabarī, *loc. cit.*; *Fath*, *loc. cit.*

¹⁵ al-Makkī's repetition of this argument was challenged, *Baḥr*, *loc. cit.*

¹⁶ *Baḥr*, *loc. cit.*; al-Kaṣṣāf, 3,104.

mubīn. In Arabic, *aw* is a particle which suggests doubt and uncertainty, but the Prophet never for one instant supposed that he was following the path of error. He did not doubt that he was following the true guidance, that he was in the right and his opponents in the wrong. Similarly, he never for one instant doubted the unreality of the offspring that other men ascribed to God. Besides, in Q 43, the denial of offspring is to be derived from the wider context.

az-Zamaḥṣarī, taking the verse *‘alā z-zāhir*, regards it as a dazzling specimen of divine rhetoric. Unhappily, in paraphrasing it, he used expressions that so shocked the orthodox that, for example, Abū Ḥayyān could not bring himself to repeat them¹⁷. The sentence is indeed conditional and deliberately cast in that form the more effectively to expose the absurdity of the proposition which the verse was designed expressly to deny. The scholars have indeed, as az-Zamaḥṣarī alleges, performed prodigies of ingenuity in their interpretations.

Characteristically, ar-Rāzī seizes the opportunity offered in the difficulties the verse has occasioned the Muslims to compose a disquisition on the logic of the conditional sentence. Like az-Zamaḥṣarī, he takes the verse *‘alā z-zāhir*, and identifies for us the motive which had induced the exegetes to depart from the *zāhir* of the text¹⁸. The conditional sentence, he argues, is not concerned with the reality of the propositions conveyed in either the protasis or the apodosis. Its sole function is to allege that from one statement a second logically follows. Thus, a condition may involve two verifiably true propositions; two demonstrably untrue propositions, or an untrue protasis and a true apodosis. The first may be illustrated by: 1. If man is an animal, man is physical. The second by: 2. If five is even, it is divisible into two whole numbers. As a condition, that is unexceptionable, but it is based on two false propositions: that five is even and that it is divisible into two whole numbers. That both are false does not prevent the apodosis from resulting

¹⁷ *Baḥr*, loc. cit.

¹⁸ *at-Taḥsīn al-kabīr*, 27, 229 ff.

logically from the protasis. We merely have to assume the truth of the protasis. One might say: If man is of stone, man is physical. The protasis is false, but assuming its truth, the apodosis follows. ar-Rāzī rules out a fourth class of condition, a true protasis with a false apodosis, since falsehood can never logically proceed from truth.

He criticises those exegetes who depart from the *zāhir* on the plea that the wording of the verse appears to imply an element of doubt as to the reality of the offspring ascribed to God. On the contrary, he argues, the verse illustrates the type of conditional sentence constructed from a false protasis and a false apodosis. In abstracting both from the conditional setting: God has offspring, and I am the first to worship that offspring, he incidentally indicates the reasoning that underlay the exegetes' anxiety that had induced them to depart from the *zāhir* of the text, to seek refuge in one or other form of *ta'wīl*.

Comparing Q 43,81 with Q 21,22: *law kāna fihimā ālibatun illā allāhu la-fasadatā*: "Were there in Heaven and Earth gods other than God, they would both fall into ruin", a sentence consisting like Q 43,81, of a false protasis and a false apodosis, ar-Rāzī meets the following objection: there is a difference between the two verses. Q 21,22 uses the conditional particle *law* which implies the non-existence of an object consequent upon the non-existence of another; whereas Q 43,81 uses the particle *in* which does not imply the non-existence of one object consequent upon the non-existence of another. *In* implies doubt and uncertainty as to whether the protasis is false or true. In the case of the Prophet, uncertainty on the question of whether God has or has not offspring is quite unthinkable. Further, it is also clear from his handling of the entire question of the formation of conditional sentences, that ar-Rāzī regards the protasis as an originally independent affirmative statement that becomes conditional or presumptive only when prefixed by the conditional particle. The truth or falsity of either protasis or apodosis cannot be determined internally in the conditional cluster, but may be known, he admits, only on the basis of additional, external information. That Heaven and Earth have not both fallen into ruin, he

says, is known from observation and it is from that observation that we perceive that there are not other gods besides God.

Of great antiquity as exegetical devices, and among the most enduring in use were the intimately connected *sabab* or identification of the circumstance that had allegedly necessitated the revelation of a verse and *ta'yīn al-mubham*, or identification of the persons involved in the verse's allusions. The difference of opinion among the scholars as to the precise function and meaning of the particle *in* used in Q 43,81 was concretised in an ancient narrative presented in his *tafsīr* by Muqātil (d. 150 A. H.). In his discussion of Q 8,31, where the Makkan unbelievers mockingly dismiss the Qur'ān revelations as 'mere tales of the ancients', Muqātil identifies the persons referred to¹⁹. The speaker was an-Naḍr b. al-Ḥārīt. Mocking the tales brought by Muḥammad, an-Naḍr reminds his listeners that he brings them the stories of Rustum and Isfandiyār. 'Uṭmān b. Maz'ūn warned an-Naḍr to take care what he says. Muḥammad tells the truth. "I too tell the truth", insists an-Naḍr. "Yes", replies 'Uṭmān, "but Muḥammad says, 'There is no god but God'." an-Naḍr claims that he also states that there is no god but God, but that the angels are 'the daughters of God' – at which God revealed: *qul: in kāna li-r-raḥmān waladun fa-anā awwalu l-'ābidīna*. "There", says an-Naḍr, "Muḥammad agrees with me". al-Walīd b. al-Muḡīra exclaimed, "By God! he does not agree with you. What he is saying is, 'God has no offspring'."

Repeating the differences among the scholars as to the function and meaning of this *in*, Abū 'Ubayda underlines that, for those who take the *in* to mean "if", the *fa*-prefixed to *fa-anā awwalu l-'ābidīna*, has the conjunctive function of *wāw*²⁰, while, to illustrate the suggestion that the verb '*abida ya'badu*, 'to repudiate' exists in Arabic he cites a line by al-Farazdaq:

¹⁹ *Tafsīr Muqātil*, 2,112.

²⁰ *Maḡāz*, 2,206.

*ūlā'ika qawmun in hağawnī hağawtuhum
wa-a'badu an ahğūwa 'abīdan bi-Dārimin*²¹

Some said that: *fa-anā arwalu l-'ābidīna* meant: 'I shall be the first to worship that offspring'; while others maintained that it meant either: 'I shall be the first to worship God on the basis that He has such offspring'; or, 'I shall be the first to worship God on the basis that He has no such offspring'.

To make absolutely clear that here, *al-'ābidīna* was not the *Nomen Agentis* of the root *'abada ya'budu*, 'worship', further resort was had to *luğa*. To circumvent the objections to their *tafsīr*, those who insisted that Muḥammad would never have made any concession, not even a conditional concession to disbelief, employed yet another exegetical technique, *qirā'a*. It seems that their opponents had objected that the *Nomen Agentis* of *'abida ya'badu* was not the *'ābid* which we find in Q 43,81, but *'abid*, or, as al-Ḥalīl is reported to have listed in his *Kitāb al-'Ayn*, *'abd*. To this, they could now retort that, in fact, the 'reading' of the text that had been adopted by Abū 'Abdarrahmān as-Sulamī had been precisely: *fa-anā arwalu l-'ābidīna*²².

as-Suddī may have hinted at it, but not one exegete has suggested that the use of the particle *larw* in Q 43,81 would have been more in conformity with Arabic usage. Certainly, no-one has ever expressed the view that the use of *in* in the verse was a linguistic error.

²¹ *Baḥr*, loc. cit. has:

*ūlā'ika abā'ī fa-ğī'nī bi-miḥlihim
wa-a'badu an ahğūwa l-Kulayba bi-Dārimiyyin*

al-Qurṭubī, 16,119, has:

- a. *ūlā'ika ağlāsī fa-ğī'nī bi-miḥlihim
wa-a'badu an ahğūwa Kulayban bi-Dārimin*
- b. *ūlā'ika nāsun in hağawnī hağawtuhum
wa-a'badu an yuhğā Kulaybun bi-Dārimin.*

²² al-Qurṭubī, loc. cit.; *Baḥr*, loc. cit.

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LA ACTITUD DE LOS ULEMAS ANDALUSIES ANTE EL JUEGO Y LA DIVERSION

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“Afirma Ibn al-Mawwāz que no es válido el testimonio de quien fuese aficionado a las competiciones de palomos, al ajedrez o al juego del *nard*, sobre todo si apostase en tales juegos; o se entregase por completo a esas diversiones, aunque no apostase en ellas”.

“Dice un ulema: Deberá ser recusado el testigo (...) que haga apuestas en el ajedrez o en el juego del *nard* o en el de los palomos, incluso si no es aficionado a tales pasatiempos”¹.

Estas citas de un manual para jueces escrito en Córdoba a finales del s. XII, ilustran claramente la desconfianza de los medios religiosos oficiales frente a formas de cultura popular como son los juegos y las diversiones, muchas veces de carácter ancestral.

No se trataba de una prohibición absoluta, es decir: no incurrían en penas canónicas (*hudūd*) quienes a tales prácticas se entregasen; sino más bien de una descalificación social: el adicto a estos pasatiempos no podía ser una persona respetable, pues cuando ponían en peligro el patrimonio (es decir: cuando mediaban apuestas) o cuando absorbían excesivamente la actividad personal llegando a anularla, tales aficiones eran consideradas como una adicción vergonzosa, y quienes estaban sometidos a ella aparecían como personas nada honorables ni buenos musulmanes, por lo que la veracidad de su testimonio había de ser puesta en duda. No eran dignos de crédito, y sería escandaloso que un juez sentenciara en base al testimonio de individuos tales.

¹ Ambas citas proceden del *Kitāb al-mufīd* de Ibn Hišām al-Azdī, ms. del Sacromonte, Granada, f° 12. Sobre este autor y su obra, véase: A. Carmona González, “Ibn Hišām al-Qurtubī y su *Mufīd li-l-ḥukkām*” en *Quaderni di Studi Arabi*, 5-6 (1987-1988). Acti del XIII Congresso dell’U.E.A.I., p. 120-130; Idem., “Los *ādāb al-quḍāt* o normas de conducta dal juez islámico” en *Homenaje al Profesor Juan Torres Fontes*, Murcia 1987, p. 235-243.

El texto que comentamos, escrito – como hemos dicho – casi en el s. XIII, reproduce una cita de un autor egipcio mucho más antiguo: Ibn al-Mawwāz² que vivió en el s. IX, quien a su vez se hace eco de una doctrina enunciada dos generaciones antes por el padre del malikismo egipcio (y aún andalusí), el célebre Ibn al-Qāsim, que en la *Mudawwana* (XIII, p. 3; XVI, p. 58 y 84) rechaza el testimonio del adicto (*mudmin*) al ajedrez, no del que juega ocasionalmente; mientras que al aficionado a las competiciones de palomos lo declara inhábil como testigo sólo en el caso de que apueste.

En todo este lapso de tiempo (del s. VIII al XIII) la desaprobación a que nos referimos no fue capaz de atajar unas aficiones populares que han perdurado hasta nuestros días. Las competiciones de palomos, habituales aún en Egipto, subsisten con puyanza en alguna región española, como la de Murcia, donde los días de fiesta podemos ver a grupos de personas desplazándose por los caminos de las zonas rurales o periurbanas con la vista fija en el cielo, donde diversos palomos pertenscientes a quienes participan en el juego persiguen y acosan a una hembra al tiempo que se desembarazan de sus rivales.

La afición por el ajedrez era tan grande en España que el autor del manual citado omitió traer aquí un hadiz que sin duda conocería bien por estar incluido en el *Muwatta'* del Imām Mālik. Según esta tradición, “el Profeta dijo que quien juega al ajedrez desobe deos a Dios y a su Mensajero”³, lo que equivale a una prohibición sin paliativos, mientras que en el texto que estamos utilizando tan sólo se habla de quien juega su dinero o emplea en ello demasiado tiempo y energías. Nos consta que era el juego favorito tanto de los cristianos como de los andalusíes, de soberanos y plebeyos: al-Muṭamid poseía un juego cuyo tablero y piezas eran una maravilla; gracias a este juego, Ibn ʿAmmār, tras vencer en una partida a Alfonso VI, obtuvo de este le la evacuación del territorio de

² Muḥammad b. Ibrāhīm b. Ziyād “Ibn al-Mawwāz” (180/796-269-882); su obra de *Furūʿ*, conocida como *al-Mawwāziyya* es uno de los libros fundamentales del malikismo.

³ *Muwatta'*, XXXII, p. 564, n° 1726.

Sevilla; los literatos empleaban imágenes sacadas de las jugadas de ajedrez para describir, sobre todo las vicisitudes de los aconteceros políticos.

El otro juego mencionado en las citas del manual cordobés puede corresponder al conocido en nuestra tierra como “chaquete”: parecido al de “damas”, se juega con un tablero dividido en dos compartimentos, empleándose 30 fichas o peones y dos dados; se empieza poniendo peones en todas las casillas, y gana quien los hace pasar, de acuerdo con ciertas reglas, por delante del lado contrario.

Esta actitud de intolerancia, no sólo con los juegos sino también con la música – como vamos a ver –, alcanza a quienes procuren los medios para tales actividades. Así, en el *Kitāb al-mufīd*, de donde hemos extraído las citas que encabezan esta comunicación, se manda recusar el testimonio de “quien venda tableros para el juego del *nard*, flautas, laudes, tambores o artículos para fiestas” (f° 12 b).

La desconfianza de los ulemas andalusíes continuó entre las comunidades mudéjares bajo dominio cristiano. En la Castilla de 1462, un alfarquí, Isā b. Ġābir, que escribe en castellano, para sus fieles, una *summa* de los mandamientos y prohibiciones de la Ley musulmana, dice respecto a la misma cuestión: “No passa el testigo del que continúa mucho yr a muchos juegos biçiossos, como son naypes, dados o sus semejantes”⁴. Se mencionan aquí dos juegos no aludidos en los textos de época islámica, los naipes y los dados (si es que estos últimos no son lo mismo que el juego del *nard*), prueba de que no se trataba de una cita reproducida mecánicamente, sino de la adaptación de una norma tradicional al contexto social en que se escribe: esas dos aficiones aparecerían entonces como las más criticables.

Pero, volvamos al *Kitāb al-mufīd* de Ibn Hišām al-Azdī y a su capítulo sobre “habilitación (*ta’dil*) y recusación (*tağrīh*) de testigos”. Líneas adelante leemos: “Deberá ser recusado el testigo (...) que enseñe a una esclava suya las artes del canto, aunque él no sea de los que vayan a oírla” (f° 12 a). Y también: “Dice Ibn ‘Abdalḥakam: No es aceptable tampoco

⁴ Don Iça Gebir, *Suma de los principales mandamientos y devedamientos de la Ley y Çunna*, ed. P. Gayangos en Memorial Histórico Español, t. V (1853), p. 369.

el testimonio de quien fuera aficionado a oír cantantes y música de laúdes, aunque no vayan tales fiestas acompañadas de vino (*nabīd*). Se exceptúan las bodas (*ʿurs*) y fiestas esporádicas por algún motivo especial; por más que tales cosas sean censurables en cualquier circunstancia” (f^o 11b-12a).

Estamos de nuevo ante una norma proveniente de un jurista egipcio⁵: de esta escuela *miṣrī*, más que de la mediní, parecen haber aprendido los alfaquíes de al-Andalus su rechazo de las actividades lúdicas y de entretenimiento. Aunque tal desaprobación tiene sus excepciones: según esta última cita, el regocijo mundano es permitido con ocasión, al menos, de los festejos de boda. En al-Andalus éstos se desarrollaban durante toda una semana; primero, en casa de la novia, quien, acompañada de música, iba luego a casa del novio, donde con gran pompa era presentada a los invitados; el convite reunía a los hombres de ambas familias.

La asistencia al banquete nupcial era muy aconsejada. En el *Muwattaʿ* (n^o 1110) aparece el siguiente *ḥadīṭ* del Profeta: “Quien sea invitado a una fiesta de *walīma* deberá asistir”. El tunecino Saḥnūn⁶, discípulo de los maestros egipcios, explicó a los fundadores de la escuela española *mālikī* que la comida de *walīma* era el banquete de bodas; pero advertía: “En caso de que haya en ella tocadores de instrumentos musicales, no se debe asistir”⁷. Así pues, ni siquiera en esta ocasión los adustos alfaquíes estaban dispuestos a levantar la mano y a mostrar una mayor permisividad.

La literatura jurídica andalusí, casi unánimemente, va a repetir estos principios recibidos de la escuela egipcia, vía Qayrawān. Por ejemplo:

⁵ ʿAbdallāh b. ʿAbdalḥakam (155/772-214/829), discípulo de Mālik y autor del primer *Muḥtaṣar* sobre su doctrina; maestro de Ibn al-Mawwāz.

⁶ ʿAbdassalām b. Saʿīd “Saḥnūn” (180/777-214/829) estudió principalmente con Ibn al-Qāsim cuyas enseñanzas consignó literalmente en su *Mudawwana*.

⁷ Cit. en Martínez Antuña, “Ordenanza de un cadí granadino para los habitantes del valle de Lecrín” en *Anuario de Hist. del Derecho Español*, X (1933) p. 286.

Ibn al-^ʿAṭṭār (s. X)⁸ desautoriza explícitamente a quienes acuden a escuchar a esclavas cantoras (*qiyān*). Sin embargo, sabemos que las clases altas de Córdoba organizaban veladas en que diversas cantantes intervenían por turno ante numerosos invitados.

Pero, no sólo la práctica social disentía de tales planteamientos teóricos, sino que también hubo algún escritor que argumentó en contra de una interpretación abusiva de la Tradición, que impedía a muchos piadosos musulmanes disfrutar con buena conciencia del placer de la música y la danza. Es el caso de Ibn Ḥazm de Córdoba (s. XI), que declara su opinión favorable a la licitud del canto con música instrumental en su *Risāla fī l-ġinā' al-mulhī a-mubāḥ huwa am mahzūr*, título que Asín Palacios traduce: "Epístola acerca de si el canto con música instrumental es licito o está prohibido"⁹. El método que sigue es el de negar validez a la docena de hadices en que se basan los enemigos de la música, arguyendo que ninguna de las cadenas de transmisores que exhiben es válida por faltar eslabones o por la presencia de individuos desconocidos o no fiables. Sólo en un caso encuentra un argumento en el propio contenido del hadiz, y es cuando, según una tradición que remontan a Mu^ʿāwiya, el Profeta habría vedado incluso la poesía, lícita a todas luces. Tres de estas tradiciones contrarias a la música fueron introducidas en al-Andalus precisamente por el mayor difusor del malikismo en España: ^ʿAbdalmalik b. Ḥabīb.

Los hadices descalificados por Ibn Ḥazm son todos aquellos que han dado pie a la hostilidad de los malikíes respecto a vender, pagar, enseñar o escuchar a esclavas cantoras, lucrarse con ellas, utilizar instrumentos musicales o simplemente cantar. Sabido es que Ibn Ḥazm no fue seguidor de la corriente jurídica malikí, prácticamente la única implantada en

⁸ Muḥammad b. Aḥmad "Ibn al-^ʿAṭṭār", cordobés (330/942-399/1009), fue discípulo en Qayrawān de Ibn Abī Zayd. La cita está sacada de sus *al-Waṭā'iq wa-s-siġillāt*, ed. P. Chalmeta y F. Corriente, Madrid 1983, p. 335.

⁹ Edit. por Iḥsān Rašīd ^ʿAbbās, y trad. por Elías Terés; véase: E. Terés, "La Epístola sobre el canto con música instrumental, de Ibn Ḥazm de Córdoba" *Al-Andalus*, XXXVI (1971), 203-214.

al-Andalus, lo que le daba gran libertad para revisar los argumentos escriturarios en que se basaban los intolerantes alfaquíes. Estos, por lo general, ignoraron su fundamentada opinión y siguieron defendiendo hasta el final de la presencia musulmana en España, y contra toda una realidad social, la ilicitud de la música. Hay el menos una excepción: Ibn ʿAbdalbarr¹⁰ del que sabemos que apoyó las tesis de su amigo Ibn Ḥazm, llevado sin duda no sólo por esta amistad sino por su rechazo de la sumisión servil en lo doctrinal que le caracterizó dentro de la escuela *mālikī*, en la que llevó a cabo un estudio crítico de las diferencias de opinión entre los fundadores de esta corriente jurídica.

Además de criticar las bases en que se fundamentan sus adversarios doctrinales, Ibn Ḥazm aporta unos cuantos relatos protagonizados por Mahoma o por sus primeros seguidores; relatos con los que pretendía demostrar que el canto era seguido con agrado por éstos, o al menos no abiertamente desautorizado. Así, por ejemplo, relataba ʿĀʾiṣa cómo Abū Bakr entró en su casa cuando ante ella dos esclavas cantaban y tañían instrumentos, mientras el Profeta estaba como ausente, arrebozado en su manto. Escandalizado, Abū Bakr quiso echar a las esclavas, diciendo: “¡El canto de Satán en la casa del Enviado de Dios!” Pero, Mahoma, destapándose dijo: “¡Déjalas, son días de fiesta!”

Según otro relato, Ibn ʿUmar se taponó los oídos al percibir el sonido de una flauta, pero no la mandó callar ni ordenó a los otros que no escuchasen, explicando que así había obrado el Profeta en su presencia en situación similar. Este mismo personaje actuó de intermediario en la compra de una esclava cantora, aunque en un momento dado exclamara, con mala conciencia: “¡Basta ya! ¡Todo el día con el canto de Satán!”

De acuerdo con otro hadiz, ante la reacción escandalizada de alguien al ver a unos Compañeros del Profeta oyendo cantar, éstos respondieron: “Se nos ha permitido el canto en las bodas”.

¹⁰ Yūsuf b. ʿAbdallāh b. ʿAbdalbarr, cordobés (368/978-463/1071), uno de los primeros sabios andalusíes que no necesitó salir de España, es considerado un *muğtabid* de la escuela *mālikī* y el mejor tradicionista de su época.

Todos estos relatos evidencian que en los comienzos del Islam había un sentimiento contrario a prácticas lúdicas que eran ocasión de disipación y que escandalizaban a los neófitos más integristas: el canto y el baile, sin duda excitantes cuando no abiertamente lascivos, de esclavas especializadas, en el marco de veladas en las que la música instrumental se apoderaba de los espíritus. Según se desprende de lo que nos ha transmitido la tradición, los jefes de la naciente Comunidad musulmana no pensaron en erradicar aquel “arte diabólico” del que ellos ocasionalmente pudieron gustar, aunque compartieron con los más intransigentes el recelo por prácticas lindantes con lo pecaminoso. Esa doble actitud ha quedado reflejada en las compilaciones de hadices y ha servido para dar argumentos tanto a quienes inútilmente han intentado oponerse a esa forma de cultura como a los que a través de los siglos la han mantenido.

De todos modos, para muchos hombres de religión en al-Andalus, pese a las tradiciones que se esgrimían en contra¹¹, estuvo siempre claro que no se trataba de una prohibición total de la música, sino de la desaprobación del empleo de algunas de sus formas en circunstancias y con fines censurables. Pero, por ejemplo, el canto religioso era admitido, e incluso considerado conveniente, por nuestros místicos, aunque bastantes de ellos (entre los que se cuenta el murciano Ibn al-^cArabī) advertían que había que prescindir de él cuando se pretendía acceder a los más altos grados de la perfección espiritual, por la imperfección que comporta el buscar un deleite sensible. Es verdad que algunos otros místicos, partidarios de una interpretación rigorista de la Tradición, le negaban al canto licitud en toda circunstancia¹².

Nos queda sólo añadir algo acerca de los grandes días de fiesta. Volvamos para ello *al-Kitāb al-mufīd*, que nos dice (f^o 12a): “Deberá ser recusado el testigo (...) que asista a las fiestas del *nayrūz* o del *mihrağān*”.

¹¹ A las citadas por Ibn Ḥazm en su *Risāla fī l-ğinā'*, hay que añadir la dada a conocer por Abū l-Ḥasan al-Aṣṣarī; véase C. Castillo, *Kitāb ṣağarat al-yaqīn, Tratado de escatología musulmana*, Madrid 1987, p. 51.

¹² Véase: M. Asín Palacios, *Vidas de santones andaluces*, Madrid 1935, pp. 40-50.

Se trata de dos fiestas estacionales, fijadas por el calendario juliano y conocidas por sus nombres persas: *nayrūz* o *nawrūz* – en su origen, día del año nuevo iraní – y *mihraġān* – o *mahraġān*, como se pronunciaba en al-Andalus – llamada también ‘Anṣara, coincidente con el día de San Juan. Ambas daban lugar a festejos y diversiones en los que siempre participaron, pese a la reprobación del Islam oficial, todas las capas sociales de las tres religiones¹³.

La razón de la hostilidad que ulemas y hombres piadosos andalusíes mostraron frente a estas fiestas no parece ser otra que su carácter cristiano. Así, la fiesta del *nayrūz* también conocida en al-Andalus como *yan-nayr*, corresponde a nuestra fiesta de Año Nuevo, “siete días después del nacimiento de Jesús”, como subrayaban airadamante los alfaquíes, quienes se escandalizaban de que “los musulmanes llevasen el cómputo de las fechas de los cristianos” y de que gentes de todas las clases sociales y “apiñadas muchedumbres” se pusiesen de acuerdo para exaltar el carácter de tales fiestas, vigilando con celo las fechas de su celebración y llenándose de júbilo ante su venida. En esos días se concedía vacación a los niños de las escuelas y hasta se llegó a cerrar zocos y alcaicerías con lo que la fiesta adquiría un indudable carácter oficial. Todo lo cual era, para los celosos guardianes de la ortodoxia, constitutivo de “rebeldía contra Dios y su Enviado”. Y ello ante el silencio cómplice de muchos ulemas – opinaban – y la anuencia de los poderes públicos, que consentían ese grave pecado¹⁴.

De todos modos, y no obstante lo anterior, junto a la argumentación a partir del dogma religioso, con que se atacaba la participación musulmana en los mencionados festejos, aparecen unas consideraciones de tipo – diríamos – moral: el excesivo gasto que esas celebraciones conllevaban, debido a la riquísima mesa que se preparaba, la costosísima repos-

¹³ Véase: F. Simonet, *Historia de los mozárabes de España*, Madrid 1897, p. 820; R. Arié, *España musulmana VIII-XV*, Barcelona 1982, pp. 311-2; M. Ocaña Jiménez, *Nuevas tablas de conversión de datas islámicas o cristianas y viceversa*, Madrid 1981, pp. 47-8; F. De La Granja, “Fiestas cristianas” *Al-Andalus*, XXXIV (1969) pp. 2, 33-41.

¹⁴ F. De La Granja, *op. cit.* p. 38 et *passim*.

tería, los preciosos regalos que se intercambiaban ... consideraciones emparentables con la defensa del patrimonio frente al despilfarro, que subyace en la prohibición de las apuestas.

Pero, de hecho, de haber podido ser llevada a la práctica la prohibición de estas fiestas, los hombres de religión habrían arrebatado a la población en general la mayor ocasión de regocijo, de recreo y de ejercicio de la imaginación con que contaba. Aludamos a la sobradamente conocida repostería en forma de ciudades y de otras figuras – que hizo necesario recordar la prohibición expresa de hacer imágenes que consta en las tradiciones del Profeta – y a las curiosas costumbres que acompañaban estos días especiales.

Conclusión

Si manifestaciones de cultura popular tales como juegos, música, diversiones y festejos nunca fueron erradicadas de la sociedad musulmana fue porque su total supresión no entró en el programa de reforma moral de los fundadores del Islam. Sin embargo, la oposición de muchos de los primeros musulmanes a aspectos escandalosos de estas prácticas (como el de la adicción) reflejada en los relatos del *ḥadīṭ*, ha servido de base escrituraria para una prohibición o al menos desaprobación de estas formas de cultura popular sobre todo por parte de alfaquíes de la escuela *mālikī*, hegemónicos en al-Andalus, aunque éstos nunca consiguieron su erradicación.

PREDICATION TESTS, COPULA, AND A POSSIBLE LINK WITH AŞĀRISM

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This paper very briefly describes a series of predication tests in the works of the early Arab grammarians and links them with the concept of the "copula" in the philosophers. It concludes with the suggestion that there may be some connection between these two topics and later Aşārite speculations about the attributes of God. Naturally there can be no certainty about such a conjecture, though the paper will conclude with some remarks which might at least make it seem reasonable.

Predication tests in grammar are observable as early as al-Mubarrad (d. 898 A.D.)¹ and are a prominent feature in the works of such later figures as Ibn as-Sarrāğ (d. 929 A.D.)² and Ibn Mālik (d. 1274 A.D.)³. Under the general heading of *al-ihbār bi-lladī wa-l-lām* a simple sentence is paraphrased either with a participle or *alladī*, often achieving great complexity, sometimes to the point of incomprehensibility. The following table presents a basic sentence⁴, its two paraphrases with the participle and *alladī* and, for contrast, the normal patterns of topicalization. For the purposes of the later discussion the boundary between subject and predicate is marked (|), the anaphoric pronouns which bind the two together are in bold type and non-canonical structures are starred:

¹ *Muqtaḍab*, ed. M. ʿA. H. ʿUḍayma, Cairo 1963-68, vol. III, p. 89f.

² *Uṣūl an-naḥw*, ed. ʿA. H. al-Fatḥī, Beirut 1985, vol. II, pp. 261f, 331f.

³ *Alfiyya* (any edition), verse 717f.

⁴ It is derived from al-Mubarrad's *Muqtaḍab*, vol. III, p. 93.

1a Basic sentence, normal word order

a'taytu zaydan dirhaman

1b Normal topicalization

anā | a'taytu zaydan dirhaman

zaydun | a'taytubu dirhaman

(**dirhamun | a'taytubu zaydan*)

ammā anā | fa-a'taytu zaydan dirhaman

ammā zaydun | fa-a'taytubu dirhaman

(**ammā dirhamun | fa-a'taytubu zaydan*)

2a Paraphrase with participle (*al-ihbār bi-l-lām*)

al-mu'tī∅ zaydan dirhaman | anā

al-mu'tīhi anā dirhaman | zaydun

al-mu'tīhi anā zaydan | dirhamun

2b Paraphrase with *alladī* (*al-ihbār bi-lladī*)

alladī a'tā∅ zaydan dirhaman | anā

alladī a'taytubu dirhaman | zaydun

alladī a'taytubu zaydan | dirhamun

or: *alladī a'taytu iyyāhu dirhaman | zaydun*

alladī a'taytu zaydan iyyāhu | dirhamun

3a Regular topicalization of 2a

anā l-muṭīḍ zaydan dirhaman
zaydun | anā l-muṭīḍi dirhaman

(**dirhamun | anā l-muṭīḍi zaydan*)

3b Regular topicalization of 2b

anā | lladī aṭaytu zaydan dirhaman
zaydun | illadī aṭaytuhu dirhaman

(**dirhamun illadī aṭaytuhu zaydan*)

It is obvious that the examples in 2a and 2b are not instances of the regular topicalization seen in 1b. In fact they are the opposite of topicalization, fronting or foregrounding, as it is variously termed, since they reverse the usual order of the given and the new. This is shown clearly by the starred forms in 3a and 3b, for while it is perfectly correct to make the indefinite word *dirhamun* the predicate in 2a and 2b, *dirhamun* cannot be topicalized into a subject position in 3a and 3b.

Interestingly the sentences with *zaydun* as the final element in 2a and 2b appear to break a rule of logic that predicates cannot be proper names. This rule has attracted some attention among the medieval Arab philosophers, not least of al-Fārābī, who evidently rejected it⁵. al-Baṭalyawsī also discusses the question, and argues that a case such as *alladī darabtuhu zaydun* is merely an inversion of *zaydun illadī darabtuhu*, hence not an infringement of the rule of proper name predicates⁶. This view is somewhat vulnerable, however, for the illegal **dirhamun*

⁵ See the discussion in K. Gyekye, *Arabic Logic: Ibn al-Ṭayyib's Commentar on Porphyry's Eisagoge*, Albany 1979, p. 188f.

⁶ See A. A. Elamrani-Jamal, "Les rapports de la logique et de la grammaire d'après le *Kitāb al-masā'il* d'al-Baṭalyūsī", *Arabica* 26, 1979, p. 82f (Arabic text), 86f (translation).

illadī a'taytuhu zaydan in 3b is sufficient to prove that inversion (here of *alladī a'taytuhu zaydan dirhamun*) is not always possible. We should therefore be cautious in accepting al-Baṭalyawsī's ideas as a full explanation of the phenomenon.

Finally we should note that there are some restrictions on the use of *al-ihbār bi-lladī wa-l-lām*. Two may be noted here: neither the *maf'ūl mutlaq* nor the *mudāf* may occur as predicates⁷, i.e.

4a *ḍarabtu zaydan ḍarban*

4b **alladī ḍarabtuhu zaydan ḍarbun*

5a *ḍarabtu gulāma zaydin*

5b **alladī ḍarabtuhu zaydin gulāmu*

In the case of 4b the rule of *ifāda* is breached, since the utterance would convey no more information than was already in *ḍarabtu*. In 5b *gulāmu* cannot be pronominalized since pronouns cannot occur as the first elements of *idāfa* (contrast *alladī ḍarabtu gulāmahu zaydun*)⁸.

The question now arises, what was the purpose of this elaborate procedure? The Arab grammarians regard these sentences as student practice, but that simply leads to another question, practice in what? The key to the answer probably lies in the term *ihbār*, which strongly implies that the main concern of the exercise was the mechanism of predication, testing thereby the predicability of any noun in the sentence. For reasons which will become relevant later on, we suggest that in the earliest stage the focus was indeed on the predicability of the noun, and that relatively little attention was paid to the pronouns which automa-

⁷ See al-Mubarrad, *Muqtaḍab* vol. III, p. 103, and cf. p 91f for other restricted categories.

⁸ The same restrictions apply to any topicalization of the *mudāf*, e.g. after *ammā* or *inna*.

tically appear as traces of the noun when it is moved into the predicate position.

Since the *ihbār* test appeared in the time of al-Mubarrad, we may also hypothesize that it has some connection with the grammarians' interest in logic which begins to be noticeable in this period, particularly the principle of falsifiability which had intruded into grammar from logic⁹. If we call to mind the critical Arabic distinction between verbal and nominal sentences, the *ihbār* method presents itself as a very effective device to test falsifiability.

For not only is there a formal difference between nominal and verbal sentences, but there is also a logical difference. We may characterize verbal sentences as intrinsically "historical", as narrative statements, empirical, non-demonstrable: it cannot be apodictically "proved" that an event ever took place, and so verbal sentences are logically non-falsifiable. By contrast nominal sentences, by merely asserting that *x* and *y* are the same thing without the mediation of any verbal copula, are demonstrable, logical propositions and therefore by nature falsifiable. This, we would claim, is a likely motive for the *ihbār* test, since it enables all the nominal elements of a sentence (apart from the exceptions already alluded to above) to be placed in an equational relationship and thus become falsifiable. Straightforward topicalization cannot achieve this since, as has been shown, the indefinite nouns in the sentence cannot be fronted, whereas there is nothing to stop them from being thematized as predicates by the *ihbār* method.

In passing it may be observed that the verbs in such sentences have to be accepted as a given fact, exactly as in the English analogue, "what I gave him was a dirham", which is one good reason why the *maf'ūl mutlaq* type **alladī darabtubu darbun* is disallowed. This is not trivial, since one of the features of the verbless equational sentences of Arabic

⁹ Cf. al-Mubarrad, *Muqadab* vol. III, p. 89., which seems to be the earliest instance of truth/falsehood as a sentence criterion. The gradual prevalence of *isnād/musnad/musnad ilayhi* over the purely structural terms *ibtidā'/mubtada'/mabnī 'alayhi* probably belongs to the same trend.

is that they also take for granted the "being" of the subject, as was pointed out very perceptively by Elamrani-Jamal and to which we shall return shortly¹⁰.

There remains the historical difficulty of tracing the origins of the *ihbār* procedure. Nothing conclusive can be said about it here, in the absence of any strong indications either of a foreign or an indigenous origin, but it is certainly a problem which deserves a proper investigation.

Turning now to the copula, it must be said at the outset that there are serious historical problems here too. Surprisingly the word *copula* is not a term of classical Greek or Latin grammar, nor are its place and date of entry into medieval European grammar precisely known¹¹. And finally there is the fundamental fact that whatever may be the history of the *rābiṭa* concept in Arabic linguistic analysis (see below), it is never at any time equated¹² with a verb "to be" or indeed any notion of existence, for the reason already noted by Elamrani-Jamal above, that Arabic equational sentences do not assert but simply presume the existence of their subject.

As elaborated among the philosophers and grammarians, there were two different kinds of problem to be solved, firstly what was the formal, syntactic link between subject and predicate and secondly what was the nature of the semantic, ontological link between these two. The structural possibilities reduce to three, exemplified in the following:

¹⁰ See A. A. Elamrani-Jamal, *Logique aristotélicienne et grammaire arabe*, Paris 1983, p. 139.

¹¹ The first appearance in Europe is attributed to Abelard, Elamrani-Jamal, *ibid.* p. 130, note 5.

¹² The word has been chosen carefully: certainly some affinities were perceived between Indo-European verbs "to be" and the hypothetical *rābiṭa*, but there the similarity ends, cf. Elamrani-Jamal, *Logique aristotélicienne* p. 134.

- 6a Predicate = an “underived noun” (*ism ġāmīd*)

zaydun raġulun

- 6b Predicate = a sentence

zaydun māta abūhu

zaydun ġāriyatuhu dāhibatun

- 6c Predicate = a “derived noun” (*ism muštaqq*)

zaydun qā'imun

The first two present no difficulty. In 6a the semantic relationship is one of identity as the paraphrase *huwa huwa* for this type illustrates¹³, and there is no need to look for a formal syntactic connection between subject and predicate (note that there is also no need to seek any element denoting the existence of either component since that is taken for granted). In 6b the problem is solved by the explicit connecting pronoun (*rābit(a)* or ‘*ā'id* in the conventional terminology) which establishes the predicate as referring to the particular subject in accordance with the normal syntax of the *ġumla dāt waġħayn* (the inverted verbal sentence *ar-riġālu dāhabū* can also be regarded as a variant of the *ġumla dāt waġħayn* in which the topic/subject happens to be the same as the agent of the verb in the predicate)¹⁴. The second example in 6b is a case where the *ġumla suġrā* of the predicate is itself a sentence of type 6c, and will be discussed under that heading.

¹³ *Huwa huwa* is one of Sibawayhi's representations of the basic sentence types, cf. *Kitāb*, ed. H. Derenbourg, Paris 1881-89, vol. I, p. 237 (= Būlāq ed. I, 275).

¹⁴ In medieval grammar it became axiomatic that all complex predicates contained a pronoun referring to the subject, cf. M. G. Carter, “The term *sabab* in Arabic grammar”, *ZAL* 15, 1985, p. 62.

In 6c the predicate is neither an underived noun identical with the subject, nor a sentence containing an overt pronoun referring to the subject. The philosophers recognized the potential inconsistencies and were perturbed by them: the underived noun was by definition resistant to further analysis and all 6a type sentences reduce to *hurwa hurwa* as already mentioned, but the derived noun, with its manifestly verbal concordance (as the pattern sentence *a-qā'imun iz-zaydāni*, with singular form of the participle in a verbal position is meant to display)¹⁵ was a challenge. Orthographically it may be a single word but semantically it is a complex notion.

al-Fārābī's discussion of the problem comes to perhaps the only possible conclusion that there must, in fact, be some element which connects the subject *zaydun* with the predicate *qā'imun*¹⁶, and he appropriately calls this element *rābiṭa*, a term which he was apparently the first to use¹⁷. His explanation is doubtless the product of a mixture of influences. From the Arab grammarians he could draw on a well-established theory that derived nouns (including the whole category of adjectives) are equivalent to verbal predicates, i.e. *zaydun ḥasanun* is synonymous with *yahṣunu zaydun*: in this way the phenomenon of adjectival concord is accounted for in terms of the agent pronouns either visible or concealed in verbs¹⁸. From the Greek grammatical ideas to which he was

¹⁵ This is an example quoted by the grammarians in support of the claim that *qā'imun* may observe the rules of verbal concord when preceding its noun, see M. G. Carter, *Arab Linguistics*, Amsterdam 1981, p. 189.

¹⁶ See A. A. Elamrani-Jamal, "Verbe, copule, nom dérivé (*fī'l, kalima, ism muṣtaqq*) dans les commentaires arabes du Peri Hermeneias d'Aristote, avec un texte inédit d'Ibn Ruṣd", in Kees [C. H. M.] Versteegh and M. G. Carter (eds), *Studies in the History of Arabic Linguistics II, Proceedings of the 2nd Symposium on the History of Arabic Grammar, Nijmegen, 27 April - 1 May 1987*, Amsterdam and Philadelphia 1990, pp. 151-164.

¹⁷ Elamrani-Jamal, *Logique aristotélicienne* p. 131.

¹⁸ For this reason adjectives are terms "quasi-participial" (*muṣabbaha bi-smi l-fā'il*) in certain contexts. It is not the purpose of this paper to review the *ḍam'ir mustatir* theory, but the examples in 2a, 2b and 3a show clearly how it was necessary to infer the existence of an agent pronoun in unmarked verbs. Note, too, that *anā l-muṭī...* is often expressed

indirectly exposed he was probably also aware of the intermediate status of the verbal noun (*maṣḍar*) which might have suggested to him the possibility of an agent being concealed in a noun in the same way as it is in several Arabic verb forms as a *ḍamīr mustatir*¹⁹.

The combination of these ideas and al-Fārābī's own logical imperatives produced the conclusion just mentioned, that indeed there was some invisible connecting element in *qā'imun* linking it to *zaydun*. This element, being invisible, was also entirely inferential. We must beware of misinterpreting the paraphrase **zaydun huwa qā'imun*²⁰ as implying that there was a real pronoun either concealed or, worse still, merely elided in *zaydun qā'imun*. This would be a gross error: in the first place **zaydun huwa qā'imun* is not a natural Arabic sentence at all (we are not talking of the emphatic appositive *huwa* here), and the artificial *huwa* is on no account to be confused with the *ḍamīr al-faṣl*. In the second place it contradicts al-Fārābī's own argument, which is, that the linking element has no linguistic status beyond its ability to be paraphrased by the appropriate free pronoun. We shall see that for a number of reasons this is a perfectly sensible position.

It is hardly surprising that there was disagreement among the philosophers over the exact nature of the linking element²¹. al-Fārābī's interpretation of a word like *qā'imun* is that unlike *yaqūmu*, which is predicative by nature and contains a pronoun (whether hidden, as here, or not, as in a *yaqūmūna* etc.), *qā'imun* is unable to stand as a predicate

anā huwa l-mu'tī... when the hidden pronoun is externalized.

¹⁹ Cf. the discussion of the debate over the priority of verb and verbal noun in C. H. M. Versteegh, *Greek Elements in Arabic Linguistic Thinking*, Leiden 1977, p. 83f.

²⁰ Elamrani-Jamal, *Logique aristotélicienne*, p. 134. Interestingly enough, when the grammarians wish to externalize an agent pronoun in the participle they seem to prefer a different word order in the paraphrase, e.g. *marartu bi-raḡulin mā'ahu mra'atun dāribuhā huwa* placing the pronoun after the participle (Sibawayhi, *Kitāb I*, 208/243, cf. Carter, *ZAL* 1985 p. 58).

²¹ What follows is drawn from Elamrani-Jamal, *Logique aristotélicienne* p. 135f and the same writer's "Verbe, copule, nom dérivé.." *op. cit.* note 16.

unless some connecting feature is assumed (note that in *qā'imūna* for example, the *ūna* suffix is not a pronoun but a plural marker, and the linking element is still to be inferred). al-Fārābī is here taking into account the fact that *qā'imun* also occurs in other functions than predication, unlike verbs, which can only be predicates. However, his ideas were subsequently attacked by Ibn Rušd, who makes a different kind of distinction between verbs and participles, namely that verbs predicate extrinsically (*muğarraḍ*) of their subjects while participles predicate intrinsically of their subjects and inherently denote the meaning in the object they qualify.

Ibn Rušd sees a contradiction in al-Fārābī's position: if, as al-Fārābī claims, the reference of *qā'imun* to its subject is different from the linking element it is assumed to contain, then the same word is both subject (by reference) and predicate (by *rābita*) of itself. Conversely, if predication is only by linking element then the quality predicated need not be intrinsic to the subject but may be in the relationship of substance to accident, which Ibn Rušd will permit for the verb but not the participle. We cannot know to what extent this line of argument is determined by strictly logical considerations but it is clear that there are parallels with the discussions of the nature of God's attributes which raise the same difficulties in hylomorphic terms. When Ibn Rušd insists on the unicity of the *qā'imun* word class we must assume he was at least aware of its implications for theology even if we cannot say that this was the reason for his view.

By way of conclusion to this section a short digression may be permitted on two contemporary problems of the copula. It should be obvious that any modern treatment of Arabic syntax which treats the verb *kāna* as a copula is a lamentable confusion of two entirely unrelated syntactic systems. The only medieval grammarian who ever made this equation probably took it more or less directly from Greek and his

views were never generally adopted²². Secondly it should be equally obvious that the growing tendency to use a *damīr al-faṣl* in modern Arabic *as if it were a copula* is an awesome demonstration of the cultural impact of Western syntax on Arabic thought patterns which has now become so ingrained that it is unlikely that any Arab is aware of the extreme irony of referring to the *damīr al-faṣl* (whose purpose is to keep things apart) as a copula (whose purpose is to link things together)²³!

Returning to the topic in hand, we now consider the controversy over the attributes of God in the light of the above information. Two solid points may be cited as a foundation for the approach taken by this paper, the first being the generally acknowledged fact that theological arguments in Arabic are inescapably linguistic in nature. This contention need not be elaborated, it surely suffices to appeal to the authority of Michel Allard²⁴.

The second point is rather more delicate and crucial for the present case. It is that in Ašārite theological debate the attributes of God are seemingly always expressed in participial form: thus when God's knowledge, for example, is under discussion He is said to be *ʿālimun*²⁵. We presume that this preference for the participle is not a random choice.

²² az-Zaḡḡāḡī (d. 949 A.D.), in his *Ġumal* (ed. Muhammad Ben Cheneb, Paris 1957), p. 53 refers to *kāna* and its related verbs as *hurūf*, which has evidently been taken by later grammarians as meaning that they are "like *rawābiʿ*", q.v. in M. G. Carter, *Arab Linguistics*, Amsterdam 1981, p. 208, where this view is ascribed to "the Kūfans".

²³ Since this paper was submitted for publication the present writer has examined the copula problem in more detail, cf. M. G. Carter, "Copula in Arabic Grammar", to appear in the Proceedings of the 17th Congress of the Union of European Arabists and Islamicists, St. Petersburg, August 22-25 1994.

²⁴ M. Allard, *Le problème des attributs divins dans la doctrine d'Ašāri et ses premiers grands disciples*, Beirut 1965, passim.

²⁵ Cf. Allard, *op. cit.* pp. 115, 197, 241 etc. In the same work, p. 115, it is mentioned that al-Ġubbāʿī preferred participles to nouns, and cf pp. 197-199 for more on the reasons for this.

As it happens, verbs would be a singularly inappropriate vehicle for expressing God's attributes. Whether we follow the indigenous grammatical tradition or the Aristotelian categorization which was later absorbed into Arabic grammar, there is an indissoluble connection between verbs and *time* which rules them out as useful tools for formulating ideas about God²⁶.

Moreover it is not so much what God *does* which interests the theologian but what God *is*, and it is precisely this concept for which Arabic lacks a verb! Admittedly adjectives could be used, but all adjectives are reducible to participles anyway, and there is also the objective fact that many of God's attributes are already expressed in the Qur'ān as participles which do not have truly adjectival equivalents.

Nouns, on the other hand, are used in theological discourse: we read *lahu 'ilmun* and the like in the context of God's attributes. But we must be very careful to distinguish the logical status of such expressions. A closer look reveals the unbridgeable gap between *huwa 'ālimun* and *lahu 'ilmun*: both refer to God, but in *huwa 'ālimun* we have a statement directly about God while in *lahu 'ilmun* we merely have a statement about *huwa 'ālimun* which is thus of an entirely different order. In fact the periphrastic *lahu 'ilmun* is completely unacceptable as a definitive theological formulation since it blatantly externalizes the very dualism which was at the root of the problem. It contains two linguistically and semantically discrete entities and, to make matters worse, an explicit relational term²⁷.

²⁶ On the built-in dualism of verbs cf. B. Weiss, "Subject and predicate in the thinking of the Arabic philologists", *JAOS* 105, 1985, 613 (the article has many other useful insights relevant to the topic of the present paper, especially the notion of the "linking symbolism" in predication).

²⁷ It is to the credit of the theologians that they apparently did not consider resorting to the nonsensical **huwa 'ilmun* to escape from this predicament. No matter how much they may have wanted to prove that God's nature and attributes were identical they could never bring themselves to do violence to the common sense enshrined in normal linguistic usage. This would have immediately caused them to be ejected from the linguistic community, either by ridicule or silence.

From what has just been said it may well appear that the theologians were compelled to use the participle in the absence of any acceptable alternatives (which would conform very nicely with the Ašcarite doctrine of *kasb!*), but even the inevitable must be plausible, and the purpose of this paper is to show that there was already a solid grammatical and philosophical tradition to predispose the theologians to favour the participle in this particular context.

The participle has all the features necessary to solve the theologians' difficulties: it denotes attributes intrinsically without any formal dualism, and unlike verbs, which also denote attributes, it has no reference to time²⁸. It is thus a perfect linguistic analogue of the divine *tawhīd*, a unity of subject and attributes that are integral with its essence. The theological statement *huwa 'ālimun* has exactly the same structure as Sībawayhi's symbolic sentence pattern *huwa huwa*: the subject and predicate are identical, the latter however is enhanced by an attribute joined by an invisible link. This kind of sentence can thus be restated symbolically in the form *huwa (huwa + šifa)*, where the bracketed element is as much a single entity as *huwa* by itself. The obvious echo of the Old Testament "I am that I am" seems worth mentioning at this point, as *huwa 'ālimun* in the end means no more than "He is what He is" until we ascertain the real nature of His attributes.

It was, after all, the Ašcarīs who maintained that since God spoke to us in human language His words and our discourse about Him are both subject to linguistic criteria no matter how transcendental the themes. Otherwise, says al-Ašcarī himself, it would not matter what we or God said as it would all be equally meaningless²⁹. What this paper has tried to show is that the Ašcarite position is in fact fully consistent with the grammatical and philosophical level of enquiry which, as hardly needs proving, was already the context out of which Ašcarism

²⁸ Here we must disagree with Weiss, *JAOs* 1985, p. 617, that the particle shares with the verb the function of attributing a *ḥadaṭ* to a *dāt*. There is no "event" in the participle: all it implies is eternal potential, cf. the "Kūfan" term *fīl dā'im* for the participle.

²⁹ M. Allard, *Problèmes des attributs* p. 182.

evolved. We may invert al-Aš'arī's proposition and claim that if any of the theological arguments had been incompatible with or not up to the standard of the very sophisticated grammatical theories of the time they would have been totally rejected³⁰. The use of the participle, therefore, is not just a theological convenience but a recognition that theology must conform to the principles of the language sciences as well as those of abstract thought³¹.

³⁰ This may look like a truism, but it is surprising how often the linguistic contribution to theological argument is downgraded to "mere grammar" (G. E. Hourani, *Reason and Tradition in Islam*, Cambridge 1985, p. 120) to quote one example.

³¹ Two recent works, F. M. Zimmermann, *Al-Farabi's Commentary and Short Treatise on Aristotle's De Interpretatione*, Oxford 1981 (pb. 1987) and S. B. Abed, *Aristotelian Logic and the Arabic Language in Alfarabi*, Albany 1991, contain extensive discussions of predication, copula and the participial form. However, neither author addresses the specific issue of predication tests in relation to divine predicates.

PHILOSOPHICAL COMMENTARIES AND POPULAR CULTURE IN ISLAM

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Philosophy was introduced into the Islamic world in the third century A.H. (the ninth century A.D.), an expression in part of the cultural efflorescence of the period, tolerated and even encouraged by the ruling 'Abbāsid circles in Baghdad. It is worth recalling that al-Kindī (d. 870), the first philosopher in Islam, was patronized by the caliphs al-Ma'mūn and al-Mu'tasim, and that he was the tutor of the latter's son. A number of al-Kindī's treatises are dedicated to the nobility of his day, and they are written as responses to queries put to him on scientific and philosophical matters.

Though his patrons and auditors may have been genuinely interested in such issues, they were not for the most part equipped to follow elaborate or sophisticated explanations, and al-Kindī wisely refrained from boring them overly with such. He often wrote essays of relatively short length, some just a few pages long, geared to the limited education and understanding of the addressee, whose limitations al-Kindī unhesitatingly proclaimed. *Fa-hādā fīmā sa'alta kāfin bi-ḥasb ma'wḍi'ika min an-nazr* ("Of what you inquired about, this, then is sufficient, corresponding to your attainment [literally, "place"] in speculation")¹, is a not uncharacteristic closing remark of his. al-Kindī's successors thought scarcely more of him than he thought of his contemporaries, viewing his oeuvre as extensive but limited in depth and philosophical acumen. Once the Aristotelian corpus in translation had been assimilated, al-Kindī's initial response to it seemed inadequate, to later generations.

¹ Cf. M. Abū Rīda, ed., *Rasā'il al-Kindī al-falsafīyya* (Cairo, vol. I, 1950; vol. II, 1953), I, 311. Cf. further, R. Walzer, "New Studies On Al-Kindī", *Greek into Arabic* (Oxford, 1962), 179.

Overlooked, perhaps, was his real achievement, that of introducing philosophy into a culture that had not known it previously, and which was of divided minds as to its suitability. Overlooked, too, it seems, was the distinction to be found in al-Kindī's writings between essays written to order, and longer, more thorough works on the same theme. It is in the latter kind of treatise that we find the arguments which are often treated more dogmatically and more superficially in the shorter works. al-Kindī's success in introducing philosophy into Islamic culture may well be due in part to this distinction which he drew between philosophy in a somewhat lighter and more popular mode, though still *falsafa*; and philosophy proper, or at least as proper as he could make it.

Whatever one may think of al-Kindī's philosophical abilities, his longer treatises do have the merit of arguing *in extenso* for a given position, using arguments which are mostly philosophical in character. In his book *On First Philosophy (Fī l-falsafa l-ūlā)*² and in other longish treatises, he works out the logical entailments of concepts which derive directly from a philosophical lexicon formed by Aristotelian and Neoplatonic texts. Though his definitions of terms may be presented as so many grand pronouncements, and his premises appear to be dictated by a philosophical tradition accepted almost *en bloc*³, he is not prepared, in the longer works, to dictate the conclusions which follow from these premises, preferring to reason them out syllogistically, as best he could.

al-Kindī's shorter treatises, in comparison, and particularly those which are but a few pages in length, tend to state their claims in summary and mostly dogmatic terms, presenting philosophy as another genre of teachings to be accepted on authority. The auditor or reader of

² Ed. Abū Rīda (*op. cit.*, I, 81-162; trans. A. Ivry, *Al-Kindi's Metaphysics* (Albany 1974), 55-114; analysis of the argument, pp. 11-21 and *passim*).

³ Cf. al-Kindī's *Treatise on Definitions*, ed. Abū Rīda, I, 163-179; S. M. Stern, "Notes on Al-Kindī's Treatise on Definitions". *JRAS* (1959), 32-43.

a short composition⁴ is being told what to believe in science or philosophy, not why it is necessary to so believe. At best, al-Kindī favours his audience with some slight argument, offering a partial account of his reasons for holding a given view. Accordingly, these essays serve essentially as brief digests of the longer works on the same theme, and may be seen as a popular gloss or commentary to them. As such they complement the more serious work, and extend its teachings to wider circles. If the shorter treatises succeeded to stimulate people to inquire further, so much the better; if not, they caused no harm, from al-Kindī's viewpoint. They did not teach false doctrines, or misrepresent the author's real position.

Of course, one may well question the wisdom of teaching philosophy in the manner of the short treatise, essentially as a series of truths to be learned, without fully demonstrating the *technē* which renders these truths true; and al-Kindī's recourse to this didactic approach reflects his social position more than his status as a philosopher. However, the *falāsifa* in Islam from al-Kindī's time on occupied a social position of some significance, and the shorter type of treatise assured their acceptance in the broader circles on which their livelihood – and very life – usually depended.

An example of this kind of short treatise may be had in al-Kindī's "Treatise on the True Agent, the First and Perfect, and On the Agent Which is Deficient and Metaphorically (Predicated)". *Risālat al-Kindī fī l-fā'il al-ḥaqq al-awwal at-tāmm wa-l-fā'il an-nāqiṣ alladī huwa bi-l-mağāz*⁵. The "true, first and perfect" agent is of course God, "the Creator, Agent of all that is" (or "the universe"), *al-bārī, fā'il al-kull*. God is

⁴ No one term necessarily serves al-Kindī for this genre of writing, though *kitāb* by itself is reserved for the longer works. *Kalām*, a term which is used sparingly for this purpose, does seem to denote a brief "word" on a given subject. but *risāla* may stand for a long or short treatise. Cf. the titles listed in the Table of Contents of Abū Rīdā's edition, *op. cit.*, I, v, vi; II, 153. See too the comprehensive list of titles prepared by G. Flügel, *Al-Kindī: genannt "der Philosoph der Araber"*, (Leipzig 1857; reprint Liechtenstein: Nendeln, 1966), 36-52.

⁵ Ed. Abū Rīdā, I, 182-184.

designated as "agent", *fā'il*, in that He alone is capable of performing that kind of action which truly merits being called an action, or agency, *al-fi'l*, viz., creation from nothing, *ta'yīs al-aysāt 'an laysa*.

This unique action, however, is called *ibdā'* rather than *fi'l*, since the latter term is used, if metaphorically, for other forms of activity as well, al-Kindī knows. These other actions involve the agent in the effect of its action, whereas God's actions do not affect Him in any way whatsoever, presumably. In the causal chain of events which al-Kindī then outlines, God alone is "the agent which is never a recipient of action", *fā'ilun lā munfā'ilun battatan*.

A causal chain of events does exist, however, for al-Kindī, so that God's agency over the world is shared, to a degree, with other agents. Thus, the creation of the world from nothing is an action unique to God, but the world He has created possesses, *pace* al-Kindī, many real, and not metaphorical agents. God may be *fā'il al-kull*, the agent or cause of all that is in the universe, but He is, as al-Kindī acknowledges, a remote or mediated cause for all but the first effect of His action.

While the treatise goes on for a short while to make further distinctions in the concept of agency, we may pause here and ask what al-Kindī has sought to do in this brief *risāla*, and what he has not done. It seems clear that he wishes to extol God's uniqueness as Creator of the world, where creation is *ex nihilo*, *'an laysa*. This action is of such unique greatness that it alone qualifies to be called an "action" truly, even as its "agent" is the only one fully deserving of the name.

In making these assertions, al-Kindī distinguishes radically between God and the world, and between His actions and all other causes. Purportedly, God is not affected by, i.e., He is not involved in a causal relation with the effects of his actions, though He clearly is the cause of these effects, directly or remotely. al-Kindī does not explain here how God can be both involved and totally unaffected, any more than he explains how creation from nothing is possible, logically. After all, defining *ibdā'* does not render it real. God's status as a unique agent is proclaimed arbitrarily, and the term *fi'l* is both rejected and rescued for further philosophical use. The very meaning of metaphorical discourse,

of equivocal language, is taken for granted, though an understanding of his intention in using the term is critical for judging whether al-Kindī is to be taken seriously as a philosopher.

al-Kindī attempts to address all these issues in his treatise "On first Philosophy" and in other works, but in this short essay he has simply stated the conclusions he has reached elsewhere. As found here, his remarks also have the effect of affirming traditional views of God's unique nature, of his creation of the world, and of His governance of it; while at the same time, he explicitly indicates to his audience that he believes in a world which, once created, functions along physical. i.e., natural principles of cause and effect. al-Kindī's world is thus more akin to that of the philosophers than to that of the *mutakallimūn*, his main adversaries, though his differences with them are somewhat muted in this presentation. Here as elsewhere in his shorter pieces, al-Kindī is not interested in drawing attention to the challenges or problems which philosophy can present to traditional beliefs, or to theology; but in highlighting the areas of agreement and sympathy with tradition which philosophy offers.

al-Kindī is able to do this because he was himself persuaded of the harmony of philosophy and religion, where religious belief determines philosophical tenets. His successors were similarly convinced of the agreement of philosophy and religion, but with philosophical premisses often determining the interpretation of religious beliefs. Thus *ibdā'*, for example, is still employed by later philosophers to describe the act of creation, but it is not a creation from nothing, as al-Kindī understood it⁶. The "created" world is ever more self-explicable and self-reliant. God's uniqueness notwithstanding. Philosophy had come of age, and in its maturity was prepared to exhibit its strength to all interested parties.

Not all interested parties were disinterested future philosophers, however, and the philosophers had to temper their enthusiasm for their profession with professions of conformity to religious ideals, or at least to avoid statements antagonistic to such beliefs. A good example of this

⁶ Cf. Walzer, *op. cit.*, p. 189.

may be found in the writing of Abū Naṣr al-Fārābī (257-339/870-950), *al-mu'allim at-tānī*, the "second teacher" (after Aristotle) of philosophy for the Muslims. Not all of the compositions of al-Fārābī are equally discrete, and some, such as his *Kitāb al-milla*⁷ are shockingly daring in their depiction of religion in sociological terms. In general, al-Fārābī's objectivity in discussing religious phenomena is striking, though that does not necessarily imply disbelief in the tenets of Islam. With him, however, philosophy has gone well beyond theological concerns, though when the two intersect, he is usually careful to avoid giving offense to traditional beliefs.

A good example of this may be seen in what may be regarded as al-Fārābī's Long and Short commentaries on Aristotle's *De Interpretatione*, *Kitāb al-'ibāra*⁸. These compositions are part of al-Fārābī's careful elucidation of Aristotle's *Organon*, which, as found in his Hellenistic predecessors, includes Porphyry's *Eisagoge*. In relation to that latter work, al-Fārābī wrote what amounts to an introduction to an introduction to logic, which itself is regarded as the propaedeutic or preliminary training required for one to do philosophy responsibly.

al-Fārābī thus takes his reader by the hand and leads him from the initial stages of the philosophical pursuit to its final pronouncements, in logic and beyond. The stages and areas of philosophy in which al-Fārābī writes are usually treated a number of times, in essays and books of varying length and difficulty. It has been a challenge to scholars to sort out the differences found in parallel works, and to evaluate the various emphases, omissions and additions with which al-Fārābī confronts the reader. Whatever the moral al-Fārābī wished his

⁷ Ed. M. Maḥdī, Beirut 1968.

⁸ The short commentary has been edited by M. Küyel, *Kitāb bārī armīn iyās ayy al-'ibāra*, and published in the Turkish journal *Araştırma* (Ankara 1966), IV, 35-85. The long commentary has been edited by W. Kutsch and S. Marrow, *Šarḥ al-Fārābī li-kitāb Aristūṭālīs fī l-'ibāra*, Beirut 1960. Both commentaries have been translated by F. W. Zimmermann, *Al-Farabi's Commentary and Short Treatise on Aristotle's De Interpretatione*, London 1981.

sophisticated reader to receive from his frequently mixed messages, it would appear that in his shorter treatises and commentaries he sought common ground with the layman who was educated but not expert in philosophy. In his surveys and shorter works, al-Fārābī could convey a greater sense of agreement between competing ideas, be they religious or philosophical, than he could in his more comprehensive compositions. If he did not sacrifice his principles in these shorter works, neither did he fully acquaint the uninitiated reader with the complexities of the issues being discussed.

Thus, his Short Treatise on the *De Interpretatione* covers much the same ground as his much longer *Šarḥ* on the subject. It is mostly a technical manual, and avoids asserting the larger philosophical justification of logic which its English translator has so well described⁹. al-Fārābī prefers here to offer definitions and clear-cut, brief explanations of the terms and concepts which Aristotle and his Hellenistic commentators treated under this rubric. Thus we learn what constitutes significant expressions, both simple and compound; what the structure of language is in itself and in relation to time and circumstances; what the distinction is between univocal and non-univocal meanings of terms, and that for al-Fārābī metaphors are to be excluded from scientific discourse¹⁰. Propositions are discussed in terms of their internal structures and in terms of the type of predication they exhibit, with the relationships of the various forms of affirmative and negative predication fully outlined.

This technical disquisition changes its tone only when al-Fārābī discusses modal propositions and the truth status of "future matters of possibility", *al-umūr al-mumkina al-mustaqbala*¹¹. Here the relevance to issues which the community of believers felt strongly about has probably led al-Fārābī to expand a bit upon his theme. Unlike events in the past or present which, in his words, "distribute truth and falsity

⁹ Cf. Zimmermann's introduction, pp. xxiv-xlvi.

¹⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 231.

¹¹ Cf. Zimmermann, p. 244, Küyel, p. 79.

intrinsically definitely" (*alā t-tahṣīl*), future possible events, "though they do distribute truth and falsity between themselves, do so intrinsically indefinitely". That is, we do not know whether a possible event will or will not transpire, and whether our claim about it is true or false, because neither condition attaches to it definitely. It is the nature of possible events that they are not necessary, and therefore no definite claim about them can be certain, as long as they are future events.

The passage from future possibility to present reality is described as a change from "nonexistence to existence", *min al-ʿadam ilā l-wuḡūd*¹², a radical change which deprives future existence of any substantive existential status. The future is not known with certainty because it does not exist yet.

Though this is al-Fārābī's conclusion here he does not belabour it, preferring to dwell on the unwelcome consequences of assuming definite knowledge of future events, which is tantamount to asserting their necessary nature. In a world in which nothing is intrinsically possible, he insists, there would be no significance to will or choice, or to deliberate actions, in terms of changing the future. God Himself is seen as constrained by the necessity of such a universe, unable to change anything in it.

The limitations on God's omnipotence which this last assertion entails is brought by al-Fārābī as the final argument for a position which he describes as "self-contradictory, impossible and absurd", *muḥāla ḡayr mumkina wa-ṣunʿa*¹³. The paradoxical truth which he wishes to leave with the reader of this Short Treatise is that possibilities are real, just because they do not exist (except as such). There are events which are contingent, as long as they have not occurred, and it is this element of contingency which is a condition of civilization in general, and of ethical behaviour in particular.

¹² Zimmermann, p. 246, Küyel, p. 81.

¹³ Zimmermann, p. 247, Küyel, p. 84.

In the *Šarḥ* to this Aristotelian text, al-Fārābī also expresses his awareness of the ethical and theological challenge which a strict determinism holds, but he acknowledges there as well the popular belief, asserted also by most *mutakallimūn*, in God's foreknowledge. Thus, the dilemma which faces God's omnipotence in a necessary world is countered by the problem which is posed to His omniscience in a possible world. To believe that God does not know things before they come to be is, in al-Fārābī's words, "absurd and unacceptable. All religions have it differently, and it would seem a very detrimental belief for people to hold"¹⁴. al-Fārābī therefore seeks for "a solution to these dilemmas which does not entail anything objectionable in relation to what exists or is commonly accepted or (what is believed by) religions", *lā bi-ḥasb al-amr al-mawǧūd wa-lā bi-ḥasb al-mašhūr wa-lā bi-ḥasb al-milal*¹⁵.

al-Fārābī's solution is rather problematic, for in it he attempts to distinguish between events which are possible in themselves, and statements about these events which are necessary propositions. The necessity in the one is not seen as obliging a change in the character of the other. Thus, for God to know (and in that sense say) what e.g. Zayd will do on the morrow does not, supposedly, deprive Zayd of having the theoretical possibility, seen as a real possibility, of doing otherwise; though of course Zayd will not do other than as God knows.

This solution is, as I have said, problematic, though it is also traditional. Whether al-Fārābī himself was convinced of its plausibility is an open question, particularly since his reasons for offering it are partially logical and partially utilitarian, or political. In a related problem, that of the status of possible events which God knows will never exist, belief in the possibility of their existence is said to be "more helpful", *anfāʿ*, from a religious point of view than otherwise¹⁶.

¹⁴ Zimmermann, p. 92 f., Kutsch & Marrow, p. 98.

¹⁵ Kutsch & Marrow, *ibid.*, and cf. Zimmermann's translation, p. 93 and note 1.

¹⁶ Zimmermann, p. 96; Kutsch & Marrow, p. 100.

One may question the sincerity of al-Fārābī's position further, in view of the fact that he avoids raising the whole issue of Divine omniscience in his Short Commentary. Though the position taken there is less complete than a traditional Muslim would like, it upholds certain traditional beliefs, while maintaining a discrete silence about others. Note also that while God's omnipotence is supposedly defended, it is also limited, as it were, to what exists, though that includes potential as well as actual existents.

This particular short treatise thus alerts us to the fact that longer is not necessarily better. Still, it does seem true that the shorter treatise and commentary, by its very nature, treats the issues more simply and superficially, offering in that sense a more popular version of that which is being communicated.

There is none to compare with Averroes when it comes to philosophical commentaries and to commentaries of diverse length, though hitherto there has been very little comparative study of them, that is, of Short, Middle and Long commentaries to the same work, the various *ḡumūʿ*, *talāḥīṣ* and *ṣurūḥ* which in all comprise some thirty-eight commentaries¹⁷. The assumption has been that Averroes' teachings on a given work are uniform, an assumption that has yet to be tested. It is known that Averroes changed his mind on the nature of the material or hylic intellect, *al-ʿaql al-ḥayūlānī*, after completing his Short Treatise, or Epitome, on the *De Anima*¹⁸, but little else in it has been compared to his remarks in the celebrated Long Commentary of that work¹⁹. I have now had occasion to compare the latter work with Averroes' Middle

¹⁷ Cf. H. Wolfson, "Plan for the Publication of a *Corpus Commentariorum Averrois in Aristotelem*", *Studies in the History of Philosophy and Religion*, ed. I. Twersky, G. H. Williams (Cambridge, Ma. 1973), I, 433 f.

¹⁸ Ed. A. al-Ahwānī, *Talḥīṣ* (!) *Kitāb an-Nafs*, Cairo 1950.

¹⁹ Ed. F. S. Crawford, *Averrois Cordubensis: Commentarium Magnum in Aristotelis de Anima libros*, Cambridge, Ma. 1953.

Commentary, or *Talḥīs*, in preparing the *Talḥīs* for publication²⁰. I have discussed this hitherto unedited work elsewhere²¹, and can here only outline those characteristics it possesses which qualify it as a "popular" work.

It should be evident by now that "popular" for the philosophers is not tantamount to "vulgar", in the classical or common usage of that term. The audience even for "popular" philosophical treatises was limited, and highly selective. Though not philosophically adept, the auditor or reader of these treatises was an educated and literate person. The author, correspondingly, did not need to condescend to his public or overly simplify his material. At the same time, there was little to be gained in a rigorous and overly demanding presentation, or one which assumed too great a familiarity with the philosophical tradition and its representatives.

Averroes' Middle Commentary on the *De Anima* seems geared to such an audience. It is an extensive work, some 155 pages in folio²², yet small in comparison to the Long Commentary. Unlike that longer work, the Middle Commentary does not bring every word of Aristotle's text, and its comments are more selective and more brief. It is apparent that Averroes has consulted the Long Commentary in writing the Middle, for many of his remarks in the latter are excised *verbatim* from the former. Themistius' commentary on the *De Anima* in its Arabic

²⁰ The Arabic edition has been published by the Egyptian Academy of Letters and Supreme Council of Culture, Cairo. A partial edition and German translation, comprising Averroes' commentary on *De An.* III 9-11, has been published by H. Gätje, "Aristoteles Semitico-Latinus: Das Kapitel über das Begehren aus dem Mittleren Kommentar des Averroes zur Schrift über die Seele", *Verhandelingen der Koninklijke Nederlandse Akademie van Wetenschappen, AFD. Letterkunde Nieuwe Reeks* 129 (Amsterdam, Oxford & New York 1985), pp. 60-79. Cf. too Gätje's general comments on this text, and on Averroes as commentator, pp. 1-58.

²¹ Cf. "Averroes' Middle Commentary on the *De Anima*", in the *Proceedings of the Eighth International Congress of Medieval Philosophy: Knowledge and the Sciences in Medieval Philosophy*, ed. R. Tyorinoja, Helsinki, 1990, III. 79-86.

²² In the Paris ms. hébreu. 1009, one of the two Judaeo-Arabic mss. extant.

translation by Ishāq b. Ḥunayn is another source for Averroes in the Middle Commentary, and it is consulted both in itself and as it had already been used by him in the Long Commentary. Ishāq's translation of the *De Anima* itself is quoted also, both as it appears in Themistius and by itself, presumably (the original being lost, but now largely retrievable, through Themistius' and Averroes' use of it).

Averroes borrows freely from these sources and rearranges them to a degree, occasionally adding new thoughts, besides omitting old ones. The entire *mélange* is presented, however, with less than scrupulous care for acknowledging its sources. Aristotle is explicitly quoted often enough, but not always, and some *qālas* are not his, though they claim to be. It is clear that the issue of attribution is secondary to the subject matter under discussion, in Averroes' eyes, and that past sources all blend into a present unified reality. This is well suited for the presumed audience of this work, which would not have cared particularly for a detailed acknowledgement of each source, but was interested in having Averroes' explanation of the issues presented in as self-contained a manner as was possible. Admittedly, this approach fits a general indifference to acknowledging one's sources that is not uncommon in medieval philosophy, where the universality of the truth made it seem unnecessary to recognize publicly one's predecessors. However, the Middle, and certainly the Short Commentary, go further in this direction than the Long Commentary, so that this attitude may also be taken to be a function of the genre of composition under discussion. Averroes even goes so far in the Middle Commentary as to refer often in general terms only to Aristotle's other works, reserving specific mention of them for the Long Commentary.

It is probably Averroes' awareness of this same audience which leads him to minimize mention of the Presocratics with whom Aristotle takes issue in the *De Anima*, for Averroes knew full well that such names meant little to the readers of the Middle Commentary. The Greek world of personal names and (occasional) places thus figures less prominently in the Middle Commentary, and in a variety of ways a more neutral ambience is suggested.

The most striking difference between the Middle and Long Commentaries is the absence in the Middle of the two extended discussions which Averroes has in the Long Commentary on the nature of the intellect, both in its active and passive states²³. This is the doctrine of monopsychism for which Averroes was celebrated, and denounced, in the Latin West, and which probably contributed to the demise of Aristotelian philosophy in the Muslim world. Averroes explores this issue in the Long Commentary at length, evaluating the positions of his predecessors, particularly Alexander of Aphrodisias and Themistius, in detail, and offers his own view of the relation of the Agent Intellect to the individual material intellect, having first defined the latter intellect in relation to the faculty of imagination. Averroes is much more reticent in these matters in the Middle Commentary, leaving his audience less agitated, perhaps, and more free to construe his meaning as it wished. He does speak his mind, but less loudly. Again, the genre of the commentary and the expectations of the public for which it was written allowed Averroes to take the steps he did, hoping probably to avoid controversy without sacrificing his integrity.

The appearance of phenomena such as these in Averroes' writings indicate that his Middle and Short treatises, as the shorter compositions of his predecessors, well deserve comparative study with the longer treatment he gave a given Aristotelian work. Within the Long Commentaries too, shorter treatments of the material may be found in the introductions and in the prefaces Averroes wrote to individual chapters, and this introductory material is not without political as well as philosophical significance²⁴. Such comparative studies will tell us a good deal about their authors and about the society in which they lived and which they served.

²³ Cf. Crawford. *op. cit.*, Commentary 5, pp. 387-413; Commentary 14, pp. 430-434.

²⁴ Cf., for example, Averroes' "prooemium" to *Metaphysics Lambda*, ed. M. Bouyges, *Averroes Tafsīr Mā ba'd at-ṭabīʿa* (Beirut 1938-48), 3:1393-1405, and see Ivry, "Averroes and the West: The First Encounter/Nonencounter". *A Straight Path: Studies in Medieval Philosophy and Culture*, ed. R. Link-Salinger et al. (Washington, D.C. 1988), pp. 153-158.

THE PREACHING OF ŠAYH AŠ-ŠA^cRĀWĪ: ITS POLITICAL SIGNIFICANCE

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Few people produce as many articles, read as many sermons and grant as many interviews as the Egyptian preacher Šayh aš-Ša^crāwī (*1911). It is amazing that in spite of his enormous output it is hard to pin him down within the spectrum of Egyptian religious politics. Recently, in May 1988, even *The Economist*¹ paid attention to the Šayh's religious fervor, saying: "He does not advocate violence. But his declarations encourage ... the militants".

There are, however, different sorts of Islamic militants in Egypt. According to Dr. Farag Fōda (*1945), an informed Egyptian observer of militant Islam, we have to discern three main tendencies² within militant Islam³: the traditional tendency, the revolutionary tendency and the affluent tendency. The word-play on 'revolutionary' in Arabic *tawrī*, and 'affluent' *tarwī*, should be noted, but the pun does not imply that Dr. Farag Fōda is not serious in proposing this threefold division.

The first group he wants to identify, the traditional islamists, are generally moderate, even though this group may have radical wings or occasionally produce secret terrorist cells. This group of traditional islamists, *al-ittiğāb al-islāmī at-taqlīdī*, is the continuation of Ḥasan al-Bannā's Muslim Brotherhood. In Dr. Farag Fōda's own words⁴:

¹ *The Economist*, May 21, 1988, p. 60.

² Dr. Farag Fōda, *Qabla s-suqūt*, Cairo 1985, pp. 159-166.

³ Apart from militant Islam the existence of two other elements within modern Islam has to be recognized: the quietist mystic Šūfī element and the orthodox legalist Azhar influence. The state usually supports and encourages its own mixture of these two factors.

⁴ Farag Fōda, *op. cit.*, 159.

“They always keep a delicate balance between their claim to be an organization that does not attempt to come into power and their being occupied with political activities that have coming into power as their only goal”.

Due to the particular circumstances of Egypt's political life since 1952 and due to the role of political parties in pre-revolutionary Egypt, the Organization of Muslim Brothers could not develop into a political party, so Dr. Farag Fōda thinks. He predicts, however, that the entry of representatives of the Muslim Brotherhood into the Egyptian parliament, for the first time in 1984, will have a positive effect on the gradual development of the traditional Islamists into a political party.

Dr. Farag Fōda calls the second tendency the revolutionary tendency. The main ideological characteristic of the different groups that constitute this tendency is their belief that modern society is *ġābilī*, ‘pre-Islamic’, or ‘pagan’, and should hence be fought by true Muslims the way the Prophet fought the Meccans in the years 622-630 AD.

Often this tendency is referred to as the *ġibād* movement. It achieved one of its most spectacular successes when some of its sympathizers assassinated President Sadat in 1981. The representatives of this tendency sincerely believe that God wants them to come into power. In order to obey God's special command to them they are willing to make use of force.

Most Western observers will agree with Dr. Farag Fōda's examination of these two component parts of contemporary Muslim radicalism in Egypt. His description of the third militant tendency which he assumes to be present, the affluent tendency, *al-ittiġāh at-tarwī*, will be less readily accepted. Nevertheless, Dr. Fōda's analysis may well be right.

The third tendency (*ittiġāh*) within contemporary Egyptian radical Islam, so Dr. Farag Fōda writes, is led by people who amassed their fortunes in Saudi Arabia or in Sadat's Egypt of unlimited economic possibilities during the good old days of the *infītāh*.

The people in this group believe that it is possible to establish a Saudi style regime in Egypt. They are in favor of freedom of trade, they

are against governmental price fixing (*tas'īr*), they want to limit all taxation to the Islamic *zakāt*-tax, and they regard opposition against their own views as an un-Islamic activity. They think they can keep the populace amused with the spectacles which public execution of the *ḥadd* punishments offer (flagellations and stonings for sexual offences, and amputations for theft). Under such a system, the poor should concentrate on the blessing they will receive in the hereafter. As the affluent faction sees it, it is an important duty of the State to distribute small gifts of sweets and fruits to the poor at the occasion of religious holidays.

To the partisans of this tendency, so Dr. Fōda writes, the Islamic state is nothing but an efficient instrument to increase their wealth. It is an instrument that is, more-over, well-equipped to guarantee political stability in the Middle East since its Islamic ideology puts it in a position which will supply it with a popular base, *qā'ida ša'biyya*, from where it may confidently attempt to quell all forms of political opposition. Since, especially in the Middle East, political stability is a commodity much sought after, it would be interesting to know whether certain agencies of certain super powers hold the same or similar views. Dr. Fōda is a professional consultant engaged in international consultancy concerning agricultural development projects. Hence he does not hesitate to give a sober evaluation of the strength and methods of each of the three tendencies which he assumes to be present. A theologian or an orientalist is trained to postpone giving value judgements, but such luxuries are alien to a professional consultant like Dr. Fōda.

The traditionalist tendency, Dr. Fōda explains, may be weak at this moment, but of the three existing tendencies it is the tendency that is best equipped for political action in an open democracy. In free elections they may easily get a majority, he believes. According to Dr. Fōda, the absence of any intellectual opposition to their views is one of their greatest assets.

The revolutionary tendency he regards, first of all, as dangerous. As Dr. Fōda sees it, their partisans are all between 15 and 35 years of age, they have ample opportunity to meet and organize, they have no responsibilities, they have no hope that even modest material ambitions

can ever be realized within present day society, they have no interest in discussing or analyzing the revolting details of a society they regard as corrupt all over, they believe that only armed struggle can put things right and make the world Islamic. Dr. Fōda calls them weak, but by the very nature of their methods and their aspirations it is impossible to assess their real strength.

According to Dr. Fōda, the strength of the third tendency is found in its low visibility. The militants of the affluent faction are strong and they work according to modern techniques. At present, they are the only effective lobby within Egyptian society, Dr. Fōda asserts.

The activities of the traditionalists do not bother them: these can only be helpful to their aims. Islamic revolutionary activities they regard with suspicion and hostility.

In the days of Sadat's *infitāḥ* the representatives of this faction with militant Islam build a financial empire which becomes stronger daily by the foundation of Islamic investment companies. These pious Islamic projects usually get much favorable publicity.

The militants of the affluent faction do not have to fear the traditional financial institutions, on the contrary, the traditional financial institutions fear them. They, moreover, engage in a wide variety of activities in the field of publishing and printing.

If Dr. Fōda's analysis is correct, we can easily place Šayḥ aš-Ša'arāwī within the spectrum of Egyptian Islamic militancy. The available evidence can only be circumstantial but it all points the same direction.

First, the Šayḥ's biography: the Šayḥ spent many years in Saudi Arabia. He came back to Egypt during Sadat's *infitāḥ*-period, and in this period he even became the Cabinet Minister for Religious Affairs from November 1976 to October 1978. These two circumstances both point to his being closest to *al-ittiḡāḥ at-tarwī*, the affluent tendency.

Šayḥ aš-Ša'arāwī cannot be close to the traditionalist or the revolutionary tendencies. Several times he was attacked in the magazines and

books published by the traditionalist Muslim Brothers. Two examples⁵: the traditionalist monthly *ad-Da'wa* attacked him in 1978 when he still was a Cabinet Minister, and Dr. Yūsuf al-Qarḏāwī, a prominent Muslim Brother traditionalist, attacked him – without, however, mentioning his name – in a book published in 1984.

Such attacks are reliable, circumstantial evidence that the Muslim Brother traditionalists do not think that Šayh aš-Ša'rāwī is one of them.

Šayh aš-Ša'rāwī in turn attacked representatives of the revolutionary tendency. In November 1981 he gave a long interview about Sadat's assassination to *al-Abrām*. About the assassins who at that point in time awaited trial and execution in a Cairo prison the Šayh said at this occasion: "If these people had been real *ansār*, helpers, of Islam, nothing could have stopped them". Since – as everybody knows – nothing stopped these people from killing President Sadat, what does the Šayh mean? In the Šayh's own words: "Their aim was not only to assassinate [Sadat]. Wasn't the real aim of [their] whole operation that they wanted to seize power in Egypt?"

The general tone of this interview suggests that the Šayh feels himself to be very much above these revolutionaries who use such primitive and ineffective methods in order to serve the cause of Islam.

These are all circumstantial proofs indicating that the Šayh does not belong to the traditionalist or the revolutionary factions. But can he be connected to the affluent faction by other, more direct evidence? There may be much better material in the thousands of printed pages which the Šayh has published, but a letter written by the well-known Egyptian novelist Tawfīq al-Ḥakīm to the weekly *al-Liwā' al-islāmī*⁶, early in 1985, contains a surprising juxtaposition of Šayh aš-Ša'rāwī and one of the ideological shibboleths of the affluent faction, viz. the much neglected Islamic duty of paying *zakāt*.

⁵ See my *The Neglected Duty: The Creed of Sadat's Assassins*, New York (Macmillan) 1986, pp. 128 & 145.

⁶ *al-Liwā' al-islāmī*, 170, April 25, 1985, p. 3.

In the letter, Tawfīq al-Ḥakīm complains that contemporary Muslim activists so often talk about *ḡihād* and the application of the Islamic *ḥadd*-punishments: should they not, so he asks, pay more attention to the possibility that paying *zakāt*, this strangely neglected Islamic duty, could automatically put things right in this world?

From where did Tawfīq al-Ḥakīm suddenly get this idea? In his earlier writings on the rigidity⁷ of Islam, he did not discuss *zakāt*. Did Šayḥ aš-Šaʿrāwī prompt him? At the end of the *zakāt*-letter Šayḥ aš-Šaʿrāwī is abundantly present: when Tawfīq al-Ḥakīm was in hospital, the letter informs us, the Šayḥ visited him, prayed in his room, and Tawfīq was cured⁸. Tawfīq thanks God for the existence of men of religion like Šayḥ aš-Šaʿrāwī – and then at once rambles on about the duty of the state to establish *zakāt*-committees that have to take care of the poor.

Finally, Šayḥ aš-Šaʿrāwī's name does indeed every now and then crop up in the newspaper reports on Islamic banking, a profitable sideline of the affluent faction of truly modern militant Muslims.

In February 1986, Šayḥ aš-Šaʿrāwī is reported to have been elected president of a consultative committee appointed by the Governor of the Egyptian Central Bank. The objective of this committee is reported to have been to solve the problems that existed within a financial institution called *al-Maṣrif al-Islāmī ad-Duwalī*⁹. According to the fundamentalist periodical *an-Nūr*¹⁰ Šayḥ aš-Šaʿrāwī's duties in this committee involved mediating in a conflict within the board of directors of *al-Maṣrif al-Islāmī ad-Duwalī*, and supervising the Islamic character of future dealings of this financial institution.

⁷ See my "Tawfīq al-Ḥakīm on the Rigidity of Moslem Law", *Bibliotheca Orientalis*, xxxviii (1981), pp. 13-16.

⁸ *zāranī fi l-mustašfa wa-šallā fi ḡuḡratī fa-šafānī llāh.*

⁹ *al-Ġumhūrīyya*, February 17, 1986.

¹⁰ *an-Nūr*, February 19, 1986.

Furthermore, Šayḥ aš-Šaʿrāwī is reported to have founded an Islamic Bank in Austria¹¹. Finally, the Secretary-General of the International Union of Islamic Banks, Dr. Aḥmad ʿAbdalʿazīz an-Nağğār, is reported to have declared¹², early 1987, that “without Šayḥ aš-Šaʿrāwī the Islamic Fayṣal Bank in Egypt (*Bank Fayṣal al-Islāmī fī Miṣr*) could not have been founded in the days when [Šayḥ aš-Šaʿrāwī] was Cabinet Minister for Religious Affairs..”.

It is, I think, almost certain that Šayḥ aš-Šaʿrāwī is a representative of the affluent faction of militant modern Muslims in Egypt.

The Egyptian philosopher Dr. Fuʿād Zakariyyā¹³ sees a connection between the Šayḥ’s political attitude and the anti-rational anti-scientific ideology which the Šayḥ preaches in his televised sermons.

In some of these sermons, the Šayḥ equates the Byzantine and Sasanid Empires, both defeated by the Muslim armies of the early seventh century AD, with respectively the United States and the Soviet Union, and then concludes that both Christian capitalism and atheist communism will eventually be defeated by Islam. In the meantime, so the Šayḥ preaches, the proper attitude to the Soviet Union should be one of *ʿadāwa*, enmity. The proper attitude towards the United States should, on the other hand, be one of *muwāğaba*, confrontation: after all the Americans, like the rulers of the Byzantine Empire, believe in God.

Such preaching, Fuʿād Zakariyyā writes, is simply a call for stepping up Arab enmity against the Soviet Bloc and for detente in the relations of the Arab world with the capitalist world. Why does Šayḥ aš-Šaʿrāwī, so he asks, present this purely political viewpoint as if it were an important religious lesson? Fuʿād Zakariyyā confesses that he fails to see why international relations between independent states have to be

¹¹ *al-Ġumhūriyya*, April 1, 1986.

¹² *Šabāb Bilādī*, January 3, 1987, p. 5. I am indebted to Mirjam Ietswaart (Leiden) for supplying me with these newspaper clippings.

¹³ Fuʿād Zakariyyā, *al-Ḥaqīqa wa-l-waḥm fī l-ḥaraka al-islāmīyya al-muʿāṣira*, Cairo 1986², 31 ff.

reduced to a comparison of creeds, *hākadā tuhtazal as-sirāʿāt ad-duwāliyya ilā muğarrad muqārana bayna muhtawā al-ʿaḡāʿid ad-dīniyya* (p. 36).

The Šayḥ, so Fuʿād Zakariyyā concludes (p. 39), is someone who defends capitalism and free enterprise in their crudest forms, and he embellishes this defence with pious Islamic formulas like *al-māl al-ḥalāl*, even though he, too, must know how difficult it is to determine the borderline between *ḥarām* and *ḥalāl* in matters of trade.

In a further analysis of Šayḥ aš-Šaʿrāwī's sermons Fuʿād Zakariyyā detects a "constant desire to belittle human reason and human science" (p. 31). The best example is perhaps the sermon in which the Šayḥ argues that paper tissues, *waraqat klīneks*, are of more use to humanity than space technology and satellites.

Egypt, Fuʿād Zakariyyā warns, is desperately in need of modern science and technology to be able to feed its population and to supply it with electricity and drinking water. Why, under such circumstances, should one ridicule science and technology?

Does the Šayḥ represent a tendency that wants to keep Egypt's population backward, illiterate, superstitious, obsessed with theological riddles, incapable of participating in the 20th century, an easy victim of the commercial dealings of the economic elite, kept happy with the luxury of Kleenex paper tissues, thus contributing to political stability in the Middle East?

At least two Egyptian intellectuals, Dr. Farag Fōda and Professor Fuʿād Zakariyyā, understand the verbose message of Šayḥ aš-Šaʿrāwī in this way.

Although it is difficult not to agree with these two articulate observers of militant Islam in Egypt there may be another possible explanation for the phenomenon which we in the West have named "fundamentalism".

It is well-known that Islam has absorbed the system of law which existed in the Middle East before the advent of the Muslim invaders. The Islamic *šarīʿa* represents the successful islamization of the legal system of the pre-Islamic Middle East.

The same is true of Islamic philosophy: Muslim philosophers have islamized the Greek Hellenistic philosophical tradition. Even today, Aristotle cannot be studied without Ibn Sīnā and Ibn Rušd, Avicenna and Averroes. The same is true of pre-Islamic religious phenomena: these, too, were successfully islamized by generations of Islamic thinkers.

Could it not be true that modern "fundamentalism" represents an heroic attempt by Muslims to make Islamic the modern State? The omniscient omnipotent omnipresent states, and their power, were left to the Muslim world by the colonial rulers who in the course of this century had to give up their political domination of the Muslim world.

Even in countries with a tradition of separation between religion and politics, the limitless power of the modern state creates problems. How much more this may be true of territories in which the modern state has not evolved gradually and in which there is, at least in the theory of the dominant religion, little or no separation between religion and politics?

Contemporary Muslims, confronted with the omnipotent omniscient omnipresent modern state, cannot but desire to make this state more Islamic than it is today. This desire may take two forms: [1] revolutionary Islamic activism may attempt to replace the existing secular governments by Muslim regimes, or [2] the existing governments which in principle are not religious may attempt to take the very measures that are called for by the Islamic opposition with which they are confronted. In this way, they can remain in power, and the Islamic opposition will be frustrated and may eventually disappear.

The final result of these two developments may be identical: the emergence of truly Islamic states. The enigma of the Egyptian preacher ŠayḤ aš-Šaʿrāwī is possibly found in that he understands this dilemma, and does not really care which of these two roads Egypt will go, as long as the final result is God's will.

ON THE TERMINOLOGY OF THE *LIBER DE CAUSIS*

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The scholarly literature on the anonymous medieval treatise *Liber de Causis* is quite extensive. In this literature the treatise in question is considered from different angles and ways of research are outlined, the emphasis being laid on comprehensive textual and terminological investigations¹. A few more words would seem to be relevant in connection with the terminology of the *Liber de Causis* and the prospects of its study.

I have long been engaged in the study of Greek-Arabic-Georgian correspondences of the many-language but semantically unitary medieval philosophical terminology of the East. My approach - perhaps not infallible in some concrete cases but basically justified - has led me to the conclusion that the medieval philosophical terminology is unitary, that is, it was subject to an unitary semantics, the latter being a totality of single-valued concepts expressed by a plurality of lexico-semantic units. Single-valued but multilingual concepts were coined on the basis of classical philosophical thought, developed by the national traditions of medieval thinkers.

According to the prevalent view, the term 'philosophy' and its principles came into being in classical antiquity. Thus, ancient Greece is rightfully considered the cradle of philosophical science. This does not preclude the existence of other geographical areas of development of ancient philosophical systems, e.g. ancient India, China, and so on. In the Classical period as well as in the Middle Ages, philosophy not divorced from theology or science. Philosophy involved the concepts of not only

¹ It will suffice to mention Georges C. Anawati's important work *Etudes de Philosophie Musulmane (Prolégomènes à une nouvelle édition du Liber de Causis Arabe Kitāb al-ḥayr al-mahd)*, Paris, 1974.

philosophical but also of theosophic, religious, and scientific doctrines. Naturally enough, the many-language philosophical terminological system of the Middle Ages involved not only philosophical terms and concepts. However, this terminological system largely consists of term and special lexico-semantic units linked to medieval philosophy. Therefore, philosophical terms, special philosophical vocabulary, religious, scientific, theosophical, and technical terminology express - in their own way - the unitary meaning of the medieval philosophical terminological system. The latter system came into being on the basis of direct contacts of medieval thought with its classical counterpart. From this point of view, the elements of the middle-age terminological system are considered as primary sets. The renderings of these primary elements of the middle-age philosophical terminological system, e.g. into Latin or into Western languages, are grouped into class of secondary sets.

Special care should be given to Syriac terms. When they serve as a link between Classical and Arabic thought they belong to the primary sets, while their Arabic counterparts are relegated to the secondary sets as translations of the latter. The fact should also be noted that at times it is difficult to determine whether the Arabic term stems directly from the original Greek term or from its Syriac translation. This difficulty - not only regarding Syriac terms - is felt especially in connection with the terminology of the *Liber de Causis*. In such cases the anonymity of the work does not allow to trace the path of formation and further development of its terminology. Hence, among the terms of the *Liber de Causis*, Greek terms and their medieval counterparts, conjecturally stemming from them, are tentatively considered to be primary, while the translated material whose secondariness causes no doubt, is classed secondary.

Thus, the present study of terminological correspondences of the terms of the *Liber de Causis* is based on the above method.

It should be noted also that the anonymous terms of the *Liber de Causis* prompt some new ideas. The study of terms is gradually gaining ground among linguistic disciplines. Quite a few scholars in different

countries are engaged in terminological research resulting in significant studies. The latest findings in the field allow to formulate some general views which, in the present case, can be applied to the study of the terms of the *Liber de Causis*.

The terms of the work in question - taken as a whole - form part of medieval philosophical terminology, sharing the general features of the latter. The terminology of the *Liber de Causis* accords also with language systems, evincing wholeness and regularity at one with the environment or cultural area. As the result of the interaction of the culture area and the semantics of the terms of the *Liber de Causis* the terminology of the treatise cannot fail to reflect the cultural-historical, socio-political, and economic processes occurring the period of its formation. Each medieval thinker had his own philosophical system, forming a part of the common medieval philosophical thinking. Commonness makes for conceptual unity and regularity with thinkers of the same period, in the present case, the thinkers of the medieval intellectual heritage.

Thus, the terminology of the *Liber de Causis*, as a kind of system, is related, on the one hand, to the common medieval terminology and, on the other, to the system of medieval intellectual thought and conceptual system of particular - in the present case anonymous - thinker. As a component part of language - or to a certain extent, its subsystem - the terminology in question is related to the language system. The above correlations and the systems nature of the terminology of the *Liber de Causis* allow to detect in it a regularity common to all terms, which is open to various interpretations. At present I propose to concentrate attention on definite stages of the terms, viz. 1) origin; 2) development; 3) transference; 4) change; 5) extinction.

Terms cannot be located without taking these stages into account. A term located should, in my view, be defined from the viewpoint of its origin and development, as well as transference, change, and extinction, provided it is characterized by the above stages. But prior to its location, the term should be defined from the viewpoint of (a) language, (b) subject matter, and (c) time-period. These parameters, i.e.

the attribution of the term to a definite language within a definite time-period and subject matter, must be specified in the first place. The above stages can then be defined.

The language of the terms of the *Liber de Causis* is undefined. The many-language versions of the treatise do not allow the identification of one of them as the original. Hence the version are united by the unitary semantics, drawing into the discussion all the possible languages of the extant and conjectured variants of the treatise. Thus, the codification of the many-language versions of the *Liber de Causis* primarily based on its subject matter. That the content of the book belongs to the realm of philosophy, high scholastics, etc. is incontestable. The subject matter may be specified further through a thorough scrutiny of the contents of the treatise. The time-period of the creation of the terms of the *Liber de Causis* is determined to a certain extent; approximate data can also be arrived at on the basis of extended textual study. Any progress in the specification of the subject matter of the terms and of the time-period of their origin formation will doubtless bring us closer to the ascertainment of the language parameter. Classification of the problem of the stage of the origin and shaping of terms should play a significant part in specifying the language parameter of the terms of the *Liber de Causis*. The stage in question involves two possible variants: 1) terms take shape in definite language medium on the basis of term-creation or through a change of the semantics of ordinary words; 2) terms originate through borrowing on the basis of inter-language shifts or migrations. A comparative analysis of the terms of the *Liber de Causis* should lead to the determination of this stage. The analysis implies a thorough study and comparison of the entire extant and lost but conjectured terminology of the *Liber de Causis*. The culture areas of the terms of the lost versions should be considered on a par with the areas of the existing variants of the treatise. Terminology does not become extinct totally but is somehow preserved to a certain extent. This equally applies to the above two types of the origin and shaping of terms as well as to the varieties of term creation.

Terms may originate in the vocabulary of a national language due to the creation by a thinker, his professional activity, or on the basis of joint intellectual work. Terms may also take shape through the joint efforts of the different language writers of the same period. Comparative analysis should lead to the identification of the type of term-coining and to the establishment of their formation. Focusing the attention on the temporal lag - an indicator of the retardation or anticipation in time of a certain event as compared to others - will probably be of much help. A comparison of the terms of the *Liber de Causis* occurring in the extant versions with those found in the cultural areas of the book, carried out from the point of view of the temporal lag, may also specify the close and remote contact of the intellectual influence across the original and the receptor languages.

When intersecting unitary, meanings are identified on the basis of a comparative analysis it is particularly important to detect pattern similarity of terminology. By their patterns, some terms appear to belong to artificially coined ones, i.e. formed through the term-creation of one or many thinkers. A common pattern and law-governed change - bearing in mind the conceptual system into which they find their way - may not cause any doubt regarding their uniform origin.

There is no divergence of opinion in the specialist literature concerning the derivation of the basic terminology of the *Liber de Causis* from the original term of the celebrated Greek thinker Proclus. No one doubts that the *Liber de Causis* is an interpreted work, mainly resting on Proclus' *Elements of Theology*. The language parameter on which Proclus' terms first took shape still remain an open question. The version on the interpretation of Proclus in Greek also, as well as in all the other language mentioned in the specialist literature is possible. Comparative analysis by the indicated method hold yield positive results.

Regrettably, for various reasons including technical, at the given stage of research consideration of only Greek-Arabic-Georgian corre-

spondences is feasible here². The original terms are tentatively taken to be Greek. This does not mean that I concur with the view holding that the original of the *Liber de Causis* is a short Greek redaction of Proclus' work. But it is the Greek terms that enable to trace how far their Arabic and Georgian medieval counterparts have diverged from Proclus terminology. Unlike the Arabic terms, constituting the terminology of the Arabic proper version of the *Liber de Causis*, the Georgian terms have been culled from Ioané Petritsi's commented translation of the *Elements of Theology*. In the scholarly literature Petritsi is deservedly considered a great commentator of Proclus in the East, on a par with Nicholas of Cusa in the West. The well-known English scholar E. R. Dodds wrote: "1. The old Georgian version of John Petritsi (*supra*, p. XXIX) represents a Greek text at least a century older than our earliest Greek MSS. ... 2. The Armenian version ... appears to be derived from Petritsi's Georgian (*supra*, p. XXIX, n. 8) and not directly from the Greek. 3. The second Georgian version is a retranslation from the Armenian (*supra*, p. XXIV, n. 9)"³.

The use by Petritsi of the oldest MS of Proclus' *Elements of Theology* points to the early interest evinced in the work of the celebrated Greek thinker in the medieval Georgian area. The alteration by Dodds of the above quotation in a later edition of his translation was undoubtedly caused by erroneous information supplied to him in particular to an imprecise translation of the Georgian text⁴.

It is held by some scholars that in his commentaries to Proclus' *Elements of Theology* Petritsi refers to a second commentary of the Greek thinker in Georgian. This assertion is debatable for the absence of a reference to the *Liber de Causis* in Petritsi's work does not demonstrate

² Thus, there exists a Syriac text of the *Liber de Causis* listed in the Catalogue of the British Museum under the Latin title: *De Causis universi juxta mentem Aristotelis quo demonstratur universum circulum efficere*. Sergius of Rash'ayna (d. 536) is considered the author of the version. The text is unavailable to me.

³ See: Proclus, *The Elements of Theology*, ed. by E. R. Dodds. Oxford, 1963, p. xli-xlii.

⁴ See: L. Alexidze. In: *Matsne*, series of philosophy, No. 2, 1984 (in Georgian).

the absence of Proclus' work in the Georgian area. The fact is correctly noted in the scholarly literature that Petritsi in general makes no reference to Areopagitic works, whereas they had been translated prior to Petritsi by another eminent medieval Georgian thinker Eprem Mtsire. Petritsi's consistent silence is easily accounted for if we recall the fact that he belonged to thinkers that were at odds with the Areopagitics on cardinal problems. Resting largely on the teaching of Proclus, and – to cite his own words – on “the divine Plato”, on Aristotle and generally on the Classical tradition, Petritsi tried to demonstrate the existence of God logically, Petritsi's interpretation of the Classical philosophy may even seem erroneous until we gain an insight into the essence of the Georgian thinker's commentaries. No wonder that in his commentaries to Proclus Petritsi was unwilling to mention the Areopagitic creationism in which God creates this world through a volitional act. The Georgian thinker arrives at God logically as to a category emanating or producing the world. The initial cause produces what has been caused by the cause rather than giving rise to it. Herein lies one of the divergences in the interpretation of Petritsi and that of the anonymous author of the *Liber de Causis*. This difference is taken into account in comparative analysis of (a) Proclus' Greek terms, (b) the Arabic terminology of the *Liber de Causis*, and (c) the Georgian terms of Petritsi. The analysis also identifies a similarity of terms based on the similarity or identity of their semantics, and literal translations.

The first term discussed in the present paper as an example of comparative analysis of Greek-Arabic-Georgian terminology is that of the “Supreme Good”. The notion of the ‘Supreme Good’ is related to Proclus' Greek terms τὸ πρῶτως ἀγαθόν, τὸ ἀπλῶς ἀγ., αὐτοαγαθόν. Every researcher concerned with the *Elements of Theology* can arrive at this conclusion. It is not difficult to see also that the Greek terms in the *Liber de Causis* have two parallel correspondences in its Arabic version: *al-hayr al-awwal* / *al-hayr al-mahd*⁵. The Georgian equivalents of the

⁵ Here and further the Arabic terms are considered largely on the basis of the *Encyclopedia of Islam*. Although the term *al-hayr al-mahd* is not allotted a special article in the

same tentatively Greek original terms are recorded in the vocabulary of Greek-Georgian and Georgian-Greek correspondences, appended to the edition of Petritsi's works. That vocabulary gives all the contexts in which Greek-Georgian correspondences occur and records all the special lexico-semantic and lexico-terminological units used by Petritsi in his works. Thus, the Georgian terms, together with the original Greek terms form the following correspondences: τὸ πρῶτως ἀγαθὸν *pirveli ketilobaj*, αὐτοαγαθόν, αὐτοαγαθότης - *twitketilobaj*, *twitsaxieri* - 'primal Good', 'Good absolute', 'pure Good', 'pure excellence', 'self-goodness'⁶.

There is no doubt that these Greek-Georgian words or word combinations point out and render an identical concept. If we add to them the Arabic correspondences of the Greek terms we shall have Greek-Arabic-Georgian equivalents of the concept of the "Supreme Good". Following a comparative analysis of the connotations of the "Supreme Good", a precise specification of the term becomes feasible: τὸ πρῶτως ἀγαθόν, αὐτοαγαθόν, αὐτοαγαθότης - *al-hayr al-awwal*, *al-hayr al-mahd* - *pirveli ketilobaj*, *twitketilobaj*, *twitsaxieri* - *Bonitatis prima*, *Summum bonum* - 'primal Good', 'Good-absolute', 'pure excellence', 'self-goodness'. The

EI, it is discussed in L. Gardet's article 'illa in the *EI*.

⁶ See: Ioanė Petritsi, *Works*, vols. I-II, Tbilisi, 1937, 1960 (in Georgian).

It should be noted that in the present paper the English correspondences of the Greek terms are mainly based on E. R. Dodds' translation of Proclus. They are also supplemented with English translations of Arabic and Georgian terms. The Latin correspondences here and further have been largely borrowed from the Latin translation published by Otto Bardenhewer. Mention should also be made of O. Bardenhewer's German correspondences as well as of the Russian terminological equivalents from the Russian translation of Proclus and Petritsi. I have also used the Latin-Georgian correspondences from the manuscript of Ia Gagua's translation from the Latin into Georgian which is gratefully acknowledged. See: *Liber de Causis* ed. by Otto Bardenhewer, Freiburg, 1882. Proclus, *The Element of Theology*. Transl. by A. E. Losev, Tbilisi 1972 (in Russian). *Ioanė Petritsi*, transl. by I. Pantshkava. Moscow, 1984 (in Russian). However, such expansion - especially of the secondary terms - would have created technical difficulties. Hence, only the English secondary equivalents are presented. The interested reader can readily find the rest in the specialist literature.

above-listed many-language meanings intersect, enabling a precise definition of the notion of the "Supreme Good" as the 'primal-pure-absolute good, self-goodness. I would like to mention here the meaning occurring in Efrem Mtire's translation of Areopagitic works: *αὐτοαγαθόν* - *twitsaxieri* - 'self-goodness', as the supreme deity⁷. Account of the latter correspondence allows the definition: 'the supreme Good, deity as the primal-pure-absolute Good, excellence, self-goodness'.

Another term discussed in the present paper is the Arabic *anniyya* from the *Liber de Causis*. In his article in the *Encyclopedia of Islam (EI)*, Simon van den Bergh identifies the term in question with the use of *an* or *anna* substantively. He believes that, in different contexts, *anniyya* is related to several Greek original terms. In Bergh's article we also find Latin terms from secondary sets of terminological units, and English terms, together with antitheses and parallels. Bergh endeavours to introduce maximum clarity into the establishment of the meaning of *anniyya*; he also pays special attention to the semantics of *anniyya*, in the *Liber de Causis*: τὸ ὄτι, τὸ ὄν, τὸ εἶναι *esse, existentia existentia* - that (substantively) i. e. 'thatness', 'being' (the category of Plotinus - τὸ ὄν)⁸.

The Greek terms τὸ ὄτι, τὸ ὄν, τὸ εἶναι original for *anniyya*, permit to link the Georgian equivalents *romel* (τὸ ὄτι), *mqopobay* (τὸ ὄν), *aobay* (τὸ εἶναι), *romel* is linked to "that" ('thatness') while *aobay* (*mqopobay*) is applied to existence, to being. The pattern identity of the Arabic *ann+iyya* is traceable to some extent in the term: *a*(= *ars*) + *oba*⁹ = 'to be' + *oba* - abstract ending, as well as in *mqop(i)* + *oba*; i.e.

⁷ See Petrus Iberus (Pseudo-Dionysius Areopagita). *Opera versio iberica ab Ephrem Mctire confecta* edidit commentariusque instaxit S. S. Enucaschvili. Tbilisi, 1961, p. 274. (In Georgian).

⁸ This definition can, to some extent, be correlated with the correspondence of *anniyya* 'd'être existant (existent entity)' suggested by M. T. D'Avery in *Des Mélanges Gibson*. Toronto-Paris, 1959 p. 270. Cf. Averroes, *Tahāfut al-Tahāfut*. Translated by S. Van den Bergh vol. II, p. 131, *EI*, art. *anniyya*. S. Van den Bergh.

⁹ See *Investigations in Areopagita*. Tbilisi, 1986, p. 196-197 (in Georgian).

being and the abstract ending *oba*. The foregoing would seem to warrant the conclusion that pattern literal, and semantic repetitions of the Arabic term *anniyya* (*ann* + *iyya*) occur in the Georgian area. The different conceptual system into which they found their way in this area naturally gave rise to some divergence. Yet, in the conjectural Georgian version of the *Liber de Causis* they could also express a sense identical to the Arabic term *anniyya*. The existence of these terms permits to identify primary Greek-Arabic-Georgian correspondence together with secondary Latin-English terms: with parallel terms: τὸ ὄν, τὸ ὄν, τὸ εἶναι - *an*, *anna*, *anniyya* - *romel*, *aobay/mqopobay* - *esse*, *existentia* (*existentia*) - 'that(ness)', 'existence', 'being (the category of Plotinus) 'mere existent', 'true being', 'existent entity'.

The intersection of many-language correspondences leads to the notion that may be expressed as 'thatness' as antithesis of 'whatness', 'true existence as pure being as existent entity'.

The third term dealt with in the present paper is *huwiyya*, discussed by A. Goichon in the *EI*. She cites the Greek terms related to *huwiyya*. However, she gives "ipseity" as most closely reflecting the semantics of *huwiyya*. To the terminology adduced in the *EI* one could add *haeccitas* ('itness'), suggested by Bergh as the Latin equivalent of *huwiyya*. He also offers the correspondence *ταντότης* - *huwiyya* - 'identity'. Uniting this terminology an detection of the intersection of their meanings enable the identification of primary Greek-Arabic and secondary Latin-English correspondences. It is very difficult to determine the unitary meaning of the term. Its emergence in the Arabic area is ascribed to an error due to the ignorance of the Greek language. It is not advisable to look or such erroneous understanding of the original Greek term in the Georgian area. Petritsi - an adorer and a great expert of Greek, which he himself styled "language of the sun" - could have hardly committed such an error. However, in Petritsi's writings there do occur terms that echo the semantics expressed by the Arabic *huwiyya*. Proclus' common Greek original terms permit the identification of the following Greek-Arabic-Georgian correspondences τὸ ὄν, *ταντότης*, *τάντος*, *αὐτος*, *ιδιότης* - *huwiyya* (*mawǧūd*) - *ens*, *entis*, *haeccitas* - *tvitobay*, *igivebay*, *masveobay*

(*mqopi, aobay*)¹⁰ – a concrete being, considered universally ‘itness’, ‘identity’, ‘existing in itself’, selfness, own self, without change’, ‘the very one’, ‘the same’. The Georgian terms *tvitobay, igiveobay, masveobay*, their intersection with the semantics of *hwuyyya*, with account of Proclus’ terms, yield a unitary concept of ‘selfness, identity, without change, the very one, the same of a concrete pure being - universally considered ‘itness’.

The findings of the comparative analysis, the intersection of meanings, and their union into conceptual wholes are presented in a table adduced at the end of the paper, featuring the three terms discussed above. The first columns list the names of all possible primary and secondary equivalents of the terminology of the *Liber de Causis*. Only the columns of actually compared equivalents are filled in. The terms presented are those whose comparative analysis has been carried out at the current stage of research. Hence, naturally, the generalizations adduced cannot be definitive. Yet even this scanty material gives ground for certain hypothetical statements. The primary Greek-Arabic-Georgian terms, given in the table, when their semantics, patterns and literal meanings have been found to intersect, permit to identify unitary conceptual wholes. The equivalents enrich each other, helping to specify shades of meanings. All unitary lexico-semantic many-language units are grouped together, and other secondary sets are also taken into consideration. They combine into a single whole definite concepts expressed by different-language, but single-semantic terminology. The location of terms by the above methods of terminological research will be feasible only on the basis of such unified concepts.

The three terms discussed above are associated with the trinity expressed in medieval philosophical literature: I. Supreme Being, Supreme Good, One Absolute Cause; II. Logos - intellect; III. (Universal) Soul. However, it is still early to speak about the precise data to be gained by

¹⁰ The Georgian *aobay* is mentioned here also in connection with the term *hwuyyya* on the basis of its contextual rendering as ‘selfness’; see G. Tevzadze in “To Aleksei Fedorovich Losev”, Tbilisi, 1983, p. 196 (in Russian).

a comparative analysis of terms. A thorough analysis of the many-language terminology of the *Liber de Causis* may lead to arguments not only in favour of a Christian or Muslim provenance of the anonymous author, but also of his adherence to Monophysite or Diophysite doctrines. Such specifications would seem to reduce the range of quests not only of the language but also of the temporal parameter. They may bring us closer to concrete results, e.g. to the identification of the author. This question has been repeatedly broached in the scholarly literature. The Georgian 5th-century thinker Peter the Iberian has been mentioned among the presumed authors of the *Liber de Causis*. However, this hypothesis, as well as other theories of the authorship of the *Liber de Causis*, advanced to date, have not been accepted in the specialist literature¹¹.

Irrespective of how the problem is solved - in favour of or against a Georgian area, it must be included in the study of the *Liber de Causis*. Of course, this - in the first place - is important for Georgian scholarship. Neither would it be harmful to Oriental Studies and Medievalistics in general, all the more since, from this point of view, the Georgian area has been far from well studied. It is very appropriate here to remember, for example, the anti-Muslim polemic works which occupied such an important place in Old Georgian literature. In its turn, a study of these works is necessary in order to defining clearly a phenomenon which can be called "Georgian Islam".

If the present paper evokes some interest in general and concrete problems of the Georgian medieval area its mission will have been fulfilled.

¹¹ See Ern. Honigmann, *Pierre l'Iberien et les écrits des Pseudo-Denys l'Areopagite*. Bruxelles, 1952; Sh. N. Nutsbidze, *Peter the Iberian and the Classical Philosophical Heritage*. Tbilisi, 1963, (in Russian). The fact should also be noted that recently the prominent scholar Michel von Esbrock presented a paper at the Second International Symposium: "Georgia in the context of East-Western Historical and Literary Contacts". In that paper M. van Esbrock again raised the question of the 5th-century Georgian thinker Peter the Iberian and his works.

possible equivalents

Greek	Arabic	Georgian	Latin	English
τὸ πρῶτως ἀγαθόν; τὸ ἀπλῶς ἀγαθόν; αὐτοαγαθόν, αὐτοαγα θότης	<i>al-hayr</i> <i>al-awwal</i> ; <i>al-hayr</i> <i>al-mahd</i>	<i>pirveli</i> <i>ketilobay</i> ; <i>twitketi-</i> <i>lobay</i> , <i>twitsaxieri-</i> <i>umaglesi</i> <i>gvtaeba</i>	<i>Bonitatis</i> <i>prima</i> ; <i>Summum</i> <i>bonum</i>	Supreme Good, primal Good; Good absolute, pure Good, pure excellence; self goodness, Supreme deity
τὸ ὄτι, τὸ ὄν, τὸ εἶναι	<i>an</i> , <i>anna</i> , <i>anniyya</i>	<i>romel</i> , <i>aobay</i> (= <i>ars</i> + <i>obay</i>), <i>mgorobay</i>	<i>esse</i> , <i>existentia</i> , <i>exsistentia</i>	that (substane- tively) i.e. thatness; being (the category of Plotinus) mere existent true being existent entity
τὸ ὄν, τὸ εἶναι; ταντότης, ταντόν, αὐτός, ιδιότης	<i>huwiyya</i> (<i>mauḡūd</i>)	<i>mgori</i> <i>aobay</i> ; <i>twitobay</i> <i>igiveobay</i> <i>masveobay</i>	<i>ens</i> , <i>entis</i> ; <i>haeccitas</i>	"ipseity" (a con- crete being con- sidered univer- sally); itness; identity; existing in it- self, selfness, own self; without change, the very one, the same

SOURCES DU DIALOGUE ISLAMO-CHRÉTIEN HISPANIQUE

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L'analyse des rapports des mozarabes hispaniques avec leurs dominateurs ne nous permet pas de continuer à affirmer que ceux-ci ont suivi l'attitude de l'autruche qui, au moment où elle se sent persécutée et incapable de résister, cache ses yeux avec les ailes pour ne pas voir le chasseur. Par contre, les mozarabes du IX^{ème} siècle, ainsi que ceux des siècles suivants affrontèrent hardiment les musulmans. Les plus conscients d'entre eux ont bien connu leurs doctrines et leurs pratiques religieuses et leur ont opposé un combat théologique. Ce combat avait l'objectif double de stimuler les chrétiens les moins mûrs dans leur foi vis-à-vis les attaques du prosélytisme islamique et de leur procurer aussi l'accès au camp adverse, pour amener des adeptes de Mahomet vers le camp chrétien.

Puisque la situation socio-religieuse où ils se trouvaient était vraiment difficile, le dialogue qu'ils ont mené avec les musulmans n'a pas été calme. Comme conséquence de la bipolarisation excessive qui marquait la société où ils vivaient, il est parfois devenu violent et radical.

Le dialogue religieux anti-islamique développé par les mozarabes du IX^{ème} siècle a des antécédents; il s'inscrivait dans un courant historique plus large, précédant l'invasion arabe de la Péninsule Ibérique, qui l'accompagna et lui a survécu. Il faut déterminer son origine et sa nature plus au moins polémique, de façon à pouvoir saisir son évolution.

1. Les sources théologiques

Le dialogue religieux islamo-chrétien avec la composante polémique qui l'a toujours caractérisé est aussi ancien que l'islamisme même. (Il est né en Arabie à l'époque de Mahomet, au début du VII^{ème} siècle). Ses racines sont biblico-coraniques; en effet, Bible et Coran, chacun de son côté, proclament la liberté religieuse et la tolérance. En envoyant ses

disciples, le Christ leur ordonna d'évangéliser, pas avec les armes, mais par la parole¹, le témoignage², et le service³. Les disciples ont bien compris la nature d'un tel mandat et l'ont accompli dans le respect de la liberté de leurs destinataires. Aux cours de l'histoire médiévale, malgré les conjonctures fréquemment difficiles, les maîtres de la pensée chrétienne se sont battus bravement pour la liberté et pour la tolérance religieuse. Il suffit de lire les ouvrages de Saint Athanase, de Saint Augustin, de Saint Hilaire de Poitiers, de Saint Isidore de Séville, de Pierre le Vénérable et de Saint Raymond de Penyafort pour nous en apercevoir⁴.

Telle était la théorie, telle devait être la pratique proposée par les lois. Les "Partidas" d'Alphonse X de Castille sont explicites quand elles se rapportent aux musulmans: "Por buenas palabras e convenibles predicaciones deben trabajar los cristianos de convertir los moros, para facerles creer la nuestra fe; e aduzir a ella, non por fuerza nin por premia"⁵.

Mahomet a aussi essayé d'établir en même temps un dialogue fraternel et polémique avec les chrétiens, ainsi qu'avec les juifs et les sabéens, c'est à dire, avec ceux qui sont considérés par le Coran comme les gens du Livre (*abl al-kitāb*). L'attitude de Mahomet, vis-à-vis de confessions religieuses, a très ouverte.

Le respect envers les "gens du Livre", découlait de la conception que Mahomet avait de la liberté religieuse. Selon lui, la foi est un don de Dieu et à Lui seul appartient le droit de la protéger et de l'imposer⁶. Cependant, le Coran changerait bien vite son attitude de tolérance, même vis-à-vis les juifs et, plus tard, face au chrétiens. Ce qu'il reproche

¹ *Mt*, 28, 19; *Mc*, 16, 15.

² *Mt*, 5, 16.

³ *Lc*, 9, 1-7; *id.*, 10, 1-11.

⁴ S. Athanase, *PL*, 25, col. 773; S. Augustin, *PL*, 43, col. 415; S. Hilaire de Poitiers, *PL*, 10, col. 56. Pierre le Venerable, *LCS*, ed. J. Kritzek, *Peter the Venerable*, Princeton 1965, p. 231.

⁵ Alphonse X, *Las Partidas*, VII, 25, 2. éd. Salamanque, 15-55, fl. 76.

⁶ *Co.*, 5, 69; *ib.*, 4, 171.00, 10, 88-100; cf. 10, 108 ss.; 11, 118; 2, 256; 18, 29; 109, 1-4.

chez les uns et chez les autres, c'est de s'être éloigné du vrai message de Dieu, transmis par les prophètes. Le rejet coranique des juifs a été dû, surtout, au fait de ne pas avoir accepté Jésus comme le Messie; celui des chrétiens est dû au fait de que, d'après la perspective islamique, ceux-ci se soient éloignés du monothéisme, en proclamant Jésus comme s'il était Dieu, en acceptant comme dogme l'Incarnation et la mort du Christ et en associant d'autres dieux au vrai Dieu. D'après les musulmans, les chrétiens, en acceptant le dogme de la Sainte Trinité, se placent parmi les *mušriks* (les associateurs ou adorateurs des idoles)⁷.

2. Les sources politiques-géographiques

Le rejet islamique de ses opposants, y compris les chrétiens, ne se borne pas à des paroles, mais il se manifeste dans une forte incitation à la guerre Sainte (*ğihād*) avec l'imposition du paiement d'impôts (*ğizya*), comme alternative à leur conversion⁸.

L'esprit militant, d'aspect simultanément religieux et politique, a poussé les arabes-musulmans jusqu'à la conquête de la Syrie-Palestine, du Nord d'Afrique et de la Péninsule Ibérique, des territoires bien chrétiens. Le même esprit militant viendrait provoquer comme réponse, du côté chrétien, les mouvements de la Reconquête et de la Croisade, menés de façon à retrouver la situation politico-géographique primitive. En effet, la Reconquête de l'Hispanie, et les croisades étaient considérées par les chroniqueurs médiévaux, par les historicistes des croisades et par les théoriciens du dialogue islamo-chrétien comme une récupération légitime que les chrétiens faisaient des terres qui leur avaient appartenu auparavant⁹.

⁷ *Ib.*, 4, 171; *ib.*, 5, 17; cf. 5, 116-117.

⁸ *Co.*, 9, 29.

⁹ Les chroniqueurs hispaniques, quand ils décrivent la prise des villes, emploient des mots qui expriment bien le sens de reconquête: "libération", "récupération", "conversion", "réintégration". Cf. *HS*, pp. 22, 24, 46 et 132.

C'était l'avis de S. Bernard, de Jacques de Vitry, de Rodrigo Jiménez de Rada, d'Humbert de Romans et de tant d'autres écrivains qui considéraient ces lieux comme appartenant au christianisme¹⁰.

Les Papes eux-mêmes, au moment où ils incitaient la chrétienté à reconquérir les contrées qui se trouvaient sous le pouvoir des musulmans, invoquaient le droit de récupération de tout ce qui avait été volé par la force. En effet, c'est à la lumière de la *ğihād* islamique qu'on doit interpréter les phénomènes de la Reconquête et des Croisades, ainsi qu'on doit comprendre la polémique verbale islamo-chrétienne, de signe bipolaire, à la lumière de ces mêmes phénomènes. Cette polémique est le succédané de la lutte armée; c'est l'incarnation verbale d'une mentalité hostile à toute sorte de domination. D'autre part, la polémique verbale, comme expression du non-conformisme d'un peuple opprimé, poussait l'exaltation des esprits qui était, normalement, le détonateur de la lutte armée.

3. Les sources socio-économiques

En reconstituant les sources du dialogue islamo-chrétien hispanique, on est obligé de présenter comme l'une des grandes sources d'inspiration celle de la coexistence polémique des chrétiens et des musulmans le long des générations et des siècles. Pendant les premiers temps de la domination arabe, dans la Péninsule Ibérique, les musulmans ont été relativement calmes vis-à-vis les trois groupes d'hispano-romains et wisigoths qui constituaient les couches de la population dominée: le groupe de ceux qui se sont convertis à l'islamisme par pression, par conviction ou avec le but d'en retirer de meilleurs avantages économiques; le groupe de ceux qui ont été soumis à la force (*anwatan*), et finalement le groupe de ceux qui sont restés chrétiens, en échange d'impôts spéciaux.

¹⁰ S. Bernard, *Ep.*, 458; T. Vitry, *BNP*, ms. 6244; Rodrigo Jiménez de Rada, *HG*; Humbert de Romans, *Opus Tripartitum*; R. Lulle, *Pro Recuperatione Terrae Sanctae Petitio*; cf. Norman Daniel, *Islam and the West*, Edinbourg 1960, pp. 109 ss.; Ap. Eul., *MS*, I, 7, *CSM*, p. 376. Eul., *MS*, I, 7, *CSM*, p. 298; Alv., *IL*, 24, *CSM*, p. 298.

Néanmoins, la liberté dont jouissaient les chrétiens qui vivaient sous la domination islamique était très conditionnée par des impositions et par des restrictions discriminatoires d'ordre religieux et socio-économique. A la longue, le durcissement des rapports entre vainqueurs et vaincus, provoqué par l'accroissement des impôts, la progressive ségrégation sociale et religieuse et la montante orientaliation de la vie, surtout depuis l'instauration de l'émirat de Cordoue par 'Abdarraḥmān I, à 756, ont provoqué la naissance de deux blocs irréductibles; celui des dominateurs arabes, berbères et syriens, qui se sont maintenus toujours comme une minorité accentuée, et celui des dominés c'est-à-dire, les hispano-romains et les wisigoths, soit s'ils avaient accepté l'islamisme, comme *muladīs*, soit s'ils persévéraient dans le christianisme, en tant que mozarabes.

Le mouvement d'opposition est devenu fort et il éclata sous les règnes de al-Ḥakam I (797-822), 'Abdarraḥmān II (822-852) et Mahomet I (852-886), pendant lesquels se détériora le statut socio-économique des *ḍimmīs*. Parmi les mozarabes qui ont levé la voix pour dénoncer cette situation se détachent les noms de Speraindeo, Euloge et Paul Alvare. Ils sont les défenseurs de l'orthodoxie chrétienne face à l'acculturation islamique de beaucoup de leurs coreligionnaires. Ayant pour but les soutenir dans leur foi et convertir les musulmans, ils combattent Mahomet et sa doctrine.

Les écrivains mozarabes de Cordoue étaient des hommes cultivés qui avaient accès direct à la doctrine des musulmans et, par leur contact existentiel avec eux, ils se rendaient compte de leurs pratiques rituelles. Cette osmose socio-culturelle a été l'une des principales sources d'information sur l'islam. Même s'ils ne connaissaient pas en profondeur la langue arabe, ils la connaissaient suffisamment pour leur permettre le contact avec la doctrine islamique. Par ailleurs, il y avait beaucoup de chrétiens de leurs communautés qui pouvaient devenir les interprètes de l'islam. Parmi les 49 chrétiens qui ont été martyrisés entre 852 et 859, à Cordoue il y en avaient plusieurs qui connaissaient l'arabe. On peut retenir les noms d'Émila, Hiérimias, Isaac et Auréa.

De toute façon, la connaissance de l'islam ressort des écrits d'Euloge, d'Alvare et de Speraindeo qui sont arrivés jusqu'à nos jours.

4. Les source Orientales

4.1. Les véhicules de contact

Les contacts entre l'Orient et l'Occident, avec les conséquentes influences mutuelles ont été fertiles surtout à travers l'Hispanie, et venaient déjà de très loin.

En entrant dans la Péninsule Ibérique et en affermissant leur pouvoir avec la capitale à Tolède, au début du VI^{ème} siècle, les wisigoths étaient déjà profondément marqués par la culture et le *modus vivendi* des gréco-romains. Ils avaient vécu avec eux, pendant plus d'un siècle, de 269 à 375, aux rives du Danube. Après cette date, poussés par les hunes, ils ont pérégriné à travers les Balkans où ils ont continué à assimiler la culture romaine-orientale.

La renaissance culturelle qui accompagna, ce siècle là, la vigueur expansive de l'empereur Justinien, a été menée avec enthousiasme le long de tout le Nord de l'Afrique et de la Péninsule Ibérique où étaient encore latents les restes de la colonisation grecque qui, depuis le VI^{ème} siècle a.C. et dès la Magne Grèce, avec des moments hauts et bas, n'avaient jamais été totalement supprimés. Même pendant les temps d'or de l'Empire Romain ils étaient encore bien latents dans cette région-là.

Le facteur religieux a joué un rôle bien important dans ce procédé d'implantation des influences byzantines dans la Péninsule. En effet, les byzantins ont contribué à renforcer la résistance naturelle des hispano-romains à l'arianisme des wisigoths.

L'influence directe des byzantins, consolidée au long de sept décades de domination (554-625), avait laissé des racines si profondes qu'elles ont duré bien au-delà de l'invasion arabe-même. La langue et la littérature, surtout la chronographie, en font écho. La tradition chronographique hispanique dénonce une influence byzantine accentuée. Orose, Hidace de Chaves, Jean Biclare et S. Léandre séjournèrent à travers l'Orient et ont fait des stages dans la capitale byzantine. Le fait que ce dernier, ainsi que son frère, le docte S. Isidore de Séville, étaient fils de mère grecque,

nous aide à comprendre l'interprétation des cultures romaine-wisigothe et byzantine que tous les deux ont manifesté dans leurs écrits¹¹.

Au-delà de ces moyens de transmission de renseignements d'ordre culturel et religieux entre l'Orient et tout le bassin de la Méditerranée et, plus exactement, avec la Péninsule Ibérique, on doit faire ressortir le rôle important que les marins et les marchands byzantins ont exercé sur la communication.

Les marchands byzantins ne déposaient pas dans les ports maritimes et fluviaux hispaniques seulement des marchandises. Ils amenaient aussi une langue, une culture et une façon spéciale de vivre, ainsi que des convictions et des ouvrages de sens religieux qui venaient nourrir la foi catholique des hispano-romains menacée d'être étouffée d'abord par l'arianisme des wisigoths et, après, la conversion de ceux-ci et l'invasion arabe par l'islamisme¹².

L'influence directe des écrits orientaux sur les mozarabes du IX^{ème} siècle n'est pas une hypothèse à mettre de côté. Par contre, elle est bien plausible. L'utilisation même du dialogue fictif, par Speraindeo, la suggère. Les moyens de contact établis entre l'Occident andalous et l'Orient ont été nombreux.

4.1.1. Des vagues successives de guerriers arabes et syriens ont pénétré dans l'Hispanie et s'y sont fixés avec leur culture et leur tradition:

- Ceux de la première invasion, les *baladīs* qui ont été connus comme les indigènes ou les natifs du pays;
- Ceux des corps militaires (*ġunds*) qui se sont installés en Hispanie;
- Ceux qui, avec 'Abdarraĥmān I, sont entrés dans la Péninsule et se sont identifiés comme les *dāhils* (les entrés, les émigrés).

4.1.2. Le pèlerinage annuel islamique, en établissant le contact des musulmans occidentaux avec leurs coreligionnaires de l'Orient et avec les sources doctrinales islamiques.

¹¹ Cf. César E. Dubler, "Sobre la Cronica Arabigo-Bizantina de 741 y la influencia bizantina en la Península Ibérica", *al-Andalus*, XI (1946), pp. 283 ss.

¹² J. Gil, *CSM*, Praef., pp. XXXVI-XXXVII.

4.1.3. Les rapports diplomatiques, nourris par les ambassades de l'Hispanie à Byzance, et vice-versa.

4.1.4. L'échange culturel qui accompagna toute la circulation de personnes entre l'Orient et l'Occident islamique n'a pas été, certes, imperméable à la véhiculation de problèmes d'ordre religieux.

4.1.5. Deux des martyrs de Cordoue étaient des moines itinérants qui sont venus en Hispanie demander l'aide économique pour leurs couvents. Servideo ('Abdallāh) et Georges, en s'intégrant dans des communautés monacales de Cordoue, doivent avoir transmis à leur compagnons leur connaissances sur Mahomet et sur l'islamisme.

Ils se trouvaient dans des situation privilégiées de médiateur entre l'Orient et l'Occident, grâce à leur connaissance profonde (*periti*) des langues grecque, latine et arabe¹³.

4.2. *Le dialogue islamo-chrétien oriental et sa répercussion en Hispanie*

4.2.1. *Les débuts*

Les premiers échos de la réaction du christianisme oriental à la présence asservissante de l'islamisme nous viennent de la Syrie. Envahie par les arabes, la Syrie oscilla entre les forces grecques et celles des envahisseurs. Plus que des prises de position religieuse, les premières réactions connues ont un visage essentiellement politique. En effet, face aux envahisseurs, le premier grand problème à résoudre était celui de la légitimité de la formation d'un nouvel empire, aux dépenses d'un empire déjà établi. Sont de cette nature les prises de position maintenues entre le patriarche jacobite Jean I et l'émir Amr et le patriarche copte Benjamin avec le même émir.

Vers la fin du VII^{ème} siècle, le christianisme oriental a commencé de se rendre compte des dangers religieux apportés par l'invasion arabe, mais sans manifester encore un jugement clair sur le dogme islamique. Avec Millet-Gérard et A. Ducellier¹⁴, on doit citer trois de ces textes:

¹³ *Id., ib.*, n. 24, p. 426.

¹⁴ D. Millet Gérard, o.c. pp. 167 ss. A. Ducellier, *Le Miroir de l'Islam*, Coll. Archives, Paris 1971, pp. 9 ss.

- La Chronique arménienne de l'évêque Sébéos;
- La Chronique copte de l'évêque Jean de Nikious;
- La Chronique anonyme nestorienne.

L'évêque Sébéos¹⁵ interprète la prophétie de Daniel sur les quatre bêtes, prophétie dont profitera Alvare pour blâmer l'invasion islamique¹⁶. Le même thème de l'invasion ismaélite et la ruine imparable de l'influence byzantine au Moyen Orient est commenté par l'égyptien Jean de Nikious, qui incriminait Héraclius et le patriarche Cyr comme les responsables des revers soufferts par l'Égypte.

L'auteur comparait les ismaélites au Pharaon. Ils ont été l'instrument de Dieu pour la punition des péchés. En se rendant compte de ce qui était arrivé au peuple d'Israël, il se confie à la miséricorde du Seigneur, qui détruira un jour les ennemis de la croix.

Ces-mêmes thèmes sont largement développés par la littérature mozarabe et par la chronographie chrétienne hispanique médiévale. S'il n'y a pas eu une influence directe des écrivains orientaux sur les occidentaux, il y a eu une source ou une mentalité commune qui, en partant de la lecture des livres prophétiques, se développa et s'enrichit avec les commentaires que la littérature paléochrétienne, sous la plume d'auteurs tels qu'Origène et S. Jérôme, actualisa et appliqua aux différents contextes socio-religieux vécus par les chrétiens¹⁷.

A la fin du VIII^{ème} siècle et au cours de la première moitié du IX^{ème}, nous trouvons deux polémiques islamo-chrétiennes, probablement réelles soutenues respectivement par le patriarche nestorien Timothée I (780-

¹⁵ Sébéos, *Histoire d'Héraclius*, tr. F. Macler, Paris, Leroux, 1904, cap. 23, pp. 104-105; Dan. 7, 23 ss.

¹⁶ ALV, *IL*, 21, 1, CSM, pp. 293-294.

¹⁷ Cf. M. Delcor, *Le Livre de Daniel*, Paris 1971, pp. 47-50.

823) et le calife al-Mahdī¹⁸ et par le moine Abraham de Thibériades et l'émir 'Abdarrāhmān b. al-Malik b. Šālih, à Jérusalem¹⁹.

Il s'agit de controverses d'ordre déjà essentiellement théologiques, où le visé n'est pas l'islamisme, mais le christianisme.

4.2.2. *Saint Jean Damascène et Abū Qurra*

Les dialogues qui sont arrivés jusqu'à nos jours, attribués à Saint Jean Damascène ou directement influencés par lui, sont différents de tous les autres dialogues religieux islamo-chrétiens orientaux du VII^{ème} et VIII^{ème} siècles. On connaît aujourd'hui deux dialogues, très proches l'un de l'autre, soit dans leur forme, soit dans leur contenu. Le premier a été sûrement écrit par le Damascène: la *Disputatio Saraceni et Christiani*²⁰; le deuxième, inclus dans les opuscules d'Abū Qurra (m. 870), la *Disceptatio Christiani et Saraceni*²¹, on ne sait pas auquel des deux auteurs on devra l'attribuer. Abū Qurra avoue l'avoir reçue oralement (δία φωνησ) de Jean.

Les deux textes contiennent une polémique serrée, fictive. C'est le musulman qui prend, apparemment, l'initiative des questions et le chrétien qui a le dernier mot pour dénoncer les contradictions de son interlocuteur et lui imposer son avis personnel²².

Les deux textes sont d'accord pour attribuer l'astuce aux musulmans. Abū Qurra, en plus, les appelle des licencieux et des menteurs. Ces attributs négatifs ont été très commentés par la polémique mozarabe et par la chronographie chrétienne médiévale. Cependant, au-delà des dialogues dont nous venons de parler, Jean Damascène et Théodore Abū

¹⁸ *The Apology of Timoty the Patriarch before the Caliph Mahdi*, éd. et tr. ingl. de A. Mingana, in *Woodbrooke Studies* II, Cambridge 1928; cf. D. Millet-Gérard, o.c., 171; "Dialogue religieux entre le calife al-Mahdi et le Patriarche Thimothee", éd. L. Cheiko, in *Trois traités de polemique et de théologie chrétienne*, Beyrouth 1923, pp. 1-26.

¹⁹ Cf. D. Millet-Gérard, o.c., pp. 171-172.

²⁰ PG, 96, cols. 1335-1348.

²¹ PG, 94, cols. 1585-1598.

²² PG, col. 1348; PG, col. 1597.

Qurra ont exposé les connaissances qu'ils avaient sur l'islamisme et ont créé une certaine mentalité anti-islamique à travers, respectivement, les ouvrages *De Haeresibus* et *Opuscules*.

La réfutation de l'islamisme faite par les mozarabes de Cordoue a un certain air de famille avec celle de Jean Damascène.

Sur le plan de la morale, on peut établir une coïncidence de priorités entre les polémiques de Jean Damascène et des mozarabes:

- le rejet de la loi islamique que institue la polygamie²³;
- la dénonciation de l'adultère de Mahomet avec Zaynab²⁴;
- le scandale déchaîné par la loi islamique du *tablīl*²⁵;

- la critique de l'idolâtrie arabe, matérialisée dans la Ka'ba, la pierre noire que, d'après Jean Damascène, les arabes frictionnent et embrassent. D'après le même auteur, cette pierre matérialisait le culte de Vénus et d'après Alvare, elle déchaînait des désirs et des actions dont la seule description faisait monter la rougeur au visage²⁶.

- Tous ces thèmes ont été préférablement développés par les écrivains de Cordoue.

4.2.3. L'Apologie d'al-Kindī²⁷

En lisant les apologies d'al-Hāšimī et d'al-Kindī, on remarque beaucoup d'analogies avec les écrits des mozarabes de Cordoue, surtout avec ceux d'Alvare. Parmi ces analogies, on doit faire ressortir:

²³ *Ib.* col. 769; Alv., *IL.*, 23, CSM, p. 297.

²⁴ *De Haer.*, col. 770; Eul., *LAM*, 6, CSM, p. 485; id., *MS*, II, 1, 2, CSM, Alv., 23, CSM, p. 297.

²⁵ *De Haer.*, *Ib.*, Alv., *IL.*, 23, CSM, p. 297.

²⁶ *De Haer.*, Col. 764; Alv., *IL.*, 23 et 25, CSM, pp. 296-299.

²⁷ A. Tien, texte arabe, Londres 1880; réimp. 1912; W. Muir, tr. angl. *The apology of al-Kindi...*, Londres 1882; Jose Munóz Sendino, tr. lat. de Pedro de Toledo, *Al-Kindī, Apologia del Cristianismo*, université de Comillas (Santander), 1949. Les citations de cet ouvrage seront faites à partir de cette édition, sauf quand il sera dit le contraire; Pasteur Georges Tartar, éd. franç. *Dialogue islamo-chrétien sous le calife al-Ma'mūn (813-834). Les épîtres d'al-Hāšimī et d'al-Kindī*, Paris, Nouvelles Éditions Latines, 1985.

- le jeûne, comme stimulateur des passions sexuelles²⁸;
- la polygamie²⁹;
- le divorce avec la possibilité de récupérer son épouse après l'intervention sexuelle d'un troisième³⁰;
- le paradis de délices, avec des vierges (*ḥūrīs*) toujours intègres et toujours disponibles;
- le mariage avec *Ḥadīḡa*³¹;
- la capacité sexuelle de Mahomet³²;
- le culte païen de la Ka'ba³³;
- l'impuissance de Mahomet pour faire les miracles avec lesquels Jésus témoigna sa divinité³⁴;
- les vieilles histoires avec lesquelles Mahomet tâche d'imiter les paraboles du Christ³⁵;
- l'influence des juifs sur Mahomet³⁶;

Dans l'Apologie d'Euloge, il y a aussi un lieu parallèle dont le contenu ne se retrouve chez aucun autre écrivain de l'époque. Il s'agit des références au nom de Mahomet, écrites sur le trône de Dieu.

Même si l'Apologie d'al-Kindī n'avait reçu sa rédaction définitive qu'à la fin du IX^{ème} siècle ou début du X, tel que certains auteurs

²⁸ *Ib.*, pp. 81-82; Alv., *IL.*, 33, *CSM*, p. 311.

²⁹ al-Kindī, pp. 53 et 98; Alv., *IL.*, 23, *CSM*, p. 297.

³⁰ al-Kindī, pp. 53 et 86; Alv., *IL.*, 23, *CSM*, p. 297.

³¹ al-Kindī, p. 65; Eul., *LAM*, *CSM*, p. 484; *id. MS*, I, 7, *CSM*, pp. 375-376, cf. II, 31, p. 429; Alv., *IL.*, 24, *CSM*, p. 298.

³² al-Kindī, p. 68; Alv., *IL.*, 23, *CSM*, p. 297.

³³ al-Kindī, pp. 86-87; Alv., *IL.*, 25, *CSM*, p. 29.

³⁴ al-Kindī, p. 72; Alv., *IL.*, 21, *CSM*, p. 294.

³⁵ al-Kindī, p. 71; Alv., *IL.*, 3, *CSM*, p. 276.

³⁶ al-Kindī, p. 78; Alv., *IL.*, 27, *CSM*, p. 302.

l'assurent³⁷, les mozarabes de Cordoue du IX^{ème} siècle la connaîtraient déjà d'après les sources arabes, une fois que les contacts de l'Orient avec l'Hispanie musulmane étaient fréquents, comme on a vu plus haut. Son accès direct, en latin, ne serait possible que depuis 1141, date où Pierre de Tolède l'a traduite à l'aide de Pierre de Poitiers et sur demande de Pierre le Vénéral, de Cluny.

On ne peut expliquer les approches doctrinales entre les uns et les autres qu'à partir de la connaissance de cet ouvrage ou d'une source commune. En entrant dans l'Occident, l'*Apologie* ou sa source, a fourni aux mozarabes une synthèse de tout ce qui était connu sur l'islam parmi les chrétiens arabes orientaux.

4.2.4. *Chronographie de Théophane*

La Chronographie de Théophane le confesseur, écrite entre les années 780 et 820, n'a été traduite en latin que vers 886, par le romain Anastase le Bibliothécaire³⁸. Cependant, c'est bien possible que nos mozarabes aient pu contacter, avant cette date, l'original grec, dans son ensemble ou partiellement, directement ou à travers des renseignements oraux. Théophane pourrait leur avoir donné des informations bibliographiques sur Mahomet, telles que celle de son mariage avec la veuve riche *Hadiġa*³⁹, celle de l'intervention de Gabriel et du moine⁴⁰, celle de la conception du paradis islamique, où les plaisirs de la table et du sexe sont prolongés 70 fois de plus dans le temps, et les vierges sont toujours vierges, même si s'adonnent aux dérèglements sexuels.

³⁷ R. Franke, "Die freiwilligen Martyrer von Cordova ...," in *Gesammelte Aufsätze zur Kulturgeschichte spaniens*, t. XIII, 1958, p. 141; D. Millet-Gérard, *o.c.*, p. 179; L. Massignon, *a.c.*, p. 1020; W. Muir, *o.c.*, p. V; M. Th. J'Alverny, *a.c.*, pp. 88-91; J. Muñoz-Sendino, *o.c.*, pp. 8-9.

³⁸ Théophanes, *Chronographia*, PG, 108; *Theophanes Chronographia et Anastasii Bibliothecarii Historia ecclesiastica sive Chronografia tripertita*, éd. C. de Boer, Leipzig 1883-85, I, pp. 333-335; II, pp. 208-210.

³⁹ *Id.*, PG, 108, col. 685.

⁴⁰ *Id.*, PG 108, l.c., MS., I, 8, CSM p. 377; Alv., II, 25, CSM, p. 299.

Il est bien probable que tous ces éléments, présents dans les *risālas* et dans S. Jean Damascène, aient été connus des latins à travers Théophane.

5. *L'influence de la polémique entre les juifs et contre les hérétiques d'Hispanie*

On trouve, certes, une autre source du contenu et de la forme littéraire des écrivains mozarabes dans la littérature anti-juive et anti-hérétique, dont l'Hispanie a été si féconde. La littérature progressivement accumulée par des traités écrits, direct ou indirectement contre les juifs, s'est équipée d'arguments et de manières de les exposer qui, à la longue, se sont stéréotypés, pour devenir des sources d'inspiration d'autres ouvrages qui, centrés sur les mêmes thèmes ou sur d'autres analogues, s'adresseraient à des destinataires différents.

La lutte contre les hérésies sur le sol hispanique a été enrichissante et a aussi contribué à la stratification doctrinale et littéraire du matériel polémique polyvalent. La population hispanique avait toujours eu une sensibilité religieuse très raffinée. La foi était leur valeur la plus sacrée, en étant disposée à lui sacrifier, si nécessaire, leur vie.

Après l'invasion arabe, les hispanique n'ont pas perdu la sensibilité religieuse qui leur était propre. Par contre, ils l'ont vaillamment mise au service de l'affermissement de la foi, soit de la foi chrétienne, soit de l'islamique. Les radicalismes qui ont provoqué, de l'un et de l'autre côté, l'affrontement des deux confessions religieuses ont leur point de départ dans cette sensibilité religieuse.

En ce qui concerne le radicalisme chrétien, il suffit de jeter un coup d'oeil sur les pages d'Euloge et d'Alvare de Cordoue pour comprendre qu'il ne resta pas en infériorité face à l'Islamisme. C'est là qu'on trouve l'explication du constant climat de tension socio-religieuse qui caractérisa l'affrontement des deux communautés dont les sources étaient plutôt de nature ethnico-sociale que de nature religieuse. Il s'agissait d'un penchant plus enraciné sur le caractère des gens que sur le dogmatisme de leurs religions.

L'Hispanie avait été envahie par de divisions et de luttes à l'intérieur même du christianisme, depuis le priscillianisme, au IV^{ème} siècle, jusqu'à l'arianisme.

Le priscillianisme, de la famille du sabellianisme, niait la distinction réelle des trois Personnes de la Sainte Trinité; l'arianisme, qui proclamait le Père comme le seul non engendré et qui dévaluait le *Logos*, venait mettre en question la divinité du Fils.

Vers la fin du VIII^{ème} siècle, pendant la domination arabe, la querelle de l'adoptianisme a envahi et divisé le monde chrétien des Astures et d'al-Andalus.

La polémique entre les différents groupes de chrétiens hispaniques a été violente et de longue durée et a procuré des ouvrages d'une intolérance et agressivité difficilement outrepassées dans la littérature chrétienne postérieure. De même que la littérature anti-juive s'est enrichie avec des schémas et des stratégies qui sont devenues l'appartenance acquise et stéréotypée de tous les polémistes postérieurs, la littérature contre les hérésies, en assimilant ses matériaux, a élaboré un corps plus ou moins homogène, qui a été mis au service de la défense de l'orthodoxie, même si ses destinataires étaient différents, comme dans le cas des musulmans. C'est ainsi qu'on peut considérer la polémique un genre littéraire autonome, caractérisée par une certaine unité de fond et de forme, capable d'être adaptée à des situations différentes. L'analyse des ouvrages d'Alvare et d'Euloge ne nous permet aucune doute sur la grande utilisation qu'ils ont fait d'autres polémistes précédents.

L'approche entre la polémique anti-islamique d'Euloge et Alvare, d'un côté, et la polémique adoptianiste d'Élipand contre Migetius et Beatus et vice-versa, de l'autre côté, nous montrent que le climat d'agressivité ainsi que la stratégie d'attaque sont les mêmes, quoique séparés trois quarts de siècle environ et malgré les différences des auteurs et leurs doctrines.

Conclusion

Le dialogue chrétien hispanique avec les musulmans a eu, dans son ensemble, des influences extérieures et intérieures dans la Péninsule

Ibérique et aux deux religions.

Il n'est pas surgi du néant. Comme un "Corpus" doctrinal, il a eut un début indéfini, une évolution si lente qu'enrichissante et un sommet éclatant qui a été atteint par l'orientaliste catalan du XIII^{ème} siècle, Raymond Martí, dans le petit ouvrage, synthèse de tout ce qu'on avait dit auparavant, et point de départ de tout le dialogue-polémique postérieur. Ce petit ouvrage est le *Tractatus contra Machometum*, (Traité contre Mahomet), dont je viens de faire l'édition critique, accompagnée de la traduction portugaise et de notes historiques et doctrinales. Cette édition est intégrée dans ma thèse doctorale, récemment présentée à l'Université d'Évora, au Portugal, sous le titre "Christianisme et Islamisme dans la Péninsule Ibérique. Raymond Martí, un précurseur du dialogue religieux.

Tables des Abréviations

al-Kindī = al-Kindī, *Risāla*.

BNP = *Bibliothèque Nationale de Paris*

CM = Luc de Tuy, *Chronicum Mundi*

CSM = Joannes Gil, *Corpus Scriptorum Muzarabicum*

De Haer = S. Jean Damascène, *De Haeresibus*

HA = Rodrigue Jiménez de Rada, *Historia Arabum*

HG = Rodrigue Jiménez de Rada, *Historia Gotica* ou *Rerum in Hispania Gestorum Chronicon*

IL = Alvare, *Indiculos Luminosus*

LAM = Euloge, *Liber Apologeticus Martyrum*

LCS = Pierre le Vénéral, *Liber contra Sectam sive haeresim Saracenorum*

MS = Euloge, *Memoriale Sanctorum*

PG = Migne, *Patrologia Graeco-Latina*

PCG = Alphonse X de Castille, *Primera Cronica General de España*

PL = Migne, *Patrologia Latina qui marquit la société où ils vivaient, il est parfois devenu violent et radical.*

A TREATISE ON THE IMAMATE
DEDICATED TO SULTAN BAYBARS I

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MS Or 579 of the Bodleian Library contains an otherwise unknown short treatise (*risāla*) on the imamate. The title page of the manuscript is missing, but the title is mentioned in the text as *Misbāh al-hidāya fī tariq al-imāma*¹. The author, apparently a member of the religious class with strong Šūfī leanings, is not named. The ruler for whose service (*li-hidma*) the treatise was composed is addressed with a long series of flowery epithets and titles. Decisive for his identification as the Baḥrī Mamlūk sultan Baybars aṣ-Šāliḥī (658-676/1260-1277) are the titles Rukn al-Islām wa-l-Muslimīn ... as-Sulṭān al-Malik az-Zāhir. Baybars was the only Sulṭān al-Malik az-Zāhir who bore the title Rukn ad-Dīn. The several sultans of the later Burgī Mamlūk dynasty also named al-Malik az-Zāhir, beginning with Barqūq, combined this royal name with the title Sayf ad-Dīn.

The Šūfī outlook of the author raises an intriguing question. Might he be identical with the sinister Šūfī guide and soothsayer of Baybars, Šayḥ Ḥaḍīr b. Abī Bakr b. Mūsā al-ʿAdawī al-Mihrānī, whose career and relationship with the sultan have recently attracted some attention²? There is apparently nothing in the *Risāla* which would speak

¹ My thanks are due to Professor T. Nagel for having drawn my attention to al-Ġuwaynī's *K. Giyāt al-umam* with the suggestion that the *Risāla* might be largely based on it. This is, however, not the case. Comparison of the two works has revealed no evidence that the author of the *Risāla* was acquainted with al-Ġuwaynī's book.

² See L. Pouzet, "Ḥaḍīr ibn Abī Bakr al-Mihrānī", *BEO* XXX (1978), pp. 173-183; P. M. Holt, "An Early Source on Shaykh Ḥaḍīr al-Mihrānī", *BSOAS* XLVI (1983), pp. 33-39; P. Thorau, *Sultan Baibars I von Ägypten*, Wiesbaden 1987, pp. 267-273. Šayḥ Ḥaḍīr's close relationship with Baybars probably began only in 661/1263, although the later sources speak of a meeting between them even before Baybars' accession to the sultanate

against this possibility. The biographical reports about the sheikh, however, are silent about the *Risāla* and any other treatises and books by him. His *kutub* which, according to them, were obeyed throughout the Mamlūk territories³, were obviously letters of instruction sent to local governors and officials. If he should be the author, it deserves to be noted that he was expressly described “a Muslim of sound belief (*ṣaḥīḥ al-‘aqīda*)” in spite of his satanic states⁴. There were, however, other Ṣūfīs besides Ṣayḥ Ḥaḍīr in the entourage of Sultan Baybars, though not much is known about them beyond the names of a few of them⁵. The question thus must remain open.

The special interest of the *Risāla* lies in the date of its composition during the early phase of the Mamlūk sultanate. Although formally only the fourth Mamlūk sultan, Baybars may well be considered the true founder of the Mamlūk regime. It was also he who in Raḡab 659/June 1261, less than a year after his accession, restored the ‘Abbāsīd caliphate, after its overthrow in Baghdad by the Mongols, in the Mamlūk capital Cairo and had the newly-established caliph, al-Mustanṣir, formally confirm his sultanate. When al-Mustanṣir was killed in battle with the Mongols in Muḥarram 660/November 1261, Baybars, after some hesita-

(Holt, pp. 35-36). He gained great influence on Baybars which he abused for his personal benefit. In 671/1273 his conduct was officially investigated and he was permanently imprisoned. Even in prison, however, the sultan looked after him with special favours. He died in 676/1277 shortly before Baybars.

³ Ibn ad-Dawādārī, *Kanz ad-durar*, VIII, ed. U. Haarmann, Cairo 1391/1971, p. 222.

⁴ Ibn Ṣākīr al-Kutubī, *Fawāt*, ed. Iḥsān ‘Abbās, Beirut 1973, I 405. If Ṣayḥ Ḥaḍīr was the author, the loss of the title page which presumably contained the author's name may well have been intentional. The condition of the manuscript is otherwise good.

⁵ Ibn ‘Abdazzāhir mentions that many pious sheikhs accompanied Baybars during his campaigns in 663 and 664/1265-66 and names, besides Ṣayḥ Ḥaḍīr, Ṣayḥ ‘Alī Maḡnūn, Ṣayḥ Ilyās, Ṣayḥ ‘Alī al-Bakkā, and Ṣayḥ Nabḥān. Baybars bestowed gifts and endowments on the former two after the conquest of ‘Arsūf in 663/1265 and that of Ṣafad in 664/1266 (Ibn ‘Abdazzāhir, *al-Rawḍ az-zāhir fī sirat al-Malik az-Zāhir*, ed. ‘A. Huwayṭīr, al-Riyād 1396/1976, pp. 238, 263; on ‘Alī Maḡnūn see also pp. 241-242). He made a gift of money to ‘Alī al-Bakkā after the conquest of ‘Arsūf and visited him not much later in al-Ḥalīl (pp. 238, 250). Ṣayḥ Nabḥān was killed in battle in 664/1265 (p. 260).

tion, installed another 'Abbāsīd, al-Ḥākīm, as caliph in Muḥarram 661/November 1262⁶. The *Risāla* may thus be expected to throw light on the significance of these events in the political thought of this sultan and the Egyptian 'ulamā' backing him.

In the introduction, the author of the *Risāla* sets forth a theological basis for the need for the imamate. The ultimate purpose of creation, he argues, is for God to become known and then to be worshipped. There is indeed a consensus among the Muslims that all obligations of the religious law depend on the knowledge of God. While the Aš'arites, however, derive the obligation to know God from the revealed law (*šar'*), the Mu'tazila derive it from reason, since this knowledge, according to them, affords the warding-off of the presumed harm inherent in the fear of punishment in the hereafter. The path to this knowledge is through self-purification (*taṣfiya*) among the Ṣūfīs and through rational investigation (*nazar*) and deduction (*istidlāl*) among the Aš'arites and the Mu'tazila. Knowledge and worship are possible only through the revealed law and the rational mind which require a substrate capable of accepting and combining them. This substrate is man.

The ranks of mankind differ, however, and not all men are able to acquire this happiness and to obtain this nobility independently without the mediation of a most saintly presence (*ḥaḍrat al-aqdas*). Divine wisdom thus necessitated the mission of prophets and the revelation of scripture, so that each prophet would in his time summon the people to the knowledge of God and call to his worship in accordance with the pronouncements of the scripture. After the demise of the prophets, there remains a pressing need for someone to replace them in taking charge of the maintenance of civilization (*ta'mīr*) of the countries and the adjustment of the religious and worldly affairs of men so that their livelihood is assured and their hearts find the leisure (*farāġa*) for rational investigation and deduction leading to knowledge and worship of the Creator. For as long as man does not find some leisure from his worldly

⁶ About the circumstances see P. M. Holt, "Some Observations on the 'Abbāsīd Caliphate of Cairo", *BSOAS* XLVII (1984), pp. 500-503.

occupations, he is not free to acquire this knowledge and its concomitants. This leisure, however, is provided only through someone capable of warding off evils (*dafʿ al-mafāsīd*) and of attracting benefits and advantages (*ǧalb al-manāfiʿ wa-l-maṣāliḥ*) by ordering what is proper and prohibiting what is reprehensible. That person is none other than the imam who is devoted to religion (*al-imām al-mutaḍayyin*) and the sultan who lays down the laws (*as-sultān al-mutaṣarriʿ*).

Although the author mentions here imam and sultan side by side, it becomes quickly clear that he means one and the same person. It is thus obligatory (*waǧāba*), he continues, to set up a forceful imam and powerful sultan (*imām dī šawka wa-sultān dī quwwa*) in every age and in every country so that civilization is maintained and leisure is obtained for the service of the Lord of Lords, that civil unrest should subside (*taskīn al-fitna*) and that usurpers and oppressors be warded off. With these primary tasks, forcefulness and power indeed seem to be the most important attributes of the imam. The establishment of an imam is a communal obligation (*fard kifāya*) unless there is only a single person suitable for the imamate, when it becomes a personal obligation (*fard ʿayn*). The imamate is legally contracted (*tanʿaqid*) only through appointment by the previous imam or the consensus of the people of binding and loosening (*ahl al-ʿaqd wa-l-ḥall*). It cannot be legally contracted to two persons at a single time and in a single place.

The further conditions (*šarāʿit*) of the imamate, enumerated by the author in the first chapter (*maqāla*), seem at first conventional enough. The imam must be male, because it is his duty (*fard*) to rectify religion and worldly affairs, for which ample reason and perfect faith are indispensable. Since women are deficient (*nawāqis*) in both faith and reason, religion and worldly affairs could not be properly ordered under their reign. The imam must be of sound mind and must have reached maturity, since an insane man and a minor are absolutely incompetent to hold office in view of their inability to judge affairs and to manage public interests. The imam must be a free man, since a slave is occupied with the service of his master which is a personal obligation (*fard ʿayn*). He must possess probity (*ʿadl*) since the morally depraved (*fāsiq*) does not

mind committing injustice and thus corruption will not be warded off. He must have knowledge of the rule of the religious law and be competent to carry out his responsibilities with regard to the affairs of the subjects and in providing fairness to the wronged against the wrongdoer.

Here, however, the author begins to deviate from the traditional positions. It is not a condition, he continues, that the imam be of Qurayš in the view of some legal scholars (*fuqahā*). Evidently himself backing this view, he does not mention that the requirement of the imam being of Qurayš had been a matter of consensus among Sunnite scholars until the recent overthrow of the 'Abbāsīd caliphate in Baghdad⁷ and that the only deviants had been the Hārīgites and a few aberrant Mu'tazilites. The traditional view is then quickly further discredited by associating it with Šī'ite doctrine. The imam need neither be of the Banū Hāšim nor of the descendants of 'Alī, nor is it a condition that he be impeccable, contrary to the opinion of the Šī'a. There are thus evidently no impediments to the Qipčaq Turk Baybars being the legitimate successor of the Prophet as supreme imam of the Muslims. That this is indeed the implicit intent of the author's deviation from Sunnite tradition is corroborated by the concluding point of the chapter. If these conditions, he continues, are missing and a forceful Muslim assumes the imamate and the people follow him, his imamate is effective (*naḥadāt*) out of necessity, even if he is incompetent to derive legal norms (*ġayr muġtabid*) and is morally depraved. For in our age a *muġtabid* is missing and probity (*'adāla*) is hard to find.

⁷ This consensus was not broken by al-Ġuwaynī in his *K. Ġiyāṭ al-umam*, where he insists that descent from the Qurayš is a condition of the valid caliphate. He merely discusses, in quite theoretical terms, the possibility that a qualified Qurayšite candidate might not be available. In this case the choice of a qualified non-Qurayšite would be valid, who, however, should be replaced as soon as a qualified Qurayšite would appear. The interpretation of the *Ġiyāṭ al-umam* by Wael B. Hallaq that al-Ġuwaynī wanted to encourage Niẓām al-Mulk to overthrow the 'Abbāsīd caliphate and to establish a Salġūq or himself as the legitimate imam ("Caliph, jurists and the Salġūqs in the Political Thought of Juwaynī", *MW* LXXIV (1984), pp. 26-41) goes far beyond what may be reasonably inferred from al-Ġuwaynī's discussions.

The second chapter, on the reality (*ḥaqīqa*) of the imamate, contains more sermonizing admonishment than legal exposition and reflects the author's Ṣūfī propensities. At the same time he continues to stress, however, the need for compelling power of the imam in religion and worldly matters. He defines the imamate as a guardianship (*ḥarāsa*) of religion together with governance of the soul (*siyāsat an-nafs*) and management of the affairs of the people on the basis of right. There are two kinds of imams, one an imam in religion only and the other an imam in both religion and worldly matters. The first takes the key of the *ṣarī'a* with the hand of the Ṣūfī order (*bi-yad at-tarīqa*), opens the gate of the treasures of the hidden, and perceives the stored secrets and concealed attributes in the worlds of humanity, of the heavenly spheres, and of vegetation. He witnesses with the light of faith the secret of the saying: Whoever knows himself knows his Lord. He sits on the throne of the sultanate occupied with worship of the Lord and is the image of kindness (*ṣūrat al-luṭf*). He is called the saint who guides to the straight path (*al-walī al-muršid ilā tarīq ar-rušd*). The second kind is he through whom, in addition to the perfection of this Ṣūfī saint, the sultanate over the surface of the earth and the power of guardianship over those on it is obtained through repulsion of the causes of perdition and corruption and through attraction of the causes of public welfare and benefit suitable for religion and worldly life. This is the highest aim and the ultimate purpose in respect to the imamate.

The guardianship in religion is possible only through someone who is able to preserve religion by carrying through the coercive summons (*da'wa qahriyya*) to the religion of our prophet Muḥammad and by pressing for compliance with it without any neglect, by governing the people, which consists in preserving them from whatever causes their perdition and cuts off their off-spring, by fending off the enemy through *ḡihād* and fighting him and cutting of his hands and feet, and through repelling him from the property of the Muslims, their persons, and their women (*ḥaram*), by bringing prosperity to the lands through care for their public welfare, by improving their roads, by appropriating the moneys in his charge without injustice in taking and spending them, by

redressing grievances and carrying out legal judgments, meting out equal treatment to all parties in them, and applying fairness in settling them, and by executing the Qur'anic punishments (*hudūd*) against those deserving them without either excess or deficiency. All of these tasks, the author adds, can be carried out only by someone who has the power to do so.

The purpose of the imamate is to bring about the soundness of religion and of the world, that is the integral ordering of the affairs of both of them, which entails the salvation and rescue from punishment in the other world as well as the escape from temptation (*fitna*) in this world, because the soundness of religion diverts the souls from their lusts and inclines the hearts from their desires, so that it comes to conquer the secret longings and to restrain the inner urges and becomes a guardian over the souls in their state of solitude. Likewise the soundness of the affairs of the world rectifies the hidden motives of its people, so that their trustworthiness becomes ample and their devotion to religion apparent, while their corruption corrupts the hidden motives of its people because of the lack of trustworthiness and the weakness of their devotion to religion.

The causes of the soundness of the world are religion which is followed, a sultan able to coerce (*sulṭān qāhir*), comprehensive justice, universal security, ample prosperity, and wide hope. If the sultan is able to coerce, discordant aspirations are stymied through dread of him, divided hearts become united through awe of him, transgressing hands are withdrawn before his conquering power, refractory souls are curbed through fear of him, and those who would isolate themselves from him in rebellion and corruption are restrained. Thus the affairs of religion and the world become orderly organized, and from this results the execution of legal judgments, the infliction of the Qur'anic punishments, the protection of the border towns, the mobilization of armies, the curbing of transgressors like thieves and highway robbers, and the performance of Friday Prayers and feasts. If it were not for a just imam with coercive power, none of these matters which effect the order of the world would be accomplished.

The author then quotes Qur'an XVI 90: "Verily God commands justice and kindness, and giving to kindred, and forbids indecency and disreputable conduct and greed; He admonishes you, perhaps you will be reminded." He explains that each of the three matters commanded or forbidden in this verse apply to man in three different respects, in relation to himself, in relation to his subjects (*ra'iyya*) or family, and in relation to God. Then he interprets the significance of these aspects for the conduct of the imam at considerable length in a fanciful manner with a strong element of Şūfī concepts and terminology. In spite of the predominantly moralizing nature of his discussions, he also keeps stressing the practical aspects. Following the Aristotelian tradition, he maintains that it is impossible to suppress the traits of passion (*hawā*) and anger (*ḡadab*), as some people erroneously advocate, since they are indispensable for the survival of the soul. Passion is the power through which the soul attains benefits and anger is the power through which it repels harm. The desirable purification of the soul is rather brought about by a moderate balance of the forces between excess and deficiency.

Know, he says, that worship of the sultan does not consist in his occupying himself with supererogatory⁸ prayers and fasting and seclusion in solitude, while the interests of the subjects and the people with needs are disregarded, while the subjects are left in the hands of oppressors, and the defense of the border towns is neglected. Rather his worship consists, after performance of the obligatory religious duties (*ba'd adā' al-farā'id*) in occupying himself with the interests of the subjects and their condition, and in endeavouring to preserve and benefit the kingdom, in taking care of the trusts of the Muslims and their rights, in order that this may be a step on the path of the truth and may raise him to a rank and high level towards the presence of the Lordship and to the degree of attaining paradise, and that it may be a means to the vision of God the Exalted and a cause of salvation from the wrath of the Lord and His punishment in hellfire, and a sample of the inter-

⁸ Reading *nāfila* for *nāfida*.

cession of the most excellent of creation, Muḥammad al-Muṣṭafā, in the abode of permanence with the Almighty King.

The conclusion (*ḥātima*) contains a brief discussion of the vizierate, the office of *qāḍī*, and the rôle of the 'ulamā' and Ṣūfī sheikhs. Just as the sultanate follows prophethood, the vizierate is a necessary complement of the sultanate. The sultan must inevitably have a decent vizier, of sound opinion, concerned, competent, shrewd, learned, active, and just, so that when the sultan forgets something, the vizier will remind him, and when he reminds him, the sultan will take heed of his word. The prominence given to the position of the vizier reflects its traditional importance not yet affected by the great decline of its significance in the course of the Mamlūk age.

Equally indispensable for the kingdom is the *qāḍī*, because lack of a *qāḍī* is a cause of temptation (*fitna*) and injustice. Thus there must be in every town and district a *qāḍī* in order to bring about safety in the most perfect manner and highest condition. The *qāḍī* must be qualified for the judgeship, for rendering legal opinions, and must have the rank of independant derivation of legal norms (*iğtibād*). He must have a perfectly sound mind, a pure soul, a heart enlightened by the light of faith, a high spirit, and a sane conscience. He must not covet the rule, be partial in his judgment, or give the powerful precedence over others. Unsited is the *qāḍī* who either lacks the knowledge required for the judgeship or who has it but fails to judge in accordance with it and rather judges according to his inclination, is partial, accepts bribery, disposes arbitrarily over the property of orphans, endowments, and mosques, fails to promote the people of religion, neglects the proper supervision of the markets (*iḥtisāb*), and gives preference to the powerful. His judgments are not valid and the sultan must prevent him from judging.

Knowledge (*ilm*) is the most noble means to the recognition of God and nearness to Him. It is the attribute of truth, and through it the highest grade and the greatest rank are attained if fear and reverence are associated with it. There are two kinds of knowledge, the first the useful knowledge which the Companions took from the words and acts of the

Prophet and which was studied, taught, and acted upon by the imams after them. This is the knowledge of the Book, the *sunna*, the exegesis of the Qur'an, traditions, law (*fiqh*), and related matters. The second is knowledge of the esoteric (*bāṭin*), that is recognition of the (Ṣūfī) states. This consists of knowledge of the meaning (*ma'ānī*) which is attained by the pure ones without mediation from the Ultimate Mystery (*ḡayb al-ḡuyūb*). It is of many kinds, faith, submission (*islām*), kindness, asceticism, piety, fear of God, sincerity, knowledge of the attributes and the diseases of the soul, of the heart and its phases, of self-purification and purgation, of the acquisition of praiseworthy traits, of confession of the unity of God and its stages, of the names, the attributes and the acts (of God), etc.

There are three classes of scholars, those who know the exoteric sciences, those who know the esoteric sciences, and those who know both. This last class is rare, and if there are only five or three of them in any age on the whole earth, the world will be filled with their blessings and righteousness, and they will be the poles of the age. They are the ones about whom the Prophet said with pride: "The 'ulamā' of my community are like the prophets of the Banū Isrā'īl". Among the 'ulamā' of the exoteric knowledge there are the true *muftīs* who know with their tongue and their heart and act in accordance with this knowledge. Their aim in acquiring knowledge is salvation, not the vanities of the world, closeness to the sultan, and acceptance by the common people. Their token is modesty, knowledge of the law (*fiqh*) and *hadīṭ*, and they are the select (*ḥawāṣṣ*) among the servants of God. There are others who know with their tongue and are ignorant in their heart, who have neither ear nor reverence. Their aim in acquiring knowledge is only gain of money, position, and acceptance among the common people. Their token is investigation, controversy, learning, harming people, lack of fairness, dressing up of falsehood as truth. They are the scholars of evil and should be shunned.

Among the 'ulamā' of the exoteric sciences are also the preacher (*wa'āz*) and the mercenary eulogist (*fassāl*), who memorize some words from the tongue of the scholars which they use in speaking on the

pulpits. The preachers are also of two kinds. The aim of the first kind is mere self-aggrandizement among the common people and grabbing money and a good fortune under the pulpits. They, too, belong to the evil *'ulamā'*. The aim of the other kind is to seek the benefit of the people and to summon them to the straight path, to prevent them from going astray, and to identify the road of right guidance. They belong to the *'ulamā'* of the religion, and it is obligatory to follow them and to accept their word.

As for those who have the esoteric knowledge, they are the sheikhs of the *Ṣūfī* orders. Their token is withdrawal from the world, seclusion, and separation from the creation, practice of self-control and self-observation, rise to fighting the soul and the devil, and submission to the order of God and His Messenger. They are the freedmen of God and the select of the select. The author does not mention a negative counterpart to this group. His clear preference for the *Ṣūfī* sheikhs over the conventional *'ulamā'* reflects the progressive rise of the *Ṣūfī* orders in public esteem, shared by Sultan Baybars, as much as it reflects the author's own inclination⁹.

The imam, heir of the political authority of the Prophet Muḥammad, is fully identified in the *Risāla* with the ruling Mamlūk sultan. The author uses in fact more often the term *sultān* to refer to him than the traditional term imam. The sultan's reign does not need to be legitimized by a caliph of Qurayṣite descent. It is legitimate because the sultan is the holder of the coercive power, the most basic requisite of the imam. He is admonished to rule his subjects justly and to protect them against external and internal transgressors. But even if the sultan were lacking in justice and proper qualifications in the religious law, his reign would be legitimate under the rule of overriding necessity (*darūra*).

⁹ See D. P. Little, "Religion under the Mamluks", *MW* LXXIII (1983), pp. 176-177. U. Haarman has kindly reminded me that regular patronage of *Ṣūfī* sheikhs and convents began only under Baybars II (784-809/1309-1399). See *Geschichte der arabischen Welt*, ed. U. Haarman, Munich 1987, pp. 244-245.

The *Risāla* goes in this respect a step further than the Šāfi'ite jurist Badr ad-Dīn Ibn Ġamā'a did writing about half a century later. Like the author of the *Risāla*, Ibn Ġamā'a transferred all the traditional functions and powers of the caliph to the sultan, yet he retained the notion of a Qurayšite representative head of the Muslim community who would legitimize the sultan's reign. This Qurayšite imam obviously was, in his view, the 'Abbāsīd shadow caliph first established by Baybars. For the author of the *Risāla*, such a Qurayšite imam was superfluous.

It is uncertain in what phase of Baybars' sultanate the *Risāla* was written, in the absence of a caliph or during the caliphate of either al-Mustanşir or al-Ĥākīm. If the Šayḥ Ḥadīr was its author, it was most likely composed after the establishment of al-Ĥākīm as caliph¹⁰. The date of its composition, however, is not very important in regard to its political significance. As P. M. Holt has pointed out, Baybars' reign was still insecure when he set up al-Mustanşir, and one of his purposes was certainly to gain legitimation of his rule vis-à-vis his rivals. In the case of al-Ĥākīm, this was no longer needed, and Baybars, having hesitated for a time to recognize him, kept him narrowly confined from the beginning. al-Ĥākīm was to play a certain political role in Baybars' alliance with Berke, the ruler of the Golden Horde newly converted to Islam¹¹. Baybars' restoration of the 'Abbāsīd caliphate thus was essentially an act of defiance towards the pagan Mongols and a means of strengthening his prestige among Muslims abroad. Internally, it was no political or legal necessity. Public opinion in Egypt, represented by the *ulamā'* and Šūfī sheikhs, recognized him, once he was firmly in power, as the legitimate imam without regard to his confirmation by a Qurayšite caliph who was merely his own creature.

¹⁰ It is, in any case, unlikely that the *Risāla* was written before the establishment of the caliph al-Mustanşir since Baybars is named in it with the title al-Sultān al-Malik az-Zāhir. Baybars formally adopted the title of Sultān only after al-Mustanşir conferred it upon him. See M. L. Bates, "The Coinage of the Mamluk Sultan Baybars I, Additions and Corrections", *ANSMN* XXII (1977), pp. 164-166.

¹¹ Holt, "Some Observations", pp. 501-503.

THE TEN INTELLECTS COSMOLOGY AND ITS ORIGIN

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I. al-Fārābī and Ibn Sīnā describe the celestial world in nearly identical way. The summary of their combined views runs as follows:

The One is perfect, so it is that from which existence is brought about. The second being emanates from the One and it is one and indivisible, because *ex uno fit unum*¹. This second being is the first intellect. It conceives the necessary existence of its own, that of the Supreme Being and its own contingency as compared to the One. These are three accidents on its essential unity. The accidental threeness generates three separate beings. These are the second intellect and the first, starless sphere which consists of form and matter. The form is soul, in this case the first soul. The second intellect conceives the necessary existence of its own, that of the One and its own contingency as compared to the Supreme Being. This threeness give rise to the forth being, i.e. to the third intellect and the second sphere (that of the fixed stars, which follows the starless sphere) with the second soul. This process goes on in this way giving rise to the intellects from four to ten with the corresponding spheres of Saturn, Jupiter, Mars, the Sun, Venus, Mercury and the Moon. The tenth intellect with the moon-sphere and with its form (i.e. soul) completes the heavenly world².

Ibn Sīnā formulates clearly that the intellect conceiving the necessity of its own existence and that of the Supreme Being generates the

¹ M. Horten, *Die Metaphysik Avicennas*. Halle-New York, 1907, 597-601, etc. Ibn Sīnā, *Kitāb an-nağāt*. Cairo, 1938, 277.

² R. Walzer, *al-Fārābī on the Perfect State*. Oxford 1985, Chapters 4-7, 106-135. Ibn Sīnā, *an-Nağāt*, 262-278.

next intellect and the next soul and conceiving its own relative contingency it generates the matter of the next sphere³.

In this Arabic theory one can detect the basic concepts of the Neoplatonic philosophy: the One, the Intellect and the Soul, respectively. The concepts are identical, but they form different systems in the works of Plotinus and Proclus on the one hand and in that of al-Fārābī and Ibn Sīnā on the other.

In the Neoplatonic philosophy the One generates the Intellect and the Intellect generates the Soul and the Soul emanates the world of sense-perception and the vegetative nature⁴.

There is an obvious difference between the Greek and Arabic account of emanation. This difference is due to the combination of Plotinus and Aristotle in the Arabic cosmology, to begin with. Drawing on the astronomy of his age, first of all on Eudoxus and Kallippos, Aristotle described the Universe in the 12th book of the *Metaphysics* as a system of homocentric spheres. On the basis of the geometric model given in the 8th chapter of the book the movement of the Sun, Moon and planets involves more than three spheres in each case. According to Aristotle's calculation the total number of spheres must be either 47 or 55. In this Universe, apart from the Prime Mover, there are unmoved movers equal in number to the spheres.

V. P. Demidčik asserts that the combination of the above quoted Plotinian and Aristotelian theories served as starting point for al-Fārābī and Ibn Sīnā. al-Fārābī having joined Plotinus and Aristotle modified their cosmology by adding his own views and he elaborated a new cosmology which was taken over and, it must be emphasised, slightly modified by Ibn Sīnā⁵.

³ Ibn Sīnā, *an-Nağāt*, 277.

⁴ Plotini *Enneades*. Paris 1855, 308, 3-5 lines.

⁵ V. P. Demidčik, "Kosmologiya al-Fārābī i iyo osnovnie istočniki". In: *Al-Fārābī, Naučnoe tvorčestvo*. Moscow 1975, 13-30.

R. Walzer tries to throw more light on al-Fārābī's Greek sources in the commentary accompanying his edition of the Perfect State⁶. What he says in essence is that al-Fārābī's cosmology implies the knowledge of the late Greek philosophy. In this connection the commentary is mainly based on Sambursky's book "The Physical World of the Late Antiquity" on the one hand and on the assumption that the text which served as an immediate source for al-Fārābī has been lost, on the other. Ptolemy's *Planetary Hypotheses*, a work preserved completely only in Arabic translation and Simplicius's Commentary on *De Coelo* are the two books referred to on behalf of the Greek literature of that age.

This is everything we know: Aristotle, Plotinus and possibly some obscure Greek works of later date.

II. If we want to get a deeper insight into the problem, we have to consider that the structure of al-Fārābī's works *Ārā' ahl al-madīna al-fādila* and *as-Siyāsa al-madaniyya* is identical with that of Plato's *Ti-maeus*. Both Plato's and al-Fārābī's works mentioned now describe the creation and structure of the Universe. They go on with the same method: first they give a description of the celestial regions and then descend to the world below the moon and describe the things coming to be and passing away. On the top of the earthly existence there are the human beings and the human society the description of which concludes the book of al-Fārābī. In *Ti-maeus* Plato does not mention the human society, though he devotes the last sections of his treatise to the human beings, i.e. after the *makrokosmos* he describes the *mikrokosmos*. *Ti-maeus*, *Ārā' ahl al-madīna al-fādila* and *as-Siyāsa al-madaniyya* belong to the same genre of the philosophical literature.

But there is another work of the same genre which deserves our attention. This is a treatise of the Greek Alexandros of Aphrodisias known only in Arabic version as *Risālat mabādi' al-kull'*. The structure

⁶ R. Walzer, *op. cit.*, 362-378.

⁷ *Aristū 'inda l-'arab*. Ed. A. Badawi, Kuwait 1978², 253-277.

and heading of this treatise are similar to that of the aforementioned books.

The subtitle of al-Fārābī's *as-Siyāsa al-madaniyya*, namely *mabādi' al-mawğūdāt*, rhymes with the title of Alexandros' *mabādi' al-kull* and not only by chance. Alexandros begins discussing the Universe with the Supreme Beings, i.e. with intellects, souls, and describing the heavenly regions he concludes the treatise with the domain of the always changing sublunar world. If we admit that this systematic similarity cannot be ordained by chance, than we should turn to Alexandros next.

Alexandros says that the outermost sphere moves the lower spheres with its circular movement, so it is the source of every movement in the world⁸. Below the first mover which moves the first sphere we find the movers of the second, third, etc. spheres. Alexandros does not define the exact number of the movers, but on the basis of his commentary to Aristotle's *Metaphysics* he seems to have accepted the Aristotelian numbers 47 or 55⁹. Referring to Aristotle he asserts that the movers form a hierarchic order¹⁰. This statement of the *mabādi' al-kull* cannot be corroborated with any quotation from Aristotle, but, nevertheless, the Arab philosophers, too, arranged their movers hierarchically. Alexandros writes that the movement of spheres depends on that of the first sphere and is modified by their own intellect thinking of the first mover. So becomes their movement a circular one¹¹. The different directions of their circular movement are due to the activity of the secondary movers¹².

In an important passage Alexandros writes as follows: In the case of the divine body it is not correct to speak of several movers, even if

⁸ *Op. cit.*, 161.

⁹ *Alexandri Aphrodisiensis in Aristotelis Metaphysica Commentaria*. Ed. M. Hayduck, Berlin 1891, 702, 5 sqq lines.

¹⁰ *Aristū 'inda l'arab*, 267-268.

¹¹ *Op. cit.*, 268.

¹² *Op. cit.*, 266.

we acknowledge that it is correct to say that each one of the orbits has a mover and a longing part¹³. The exact meaning of the terms 'mover' (*muḥarrik*) and 'longing part' (*mutaṣawwiq*) can be cleared up by another passage which reads as follows: We ought to believe that each orbit is animate and has a soul of its own. They make their natural movement by their longing. The nature of these things is the soul, because the form of the divine thing is the most perfect form¹⁴. Speaking of the divine body Alexandros says at the beginning of the treatise that its movement is caused by soul and intellect necessarily. The soul is the form of this body from the beginning. We must not believe that nature of a thing is different from its soul¹⁵.

In the same treatise Alexandros goes on discussing the role of the intellect¹⁶. The essentials of the same idea are summed up in the commentary to the Metaphysics as follows: The object of longing is principle of movement... This moves the intellect and the movement of the intellect is observation. The object of longing moves the intellect to observation, thus the object of observation moves the intellect. If the observation, too, moves it and makes it actual intellect, then the object of longing moves it as well, so the object of observation and longing will be the same. The primary object of observation and the intellect by its own nature are identical with the First Cause. Thus the First Cause is the real object of observation and it is the real object of intellection and longing¹⁷.

From these quotations one can gather that, according to Alexandros, all heavenly bodies have an intellect and a soul. The intellect is their mover and the soul is their longing faculty and form.

¹³ *Op. cit.*, 266.

¹⁴ *Op. cit.*, 268, 12 and sq lines. In French translation: A. Badawi, *La transmission de la Philosophie Grecque au Monde Arabe*, Paris 1968, 132-133.

¹⁵ *Aristū 'inda l-'arab*, 255; *La Transmission*, 123, 13 sq lines.

¹⁶ *Op. cit.*, 268, 14-270, 9.

¹⁷ *Alexandri ... in Meth.*, 694, 10-15.

These are the main points in the Arabic cosmology as well. Speaking of the form of a sphere as a soul which is longing after the Intellect and the One al-Fārābī and Ibn Sīnā are in harmony with Alexandros.

The two Arab philosophers not only agree with Alexandros but also differ in opinion from him. Alexandros wrote in his scholia to book N of the *Metaphysics* that one can infer from the number of spheres the number of the secondary intellects¹⁸. In Alexandros' opinion there are as many intellects as souls. The number of spheres, it means the orbits, is 47 or 55, consequently, there are 47 or 55 intellects and souls.

Ibn Sīnā says in *Kitāb an-nağāt*, while describing the heavenly regions, that every sphere has a mover (*muḥarrik*) and a longing part (*mutaṣawwiq*)¹⁹. This statement is essentially different from Ptolemy's view quoted by Walzer which, in Simplicius's narration, runs as follows: "It is thus more correct to let each planet be a source of motion, for this is the power and activity of the planets in their proper places and round their own centre, namely the uniform motion in circle"²⁰. Ptolemy derives motion from the inside vital power of the planets as contrasted with Alexandros who derives it from outside intellects. The difference between Ptolemy and the Arab philosophers can be shown by the words quoted from Ibn Sīnā's *Mabda' wa-l-mā'ād*. Ibn Sīnā says in a passage that each planet (*kawkab*) has a sphere in which it has a fixed position (*yubatu fihi*) and by which it is carried (*wa-l-falak yanquluhu*). According to Aristotle it is the sphere and not the planet which revolves round its centre and this is the more likely view, not that of

¹⁸ *Op. cit.*, 794, 12-13.

¹⁹ Ibn Sīnā, *an-Nağāt*, 266.

²⁰ Simplicius, *De coelo. Comm. in Aristotelem Graeca* VII. Ed. I. L. Heiberg, Berlin 1894, 456, 23-27. S. Sambursky, *The Physical World of Late Antiquity*, New York 1962, 142 sqq.

Ptolemy²¹. Walzer's explanation summarized above is thus refuted by the evident contradiction between Ptolemy and the Arab philosophers.

In an interesting passage of *Kitāb an-nağāt* Ibn Sinā refers to the "most correctly speaking man who wrote in his treatise about the principles of the universe that the heaven has only one mover though all spheres have a mover and a longing part of their own". As the texts quoted above and he title prove, this is a plain reference to Alexandros and his treatise under discussion. In the same passage we find another reference to the philosopher "who gives the best abridgment of Aristotle's works without a deeper insight. This philosopher said that the moved thing is not an orbit (*kura*) but a spherical body (*falak*)". And really, if we turn to the Greek philosopher, who became famous for his abridgments of Aristotle's books, i. e. to Themistius, then we find an abridged version of the *Met. A* among his works preserved only in Hebrew translation. In the Hebrew text we find the terms בּוֹרָקָב and לְלִנְיָ which render the concept of *falak* and *kura* in the section commenting on 1074 a 10-30. Themistius is of the opinion that it is superfluous to move the orbits instead of bodies and everything that is superfluous is unnatural²². Thus the number of movers had been reduced by Themistius from 47 or 55 to 9. It is very likely that this philosophical innovation of Themistius goes back on the astronomical teaching of Hipparchus who changed the course of astronomy by adopting the theory of *epicicles* instead of the Aristotelian spheres²³.

In the same chapter Ibn Sinā reports on Ptolemy's contribution to his cosmology. Ptolemy was the astronomer who added the outermost sphere without stars (*ἀνάστρος σφαῖρα*) to the others described by Aristotle. It is probably the *Syntaxis megalé* that served as a source for the Arabs and not the *Planetary Hypotheses* as supposed by Walzer. At

²¹ Ibn Sinā, *al-Mabda' wa-l-ma'ād*. Ed. Nūrānī. Teheran 1984, 68.

²² *Themistii in Aristotelis metaphysicorum librum paraphrasis*. Ed. S. Landauer. Berlin 1903. Hebrew text 24-25; Latin translation 28, and especially 26, 21-22 lines: "... virtutes moventes tot sunt, quot sunt corpora, quae moventur, ...".

²³ S. Sambursky, *The Physical World of the Greeks*. London 1960², 55-66.

any rate, Ibn Sīnā does not mention the latter work, but he refers to al-Māğiṣṭī both in *Kitāb an-nağāt* and *al-Mabda' wa-l-ma'ād*²⁴.

III. There are other texts, too, which bare witness to our solution of the problem. Nāṣir ad-Dīn aṭ-Ṭūsī names Alexandros and Themistius, instead of describing them, in his commentary to the cosmological section of *al-Iṣārāt wa-t-tanbihāt*²⁵. He refers to Ibn Sīnā's *al-Mabda' wa-l-ma'ād* as the source of his knowledge. And really, in the chapters 25-26 of the first book we find the names of Ptolemy, Alexandros and Themistius with a summary of their contribution to cosmology. In al-Fārābī's cosmology the Aristotelian and Plotinian theory is completed with Ptolemy's outermost starless sphere, with the longing souls of the spheres as their forms in Alexandros's treatise and with the teaching of Themistius who did not interpret the spheres as orbits (*kura*), but as spheric bodies (*falak*) and in this way he reduced their number to 9.

We can thus state that all the Greek texts, which have bearing on al-Fārābī's cosmology, are at our disposal either in Greek original or in Arabic or Hebrew translation.

IV. After having finished the review of texts there is one interesting question to be answered: what was al-Fārābī's scientific achievement if all constituent elements of his cosmology had been invented by Greeks? On the bases of textual evidence we can formulate our answer as follows:

1. al-Fārābī took the part of the Aristotelian school in their controversy with Platonism and Pythagoreanism on the origin of the celestial movement. Ptolemy was an adherent of the Platonic-Pythagorean line. Asclepius, the 6th century Neoplatonic commentator of Aristotle's *Metaphysics* is our best evidence for this controversy²⁶.

²⁴ Ibn Sīnā, *al-Mabda'*, 62; *an-Nağāt*, 267.

²⁵ Ibn Sīnā, *al-Iṣārāt wa-t-tanbihāt*. Ed. S. Dunyā, III. Cairo², 182. *al-Mabda'*, 62.

²⁶ *Asclepii in Aristotelis Metaphysicorum libros A-Z commentaria*. Ed. M. Hayduck. Berlin 1888. 37, 13-18; 35, 19-27, further 37, 16 and 323, 27.

2. In the late antiquity Greek philosophers began to combine the scattered philosophical and astronomical views. Asclepius e.g., who speaks of 9 spheres in his commentary on the Metaphysics united Themistius's concept of spheres (which goes back on Hipparchus) as heavenly bodies instead of orbits with the starless sphere (*ἀνάστρος σφαῖρα*) of Ptolemy. This united theory of Ptolemy and Themistius is a constituent part of the Arabic cosmology, though enlarged with Alexandros's views. al-Fārābī thus continued the activity of the late Greek philosophers carrying on the Peripatetic and Neoplatonic initiations.

3. al-Fārābī's philosophy contains the first cosmological system known to me which, though based on previous Greek theories, offers a new and genuine arrangement of the old material.

4. This cosmology, as it is proved by not very old scholastic textbooks²⁷, transmitted by scholastic philosophers, like Thomas Aquinas, to Europe served as a starting point for Copernicus. He, on the basis of his Platonic conviction, changed the place of the Sun and Earth and supposed that the stars have an inside moving energy²⁸. Through Copernicus the roots of our present day cosmology go back to al-Fārābī.

²⁷ Petri Pázmány, *Tractatus*. Budapest 1897, 22, 52, 65.

²⁸ K. Popper, *Conjectures and Refutations*, New York 1968². 141 and 187.

INWIEWEIT IST DAS THEOREM DER SÄKULARISIERUNG AUF DIE ISLAMISCHE GESCHICHTE ANWENDBAR?

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Daß in der islamischen Welt im Gegensatz zu Europa noch keine Säkularisierung stattgefunden habe, gehört zu den oft wiederholten Binsenweisheiten. Nicht selten wird jedoch versichert, daß in islamischen Ländern seit einigen Jahrzehnten eine Entwicklung in Gang gekommen sei, die auf ein Ziel zusteure, das in irgendeiner Form den Verhältnissen im säkularisierten Europa ähneln werde. Modernität – was immer man darunter verstehen mag – und Säkularisierung gelten als Gegebenheiten, die einander wechselseitig bedingen. Die Deutungen der Säkularisierung in Europa lassen sich im wesentlichen zwei Modellen zuordnen. Das eine rechnet mit einer Umgestaltung christlich-jüdischer Überlieferung unter Ausscheidung ihrer transzendenten Elemente. So sei an die Stelle der christlichen Eschatologie der neuzeitliche Fortschrittsglaube getreten; aber eben dies besage noch nicht, daß zwischen beiden eine genetische Bedingtheit bestehe. Es sei lediglich eine formale Ähnlichkeit festzustellen, inhaltlich seien Eschatologie und Fortschrittsglaube grundsätzlich voneinander getrennt, denn letzterer markiere den Sieg der Vernunft schlechthin¹. Das andere Modell besagt, daß die Grundbegriffe neuzeitlichen Denkens sehr wohl im Laufe einer kontinuierlichen Entwicklung aus christlichen hervorgegangen seien; Säkularisierung erscheint somit als der "Prozeß der Emanzipation der Moderne aus ihrer christlichen Herkunft"², währenddessen bestimmte Ideen aus dem theologischen Be-

¹ Blumenberg, Hans: *Die Legitimität der Neuzeit*, Frankfurt/Main 1966, 23 f.

² Löwith, Karl: *Weltgeschichte und Heilsgeschehen*, Stuttgart 1953, 175; Lübke, Hermann: *Säkularisierung*, Freiburg/München 1965.

gründungszusammenhang herausgerissen und als bloße Frucht der Ratio interpretiert werden³.

Das zweite Modell hat zum einen den Vorteil, daß es nicht dazu zwingt, einen völligen Austausch des Inhalts bei weitgehend gleichbleibender Form glaubhaft machen zu müssen; zum anderen müßte sich eine als radikaler Bruch mit der Vergangenheit gedeutete Säkularisierung letzten Endes jeder historischen Erklärung entziehen, so daß es auch gänzlich müßig wäre, über die Wiederholbarkeit eines derartigen Vorganges in einem anderen kulturellen Zusammenhang zu spekulieren. Im übrigen hat die moderne Soziologie zeigen können, daß es sehr unwahrscheinlich ist, daß gesellschaftliche Normen als reine Setzungen der Vernunft entstanden sind⁴.

Wenn man das Problem "Islam und Säkularisierung" erörtern will, setzt man offenbar stillschweigend die Gültigkeit des zweiten Modells voraus. Es zeigt sich dabei, daß die islamische Geschichte, unter diesem Blickwinkel betrachtet, einige wichtige Vorgänge und Ideen aufweist, in denen man Analogien zur europäischen Säkularisierung erkennen kann. Ich betrachte hier zuerst die Entheiligung der Herrschaft und dann die Funktionalisierung der *šarī'a*.

Die Regentschaft des Propheten über seine Gemeinde wurde als die Herrschaft Gottes durch den von ihm erwählten Träger der Offenbarung betrachtet⁵. Muḥammads erste Nachfolger betrieben eine Politik der Durchsetzung der islamischen Ordnung auf der gesamten arabischen Halbinsel⁶; ihre Autorität gründete sich auf die Tatsache, daß sie zu den frühesten Mitstreitern des Propheten gehört hatten. Die Omayyaden

³ Vgl. Kondylis, Panajotis: *Die Aufklärung im Rahmen des neuzeitlichen Rationalismus*, Stuttgart 1981, 57 f. Löwiths Auseinandersetzung mit Blumenberg ist jetzt abgedruckt in: Löwith, Karl: *Sämtliche Schriften*, Bd. 2, Stuttgart 1983, 452-459.

⁴ Vgl. z.B. Marcic, René: *Rechtsphilosophie. Eine Einführung*. Freiburg 1969, 114 (präpositive Seins- oder Naturordnung als Voraussetzung jeder geschichtlichen, gesetzten Ordnung).

⁵ z.B. Sūra 3, 32; 3, 81; 4, 59; 4, 64.

⁶ Nagel, Tilman: *Staat und Glaubensgemeinschaft im Islam*, Zürich 1980/1, Bd. 1, 19ff.

konnten sich hierauf nicht berufen; sie knüpften an das qurayšitische Bild der Geschichte des mekkanischen Heiligtums an und verstanden sich als uneingeschränkte Sachwalter Gottes⁷. Der Abbaside al-Ma'mūn wollte als "Imam der Rechtleitung" kraft einer dank der verwandtschaftlichen Nähe zum Propheten von ihm beanspruchten Inspiriertheit durch Gott die Gläubigen auf den richtigen Weg zum Heilserwerb führen⁸. In all diesen Fällen werden die Untertanen auf den Gehorsam gegenüber dem Herrscher verpflichtet, weil dieser mittelbar oder unmittelbar Gottes Gesetz vollstreckt und folglich zum Garanten der Möglichkeit des Heilsgewinnes wird.

Mehr als zweihundert Jahre nach al-Ma'mūns Tod hatte sich diese Auffassung islamischen Herrschertums von Grund auf gewandelt, nicht zuletzt wegen der inneren Zerrüttung des Kalifats, sicher aber auch wegen des Siegeszuges des Sunnitentums, das auf einen lebendigen Führer auf dem Pfad zum Heil verzichten kann; denn Muḥammad, der längst Verstorbene, jedoch per definitionem Unübertreffliche, ist in den zahllosen Normen, die auf ihn zurückgeführt werden und ebenfalls Ergebnis seines Prophetentums sein sollen, stets gegenwärtig. Für al-Māwardī ist der Kalif daher nichts weiter als ein Inhaber von bestimmten Amtsbefugnissen, die in zehn Punkten zusammengefaßt werden. Zum Kalifat ist man nach al-Māwardīs Meinung befähigt, wenn man eine Reihe von Bedingungen erfüllt (Wissen, Rechtschaffenheit, Tapferkeit usw.), die allesamt auf die Amtstauglichkeit zielen und nicht spezifisch religiös begründet zu werden brauchen. Lediglich al-Māwardīs Forderung, der Kandidat müsse aus dem Geschlecht des Propheten stammen, deutet noch auf den ursprünglichen, umfassenderen Sinn islamischer Herrschaft, nämlich auf die Ebnung des Heilsweges; doch erscheint diese Vorbedingung schon bei al-Māwardī von den funktionalen insofern abgehoben, als er sich hier auf eine Diskussion der in der Sunna ver-

⁷ ebd., 35 ff.

⁸ Nagel, Tilman: *Rechtleitung und Kalifat*, Bonn 1975, 136 ff.

bürgten Textgrundlage einlassen muß⁹, was bei ersteren unterbleiben konnte, eben weil deren Unabdingbarkeit für die Alltagsgeschäfte sofort einleuchtet.

Es blieb dem Šāfi'iten al-Ġuwaynī (gest. 1085) vorbehalten, dieses letzte Überbleibsel aus der Zeit der anerkannten Heilswichtigkeit islamischer Herrschaft, das Qurayšitentum des Kalifen, auszumerzen. Die kalifale Machtausübung ist nun bereits durch Aufzählen ihrer Funktionen erschöpfend beschrieben, und ausschließlich die Tauglichkeit zur Erfüllung dieser Funktionen ist vor der Inthronisierung eines Kandidaten zu erwägen¹⁰. Es ist durchaus verständlich, daß angesichts solcher Entheiligung des höchsten islamischen Herrschers jetzt, im 11. Jahrhundert, eine Fürstenspiegelliteratur aufblühen kann, die sich ihren Stoff auch aus der iranischen oder der griechischen Überlieferung entleiht, denn es geht um Machtausübung an sich, nicht mehr um die Nachfolge des Propheten. Der Weg wird für die theoretische Rechtfertigung des Sultanats frei, das es in Ansätzen schon *de facto* seit dem ausgehenden 9. Jahrhundert (z.B. Ṭāhiriden, Sāmāniden usw.) gegeben hatte, und es wird eine Geschichtskonzeption wie diejenige Ibn Ḥaldūns möglich, die das Schicksal der islamischen Welt aus einem Ringen zwischen Nomaden und Sesshaften erklärt. Herrschaft erscheint nicht mehr als eine Institution der Heilsfürsorge, sondern als Vorbedingung für jegliche Art menschlicher Gesellung. Schon der Andalusier at-Ṭurṭuṣī (gest. 1126) verglich die Herrschaft mit einer Lampe, die einen Raum erhellt. Alle Menschen in diesem Raum können ihrer nutzbringenden Tätigkeit nachgehen. Sollte die Lampe erlöschen, kröche Ungeziefer aus allen Verstecken hervor und fielen Diebe über die Bewohner her, deren Arbeit zum Erliegen käme¹¹.

⁹ al-Māwardī: *al-Aḥkām as-sultāniyya*, Ed. Cairo 1960, 6.

¹⁰ Nagel, Tilman: "Gab es in der islamischen Geschichte Ansätze einer Säkularisierung?" in: Roemer/Noth (Hgg.): *Studien zur Geschichte und Kultur des Vorderen Orients. Festschrift Bertold Spuler*. Leiden 1981, 275-288; ferner ders.: *Die Festung des Glaubens*. München 1988, Teil 2, III/3.

¹¹ at-Ṭurṭuṣī: *Sirāğ al-mulūk*, Būlāq 1289, 41 f.

Die Entheiligung der Herrschaft scheint angesichts des Verfalls der kalifischen Macht nahegelegen zu haben. Was demgegenüber die Funktionalisierung der *šarī'a* betrifft, so sind deren geschichtliche Voraussetzungen schwieriger auf den Begriff zu bringen. Denn zweifelsohne ist die inhaltliche Ausgestaltung der *šarī'a* und deren Verankerung in der auf den Propheten zurückgeführten Überlieferung ein Vorgang, der erst seit dem Werk aš-Šāfi'īs, also seit der Wende zum 9. Jahrhundert, die islamische Rechtswissenschaft prägt. Dennoch war es ein Schafiiit, wiederum al-Ġuwaynī, der nun, nach dem Abschluß der Fundierung des Rechts im Glauben und der Offenbarung, nach dem Wirklichkeitsbezug einer Jurisprudenz fragte, die sich zu seiner Zeit vor allem als eine gelehrte Deutung autoritativer Texte darstellte, unter deren Aussage die prinzipiell unüberschaubare Mannigfaltigkeit der Lebenswirklichkeit subsumiert werden mußte. Gerade weil al-Ġuwaynī entschieden die These verfocht, daß der Regelungsanspruch der *šarī'a* allumfassend sei und auch die freigestellten Handlungen (*mubāḥāt*) sich ausschließlich aus dem jeweiligen Stillschweigen der *šarī'a* ermitteln lassen, mußte er sich dem Problem stellen, wie dann im konkreten Fall Leben und Gesetz aufeinander zu beziehen seien. Noch der Qādī Ibn al-Bāqillānī, mit dessen Werk sich al-Ġuwaynī immer wieder auseinandersetzte, hatte darauf bestanden, daß das seit langem geltende methodische Postulat, eine Analogie sei nur aussagekräftig, sofern die zwei verglichenen Tatbestände auf einen gemeinsamen Grund bzw. eine "Ursache" zurückgingen, nicht angetastet werden dürfe. Eine derartige Strenge, das erkennt al-Ġuwaynī, steht jedoch der Verwirklichung des allumfassenden Regelungsanspruches der *šarī'a* entgegen. Es muß also auch eine Analogie einer terminologisch nicht näher bestimmbareren Ähnlichkeit statthaft sein. Diese darf freilich nicht zu reiner Willkür in der Subsumierung von Fakten unter die unveränderlichen Normen führen.

al-Ġuwaynī findet im Grad der Gemeinschaftsdienlichkeit eines jeden zu beurteilenden Sachverhaltes einen, wie er hofft, handhabbaren Maßstab für die Anwendung der Analogie der Ähnlichkeit. Sämtliche Bestimmungen in der *šarī'a* lassen sich nach seiner Meinung fünf Graden der Gemeinschaftsdienlichkeit zuordnen. Deren erster umfaßt Nor-

men, deren Beachtung für den Fortbestand der menschlichen Gesellschaft unabdingbar ist. Als Beispiele nennt er die Bestimmungen über Kauf und Verkauf und über die Talio. Es sei kein Individuum denkbar, das auf den Schutz seines Lebens und auf den Gütertausch verzichten kann. In die zweite Kategorie fallen Normen, die Sachverhalte regeln, die nicht jedes Mitglied der Gesellschaft betreffen, jedoch ein spannungsfreies Zusammenleben erst möglich machen. Hierher gehören Miet- und Eherecht. Nicht jedes Individuum steht vor der Notwendigkeit, eine Wohnung mieten zu müssen, nicht jeder hat das Bedürfnis, einen Ehevertrag zu schließen. Dennoch könnte das Gemeinwesen nicht existieren, wenn diese Bereiche nicht geregelt wären.

Den dritten Grad bilden Normen, die weder einer gesellschaftlichen Notwendigkeit noch einem allgemeinen Bedürfnis Ausdruck verleihen. Sie dienen lediglich dem Erhalt der Würde und des Prestiges (*makrama*). Hier nennt al-Ġuwaynī die Bestimmungen über Erwerb und Erhalt der rituellen Reinheit, ein Sachverhalt, der wiederum jedes Mitglied der Gesellschaft angeht. Daneben gibt es viertens Normen, deren Einhaltung in bestimmten Einzelfällen zur Sicherstellung der persönlichen Würde empfohlen wird. al-Ġuwaynī denkt z.B. an den Vertrag, der den Selbstfreikauf von Sklaven regelt. Fünftens schließlich seien Regelungen zu nennen, deren Gemeinschaftsdienlichkeit schwer oder gar nicht einleuchtet; freilich sei so etwas kaum vorstellbar. So dienten die rituellen Bewegungen beim Gebet an sich nicht dem Gemeinwesen, aber wenn man genauer nachdenke, erkenne man, daß sie das Individuum zur Folgsamkeit erzögen und insofern doch gemeinschaftsdienlich seien. Allein Detailfragen zum Ritus – etwa die Zahl der *rak'as* eines Gebets – könnten ohne Bedenken dem fünften Grad zugeordnet werden¹².

¹² al-Ġuwaynī: *Kitāb al-burhān*, ed. ‘Abdal‘azīm ad-Dīb, Kairo 1400², §§ 901 ff. In § 908 erklärt sich al-Ġuwaynī sogar damit einverstanden, unter dem Gesichtspunkt der "Notwendigkeit" auch Talio und Ḥadd-Strafen bzw. Kauf und Ḥadd-Strafen in Analogie zu setzen. Von anderen Autoren wird dagegen festgestellt, daß zu Ḥadd-Strafen keine Analogie statthaft sei (z.B. al-Gazālī: *al-Mustasfā*, Ed. Kairo 1324, Bd. 2, 334 f.).

Es fällt sofort auf, daß in diesem Schema, für dessen Anwendung al-Ğuwaynī einige knappe Hinweise anfügt, die rituelle Reinheit, in der Regel der erste und würdigste Gegenstand der Rechtshandbücher, einen untergeordneten Rang einnimmt; denn die Funktion der *šari'a* ist es, die Gemeinschaft zu erhalten. An die letzte Stelle der Gemeinschaftsdienlichkeit verbannt al-Ğuwaynī alle die Vorschriften, die in keiner Weise mit dem Verstand hergeleitet bzw. als gemeinschaftsdienlich erwiesen werden können. Bis dahin war die Unableitbarkeit einer *šari'atischen* Vorschrift für die Schafiiten das stärkste Argument für die Wahrheit der *šari'a* gewesen. Denn diese ist, so hatte es immer geheißen, Knechtung (*ta'abbud*) des Menschen, und insofern ist sie eben dem Menschen nicht ableitbar, und es ist nur Zufall, wenn sich Gottes Absicht und menschliche Ratio einmal in einer Vorschrift treffen¹³.

Sobald aber das alltägliche Leben des Menschen in der Gesellschaft zur Debatte steht, überspielt al-Ğuwaynī diese überkommene Auffassung, nämlich daß die *šari'a* in der Knechtung des Menschen ihren Daseinsgrund finde, zugunsten einer rein funktionalen Interpretation des Wesens des Gesetzes. Wäre hier nicht die Einbruchsstelle, durch die sich die Wirklichkeit der *šari'a* bemächtigen, sie umgestalten und damit die für sie in Anspruch genommene Unveränderlichkeit ad absurdum führen müßte?

In der Theorie wäre dies durchaus denkbar. Und es fragt sich doch, warum jene Ansätze, die wir eben skizziert haben, nicht einer der Säkularisierung vergleichbaren Strömung zum Durchbruch verhelfen konnten, zumal, wie angedeutet, die Heilsbedeutsamkeit der Machtausübung dahingeschwunden war. Auch das zweite der eingangs genannten Erklärungsmodelle scheint also nicht weiterzuhelfen. So ist zu vermuten, daß andere, von jenen beiden Modellen nicht erfaßte Gegebenheiten für die Auslösung oder wenigstens Ermöglichung einer Säkularisierung entscheidend sind, sei es, daß sie deren eigentliche Voraussetzungen bilden, sei es, daß sie die Rolle eines Katalysators innehaben.

¹³ Nagel, Tilman: *Die Festung des Glaubens*, 224 ff.

Ich möchte am Schluß meiner Betrachtung drei solcher – im übrigen recht vielschichtiger Gegebenheiten nennen.

Erstens: Im lateinischen Christentum wurde zumindest seit Augustinus das Diesseits dem Menschen zur – vorläufigen – Gestaltung freigegeben, nachdem sich die frühchristliche Hoffnung auf eine baldige Wiederkunft des Herrn als vergeblich, die Anstrengung um eine Selbstbehauptung im politischen Sinn dagegen als höchst erfolgreich erwiesen hatte. Der Dualismus von Staat und Kirche ist das geschichtsmächtige Ergebnis jener Parusie-Verzögerung und jenes Aufstiegs zum offiziellen Glauben des Römischen Reiches. Der Islam dagegen verstand sich von Anfang an auch als einen politischen Organismus. Das islamische Recht weist daher den bekannten Doppelcharakter auf, den Denker wie al-Ġuwaynī zwar vorübergehend überspielen, nie aber ganz verdrängen oder gar durch eine andere Theorie außer Kraft setzen konnten. Unter dem Blickwinkel der Gemeinschaftsdienlichkeit mag das Ritualrecht nur von untergeordneter Bedeutung sein; will man dagegen definieren, was die *šarīʿa* an sich sei, nämlich letzten Endes Knechtung des Menschen durch nicht rational deutbare gottgegebene Normen, dann ist gerade das Ritualrecht entscheidend. Denn in ihm tritt dieser Charakter der *šarīʿa* am klarsten zutage. Da eine Ausklammerung des Ritualrechtes nie versucht wurde, mußte dessen theoretische Prämisse, nämlich die Unableitbarkeit, immer wieder auf die übrigen Rechtsgebiete durchschlagen.

Zweitens: Die Entheiligung der Herrschaft und die Funktionalisierung der *šarīʿa* dürfen nicht – wie im Islam – zu einem bloßen Pragmatismus des Handelns führen, zu dessen Rechtfertigung die beliebig auslegbare Formel gilt, es gehe darum, den göttlichen Willen soweit wie möglich zu verwirklichen. Gerade diese Vorstellung aber beherrscht das Denken al-Ġuwaynīs, der im übrigen davon überzeugt ist, die endgültige Verwirklichung sei möglich und stehe nahe bevor. Bei Ibn Haldūn, der diese Formel ebenfalls verwendet, scheint sie nicht mehr mit derartigen Erwartungen verknüpft zu sein¹⁴. Diese Formel dient der Verschle-

¹⁴ Rosenthal, Erwin: *Political Thought in Medieval Islam*, 94 f.; Nagel, Tilman: *Staat und Glaubensgemeinschaft*, Bd. 2, 72 f.

ierung des Spannungsverhältnisses, das zwischen tatsächlich befolgten Handlungsmaximen einerseits und der behaupteten religiösen Fundierung des Handelns andererseits besteht, und verhindert eine intellektuell redliche Untersuchung der hiermit verbundenen Problematik¹⁵.

Drittens: Es hat den Anschein, daß für die Ingangsetzung einer Säkularisierung bestimmte gesellschaftliche und historische Voraussetzungen erfüllt sein müssen. Ein Blick auf Europa zeigt, daß zu Beginn der Neuzeit die im Mittelalter entstandenen Lehensbeziehungen, die Menschen unterschiedlich hoher Schichten in gegenseitige Treueverpflichtungen einbanden, in institutionalisierte Formen umgewandelt wurden. Es kam die Vorstellung von einem mit bestimmten Rechten und Pflichten ausgestatteten Staatsbürgertum auf, die letzten Endes in die Idee der unveräußerlichen Rechte einmündete, die jedem Menschen eignen und nicht der Begründung durch die Zugehörigkeit zu einer bestimmten Glaubensgemeinschaft bedürfen. Die islamische Welt dagegen hatte kein dem europäischen vergleichbares Lehnswesen gekannt und entwickelte folglich auch nicht die "europäische" Form der Staatlichkeit geschweige denn die Idee der Menschenrechte.

Einer Säkularisierung im europäischen Sinn fehlt dort augenscheinlich der richtige Nährboden; diese Vermutung wird durch die aktuelle Lage in den islamischen Ländern bestärkt. Selbst wenn Säkularisierung von muslimischen Intellektuellen immer wieder gefordert wird, muß bezweifelt werden, daß sie bei realistischer Einschätzung der Verhältnisse möglich sein wird. Sie ist vermutlich ein einmaliger, im wesentlichen auf Europa begrenzter Vorgang gewesen.

¹⁵ Daher rührt beispielsweise die "Verquickung der Idee der Gottesherrschaft mit dem Cedanken einer menschlichen Selbstbestimmung", die R. Wojtowycsch-Wielandt bei einigen zeitgenössischen ägyptischen Intellektuellen wahrgenommen hat ("Zeitgenössische ägyptische Stimmen zur Säkularisierungsproblematik", *Die Welt des Islams*, N. S. 22/1982, 129). Diese Verquickung, die letzten Endes der Verankerung politischer Wertvorstellungen im Religiösen, d.h. in der islamischen Offenbarung, den Vorrang einräumt (Wojtowycsch-Wielandt, 132), ist nichts weiter als die Wiederholung der überkommenen Formeln in neuen, zeitgemäßen Worten.

KALĀM IM ANTIKEN GEWAND
DAS THEOLOGISCHE KONZEPT DES *KITĀB SIRR AL-HALIQA*

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I.

Literarische Werke, die anonym oder unter falschem Namen verbreitet worden sind, tragen heute häufig das Odium einer Literatur zweiter Klasse. Allein der Umstand, daß ihr Verfasser seine Identität verborgen hat, führt oft schon zu der Annahme, daß auch seine Ideen nicht eigenständig gewesen seien, sondern nur plagiiertes Gedankengut von minderer Qualität. Gewiß wird dieses Urteil nicht auf alle Texte übertragen. Denn es ist längst bekannt, daß solche Verschleierungen aus sehr verschiedenen Gründen zustande gekommen sind. Trotzdem bleibt festzuhalten, daß noch immer eine grundsätzliche Reserve gegenüber apokrypher Literatur besteht. Und sie erstreckt sich gleichermaßen auf Werke aus der Antike und dem europäischen Mittelalter wie auf solche aus dem Kulturkreis des Islams¹.

Besonders auffällig ist diese Skepsis indessen bei einer bestimmten Gruppe von Schriften, in denen sich Antike und Islam begegnen. Gemeint ist damit jene große Zahl pseudepigraphischer Texte, die sowohl am Beginn der islamischen Philosophie als auch am Anfang der is-

¹ Allgemeine Einführungen zum Thema geben Wolfgang Speyer: *Die literarische Fälschung im heidnischen und christlichen Altertum. Ein Versuch ihrer Deutung*, München 1971 (= *Handbuch der Altertumswissenschaft*, 1. Abteilung, 2. Teil); *Pseudepigrapha I*, hg. von Kurt von Fritz, Genf 1972 (= *Entretiens sur l'antiquité classique*, 18); *Pseudepigraphie in der heidnischen und jüdisch-christlichen Antike*, hg. von Norbert Brox, Darmstadt 1977 (= *Wege der Forschung*, 484). Zum Problem der Vorurteile gegenüber pseudepigraphischer Literatur äußert sich am ausführlichsten Brox in der Einleitung zu dem von ihm herausgegebenen Sammelband, S. 1 ff.; vgl. auch Speyer, *Die literarische Fälschung*, S. 99 ff.

lamischen Natur- und Geheimwissenschaften stehen². Überliefert in arabischer Sprache, sind sie meist alten Autoritäten wie Pythagoras, Empedokles oder Aristoteles zugeschrieben, ohne daß sich in der bekannten antiken Literatur eine direkte Vorlage für sie ausmachen ließe. Wann diese Texte entstanden sind, ist nur in seltenen Fällen gesichert und für den Großteil der Werke nach wie vor noch nicht geklärt. Was sich hingegen mit großer Deutlichkeit in vielen der vorläufigen Urteile über sie widerspiegelt, ist das erwähnte Unbehagen angesichts dieser Form von Literatur. Entweder will man es nicht für möglich halten, daß in der Antike solche Fälschungen entstanden sein sollen, und folgert deswegen, daß sie allesamt aus der Feder muslimischer Scharlatane stammen. Oder aber man sieht die Integrität der islamischen Wissenschaften auf dem Spiel und glaubt daher, die Texte gingen auf spätantike Originale zurück, die dann allerdings sämtlich verloren gegangen sein müßten³.

² Die Pseudepigrapha zu naturwissenschaftlichen Themen sind übersichtlich zusammengestellt von Manfred Ullmann: *Die Natur- und Geheimwissenschaften im Islam*, Leiden/Köln 1972 (= *Handbuch der Orientalistik*, 1. Abt., Erg.bd. VI, 2), besonders S. 151 ff., 277 ff. u. 364 ff. Für die philosophische Literatur fehlt eine vergleichbare Darstellung. Wichtiges Material dazu findet sich bei Josef van Ess: "Jüngere orientalistische Literatur zur neuplatonischen Überlieferung im Bereich des Islam", in: *Parusia. Festgabe für J. Hirschberger*, hg. von K. Flasch, Frankfurt 1965, S. 330-350; G. C. Anawati: "Le néoplatonisme dans la pensée musulmane: état actuel des recherches", in: *Atti del convegno internazionale sul tema: Plotino e il Neoplatonismo in Oriente e in Occidente (Rom 1970)*, Rom 1974, S. 339-405 (= *Accademia Nazionale dei Lincei. Problemi attuali di scienza e di cultura. Quaderno 198*); *Pseudo-Aristotle in the Middle Ages. The Theology and Other Texts*, hg. von Jill Kraye, W. F. Ryan & C. B. Schmitt, London 1986 (= *Warburg Institute Surveys and Texts*, 11). Aufschlußreich für das gesamte Phänomen sind auch die Beobachtungen von Paul Kraus: *Jābir ibn Ḥayyān. II: Jābir et la science grecque*, Kairo 1942 (= *Mémoires présentées à l'Institut d'Égypte*. 45; jetzt auch repr. Paris 1986), S. 42 ff.

³ Diese Kontroverse entzündet sich bei jedem einschlägigen Werk von neuem. Vgl. dazu etwa die Forschungsberichte bei Martin Plessner: *Vorsokratische Philosophie und griechische Alchemie in arabisch-lateinischer Überlieferung. Studien zu Text und Inhalt der Turba Philosophorum. Nach dem Manuskript ediert von Felix Klein-Franke*, Wiesbaden 1975 (= *Boethius*, 4), S. 9 ff.; Ursula Weisser: *Das "Buch über das Geheimnis der Schöpfung" des Pseudo-Apollonios von Tyana*, Berlin/New York 1980 (= *Ars Medica*, 3. Abtl., Bd. 2), S. 8 ff. u. S. 48 ff. und die Einleitung zu meiner Studie: *Die Doxographie des Pseudo-Ammonios. Ein Beitrag zur neuplatonischen Überlieferung im Islam*, Stuttgart 1989 (= *Abhandlungen für die*

Beiden Urteilen gemeinsam ist die offenkundige Distanzierung von dem Gegenstand ihrer Betrachtung. Was beiden jedoch fehlt, ist der Versuch, die Texte aus sich heraus zu verstehen, das heißt zu fragen, wann und aus welchen Gründen unbekannte Autoren glaubten, ihre Geisteshaltung am besten auf eben diese Weise ausdrücken zu können. Eine solche Bemühung ist selbstverständlich schwierig, denn sie setzt voraus, daß man jene Geisteshaltung Werk für Werk erst einmal bestimmt. Aber nur so wird es vielleicht möglich werden, das Phänomen historisch einzuordnen, und zu diesem Versuch sollen die nun folgenden Ausführungen über das *Sirr al-ḥalīqa* ein Beitrag sein.

II.

Das "Buch über das Geheimnis der Schöpfung", auch "Buch der Ursachen" (*K. al-ʿIlal*) und "Buch des Sammlers der Dinge" (*K. al-Ġāmiʿ li-l-ašyāʾ*) genannt, weist alle wesentlichen Merkmale auf, die für die eben erwähnte Gattung von Schriften charakteristisch sind⁴. Der Form nach eine philosophische Enzyklopädie, will es in sechs großen Kapiteln Aufklärung über die Entstehung und den Aufbau des gesamten Kosmos geben. Dabei werden sowohl Gott und sein Verhältnis zur Schöpfung

Kunde des Morgenlandes, 79/1), S. 13 ff. Den prononciertesten Standpunkt hinsichtlich der arabischen Pseudepigrapha vertritt Fuat Sezgin, der immer wieder betont, daß sie ausnahmslos aus vorislamischer Zeit stammten. Vgl. jeweils das Vorwort / die Einführung zu seiner *Geschichte des arabischen Schrifttums*, III-VII, Leiden 1970-1979.

⁴ Zur allgemeinen Orientierung über das *Sirr al-ḥalīqa* vgl. Ullmann, *Natur- und Geheimpwissenschaften*, S. 171 ff. und Sezgin, *GAS* IV 77 ff. Der Text ist ediert worden von Ursula Weisser u.d.T.: *Buch über das Geheimnis der Schöpfung und die Darstellung der Natur (Buch der Ursachen) von Pseudo-Apollonios von Tyana*, Aleppo 1979 (= *Sources and Studies in the History of Arabic-Islamic Science. Natural Sciences Series*, 1) [im Folgenden als "*Sirr*" zitiert]. Der Edition zur Seite steht Frau Weissers bereits oben (Anm. 3) genannte Studie, die eine literargeschichtliche Einleitung, eine ausführliche Inhaltsangabe und einen Kommentar zum *Sirr* enthält [im Folgenden als "Weisser" zitiert]. Rezensiert wurden Edition und Studie von Manfred Ullmann, *Journal for the History of Arabic Science* 4/1980/90-94 u. 5/1981/121-126; Gerhard Endress, *ZDMG* 131/1981/410-411; Friedrich W. Zimmermann, *Medical History* 25/1981/439-440; Hans Daiber, *Der Islam* 59/1982/326-332.

(Buch I) als auch die verschiedenen Bereiche der Natur (Bücher II-VI) mit der gleichen Ausführlichkeit behandelt. Erhalten ist das Werk ausschließlich in arabischer Sprache, zugeschrieben aber wird es Apollonios von Tyana (1. Jh.n.Chr.), das heißt einer antiken Autorität. Hinzu kommt jedoch noch ein externer Hinweis, der, wenn er denn seriös ist, eminente Bedeutung besitzt. Er besteht in einer Äußerung des ismailitischen Propagandisten Abū Ḥātim ar-Rāzī (gest. 322/933-4), der erklärte, mehrfach gehört zu haben, daß der Autor des *Sirr* ein Gelehrter und Philosoph zur Regierungszeit al-Ma'mūns (reg. 198/803-218/833) gewesen sei⁵.

Auf dieser Grundlage sah sich die moderne Forschung zwangsläufig vor eine sehr präzise Alternative gestellt: Entweder ist davon auszugehen, daß ar-Rāzī richtig informiert war und daß folglich die gesamte Schrift im frühen 9. Jahrhundert auf Arabisch entstanden ist⁶. Oder aber man postuliert doch eine griechische Urfassung, die später übersetzt und erweitert worden wäre, wobei dann die letzte Stufe der Bearbeitung in der Zeit al-Ma'mūns vermutet werden muß⁷. Diese Alternative besteht im Grunde bis heute fort und ist in der einschlägigen Literatur immer wieder anzutreffen. Die Ursachen dafür sind sehr verschieden und bestehen nicht zuletzt darin, daß das *Sirr al-halīqa* ein ebenso umfangreiches wie im Detail schwieriges Buch ist. Darüber hinaus aber muß auch erst noch ein Ansatz gefunden werden, der es uns tatsächlich erlaubt, das Werk geistesgeschichtlich zu lokalisieren.

⁵ Abū Ḥātim ar-Rāzī: *A'elām an-nubuwwa*, edd. Salah as-Sawy & Gholam-Reza Aavani, Teheran 1977, S. 275, 17 ff. Vgl. auch Paul Kraus: "Raziana" II, in: *Orientalia* N.S. 5/1936/35-56 u. 358-378, hier: S. 373 und ders., *Jābir* II 275 Anm. 2.

⁶ So z.B. Louis Massignon bei André Marie Jean Festugière: *La révélation d'Hermès Trismégiste. I: L'astrologie et les sciences occultes*, Paris 1950², S. 395; Ullmann, *Natur- und Geheimwissenschaften*, S. 172 u. *JHAS* 5/1981/122; Daiber, *Der Islam* 59/1982/328; Friedrich W. Zimmermann: "The Origins of the So-called Theology of Aristotle", in: *Pseudo-Aristotle in the Middle Ages* (siehe oben Anm. 2), S. 112 u. 135.

⁷ Vgl. z. B. Sezgin, *GAS* IV 85 u. Weisser, S. 52 ff.

Die naturphilosophischen Partien des Textes, die bislang meist im Vordergrund der Betrachtung standen, sind dafür weniger geeignet, weil hier kaum mit signifikanten Brüchen zwischen der Antike und dem Islam gerechnet werden kann. Aussagekräftig ist dagegen eher der bisher vernachlässigte Abschnitt über die Theologie (vor allem Buch I)⁸. Denn man wird nicht zu Unrecht annehmen, daß sich gerade in der Darlegung der religiösen Überzeugungen der geistige Hintergrund eines Menschen besonders markant abzeichnet. Und so sollen eben diese Aussagen für unsere Überlegungen der Leitfaden sein.

III.

Die theologischen Erörterungen des *Sirr al-halīqa* sind in drei Schritte gegliedert, die einer logischen Abfolge entsprechen. Der erste behandelt das Wesen und die Attribute Gottes (I.2: *fi ṣifāt Allāh*), der zweite die Erschaffenheit der Welt (I. 3.1-7, wobei I. 3 insgesamt *fi ḥadaṭ al-ālam* überschrieben ist), während der dritte schließlich der Frage nachgeht, ob auch die Handlungen der Menschen von Gott geschaffen seien (I. 3.8)⁹. Dabei ist zunächst auffällig, daß sehr viele Aussagen eine allgemein monotheistische Tendenz aufweisen, die keiner be-

⁸ In ihrem ausführlichen Kommentar zum *Sirr* hat sich Frau Weisser nach eigenen Angaben (S. 2 f.) auf die naturphilosophischen Abschnitte konzentriert und hinsichtlich der Theologie viele Fragen offengelassen. Vgl. jedoch die einschlägigen Beobachtungen von Daiber, *Der Islam* 59/1982/329 f. und Zimmermann, "The Origins", S. 196 ff.

⁹ Somit zeigt bereits die äußere Anlage von Buch I (abgesehen von der Einleitung in I. 1), daß wir es hier mit einer einheitlich konzipierten theologischen Abhandlung zu tun haben, die in ihrer Systematik übrigens ganz dem Aufbau von *Kalām*-Werken entspricht (vgl. dazu Louis Gardet & M. M. Anawati: *Introduction à la théologie musulmane. Essai de théologie comparée*, Paris 1981³, S. 136 ff.). Diese Feststellung ist deswegen wichtig, weil der Autor des *Sirr* den Eindruck zu erwecken versucht, als handle es sich bei I. 2 und I. 3 um zwei getrennte Erörterungen, die auf verschiedene Verfasser zurückgingen: I. 3 stamme von Apollonios selbst (*Sirr* I. 3.1.1: S. 51,1 ff.), während I. 2 später von dem Priester Saḡiyūs hinzugefügt worden sei (*Sirr* I. 2.4: S. 50,3 f.). Vgl. dazu Weisser, S. 49, 157 und 164, die unter anderem auf diese vermeintliche Zweiteilung von Buch I ihre Hypothese von einer griechischen Urfassung und einer späteren Erweiterung des Textes aufbaut.

stimmten Religion eindeutig zugewiesen werden kann – fast so, als hätte der Verfasser eine solche Festlegung nur zu bewußt vermieden. Bei näherer Betrachtung indessen zeigt sich, daß er doch einige sehr spezifische Gedanken geäußert hat.

Das erste dieser Indizien ist seine Theorie, wie die Entstehung der menschlichen Handlungen zu denken sei. Das Bild, das uns das *Sirr* hier zeichnet, ist entschieden prädestinationistisch und läßt sich in seinen wesentlichen Elementen wie folgt zusammenfassen: Neben dem Schöpfer und den Geschöpfen existiert keine weitere ontologische Kategorie. Folglich können auch die Handlungen der Menschen nichts Eigenständiges, vom Menschen selbst Vollbrachtes darstellen, sondern müssen wie alles andere von dem einen Schöpfer geschaffen sein (I. 3.7.1, 3.8.1 und 3.8.7). Denn obwohl jede Kreatur die Fähigkeit hat, ihrem Wesen gemäß zu handeln (*mustatī un bi-fī libi*), also ein Mensch wie ein Mensch oder ein Schaf wie ein Schaf, sind doch die Tätigkeiten selbst immer von Gott hervorgebracht, weil er allein Macht über sie besitzt (I. 3.8.4). Und so kann man letztendlich folgern, daß die Handlung ein vergänglicher Teil des Handelnden ist, den Gott erschafft und den jener lediglich zum Vollzug erwirbt (*yastafiduhu hattā yaqūma* / I. 3.8.13: S. 91,6-7).

So wenig ausgefeilt diese Theorie in mancher Hinsicht auch bleibt, sie ist charakteristisch genug, uns eine doppelte Feststellung zu erlauben. Die erste lautet, daß unser Autor hier Gedanken geäußert hat, die nicht mit antiker Philosophie, aber auch nicht mit den spätantiken christlichen Vorstellungen in Verbindung gebracht werden können. Alle griechischen Kirchenväter sind von der Freiheit des menschlichen Willens ausgegangen und haben die Vorherbestimmung der Handlungen durch Gott abgelehnt¹⁰.

¹⁰ Vgl. David Amand [= Emmanuel Amand de Mendieta]: *Fatalisme et liberté dans l'antiquité grecque*, Louvain 1945 (repr. Amsterdam 1973), S. 191 ff. und Albrecht Dihle: *The Theory of Will in Classical Antiquity*, Berkeley 1982 (= *Sather Classical Lectures*, 48), besonders S. 107 ff. – dt. Übers. u.d.T. *Die Vorstellung vom Willen in der Antike*, Göttingen 1985, S. 120 ff. – Von Bedeutung ist in unserem Zusammenhang, daß sich auch Nemesios von Emesa in seiner Schrift *De natura hominis* für die Freiheit des menschlichen Willens ausgesprochen hat: vgl. Nemesii Emeseni *De natura hominis* 39-41: S. 112, 7-120,5 ed.

Dagegen aber – und das ist wichtiger – finden wir im frühen *Kalām* eine ganze Reihe von Denkern, die deterministische Ideen vertreten haben. Sie beginnt bereits mit Ġahm b. Šafwān (gest. 128/746), setzt sich fort mit Dirār b. ʿAmr (gest. ca. 200/815) und führt hin zu jenen Theologen des 3./9. Jahrhunderts, die unter der polemischen Bezeichnung ‘Ġahmiten’ bekannt geworden sind. Und bei diesen Denkern lassen sich in der Tat eindeutige Parallelen nachweisen.

Nach der Ansicht Ġahm b. Šafwāns beispielsweise kennen die Menschen keinerlei reales Handeln, sondern nur Handlungen, die aufgrund äußerer Einwirkung an ihnen geschehen¹¹. So, wie das Feuer brennt oder die Sonne untergeht, vollbringen auch sie dieses und jenes, aber nur deswegen, weil Gott sämtliche Momente des Handlungsablaufes – die

Moreno Morani, Leipzig 1987 und die kommentierte engl. Übersetzung von William Telfer: *Cyril of Jerusalem and Nemesios of Emesa*, London 1955 (= *The Library of Christian Classics*, 4), S. 410-423; dazu Amand, *Fatalisme*, S. 549 ff. Denn der Verfasser des *Sirr al-ḥaliqa* hat dieses Werk ja gekannt und sogar zum größeren Teil ausgeschrieben, wobei er die Passagen über die Willensfreiheit beiseite gelassen hat (vgl. *Sirr*, S. 537 ff. und Weisser, S. 63 ff. mit der Auflistung der Parallelen). Das zeigt, daß er über die christliche Position in dieser Frage informiert war, von ihr aber bewußt abgewichen ist. – Innerhalb der christlichen Tradition fanden Nemesios' Ausführungen über die Willensfreiheit durchaus Anerkennung, wie z.B. die umfangreichen Zitate bei Johannes Damascenus belegen: vgl. dessen *De fide orthodoxa* II. 25-27 = *Die Schriften des Johannes von Damaskos*. II: *Expositio fidei* 39-41: S. 96-99 ed. Bonifatius Kotter, Berlin & New York 1973 (= *Patristische Texte und Studien*, 12) und dazu die dt. Übers. von Dionys Stiefenhofer: *Des heiligen Johannes von Damaskus genaue Darlegung des orthodoxen Glaubens*, München 1923 (= *Bibliothek der Kirchenväter*, 44), S. 100-104.

¹¹ Der wichtigste Bericht über Ġahms Determinismus findet sich bei Ašʿarī: *Maqālāt al-islāmiyyīn*, ed. Hellmut Ritter, Wiesbaden 1963² (= *Bibliotheca Islamica*, 1), S. 279, 3 ff. Für weitere Überlieferungen und für die Einordnung seiner Lehre vgl. W. Montgomery Watt: *Free Will and Predestination in Early Islam*, London 1948, S. 99 ff.; Richard M. Frank: "The Neoplatonism of Ġahm ibn Šafwān", in: *Le Muséon* 78/1965/395-424, hier S. 404 ff.; Josef van Ess: "Dirār b. ʿAmr und die 'Cahmīya' – Biographie einer vergessenen Schule", in: *Der Islam* 43/1967/241-279 (im Folgenden zitiert als: "Dirār I") u. 44/1968/1-70 (zitiert als: "Dirār II"), hier: "Dirār I" 271; ders.: *Une lecture à rebours de l'histoire du muʿtazilisme*, Paris 1984 (= *Revue des Etudes Islamiques*. Hors Série 14. Extrait des tomes 46/1978, 47/1979), S. 87 f.; Daniel Gimaret: *Théories de l'acte humain en théologie musulmane*, Paris 1980 (= *Etudes Musulmanes*, 24), S. 64 ff.

Fähigkeit (*istitāʿa*) dazu, den Willen und das Tun selbst – unmittelbar an ihnen erschafft. Das sind natürlich andere Beispiele als in unserem Text, wo von Schafen und sonstigen Tieren die Rede war, aber die Quintessenz stimmt überein: Der Mensch kann keinen einzigen Handlungsakt selbständig bewirken, sondern vollzieht nur, was Gott an ihm und für ihn erschaffen hat.

An einer Stelle allerdings scheint unser Verfasser doch über Ğāhm hinauszugehen, denn er führt eine Differenzierung ein, die von jenem noch nicht vertreten worden ist. Gemeint ist damit seine Aussage, das Handeln sei ein vergänglicher Teil des Handelnden, den dieser erwerbe (*yastafiduhu*), um ihn auszuführen. Das erinnert nun sehr an die spätere prädestinationistische Position, die – im Anschluß an eine Theorie Dirār b. ʿAmr – zwischen dem Erschaffen durch Gott und dem Erwerben durch den Menschen unterschieden hat¹². Leider ist die Bemerkung in unserem Text zu knapp und flüchtig, als daß man sie genauer einordnen könnte. Aber man kann doch zumindest festhalten, daß der unbekannte Autor einen Gedanken ausgesprochen hat, den zu kennen erst mit oder nach Dirār b. ʿAmr möglich gewesen ist.

IV.

Zu diesem Terminus a quo paßt auch das zweite Indiz, das unser Werk an den muslimischen *Kalām* heranrückt. Gemeint ist die kurze Erörterung des göttlichen Vorherwissens, die im Zusammenhang mit der Prädestinationslehre angestellt wird (I. 3.8.8-9). Ihr erklärtes Ziel ist die Feststellung daß der alles bestimmende Gott auch die künftigen Dinge

¹² Zu Dirār's synergistischem Modell vgl. Ašʿarī, *Maqālāt* 281, 2 ff. und dazu Watt, *Free Will*, S. 104 ff.; van Ess, "Dirār I" 270 f.; ders., *Lecture*, S. 88; ders., Art. "Dirār b. ʿAmr", in: *EP Suppl.* 225b-227b; Gimaret, *Théories*, S. 66 ff., der nachfolgend S. 79 ff. auch die Weiterentwicklung der sunnitischen Position dargestellt hat. Zum Terminus *kasb* / *iktisāb*, der im *Kalām* gewöhnlich das "Erwerben" einer Handlung durch den Menschen bezeichnet vgl. M. Schwarz: "Acquisition' (*kasb*) in Early *kalām*", in: *Islamic Philosophy and the Classical Tradition*, hg. von S. M. Stern, Albert Hourani & Vivian Brown, Oxford 1972, S. 355-387.

immer schon vorhergewußt hat. Aber um diese Behauptung zu beweisen, muß erst eine Irrlehre widerlegt werden, und genau sie ist es, die für unsere Betrachtung besonderes Interesse besitzt.

Ausgangspunkt dieser angeblichen Häresie ist die Lehre von der Willensfreiheit des Menschen, aus der der unbekannte Gegner folgert, daß Gott die künftigen Handlungen seiner Diener weder bestimmen noch vorab überhaupt kennen könne. Wissen oder beherrschen könne man nämlich nur, was gegenwärtig existiere oder was in der Vergangenheit geschehen sei (I. 3.8.8: S. 82, 5-10 als polemische Unterstellung). Denn was noch nicht existiere, dürfe nicht als "seiend" (*marwǧūd*) bezeichnet werden, und allein "Seiendes" könne Objekt des göttlichen Wissens und der göttlichen Verfügungsgewalt sein (besonders I. 3.8.9: S. 83, 3-5).

Die Frage, an wen unser Autor bei der Darstellung dieser Ideen gedacht hat, führt uns wieder in das beginnende 9. Jahrhundert, diesmal zu Hišām al-Fuwaṭī (gest. wohl vor 218/833), also einem Vertreter der muʿtazilitischen Theologie. Bei ihm, und vermutlich nicht bei ihm allein, finden sich ganz ähnliche Vorstellungen, wobei er allerdings von einer anderen Problemstellung ausgegangen ist. Hišām ging es hier nicht darum, die Willensfreiheit theoretisch abzusichern – die er im übrigen auch vertreten hat –, sondern darum, die Konsequenz aus dem Gedanken zu ziehen, daß Gott allein von Urewigkeit her existiert haben kann. Würste Gott nämlich, so Hišām, immer schon um die (künftigen) Dinge, so wären sie auch von Ewigkeit her zusammen mit ihm vorhanden. Denn selbst wenn sein Vorherwissen nur auf ihre spätere Existenz und nicht auf ihre genaue Erscheinungsform bezogen wäre, läge darin bereits ein Hinweis (*išāra*) auf sie. Hinweisen aber könne man nur auf "Seiendes" (*marwǧūd*) und "seiend" dürfe man Dinge erst nennen, wenn sie von Gott bereits geschaffen wären¹³.

¹³ Hišāms Leben und Wirken sind übersichtlich zusammengefaßt von Charles Pellat, Art. "Hišām b. ʿAmr al-Fuwaṭī", in: *EP* III 496b. Die hier erwähnte Lehre über das Vorherwissen Gottes hat Ašʿarī, *Maqālāt* 158,4 ff. u. 488,8 ff. überliefert. Für weitere Belege siehe Hans Daiber: *Das theologisch-philosophische System des Muʿammar ibn ʿAbbād as-Sulamī* (gest. 830 n. Chr.), Beirut 1975 (= *Beirut Texts and Studies*, 19), S. 193 ff., der auch vergleichbare Vorstellungen anderer Theologen anführt. Eine Analyse der Problem-

Somit endet Hišām also bei jener These, die im *Sirr* heftig attackiert wird; und er begründet sie mit Formulierungen, die auch dort dem Opponenten unterstellt worden sind. Demnach kann man auch hier wieder folgern, daß unser Verfasser die Doktrin eines muslimischen Theologen dargestellt hat, diesmal allerdings nur, um sie mit aller Deutlichkeit zu widerlegen.

V.

Die große Nähe zum *Kalām*, die an diesen beiden Beispielen sichtbar geworden ist, läßt sich immer wieder in den Ausführungen des *Sirr al-halīqa* nachweisen, dessen Autor folglich nicht nur der antiken Wissenschaft, sondern auch der islamischen Theologie nachhaltig verpflichtet gewesen ist¹⁴. Allerdings hat er es uns keineswegs leicht gemacht,

stellung (in der Muʿtazila und bei al-Kindī) gibt Jean Jolivet: *L'intellect selon Kindī*, Leiden 1971 (= *Publications de la "Fondation de Goeje"*, 22), S. 116 ff.

¹⁴ Als weitere Parallelen zur islamischen Theologie wären zu nennen: 1) Die Frage, ob der Schöpfer den gesamten Kosmos in einem Senfkorn unterbringen könne (I. 3.6.3), die sehr genau einer Polemik Nazzāms gegen Dirār b. ʿAmr entspricht: vgl. van Ess, "Dirār I" 261; zum Beispiel des Senfkorns siehe ebenfalls Daiber, *Der Islam* 59/1982/330 und Salomon Pines: *Beiträge zur islamischen Atomenlehre*, Berlin 1936, S. 13 u. 113 f. – 2) Die auch im *Kalām* geläufige absurde Überlegung, ob Gott in der Lage sei, seinesgleichen zu erschaffen (I. 3.6.2): vgl. Josef van Ess: *Frühe muʿtazilitische Häresiographie. Zwei Werke des Nāṣīʾ al-akbar* (gest. 293 H.), Beirut 1971 (= *Beirut Texts and Studies*, 11) S. 102 Anm. 1. – 3) Das Konzept der Erschaffung der Welt mittels des Wortes (I 2.2.3 u. besonders II.2) das in seiner hier vorliegenden Ausformung von den Vorstellungen Abū l-Hudayl abhängig zu sein scheint: vgl. Zimmermann, *The Origins*, S. 196 ff. – 4) Die Lehre, daß Gott ohne Vorbild erschaffe (I. 3.7.3), die deutlich den Ansichten der Kirchenväter widerspricht, während sie im frühen *Kalām* zum Gottesbild gehört: vgl. meine Ausführungen in: *Die Doxographie des Pseudo-Ammonios* (s. oben Anm. 3), Kommentar zu IV: Xenophanes. – 5) Eine Reihe terminologischer Anklänge wie etwa der Vorwurf gegen die Dualisten, sie würden den Schöpfer und die Geschöpfe "verähnlichen" (*yuṣabbibu*; I. 3.9.1: S. 91, 2); die Formulierung, Gott schaffe "mit Macht und Wissen" (*bi-qudratin wa-ʿilmīn*; I. 2.3.20: S. 43,2 u. I. 3.9.2: S. 91,7); oder die Aussage, daß der Schöpfer – und nur er allein – als "der Einzige" (*al-fard*; I. 2.3.17: S. 41,1 ff., bes. 6-8) bezeichnet werden dürfe: vgl. dazu die Anekdote bei van Ess, "Dirār II" 27. – Wichtig ist dabei, daß sich die Parallelen zum *Kalām* nicht auf Buch I des *Sirr* beschränken, sondern, wie Beispiel 3 zeigt, auch in

die verschiedenen Quellen, aus denen er schöpfte, säuberlich zu trennen. Denn er veränderte häufig sein Material und fügte divergierende Elemente rigoros zusammen, was – wegen der Tragweite des Vorganges – noch an einem letzten Fall demonstriert werden soll.

Das Problem, das sich dafür besonders anbietet, berührt sowohl Theologie als auch Physik und läßt sich zugespitzt in folgender Fragestellung zusammenfassen: Gibt es in dieser Welt nur Körper, die sich aus sich heraus bewegen und verändern, oder gibt es auch Akzidentien wie die Bewegung und die Veränderung, mittels derer Gott alles nach seinem Belieben verwandeln kann? Die Überlegung an sich geht einmal mehr auf die Diskussionen der islamischen Theologen zurück und wird in unserem Text auch so dargestellt, daß dieser Ursprung erkennbar ist¹⁵. Daneben aber hat es den Anschein, als hätte unser Autor hier noch an eine andere, und zwar diesmal antike Theorie gedacht. An einer Stelle nämlich erwähnt und widerlegt er einen gewissen Munīs, der kategorisch die Realität jeder Veränderung bestreitet. Der eine Gott, so Munīs, könne nichts in sich Verschiedenes und Gegensätzliches geschaffen haben. Deswegen sei alles, was nach Veränderung, Handlung und Bewegung, nach den verschiedenen Farben oder nach den vier Elementarqualitäten aussehe, keine Wirklichkeit, sondern nichts weiter als ein optischer Schein (I. 2.2.10: S. 26,1-27,2 u. 27,9).

Diese Behauptung hat in der Tat nichts mehr mit *Kalām* zu tun, sondern gibt sehr verkürzt ein Konzept wieder, das uns von Parmenides und seiner eleatischen Schule her bekannt ist. Denn auch Parmenides war infolge seiner Seins-Metaphysik zu dem Ergebnis gekommen, daß

einem anderen Teil des Werkes zu finden sind. Das spricht gegen die mögliche Hypothese, Buch I sei in islamischer Zeit einer bereits vorhandenen antiken Urfassung der Schrift vorangestellt worden.

¹⁵ Der Autor des *Sirr* spricht sowohl von Substanzen, denen bestimmte Qualitäten und Wirkkräfte von Natur aus innewohnen (z.B. I. 2.2. 6-7), als auch von Akzidentien, mittels derer Gott auf die Dinge einwirkt (z.B. I. 2.3.2 u. I. 2.2.11). Zugrunde liegt hier die Auseinandersetzung zwischen den sogenannten "*aṣḥāb at-tabā'ī*" und den "*aṣḥāb al-ā'rād*": vgl. dazu Kraus, *Jabir* II 161 ff. und van Ess, "Dirār I" 241 ff., der S. 259 ff. auch Hinweise auf das *Sirr al-ḥalīqa* gibt.

es Entstehen und Vergehen, Veränderungen des Ortes oder der Farben nur für die Sinne, aber nicht realiter geben könne¹⁶. Und einer seiner Schüler namens Melissos hat später noch hinzugefügt, daß auch Wärme und Kälte, Härte und Weichheit lediglich trügerische Erscheinungsformen seien¹⁷.

Was also Munīs im *Sirr al-haliqa* vorträgt, ist nicht viel mehr als eine knappe Reprise der eleatischen Theorie. Und es mag sogar sein, daß sich sein ansonsten völlig unbekannter Name als eine arabische Korruptele von Parmenides oder Melissos erklären läßt¹⁸. Wichtiger als diese Möglichkeit aber ist für uns die simple Feststellung, daß unser Autor hier eine antike Theorie wiedergegeben hat und daß er sie ohne Zögern mit seinen sonstigen Überlegungen verband. Sein eigentliches Interesse liegt auch an dieser Stelle in einer innerislamischen Debatte. Aber er scheint gewußt zu haben, daß es schon in der Antike eine Theorie gab, die man als Anfechtung seiner Überzeugung verstehen konnte. Und so hat er in seiner Darstellung auch eine Polemik gegen diese Lehre zum Ausdruck gebracht.

VI.

Faßt man diese Beobachtungen in einem Fazit zusammen, so ergibt sich ein recht genaues historisches Bild. Das *Sirr al-haliqa* ist allem Anschein nach im Umkreis der frühen islamischen Theologie entstanden, wie sie um die Wende vom 8. zum 9. Jahrhundert n. Chr. diskutiert worden ist. Sein Autor hat zahlreiche Anregungen von dieser Seite erhalten, ohne sich deswegen in allen Punkten einem bestimmten Denker anzuschließen. Will man dennoch eine Tendenz hervorheben, die ihn be-

¹⁶ Vgl. Hermann Diels & Walther Kranz: *Die Fragmente der Vorsokratiker*, I, Berlin 1951⁶, Nr. 28 B 8, besonders Zeile 38-41 und dazu W. K. C. Guthrie: *A History of Greek Philosophy*, II, Cambridge 1965, S. 39 ff.

¹⁷ Vgl. Diels & Kranz, *FVS* 30 B 8 und Guthrie, *History* II 103 ff.

¹⁸ Vom arabischen Schriftbild her könnte Munīs (منيس) sowohl eine Verschreibung von Parmenides (پارمنيديس o.ä.) als auch von Melissos (مليسس o.ä.) sein.

sonders charakterisiert, so ist das die Tatsache, daß er auf pointierte Weise *Tawhīd* und Prädestination miteinander verband. Das setzt ihn von den Mu'taziliten ab und rückt ihn an die sogenannten ḡahmitischen Theologen heran¹⁹.

Mit dieser Tendenz aber läßt sich auch wieder die Brücke zur Regierungszeit al-Ma'mūns schlagen, von der bereits eingangs die Rede gewesen ist. Denn al-Ma'mūn war, wie man weiß, Prädestinatianer und hat ḡahmitischen Kreisen nahegestanden²⁰. Insofern ist es in der Tat sehr naheliegend, auch die Entstehung des *Sirr al-ḥaliqa* in seiner Regierungszeit zu vermuten, was einer Datierung des Werkes um 820 oder 830 n. Chr. entspricht.

Darüber hinaus legt uns das Ergebnis noch eine zweite Folgerung nahe, die jedoch vorläufig nur als Hypothese formuliert werden kann. Wenn es richtig ist, daß das "Buch über das Geheimnis der Schöpfung" in dieser Zeit verfaßt wurde, haben wir es hier mit einem erstaunlichen und bislang nicht recht erklärbaren Phänomen zu tun. Ein Autor, des frühen 9. Jahrhunderts hat dann nämlich antike Vorstellungen auf eine Weise rezipiert, die deutlich von den bekannten Überlieferungswegen abweicht: Er hat weder Texte übersetzt noch sie in einem Kompendium zusammengefaßt. Er hat vielmehr antike Ideen mit zeitgenössischer Theologie verbunden, um daraus eine eigene Weltanschauung zu entwickeln, die alle Anzeichen des Übergangs und der Neuorientierung trägt. Das aber heißt, daß man zu diesem Zeitpunkt nicht immer mit scharfen Grenzen, mit Originalen auf Griechisch und Übersetzungen auf Syrisch und Arabisch rechnen darf. Es gab dann nämlich auch eine zweite, pro-

¹⁹ Zu den "ḡahmiten", also Theologen wie Bišr al-Marīsī oder an-Naḡḡār, vgl. van Ess, "Dirār II" 21 ff. und Wilferd Madelung: *Der Imam al-Qāsim ibn Ibrāhīm und die Glaubenslehre der Zaiditen*, Berlin 1965 (= *Studien zur Sprache, Geschichte und Kultur des islamischen Orients*. N.F. 1), S. 241 ff.

²⁰ Van Ess, "Dirār II" 34.

duktive Form der Auseinandersetzung mit der Antike, oder, wenn man so will, eine Fortsetzung des Hellenismus in den Grenzen des Islams²¹.

Führt man diese Hypothese aber zu Ende, so gelangt man möglicherweise auch zu einer Erklärung für die in jenem Umkreis so häufige Erscheinung der Pseudepigraphie. Denn antike Wissenschaft derart eng mit muslimischen Gedanken zu verbinden, mag in einer Zeit der religiösen Auseinandersetzungen nicht ganz ungefährlich gewesen sein. Tat man dies jedoch im Namen eines vorzeitlichen Denkers, so versprach die Form der Darbietung vielleicht doppelten Gewinn: nicht nur, weil die eigene Person geschützt blieb, sondern auch deswegen, weil damit der Eindruck erweckt werden konnte, daß die eingestreuten islamischen Glaubensinhalte schon längst von jenen alten Weisen ausgesprochen worden seien. Damit aber hätte Pseudepigraphie in der Tat ihren plausiblen Sinn gehabt. Sie wäre dann nämlich keine zweitklassige Fälschung gewesen, sondern eine literarische Antwort auf eine schwierige historische Situation.

²¹ Vgl. dazu die Überlegungen von Zimmermann, *The Origins*, S. 111 f. In diesen Umkreis einer produktiven Rezeption antiker Überlieferungen gehören vermutlich auch das *Kitāb ārā' al-falāsifa* des Pseudo-Ammonios (siehe oben Anm. 3) und die *Turba Philosophorum* (vgl. dazu meinen Beitrag: "Christliche Theologie und vorsokratische Lehren in der Turba Philosophorum", in: *Oriens* 32 /1990/ 97-123).

LA PHILOSOPHIE D'IBN SĪNĀ ET SON ETHIQUE

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Notre but, c'est à vous exposer la philosophie d'Ibn Sīnā et son éthique. Au fond, cela revient, à vous parler, justement, du "tağallī" (la radiation ou la manifestation) et de l'"ittiṣāl" (l'arrivée), ou, plutôt, de l'"ittiṣāl al-insān ilā t-tağallī" (l'arrivée de l'homme à la manifestation divine).

Tout d'abord, il y aura, quelques mots très précis à vous adresser, concernant les études bibliographiques sur la vie, les oeuvres et les vues d'Ibn Sīnā.

Pour faire une recherche exhaustive bibliographique, il vaudrait mieux consulter, au premier abord, les bibliographies préparées par Brockelmann, Sezgin, Ergin, Mahdavi, Anawati, Sayyid Naficy y compris Bernhard Geyer, Pearson, les dernières publications, périodiques ou non, parues dans les dernières années et dans les divers pays, tels que la Turquie, l'Egypte et la Perse, même les Indes y compris la Pakistan, en se rappelant surtout, les noms, tels que Ibrahim Madkour, Fazl ur-Rahman, Louis Gardet, Corbin, Mlle. Goichon, Sayyid Husain Nasr, Mlle. d'Alverny et Van Riet.

Par cet exposé, ajoutons-le, nous allons tenir devant les yeux, surtout, *Kitāb aš-šifā'*, *Iṣārāt*, *Ḥayy b. Yağzān* et *Risāla fī l-ʿiṣq*.

Pour saisir le vrai sens de la philosophie et de l'éthique chez Ibn Sīnā, il me semble qu'il serait très convenable aux faits historiques, de nous rappeler, avant tout, l'origine du mot de philosophie. C'est cela qui donnera du jour à notre exposé, du commencement jusqu'à la fin.

Dans le temps, les Pythagoriciens devraient tenir devant les yeux, les mots *Philia* (amitié, *uhuruwa*) et *Sophia* (sagesse, *ḥikma*), pour qu'ils puissent, ensuite, d'en composer un nouveau terme qu'est la philosophie. C'étaient les Chaldéens qui sont arrivés, le premier, à la conception de sagesse, suivant les témoignages de Bérose, d'Ibn Nawbaht, d'al-Fārābī, d'Ibn Maymūn et, de Roger Bacon, de Erasmus et de Dóczy

János¹. C'est cela, d'ailleurs, ce qui conforme aux recherches archéologiques, citées dans la bibliographie de Rykle Borger dont le titre est *Handbuch der Keilschriftsliteratur* (Berlin, 1975-77, De Gruyter).

Les Chaldéens et, surtout, les Sumériens, par leurs sens d'"Ordre" et de "Classification", sont arrivés, le premier, à une "vue d'ensemble transcendante" sur tout ce qui existe et à une conception d'une réciprocité et d'un parallélisme qui se trouve entre l'Univers, la Société et l'Homme. Suivant eux, les lois des cieux (*nam*) se reflètent, à la fois, sur la société, ainsi que, sur le corps et l'âme humaine, à un tel point que, le "justice" cosmique règne partout. La "justice" dans l'univers, c'est la loi naturelle qui tient toutes les parties en harmonie, à la manière du "Cosmos". La "justice" dans la société, c'est la cause d'existence de la société. La "justice" dans le corps humain, c'est la santé. La "justice" dans l'âme, c'est la vertu. La "justice" est l'essence de toutes les choses même celle de l'"Au-delà" qui s'appelle "kur". Nul ne peut s'échapper aux lois, même, ce ne soit que les Dieux. Les Dieux, pour leur besoins, après avoir créé l'homme "à leurs image", de l'argile, et lui soufflé de leurs âmes, c. à d., de l'"extérieur", pour lui rendre la vie, ont bâti, ensuite, dans le coeur de l'homme un "bercaïl" (*kyklos*), destiné à leurs résidence. Mais, hors de la société, l'homme n'est qu'un bête sauvage (*sab'*), comme

¹ Platon, *Epinomis*, 987, d, e, *Timaios*, 19 e et suiv.; Bérose, *Babiloniaka* (Kaldéika); Paul Schnabel, *Berosos und die babylonisch-hellenistische Literatur*, Berlin: Teubner, 1923. *De Oanne*, III, 9, 10, 11, 12. *Polyhistor apud Eusebium in Chronico Pergitur Fragmentum*; Ibn Nawbah̄t, *Kitāb Nahmutān*; Ibn Nadīm, *Kitāb al-Fihrist*, Trad. D. Dodge (II, Columbia, New York p. 573); al-Fārābī, *Tahṣīl as-sā'ada*, Trad. de M. Mahdī (p. 43, ch. 53. Agora Editions, Free Press of Glencoe 1962), Ahmet, III-1730, 60 b; Roger Bacon, *Opus Maius*; E. Gilson, *La Philosophie au Moyen Âge*, p. 477, Paris: Payot, 1944; Ibn Maymūn, *Dalālat al-Hā'irīn*, p. XVI, 738, 585, ed. de Atay, İlahiyat Fakültesi, Ankara. Comparer: Conteneau, *Le Déluge*, Paris: Payot, 1952, p. 253; *Novum organum, Rudimenta*; Borger, *Summerische Weisheit III*, Berlin: de Gruyter, 1975; Langton, *Babylonian Wisdom*, Paris 1923; Viroilleaud, *Légendes de Babylon et de Cana'an*, Paris: Maisonneuve, 1949, p. 17; Lambert, *Babylonian Wisdom Literature*, Oxford 1960; Van Dyck, *La sagesse sumero-accadienne*. Leiden: Brill, 1953; Landsberger, *Mesopotamia Medeniyetinin Doğuşu*, *DTCF Dergisi*, II, 3, 1943; Kramer, *From the Tablets of Sumer*, Colorado: The Falcon Wings, 1956.

dans le cas d'Enkidu, avant de se former par les "Filles d'Inanna (Vénus)"².

Ane, Dieu de "Justice", dont la résidence est l'équateur, créé l'Univers en donnant les formes à Nin-Khursag, Matière Première, par l'intermédiaire de Nanna, Dieu de Lune, qui obéit à Ane et qui est le lieu des formes. Nanna est, donc, le "Donneur des Formes" (*Donator Formarum*, "*wāhib as-ṣuwwar*"). C'est Nanna qui, sous l'ordre de Ane, nomme quelqu'un comme souverain. Le souverain, "Pasteur Droit" ("*Si.Pa.Si.*" des Sumériens, "*Šarru Kenū*" des Akkadiens) doit être juste à l'exemple de Dieu. Ane a refusé l'offrande de poisson de Adapa si pieux, mais, nuisible aux autres créatures des Dieux, puisqu'il a cassé les ailes de Šutu, Vent du Sud, sous peine de lui empêcher d'offrir son poisson à Dieu, et qu'il a mis, ainsi, à la pluie un obstacle et la perturbation dans le pays et dans le cosmos. Ane n'offre le Paradis Dilmun qu'à Ziu Sudra, souverain si sage, juste, courageux, maître de soi et "Paragon of Wisdom", sauvant toutes les créatures, du "Déluge", par sa sagacité et la technologie, sans faire de moindre exclusivité parmi les créatures. Ane n'offre pas le Paradis à Etena si aimant sa femme, ni même non plus à Gilgameshe, souverain si courageux et maître de soi et qui cherche de l'immortalité dans la fausse direction. Car, leurs efforts ont pour but personnel et non pas social, par conséquent, contre à la "justice" cosmique. Enki, Dieu de Sagesse, qui sait tout ce qui passe dans les esprits divins et gardien de la "Table Céleste" où l'on inscrit les "Exemplaires", la transporte par son "Bateau Céleste" pour l'offrir à ceux qui ont besoin, surtout à Inanna, déesse de culture et de civilisation.

Tout cela, nous permet de préciser, clairement, la situation chez les Pré-Socratiques, surtout, chez les Pythagoriciens, ainsi que chez Platon qui disait dans son *Timaios* (41 b et sui.), qu'il se trouve un parallélisme entre l'Univers, l'Etat et l'Homme. Selon Platon, on ne peut se concevoir l'homme que dans la société. Le "Bien", qui donne aux "Idées" leurs existences et qui les illumine, c'est la Lois pour l'Univers, l'Etat pour la Société, la Vertu pour l'Homme. Les principales vertus sont la Sagesse

² Kramer, *From the Tablets of Sumer; Epopé de Gilgameshe.*

(*Sophia*), la justice (*Dikaiosyne*), la Courage (*Andreia*) et la Maîtrise de soi, la tempérance (*Sophrosyne*). La loi est au dessus de tout, surtout, du gouverneur, même qu'il soit d'élite. Car, "arkhonte-philosophe" doit se ressembler à Dieu par sa vertu de justice, par la voie d'"*Imitatio Dei*". D'ailleurs, Dieu-*Demiorgos* a formé tout, ainsi que l'homme, en appliquant la forme dans la matière, comme un potier qui forme les pots, en travaillant avec l'argile suivant les formes dans l'esprit de l'Âme du Monde. Pour l'homme, le Bien réside dans l'éloignement du monde sensible (*Phaidon*, 65; *République*, VII, 514) afin de revenir à son origine. C'est par la sagesse et par l'amour de Dieu que le "*catharsis*", ou bien le "voyage", ou bien la "migration" se réalise. Nous sommes, d'ailleurs, la "Plante Céleste" (Plante du Ciel) et non pas terrestre (*Timaïos*, 90a). Donc, il nous faut retourner au "ciel" sans perdre le moindre du temps.

Suivant Aristote, l'intellect dans l'âme humaine, c'est comme le Soleil dans l'univers. L'"Intellect Agent" est introduit dans l'âme, "du dehors" ("*turaten*", "de l'extérieur"). Dans l'âme, Dieu a allumé l'intellect comme une lampe. D'ailleurs, suivant Aristote, le bonheur, c'est la vie de l'intellect ou bien la vie intellectuelle. Donc, il en est de même le cas pour Aristote, chez qui se réalise "*eudaimonia*" suivant "*megates*" dans l'activité théorique et pratique de la meilleure partie de l'âme humaine, mais, non ailleurs, comme la santé, la gloire, la richesse etc. La vertu théorique d'un degré le plus haut, c'est la sagesse, genre de vie que nous devons attribuer aux Dieux, qui n'est que la connaissance certaine, soit intuitive, soit discursive, des objets les meilleurs et des conséquences des principes les plus éloignées, c. à d., la contemplation de la nature divine. Aristote nous disait, dans son *De Anima*, que la partie "*apathes*" de l'âme, élément divin qui est en nous, nous vient "du dehors" ("*turaten*", "de l'extérieur"), et que Dieu qui est la réalité, la bonté et l'amour, a allumé l'intellect, dans l'âme, comme une lampe, et que ce qu'est le Soleil dans l'univers, c'est ce qu'est l'intellect dans l'âme et que le Suprême Bien qui n'est que le Suprême Bonheur, c'est la vie de l'intellect. Mais, seulement, en vertu de l'élément divin qui est en nous que nous pouvons vivre la vie contemplative. Nous devons nous attacher à la vie éternelle, en nous participant à la vie de cette partie qui est en nous. Celui

qui mène une vie comme cela, est l'homme le plus heureux du monde. La vie idéale c'est le culte de Dieu et la contemplation de son essence (*Ethique à Eudème*, 1249 b,20).

Ajoutons à cela, ce qu'il disait Hermès (*Corpus Hermeticum*): l'Intellect est un don, un cadeau du Ciel, et, ce qu'il disait Asclepius: L'Intellect est la lumière dans l'âme à la manière du Soleil. Avant de passer à Ibn Sīnā, rappelons-nous, ce qu'il disait Plotin: Comme dans le cas d'une procession, l'Un se manifeste par une émanation des hypostases, tel que l'Un, l'Intellect, l'Âme, et la Matière, à l'exemple de la lumière qui émane de sa source. Cela se fait suivant le principe qui dit: l'Un ne vient que de l'Un. L'Homme répond à cela par l'union avec l'Un à la lumière de l'extase.

Comme on le sait bien, après l'avènement de l'Islam, on a connu tout ces idées, grâce à une période de traduction réalisée, surtout sous les 'Abbāsides. al-Fārābī fut le premier qui a pu construire un système philosophique d'une harmonie si originale et si rare, en se basant sur l'idée découverte par lui-même qui consiste d'une identité réelle entre l'essence et l'existence chez Dieu qui est nécessaire par soi et qui ne contient point de possibilité dans le sens de potentialité – idée dont Aristote est, entièrement, étranger à moins que ce ne soit pas dans la logique – et d'une différence réelle entre elles chez les créatures qui sont possibles par soi, nécessaires par autrui, c. à d., par Dieu. Grâce à cette découverte philosophique et originale, al-Fārābī a eu le mérite d'être mentionné par E. Gilson comme un "moment dans l'histoire de la philosophie".

Ibn Sīnā, considéré comme un des trois grands médecins dans l'histoire, les deux autres étant Hippocrate et Galien, n'a pu comprendre la signification de l'"être en tant qu'être" qu'à la suite de l'étude des oeuvres d'al-Fārābī. C'est d'ailleurs, à al-Fārābī qu'Ibn Sīnā doit les points fondamentales de son système philosophique.

L'étude de "l'être en qu'être" s'accomplit, d'après Ibn Sīnā, par la métaphysique qui porte plus d'un titre. La métaphysique est la "Philosophie Première" (*al-Falsafa al-ūlā*) en tant que science de l'Être Premier et Universel. Elle est la sagesse (*al-hikma*) en tant que science la plus parfaite, c. à d., la science certaine de l'objet le plus parfait, c. à d., celui du

créateur et des substances séparées. Elle est la "Science Divine" (*al-ilm al-ilāhī*) en tant que science concernant Dieu et les substances séparées. Elle est la "Science qui vient après la Physique" (*mā ba'd at-ṭabī'a*) en tant qu'elle se place, par son objet, et non par son étude, après la Physique, études de toutes les substances constituées par la matière et la forme et de leur accidents. De ce point, elle devrait, même, suivant Ibn Sīnā, être, non la "Science qui vient après la Physique", mais, la "Science qui se place avant la Physique" (*mā qabla ṭ-ṭabī'a*), puisqu'il s'agit du principe des principes et qu'elle se constitue le fondement de toutes les sciences. De ce point, on peut dire qu'elle est la "Science qui se place au dessus de la Physique" (*mā fawqa ṭ-ṭabī'a*), on aurait dû se confondre ce qui signifie à "se placer au dessus de la Physique quant à son étude". Elle est la "Science Théologique" (*al-ilāhiyyāt*) en tant que le *Livre Lambda* se forme son centre d'intérêt primordiale, à l'exemple de la "Science de l'Un" (*ilm at-tawhīd*).

La partie "*ilāhiyyāt*" du *Šifā'* est composée en dix livres qui sont, à peu près, parallèles à la Métaphysique d'Aristote, quant à son contenu, plus spécialement aux livres qui s'appellent *Alpha Minuscule* et *Alpha Majuscule*, *Gamma*, *Eta*, *Zeta*, *Teta*, *Iota* et *Lambda*. Il faut y ajouter que, dans *Ilāhiyyāt* du *Šifā'*, il y a des traces profondes de l'*Eisegoge* de Porphyre, des *Catégories* d'Aristote et de ses *Seconds Analytiques*, et de sources plotiniennes. Mais, le Dixième Livre est, essentiellement, différent d'eux. Il est un livre qui traite des problèmes islamique, tels que la théorie du prophétisme, la révélation, les anges, la "*Hilāfa*", la "*Imāma*", les obligations religieuses et les problèmes touchant à l'éthique et à la politique. En tout cas, la Métaphysique se constitue, chez Ibn Sīnā, une partie théorique de la philosophie comme les Mathématiques et la Physique le font. D'ailleurs, la philosophie est, suivant lui, la connaissance autant que possible des vérités théorétiques et pratiques par la voie de conception et d'affirmation pour but d'arriver à la perfection ou au bonheur.

L'existence est quelque chose qui se conçoit par elle même. De sorte que, si l'on fait une expérience de raison, on voit clairement la situation. Cette expérience de raison, imaginée par Ibn Sīnā, s'appelle l'"Homme

volant". Elle consiste de saisir l'existence de soi par une intuition intellectuelle, sans recours aux données du monde sensible. Cela, c'est ce par quoi on lui donne la priorité à "Cogito" de Descartes dans la littérature philosophique. Car, si l'on s'imaginait un homme suspendu dans l'air à la manière d'être empêché de toucher, d'ouïr, de sentir, de voir et de goûter, bref, d'avoir des données du monde sensible, il pourrait même se concevoir, par la pensée à elle seul, son existence, malgré les conditions dans lesquelles il se trouvait. Donc, l'existence est quelque chose conçue par un acte d'intuition intellectuelle immédiate, par "*Insus-lectio*". L'essence n'est autre chose que ce qui fait une chose telle quelle est. La définition nous donne l'essence d'une chose, mais, non son existence. De telle sorte que, de la définition d'une chose, on ne peut pas déduire son existence. L'existence est quelque chose qui doit venir à s'ajouter à l'essence, de l'extérieur. Pour qu'une chose, dont l'existence ou le non-existence est égale, soit existé, il est nécessaire de se trouver quelqu'un ou quelque chose qui lui donne son existence. Or tout est possible, sauf Dieu qui est nécessaire par soi. Dieu qui est nécessaire par soi ne peut pas ne pas être; donc, Dieu c'est le seul être dont l'existence est son essence. De sa plénitude d'être, c'est Lui qui donne leurs existences à tout les essences possibles, en pensant Son essence et par la voie d'émanation de Dix Intellects Séparés et de Neuf Corps Célestes, suivant le principe qui dit que "De l'Un ne vient que l'Un". De l'Un, émanant d'abord, le Premier Intellect du Ciel le Plus Eloigné (Epyrée), son âme et son corps, ensuite Le Second Intellect... ainsi de suite, jusqu'au Dixième Intellect, qui est l'Intellect de la Lune, et s'appelle l'"Intellect Agent" (*al-'aql al-fâ'âl*). L'Être Unique c'est Dieu. On ne peut pas le définir, puisqu'il n'a pas de genre, ni de différence spécifique. Il est la bonté et la beauté par soi. Il est l'être unique. Il est sage, Il est bon. Il est l'Intellect, l'Intelligent et l'objet de l'intellection. Il est Aimant, Aimé et l'Amour. De "l'Intellect Agent" émanent et se manifestent toutes les formes sublunaires. L'Intellect Agent est le lieu des vérités, des bontés et des beautés. Il est le "Donneur des Formes". Pour but de ce former les Substances Sublunaires, celui qui conçoit les formes émanées de Lui, c'est la Matière Première. De ce point, tous les substances sublunaires sont possibles ou

contingent par soi, nécessaire par autrui, c. à d., par Dieu. Il en est de même le cas pour l'âme humaine.

L'Âme humaine est une substance immortelle. Elle ne subit pas à la transmigration. D'ailleurs, suivant Ibn Sīnā, de même il n'y a pas de transmigration pour l'âme, de même il n'y a pas de polarité pour l'être, ni de pétition de principe pour la raison, ni de chaîne infinie de raisonnement. La contradiction ne peut pas se mettre comme principe ni pour l'être, ni pour la raison. Ce sont les gens de "*mušāgaba*" qui font cela tels que les Pythagoriciens et Porphyre.

Rappelons que l'éthique avicennienne se fonde, entièrement sur la psychologie. Dans l'âme humaine, on compte trois niveaux: l'Âme végétative, l'Âme animale et l'Âme cognitive. Pour tous ces niveaux ce trouvent les vertus correspondantes. Dans l'Âme cognitive, il se trouve deux aspects: L'un c'est l'aspect passif, l'autre c'est l'aspect actif. Ce qui est passif, ne peut pas devenir actif de soi même; il a besoin une préparation trop longue et nécessaire et d'un principe actif qui lui rend actif. Pour l'Âme cognitif c'est l'"*Intellect Agent*" qui joue ce rôle. L'"*Intellect Agent*" donne, à la foi, l'existence et la lumière, pour que l'"*Intellect en acte*" vienne à l'existence chez l'homme et se conçoive les formes émânées de lui. Se concevoir les formes c'est l'arrivée à l'"*Intellect Agent*", c'est "*ittiṣāl*". Ce n'est pas l'union (*ittiḥād*) avec lui. Même l'*ittiḥād* des Sūfīs est un terme poétique. De sorte que l'*ittiḥād* est, au fond, l'*ittiṣāl*, à moins, que ce ne soit l'esprit qui connaît soi-même. Car, dans ce cas là, le connaissant c'est le connu. L'"*Intellect Passif* chez l'homme n'est qu'une disposition de recevoir ce qui émane de l'"*Intellect Agent*". L'"*Intellect Saint*" (*al-ʿaql al-quddūsī*, *al-ʿaql al-qudsī*), qui n'est, à son tour, qu'une espèce de disposition de l'"*Intellect Passif*" chez l'homme reçoit de l'"*Intellect Agent*" la révélation, comme dans le cas du Prophète. La révélation n'est que l'arrivée par l'"*Intellect Saint*" du Prophète, à ce qui est émané de l'"*Intellect Agent*" sur la faculté d'imagination. L'"*Intuition*" (*al-hads*) se présente, donc, à la faculté d'imagination. Les gens, tous, ne sont pas doué d'un tel "*Intellect Saint*". C'est vraiment très rare parmi les gens d'en posséder, sauf les prophètes. C'est un don de Dieu. L'"*Intuition*", d'autre part, n'est qu'"une induction très raccourcie". Dans une

très longue durée, l'homme doit dépenser beaucoup d'effort, à la fois, matériel et spirituel, pour atteindre aux valeurs positives, théorétiques et pratiques et pour avoir le mérite de recevoir ce qui émane de l'"Intellect Agent". Cela s'accomplit en imitant Dieu, (*Imitatio Dei*). Afin de devenir un "miroir bien vernis et bien poli", prêt à refléter les formes émânées de l'"Intellect Agent" sur l'Âme cognitive de l'homme, on doit d'abord se sauver des "liens corporels" (*alā'iq al-badan*, cela c'est *lawāḥiq 'awāriḍ al-badan* d'al-Fārābī). Ensuite, on doit traverser des étapes de "*ābid*", de "*zāhid*" et de "*ārif*" pour but d'atteindre au niveau de "*ārif mutanazzih*", niveau idéal du philosophe et de l'"Homme parfait". C'est un niveau où l'on aime Dieu pour Dieu. Ce sont des étapes de voyage de l'âme humaine, sur la voie de perfectionnement, dont Ibn Sīnā nous a décrit dans son *Ḥayy ibn Yaqzān*, à l'exemple de Salamān et Absāl, *Iṣārāt* et *Risāla fī l-īṣq*. Cette voie de perfection consiste, en la réponse de salut de l'âme humaine, du "Nord" au "Sud", à l'être unique qu'est Dieu qui se dévoile de l'"Occident" à l'"Orient". L'âme humaine est illuminée par un acte d'intuition intellectuelle, marchant suivant une géographie métaphysique du "Nord" au "Sud" sous la lumière de l'"Intellect Agent", en imitant Dieu. Ce n'est que l'"Arrivée à la radiation". C'est le "Noesis" aristotélicien qui n'est que le produit de "Noûs" et qui se diffère de l'"épistémé" qui se développe par des raisonnements, par "*discursus*"; c'est la "*dianoia*" de Platon.

Avant de terminer notre exposé, il vaudrait mieux de nous rappeler que l'effort théorétique et pratique qu'est de "se sauver des liens corporels" n'est pas, du tout, de "se sauver des cinq injustes (*musta'bid*)" des Qarāmiṭa, à savoir, le ciel, la loi, la nature, l'état et l'ordre, ni de *iskāt waṣā'it* de Ḥallāḡ; et, que le *dā'i* ismaélite n'est pas l'"*ārif mutanazzih*" avicennien. Lorsque le temps favorable est venu, c. à d., Dieu le veut bien, l'"Intellect Saint" arrive à l'illumination, sans aucun recours à l'enseignement par quelqu'un, ni à son instruction (*at-ta'lim wa-t-ta'allum*), ni à son imitation (*taqlīd*). On y arrive, d'ailleurs, de la manière qu'on trouve le "moyen terme" du syllogisme par la voie d'intuition intellectuelle immédiate. Le syllogisme ne s'accomplit que par l'"*insus lectio*". Car, l'imitation n'est pas quelque chose certaine. L'"Intellect Saint" est le deg-

ré le plus haut de l'“*insus lectio*” à atteindre pour les créatures humaines. Celui qui est doué de l'“*Intellect Saint*” et possède des vertus positives, théorétiques et pratiques, telles que la justice, la sagesse, le courage et la maîtrise de soi, c'est le “*Basileus themistopoloï*”, c'est le “*Gouverneur Idéal*” de Platon, à la suite de “*Si.Pa.Si*” ou “*Šarru Kenū*”, c'est “*Malik as-sunna*” d'al-Fārābī, c'est l'“*Homme-Seigneur*” (*ar-Rabb al-insānī*), c'est l'“*Homme-Dieu*” (*al-Ilāh al-bašarī*), si l'on permet employer la terminologie de Siğistānī. A la suite de Dieu, on doit l'adorer, si l'on en trouve un parmi les gens! Il est très douteux qu'on se constate chez Ibn Sīnā quelque traces qui nous permettent de faire une association des idées concernant le rapport entre l'“*Intellect Saint*” et l'“*Imām ma'sūm*”. L'“*Homme-Seigneur*” ne serait pas chez lui l'“*Homme-Parfait*” (*Insān kāmil*) des Qarāmīta. Car, pour les Karāmīta l'“*Homme-Parfait*” est le “*Septième Degré*” de la connaissance concernant l'“*Imām ma'sūm*”.

Il nous semble que, la décision définitive, par laquelle on juge qu'il est vrai pour Ibn Sīnā, se fonde sur la discrimination concernant le contenu de ce qui émane de l'“*Intellect Premier*” et de l'“*Intellect Agent*”. Il en est de même le cas, à peu près, pour celui de “*Gnosis*”. Notre avis est que, l'origine de la contrariété et de la différence entre les “*Gnostiques*” de toute sorte, doit remonter à la différence entre les vues (*manāzīr*) qu'ils obtiennent lors de leurs extases.

AT-TABARĪ AND THE SEEING OF GOD

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Simply expressed, the background of speculative thought in Islam is a desire or need to make religious revelation conform to a reasonable philosophic system. Ultimately it was a question of the Islamic conception of the relation of the Creator to creation. This subject involves a number of important questions which I cannot treat in detail at this time. These include whether God can be said to have eternal attributes, whether the Qur'ān is uncreated, whether God predestines the actions of men (God's *qadar*), whether God can be seen or if He Himself can see, etc. As we know, the Mu'tazilites had shocking objections to most of these assertions. In their opinion the Islamic system of beliefs was incompatible with sound reason.

The different viewpoints in the discussion of how one conceived of God – whether He assumed an anthropomorphic attitude yet was different in essence from creation, or whether He was a pantheistic divine power, inherent in creation – could be focused on the question of whether or not the believers would be able to see God in paradise. Actually, Wensinck says that it is not improbable that the discussions concerning anthropomorphism started with the question whether God will be seen by the faithful in paradise¹. According to orthodox tradition the highest delight reserved for believers was to see God face to face on the day of resurrection².

¹ A. J. Wensinck, *The Muslim Creed*. Cambridge 1932, pp. 63 and 66.

² See e.g. 'Uṭmān b. Sa'īd ad-Dārimī, *Kitāb ar-radd 'alā l-ġahmiyya*, ed. Vitestam. Lund & Leiden 1960 (Introd.) p. 34 with references. Cf. further Duncan B. Macdonald, *Development of Muslim Theology, Jurisprudence and Constitutional Theory*. London 1903, p. 145.

The anthropomorphic concept of God was most strongly expressed in the so-called throne-traditions, the sayings that God is seated on his throne³. The fact that God could be seen in a definite place was interpreted by the Sunnites as incontestable proof of the impossibility of pantheism. If the viewer does not have a certain perspective in respect to that which he is to see, then he cannot see it⁴.

The Muʿtazilites maintained that there was no possibility of seeing God. Precisely the circumstance in which God would find Himself in a perspective relationship with the viewer would belittle God because it would impose limits on Him. Therefore the promises of beatific vision of God in the Qurʾān and tradition were to be understood in another, more figurative manner. Since no one – and this also included the Muʿtazilites – wished to or could deny the formal wording of the Qurʾān and revelation, *kalām Allāh*, they had to carry on their arguments by means of interpretation of different passages from the Qurʾān.

When *sunna* maintains that the highest delight for the believers is to see God it has literal support in Q. 75:22-23: "Faces on that day (Day of resurrection) shall be radiant, toward their Lord they will be looking". However, *muʿtazila* could also find literal support for the pantheistic aspect in another passage, Q. 6:103: "Vision (of man) does not attain Him, but He attains the vision"⁵.

If one inquires into the motive behind the two contradictory passages in the Qurʾān, it is necessary to consult the Jewish and Christian tradition, a tradition which is involved in the Qurʾān in many ways. That the ultimate goal of the faithful is to see God face to face is a

³ The basis of these traditions are Qurʾān-passages like 11:7 and 32:4. Relevant is also Q. 10:3, even though these words originally were revealed to refute the old opinion of the Meccans, who imagined their idols were intercessors into God for them. See also ad-Dārimī, *op. cit.* (Introd.) p. 25 ff. with references to the Arabic text.

⁴ ad-Dārimī, *op. cit.* (Introd.) p. 28 ff. with ref.

⁵ The English translation of the Qurʾān-passages is according to the print authorized by *al-Azhar* 1984. For a general survey of the subject see ad-Dārimī, *op. cit.* (Introd.) p. 34 with ref.

thought which is current in both the Old and the New Testaments. Take, for example, Ps. 11:7: "... the upright shall behold His face", which is taken up in Mt. 5:8: "Blessed are the pure in heart, for they shall see God". At the same time the other thread of thought can be discerned: God is too holy for an ordinary mortal to endure, for example, in Ex. 33:20 where God says to Moses: "for man shall not see me and live".

Thus, both *sunna* and *mu'tazila* could quote a respective passage from the Qur'ān as a formal statement in support of their contradictory views. Besides, both sides were obliged to employ their respective methods of interpretation to the two passages themselves to bring them into a meaningful agreement with each other. Unfortunately it is somewhat difficult to grasp the argumentation used by *mu'tazila* as it was rejected and subsequently forbidden. Our main source for it is the refutations made by the representatives of *sunna* where it is presented in a somewhat caricatured manner. Another interesting question is whether and to what degree the Mu'tazilite doctrine has left its mark also on purely orthodox presentations.

We shall now see how the above-mentioned two passages from the Qur'ān, Q. 6:103 and 75:22-23 have been treated in the most famous of all exegetic works, a work which was contemporary with the Mu'tazilite debate, namely *Ġāmi' al-bayān fī tafsīr al-Qur'ān* by at-Ṭabarī. In the present context we will unfortunately be limited to a short survey of the discussion.

First, I would briefly like to provide some information about the author himself. Abū Ġa'far Muḥammad b. Ġarīr at-Ṭabarī was born in 838 A.D. in Āmul in Ṭabaristān and died in Baġdād 84 years later. Like other young men thirsting for knowledge he set out on *talab*-travels and acquired a solid education in theoretical matters. at-Ṭabarī was by nature a quiet and discreet man of research with no interest in outward success. This can be seen in his rejection of the offer of a judgeship.

at-Ṭabarī has left us a large number of works which cover widely different areas of study, from grammar and poetry to medicine. He him-

self reports, however, that the foremost object of his scientific activity was revelation. He was of the opinion that this had been made manifest in a twofold manner: 1. as the divine written word in the Qur'ān and 2. as the manifestation of the divine will in history. He devoted his most important works to these two sides of revelation. They are both equally as monumental and important in each of their respective areas. I will not be treating his great work on history, *Ta'rīḥ ar-rusul wa-l-mulūk*, in this paper.

aṭ-Ṭabarī's other great work is his above-mentioned commentary on the Qur'ān, *Ġāmi' al-bayān fī tafsīr al-Qur'ān*. Goldziher – the famous Hungarian scholar – has described it as the starting point, the fundamental work and the climax of traditional Qur'ān exegesis. The edition from which traditions will be quoted here is the Būlāq-edition of 1323-29 A.H. (30 volumes). Q. 6:103 is treated in Vol. 7, p. 199 ff. and Q. 75:22-23 in Vol. 29, p. 119 ff.

Where did aṭ-Ṭabarī stand in the discussion which above has been introduced? The answer to this question is not entirely simple, among other reasons because the different genres in Arabic literature – including *tafsīr*-literature – strictly followed established patterns from which one did not deviate with impunity. As regards *tafsīr*-works it was also a condition especially during this era of dogmatic strife, that assertions in the Qur'ān were accepted without asking the question “how” and without making comparisons, *bi-lā kayfa wa-lā tašbih*. According to the traditionalists God's essence is beyond the reach of human reasoning. What God has said cannot be explained or expressed in a better way by a human being and therefore he is not capable or not allowed to express a definite opinion about the intention of God. If by exposition of the Qur'ān was meant the expression of one's personal opinion then it was definitely not allowed. For the sake of one's health it was necessary at least formally to keep to the established pattern. The *tafsīr* must give the impression of protecting Islam against heretical lines of thought.

As I have recounted, however, the intrusive questions raised by reason even penetrated into Islam during the ninth century A.D., “in what way”, “how is it possible”? etc. The travelled and intellectual aṭ-

Ṭabarī cannot have avoided a confrontation with the dominating issues of his time. We know, moreover, from an item reported by Yāqūt that when he questioned whether God literally sat on his throne the followers of Ibn Ḥanbal threw an ink-pot at him and that his home was stoned and the police were obliged to protect him⁶. He had every reason to conceal his private opinion. If he wished to include the discussion in his *Tafsīr* he could only do it through his choice of traditions. I would like to point out in this connection that the learned aṭ-Ṭabarī traced many old traditions and preserved them for later generations.

In his exposition of Q. 75:22-23 "Faces on that day shall be radiant, toward their Lord they will be looking" (Vol. 29, p. 119 f), aṭ-Ṭabarī adopts a quite neutral, even hesitant attitude and prefers to present the opinions of others. He reports that the commentators disagree on this point. In short, aṭ-Ṭabarī describes two opinions: Some say that they really will see the Lord, *tanzurū ilā rabbihā nazran*. The foremost authorities for this are 'Ikrima and Ḥasan. Both here and when discussing the other relevant passage aṭ-Ṭabarī recounts the following interesting tradition which goes back to 'Atiyya and 'Awfī: "They will behold God but their sight will not comprehend Him because of His greatness, but His sight will comprehend them". Those who represent the other opinion favour a more figurative interpretation and say: "No, the meaning of this verse is that they shall expect recompense, *intazara t-tawāba*, from their Lord". Accordingly they understood *nāziratun* as equivalent in meaning to *muntaziratun* and in a pregnant sense, "expecting something good". Most of the traditions which aṭ-Ṭabarī gives in support of this opinion go back to Muğāhid, like this example: "They shall expect, *intazara*, recompense from their Lord but none of his creation will see, *ra'ā*, Him". This figurative interpretation of the passage in the Qur'ān is, however, exactly the one which is attributed to the Ġahmiyya sect in ad-Dārimī's *Radd*, and which firmly is refuted by ad-Dārimī⁷. After

⁶ Yāqūt, *The Irshād al-Arib ilā Ma'rifat al-Adīb*, ed. D. S. Margoliouth (*Gibb Memorial Series* VI:6). Leiden & London 1913, p. 436.

⁷ ad-Dārimī, *op. cit.* (Arab. text) p. 57.

aṭ-Ṭabarī has conscientiously accounted for both schools of thought – and this is what characterizes aṭ-Ṭabarī, namely that he so demonstratively points out that he is well acquainted with the other way of thought – he adopts the first which is supported by ʿIkrima and Ḥasan.

aṭ-Ṭabarī did not have political ambitions but seems to have been all the more eager to make a name for himself as the exegete of revelation. But if his name and writings in this area were to achieve renown it was necessary for him to win the confidence of the orthodox. aṭ-Ṭabarī's tactic seems to have been first to report doubtful or even heretical traditions for the benefit of the reader and to show that he was well acquainted with the issues at hand. Then he would describe the correct traditions to which he himself adhered. Regarding the two apparently contradictory passages from the Qur'ān which we have quoted, aṭ-Ṭabarī, like the intellectual person he was, tried to find an explanation which would unite both passages.

Thus he first reports traditions in agreement with Q. 75:22-23 in which the Prophet emphasizes that the faithful will see (*ra'ā*) their Lord on the day of resurrection just as the disk of the moon is visible on a night when it is full and as you see (*ra'ā*) the sun when there are no clouds. Then he gives the traditions in which ʿĀ'īša guarantees that Muḥammad did not see the Lord. This is a historical statement but it clearly shows that to hold as true the assertion that Muḥammad actually saw the Lord would be to deny Q. 6:103. It can be pointed out here that traditions proving the exact opposite have been preserved, such as this one which is quoted in al-Malaṭī's *Tanbīh*: "Someone asked Ibn ʿAbbās: Did Muḥammad see the Lord? He answered: Yes, he saw him"⁸.

The main problem in the discussion with *mu'tazila* is naturally not whether or not God has been seen or will be seen but if He can be seen. Therefore it cannot be wrong to begin from concrete examples because if God can be seen at a certain time then the vision of God is in itself possible. As the present does not offer any example of seeing God, there

⁸ al-Malaṭī, *Kitāb at-tanbīh wa-r-radd ʿalā ahl al-ahwāʾ wa-l-bidaʿ*, ed. S. Dederling (*Bibl. Isl.* vol. 9). Istanbul 1936, p. 90.

are two tenses which are relevant to the discussion: the *past*, which includes above all the lives and ways of the prophets and the *future* which includes the life of the blessed in paradise. A synthesis in which the two contradictory Qur'ānic passages which represent two ancient Semitic concepts of the vision of God can be united is the following to which aṭ-Ṭabarī devotes a certain amount of attention: The light of God is too strong for human sight to endure in this world. Therefore no one has seen or shall see God here and this agrees with Q. 6:103. But on the day of resurrection God will prepare man's sight for eternity and at that time the faithful will see God face to face and this agrees with Q. 75:22-23. This interpretation allows the meanings of both verses to be harmonized⁹.

For the Mu'tazilites, however, the problem is on a different level. aṭ-Ṭabarī discusses opinions which were heretical in the eyes of the Sunnites – and perhaps also in his own – with an open-mindedness which is astonishing. The intellectual aṭ-Ṭabarī reveals that he clearly understands the so-called intellectual difficulties raised by the vision of God and he is not afraid to expound them for discussion. Even within the framework of a *tafsīr* he lets the intrusive question raised by reason come to the fore: "Is the vision of God possible"¹⁰?

It is clear that aṭ-Ṭabarī had the Mu'tazilites in mind in those passages where he discusses the possibility of the vision of God, for ex-

⁹ Compare with this way of thinking a passage in the New Testament, I. Cor. 13:12: "At present we only see the baffling reflections in a mirror, but then it will be face to face". The highest state of bliss (*visio beatifica*) is to see God, but also according to Christianity the seeing will be changed on that day. The spiritual state involves a change, so that a material being can behold an immaterial one (e.g. Augustinus, *De civitate Dei*, book 22:29, *Epistulae* 147:8).

¹⁰ The seeing of God according to Christian theology is not quite comparable. In view of the new testamental salvation doctrine God revealed himself as man. The doctrine of Trinity was firmly established several hundred years before aṭ-Ṭabarī (Cf. Augustinus, *De civitate* 10:13, 32 and others). In the Old testament even God's own seeing is interesting. He saw that all that he had done was good, but according to Augustinus (10:21) likewise his seeing is otherwise than the sight of the creation.

ample in Vol. 7, pp. 200 and 202. Often at-Ṭabarī does not base his argument on traditions but gives his own commentary on the text. When he speaks of those who deny that God can be seen now or at any time in the future he obviously does not mean 'Ā'īša but his own contemporaries, the Muṭazilites.

The Muṭazilites maintained that only that which is limited can be seen. Thus it is ascribed to the known Muṭazilite, Abū Ḥudayl al-ʿAllāf (d. 840 or 849 A.D.) that he said: "The eternal, *al-qadīm*, is without end or limit. One can neither attribute a part, *baʿd*, nor entirety, *kull*, to Him. On the contrary it is creation which has these two attributes, entirety and limitation, *kull wa-ḡamī*¹¹. It is truly remarkable that at-Ṭabarī (Vol. 7, p. 201) in principle raised no objections to a similar way of reasoning. The orthodox school of thought presumed that God was limited as regards his person. He is found in one place and can move to another. Nevertheless, according to a deep-founded Islamic conception, the Creator and the creation are two different concepts, essentially defined from each other. However, at-Ṭabarī does not dare to draw the logical consequences of this line of reasoning as do *muṭazila* and declare that it is impossible to see God.

at-Ṭabarī solved the problem by introducing an irrational element: it can be proved that the corporeal essence which normally cannot know an immaterial essence does know Him. Why then could not the same conditions be valid for seeing as for knowing? It is true that the eye normally cannot see anything other than that which is limited and is found outside the eye. But God does not necessarily have to submit to the laws of nature. His essence is such that it can cancel perspective. The conclusions at-Ṭabarī draws from this line of reasoning (Vol. 7, p. 202, line 15 f.) can be summarized as follows: one cannot arrive at an understanding of God by using rationalistic methods. One can only believe in the accounts about Him. At the end therefore at-Ṭabarī is

¹¹ See e.g. al-Ḥayyāt, *Kitāb al-intiṣār*, ed. H. S. Nyberg, Cairo 1925, pp. 7-101; cf. al-Aṣṣarī, *Maqālāt al-islāmīyyīn*, ed. H. Ritter (*Bibl. Isl.* vol. 1) second print Wiesbaden 1963. *Fihrist* p. 662. For a survey of Abū Ḥudayl's thoughts see Wensinck, *op. cit.* p. 136 ff.

obliged to remain in the orthodox sphere and evoke the principle of *bi-lā kayfa*.

In conclusion we can observe that at-Ṭabarī was an intellectual but orthodox theologian. Through his intellectual approach he provided a contrast to the Hanbalites, whose views were much closer to the naive popular piety of the time. Perhaps it was the fact that his concept of God was highly spiritualised which made him so hated in those circles.

Despite the fact that at-Ṭabarī felt bounded by the traditional *tafsīr* and did not dare to transgress its limits he could not resist implying that he was well acquainted with more speculative thinkers and the concept of God which they stood for. Even if his understanding of the godhead could have been influenced by that of the Muʿtazilites formally he presented himself as their opponent (p. 203, line 8 f.).

at-Ṭabarī's *Tafsīr* is traditional in plan. It is based on the principle of *tafsīr bi-l-ʿilm*. The conservative pattern of a *tafsīr bi-l-ʿilm* hardly permitted direct participation in the scholastic or natural philosophical discussions of the time. This discussion can only be discerned in the background as we have seen from his commentary on the important question of the vision of God (see especially vol. 7 p. 200 f.). It is also clear that at-Ṭabarī introduced new ways of reasoning into his *Tafsīr*. His method shows certain points of contact with contemporary works of refutation and reveals that he in fact did take part in the debate with *muʿtazila* and *ḡahmiyya*. Possibly he connected with the attitude which has been ascribed to al-Asʿarī, who adopted *kalām* as a method¹².

¹² Wensinck, *op. cit.* p. 93.

II. POPULAR CULTURE IN ISLAM

INDIAN 'ULAMĀ'S VIEWS ON POPULAR CULTURE

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Documents of early Islam show that from the very beginning Muslims hesitated between a flat rejection and a tacitly glossing over of certain harmless looking features of popular culture and religion. So we possess the record of Muḥammad's vehement condemnation of the worship of tombs with these words: "Do not make my grave a place of festivity" (Abū Dā'ūd, *Manāsir* 96), as well as his somewhat reluctant concession: "I forbade you to visit graves, but you may now visit them" (Mu. *Ġanā'iz* 108).

It is a truism to establish that common people in the whole wide world, whatever persuasion they might adhere, always try to draw the heaven to the earth as near as possible. And if this rule holds good for any region where Muslims dwell, it is certainly for the Indo-Pakistani Subcontinent, exposed as people over there are to the alluring Hindu rituals and festivities.

'*Ulamā*', who *qualitate qua* have to watch over faith and practice of the believers, are put in an awkward position. The iconoclastic message of the Qur'ān demands a resolute coming to grips with abuses having an unmistakable smack of *širk* (synthetism), whereas at the same time they may care for finding sufficient favour with the people entrusted to them. As a result of it, some of them conduct nevertheless a rigorous crusade against all forms of popular culture, while others try hard to tolerate as much as they think possible without harming the essential elements of Muslim creed.

In our paper we confine ourselves to views expressed in works dating from the last two centuries. The authors discussed are:

- 1) Šāh 'Abdal'azīz (1746-1824), the eldest son of the famous divine Šāh Walillāh Dihlawī. In his *fatāwā*, published in two volumes, also opinions are enunciated on the admissibility and non-admissibility of local social customs.

- 2) Šāh Ismā'īl Šahīd (1781-1831), grandson of Šāh Walillāh. He is called *šahīd* (martyr), as he was slain in a *ḡihād* against the Sikhs in the Panḡāb. In his polemical writings *Taqwiyat al-īmān*, *Tadkīr al-iḥwān* and *Širāt al-mustaqīm* he reveals himself as an uncompromising puritanical revivalist.
- 3) The anonymous writers of the treatises *al-Balāḡ al-mubīn* and *Tuḥfat al-muwahḥidīn*, probably composed in the first half of the 19th century. Both essays are spuriously attributed to Šāh Walillāh.
- 4) Representatives of the *ahl al-ḥadīth*. These followers of the Prophetic tradition proudly proclaim that they constitute the most ancient *madhhab*. Compared with them, the four orthodox *madhabs* are 'newcomers'. They are typically intellectuals who declare that an unscientific approach of religion leads to bigotry. Emphasis is laid on the reassertion of *tawḥīd* and the denial of occult powers to any of God's creatures.
- 5) Teachers and adepts of the Dār al-'Ulūm in Deoband (Uttar Pradesh). Barbara Daly Metcalf characterizes the Deobandi school as "reformist in outlook and populist in orientation"¹. A sure thing, indeed, is that they proceed with caution when judging manifestations of popular culture.
- 6) Barelwī 'ulamā' (Barēlī is a district town in Uttar Pradesh). Of all groups and individuals mentioned the Barelwīs appear the most adaptive to the cults of local religion, and also the most intolerant of dissenters. In their opinion, it is a great sin to shake hands with Wahhābīs like the Deobandī Rašīd Aḥmad Gangōhī (1828-1905), who contends that the knowledge of Muḥammad was so limited that he was not even aware of what happened behind a wall, and to associate with *gayr muqallids* (nonconformists; meant are the *ahl al-ḥadīth*), who have an undisguised contempt for folk-customs². Studying the *Taqwiyat al-īmān*, written by Ismā'īl Šahīd, is,

¹ B. D. Metcalf, *The Reformist 'Ulama*, University of California 1974, p. 131.

² Aḥmad Riḍā' Ḥān, *Fatāwā-yi riḍāwiyya*, Lyallpur 1908, I, pp. 207 ff.

according to them, worse than *zinā* (fornication) and wine-drinking³. When staying in the Hiḡāz in 1906, the founder of this movement Aḥmad Riḏā' Hān (1856-1921) tried to elicit from the 'ulamā' over there an anathema on the school of Deoband.

For a smooth fitting of popular culture with the Islamic system, by some of the above-mentioned *muftī*s references are made to the notions of 'ādāt and 'urf which – as Šāh 'Abdal'azīz explains – are in the view of *fiqh* scholars generally acknowledged principles, and come into play as soon as in a matter ambiguity has arisen about the actual relevance of *šarī'a* rules to a case at issue⁴. Hence, so the Barelwī adept Aḥmad Yār Hān (1942-82) points out, for a proper discharge of one's duties as a *muftī* also acquaintance is required with the speech, usages and customs of a district for which his *fatwās* are designed⁵. "‘Urf", Aḥmad Riḏā' Hān observes, "is different in the various Muslim countries... There exists not only no consensus of any 'urf among the Muslims, but it is also, even with the modern means of communication, impossible to reach a consensus on an 'urf"⁶. Besides, so he continues, 'urf may offer a fine opportunity to render rules flexible, often needed because of changed conditions or requirements of a locality. Thus the veil, originally not worn in Muslim countries, has gradually been introduced as a compulsory dress. The same applies to the legal requirement of compliance with distinguishing marks. In India nowadays the long tunic with the cut to the right side – a dress never obligatory in the country of our Lawgiver Muḥammad – is imperative; and it is absolutely forbidden to change it in a cut to the left side as worn by Hindus⁷.

³ Aḥmad Riḏā' Hān, *al-'Atāyā n-nabawiyya fī l-fatāwā r-riḏāwiyya*, Karachi 1985, VI, p. 183.

⁴ Šāh 'Abdal'azīz, *Fatāwā-yi 'Azīzī*, Deoband n.d., II, p. 132.

⁵ Aḥmad Yār Hān Barelwī, *al-'Atāyā l-aḥmadiyya fī fatāwā na'imiyya*, Lahore 1976, II, pp. 476 f.

⁶ Aḥmad Riḏā' Hān, *al-'Atāyā n-nabawiyya*, Karachi n.d., XI, pp. 41 & 43 f.

⁷ Aḥmad Riḏā' Hān, *Rasā'il riḏāwiyya*, Lahore 1976, II, pp. 216 ff.

Surveying the rich variety of local customs there is – in spite of the sometimes found willingness to overlook unfamiliar aspects of them – still a category of rituals denounced by everybody, including the Barelwī ‘*ulamā*’. Thus also Aḥmad Riḍā’ Ḥān considers a serious sin allowing a Hindu servant to blow on a *nāqūs*, i.e. a kind of shell blown by Hindus in divine worship⁸. Further, in his opinion a specimen of stupidity is the adoption of certain Hindu customs by disciples of a *pīr*, such as retaining a lock of hair on the top of the head, the rest being shaven off and dedicated to saints, and having a cord called *ḍorī* tied round the arm or wrist⁹. Putting a *tikā* (sectarian mark) on the forehead, as Muslim leaders did in the years 1920-22 for the promotion of Hindu-Muslim unity, is, according to the Barelwī scholar in fact a badge of *kufṛ*, incompatible with Islam. Equally *ḥarām* for Muslims is participating in the festival of Dasahrā (held on the birthday of Gangā) in order to give shape to the national unity¹⁰.

However, to become properly acquainted with the whole scale of fateful abuses the Muslim masses are enticed to in the Hindu environment we should make enquiries from Ismā‘īl Šahīd, the fighter *par excellence* of prevalent phenomena of *širk*. In his long lists of perverse habits current among the Indian Muslim population we note: Consulting Brahmins for good and bad omens, practising horoscope (to fix lucky days for a marriage), revering Sītālā (goddess presiding over small-pox), calling the assistance of Hanūmān (the monkey-god), Lonā Čamārīn (a Hindu witch of the low shoe-maker caste) and Kalwā-bīr (spirit whose aid is invoked by conjurers and jugglers)¹¹. *Širk* met in ‘*ādāt*, Ismā‘īl Šahīd continues, is *inter alia* invoking prophets, saints, *imāms*, martyrs, malignant spirits and fairies in trying times, or naming children after them, calling them ‘Abdannabī, Imām Baḥš, Pīr Baḥš,

⁸ Aḥmad Riḍā’ Ḥān, *al-‘Atāyā n-nabawīyya* Lahore 1986, X, 1, p. 169.

⁹ *Ibid.*, pp. 210 f.

¹⁰ *Ibid.*, Karachi 1985, VI, pp. 82 & 149.

¹¹ Ismā‘īl Šahīd, *Taqwīyat al-īmān*, Lahore 1956, p. 65.

instead of 'Abdallāh, 'Abdarrahmān, Hudā Bah¹². Customs on the occasion of the birth of a son, such as sacrificing a he-goat, discharging a musket (in order to inject courage into him), celebrating the sixth day (originally a Hindu practice; then the house undergoes a thorough cleaning, the mid-wife receives her present, the mother and child are bathed); usages of mourning adopted from the Hindus, such as not sewing clothes, not sleeping on a bedstead, not cooking *baryān* (small lumps of pulse), fennel and *pakwān* (cakes)¹³.

Although with their extensive web of relations the Deobandīs try hard to exercise considerable influence on the common people, they do not hesitate to battle against superstitious habits. In answer to the question put to him in 1973 whether the *šarī'a* permits the slaughter of a he-goat in order to throw its meat on the clothes of a sick person, Rašīd Aḥmad Deobandī (b. 1922) states that it is a magic practice adopted from the Hindus, and therefore a great sin¹⁴. Similarly, this *muftī* remarks that it is a sign of *širk* to utter the charm: "I have the disposal of the Chosen Five (i.e. Muḥammad, 'Alī, Fāṭima, and their two sons), because of which the heat of a pernicious and infectious disease could be extinguished¹⁵. In the *Fatāwā-yi Dār al-'Ulūm*, Deoband 1962, III, 11 we read: "A woman who dies in childbirth is a *šahīd*; but it is not right to ascribe this calamity to the agency of a *čurayl* (ghost of a woman who dies in the state of pregnancy)". On page 259 of the same *fatwā* collection the reader is warned not to shake hands with someone who makes flags which are taken out in the name of the saint 'Abdal-qādir Ġilānī when a plague epidemic is raging. Such a man is a person of a low character (*fāsiq*) and a heretic. A funeral rite condemned by the *ahl al-ḥadīth* is writing the *šahāda* on the grave-clothes of a dead to enable him to look at these notes during the interrogation by the two

¹² *Ibid.*, p. 23.

¹³ Ismā'īl Šahīd, *Tadkīr al-iḥwān*, Karachi n. d., pp. 81 f.

¹⁴ Rašīd Aḥmad, *Aḥsan al-fatāwā*, Karachi 1984-85, I, pp. 66 f.

¹⁵ *Ibid.*, I, p. 48.

angels in the tomb. "Moreover", it is observed, "what would be the use of this stupid trick for an illiterate"¹⁶?

Yet, certainly not at all times the upholders of orthodox religion display an aversion for rituals pertaining to popular belief. Šāh ʿAbdal-ʿazīz, notwithstanding the fact that by his biographer Sayyid Aṭar ʿAbbās Rizwī¹⁷ he is referred to as a "puritan", recommends when asked for an opinion concerning permitted means of warding off disasters caused by the enchantment or shadow of *ġinn*: A way of action profitable for somebody met with adversities is to put mustard-oil in a vessel of copper, to recite 14 time the *āyat al-qutb* (Q. III, 154: "Then He sent down upon you, after grief, security"), and to blow every time on this oil... God willing, in the end the calamity might be averted¹⁸. Albeit that the *ahl al-ḥadīṭ*, as a rule, are anxious to combat sundry manifestations of local religion, they make an exception for amulets and charmed cords. In the opinion of Ṭanā'allāh al-Amritsarī (1870-1948) they are permissible means if provided with the Most Beautiful Names of God, verses of the Qur'ān, or supplications handed down from the Prophet¹⁹. A similar forbearance towards popular belief is shown by ʿAbdal-ḥayy al-Laḥnawī (1848-86), who as a prominent member of the Farangi Maḥall family also emphasized the necessity of going back to the Qur'ān and the Ḥadīṭ. He postulates: "It is admissible to work spells on the scorpion's and serpent's poison by means of a Qur'ānic verse or an imprecation found in a *ḥadīṭ*. Unallowable, however, are Persian words or expressions, of which the meaning is not understood since they may pre-suppose *kufr*. Equally, it is permitted to honour and derive blessings from the salutary hairs, being an indication of utmost love of the Prophet; but inadmissible is to be concerned with such relics in

¹⁶ Muḥammad Ismā'īl as-Salafi, *Fatāwā-yi salafiyya*, Lahore 1987, p. 35.

¹⁷ Sayyid Aṭar ʿAbbās Rizwī, *Šāh ʿAbdal-ʿazīz, Puritanism, Sectarian Polemics and Ġihād*, Canberra 1982, p. 475.

¹⁸ Šāh ʿAbdal-ʿazīz, *Fatāwā-yi ʿAzīzī*, I, pp. 27 f.

¹⁹ Ṭanā'allāh al-Amritsarī, *Fatāwā-yi ṭanā'īyya*, Lahore 1972, II, p. 154.

case their identity is not known for certain²⁰. The Barelwī leader Aḥmad Riḍā Ḥān explicates without a blush: "From the time of the Companions up to this very day gaining blessings from the relics of the Prophet is ... recommended by the consensus of the Muslims. People are enjoined to kiss them. They are used as a means for adverting diseases and accomplishing desires"²¹.

The proposition advanced by L. Dumont: "chaque Musulmane... a à quelque degré un Hindu en lui-même"²² is also vindicated by the deliberations of 'ulamā' on the lines of conduct to be adopted in view of threatening contamination by impure fellow-countrymen. In answer to the question whether *wuḍū'* can be performed with water touched by Hindus, Aḥmad Riḍā' Ḥān declares that one should avoid that which has been touched by unbelievers and thereby is defiled. However, if no other water is available and it is not firmly established that it has been polluted by the mouth of a Hindu, it can be used for the performance of *wuḍū'*²³. Enjoying sweets made by Hindus is allowed, but refraining from it is preferable²⁴. However, it is disapproved, if not condemned, to accept sweets touched by the hands of Christians, or betel-leaves moistened by them, even if it happened with water from a Muslim²⁵. It is, of course, forbidden to eat bread of a *bhangī* (individual of a low caste consisting of scavengers and sweepers), for according to the prudent purpose of the *ṣarī'a* everything which fills a Muslim with disgust is prohibited. The Messenger of God once stated: "Give glad tidings

²⁰ *Mağmū'a-i fatāwā-yi 'Abdalḥayy*, Karachi 1989, II, pp. 269f; III, pp. 173, 179.

²¹ Aḥmad Riḍā' Ḥān, *al-ʿAtāyā n-nabawiyya*, X, 1, p. 92.

²² L. Dumont, *Homo hierarchicus*, Paris 1966, p. 267.

²³ Aḥmad Riḍā' Ḥān, *al-ʿAtāyā n-nabawiyya*, Fayṣalābād 1980, II, p. 6.

²⁴ *Ibid.*, XI, p. 63.

²⁵ *Ibid.*, II, pp. 110 f.

(of divine favour in this world and the Hereafter), but do not create aversion" (Mu. *Ġihād* 5)²⁶.

In this matter the views of the Deobandīs appear more liberal. According to their *fatwās*, water drawn by an idolater is not impure, and it is permitted to perform *wuḍū'* with water from a well built with "forbidden money", i.e. interest²⁷. Also lawful is water originating from wells used by *bhangīs*²⁸.

The most efficacious breeding-ground for the flourishing of local religion, however, is the hanker of the common man to get out of the drag of daily life so dominant in a farming community. Consequently, the main target of the '*ulamā*'s battle against symptoms of *širk* are the various occasions of festivity and the beloved pilgrimages to shrines of saints. Official Islam is in essence austere. The number of authorized festivals is restricted to two only, whereas the Hindus enjoy a continuous celebration of holy days. The Indian Subcontinent abounds in innumerable places of pilgrimage, frequented by Hindus, Sikhs, Jains and Buddhists, but the *šarī'a* legalizes merely one venture of this kind, to wit the *ḥaġġ* to the *Ḥiġāz*. First of all, the *muftīs* aim at what they regard unsound excrescences of wedding parties. In reply to the question whether music and merriment, looking at something comic, fire-works, ornament and decoration during marriage-feasts are allowed, Sayyid Naḍīr Ḥusayn (d. 1902), a well-known leader of the *ahl al-ḥadīth*, cites the tradition in which is recorded that for a man in Paradise all pleasures are prohibited with the exception of archery, domestication of horses, and love-play (Ibn Māġa, *Ġihād* 19)²⁹. A bit more lenient is the opinion of Aḥmad Riḍā' Ḥān, who says that although dancing and in-

²⁶ *Ibid.*, X, 1, p. 227.

²⁷ *Fatāwā-yi Dār al-'Ulūm*, Deoband 1962, I, p. 181.

²⁸ *Ibid.*, I, p. 197.

²⁹ Sayyid Naḍīr Ḥusayn, *Fatāwā-yi naḍīriyya*, Lahore 1971, I, pp. 22 ff.

strumental music are forbidden by the *šarī'a*, they do not fall under the scope of *kuf'r* and do not render a marriage invalidated³⁰.

A more serious point of difference is the institute of *mīlād*, the commemoration of Muḥammad's birth. By a member of the *ahl al-ḥadīth* the whole issue is dismissed with the ironic comment: "They who are fond of meat and sweets come into their own when they keep up the observance of *mīlād*"³¹. Another exponent of this movement notes: "Not the birthday of the Prophet as such is a beneficial event for the world. Salutary has been proved what happened forty years afterwards, t.w. the effects of his mission. In the Qur'ān we do not read: 'We have not created thee', but 'we have not sent thee, save as a mercy unto all beings' (Q. XXI, 107)" (Tanā'allāh al-Amritsarī, *Fatāwā-yi tanā'īyya*, I, p. 118). The Deobandīs, at least at present, seem more favourably disposed to it, admitting that a meeting convened for a *mīlād* might be a cause of blessing, provided that

- a) no belief is entertained that the Prophet honours the session with his actual presence; and
- b) it is not held obligatory to distribute sweets, and the like³².

In former days, however, the Deobandīs were quite critical of this usage. On the occasion of *mīlād*, so they pointed out, at times ceremonies are celebrated comparable with rituals observed by Hindus at the birthday of Kṛṣṇa, as, for instance, recounting fictitious events. Rising up during the *mīlād* service in order to suggest that the *rūḥ* of the Prophet descends from the spiritual into the phenomenal world is a stupid error, similar to the conviction of Hindus who believe that Kṛṣṇa is born every year anew³³.

Again also in respect of the celebration of *mīlād* of all 'ulamā' the Barelwīs appear the most willing to satisfy the cravings and fantasies of

³⁰ Aḥmad Riḍā' Hān, *al-Atāyā n-nabawīyya*, V, p. 37.

³¹ Muḥammad Ismā'il as-Salafī, *Fatāwā-yi salafīyya*, p. 13.

³² Rašīd Aḥmad, *Aḥsan al-fatāwā*, Karachi 1986-87, II, pp. 347 ff.

³³ Ḥalīl Aḥmad Anbetawī, *al-Barāhīn al-qaṭī'a*, p. 141.

the masses. So they emphasize that refraining from the rising up (*qiyām*) during the *mīlād* ceremonies without a valid excuse ought to be disapproved since it implies a gross affront to the Prophet³⁴! In addition, if not done for show but merely for gaining the grace of God, it is recommendable to practise *dīker* after the *mīlād* service, and to dance inclining one's body from side to side and clapping hands in a fierce rhythm³⁵. As regards the implicit veneration of Muḥammad the Barelwī go even to the point of contending that with the exception of divinity and the prerequisites for divinity the Prophet possessed all conceivable perfection³⁶. Thus, for instance, the Messenger of God was guarded against nocturnal pollution³⁷. He did not cast a shadow. For after having cleared his body from all coarse elements, God had made him pure light³⁸. Whereas the organs of all animals, the human race, and so on are composed of earth, the organs of the noble Prophet were made up of ingredients of Paradise, on account of which his excrements were pure. So could it happen that his nurse Umm Ayman inadvertently drank his urine, having taken it for water³⁹.

Finally, we need to examine the views on festivities connected with the centres where, in particular, local religion can come to full bloom; I mean the shrines of saints. If anywhere Indian people crowd together for entertainment, it is at these sacred places. Thursday evening, and on the occasion of an *'urs*, the death celebration of saints, around the *dargāhs* drums are beaten, religious songs (*qawwalīs*) are produced by professionals, while there is a remarkable free and informal intercourse between both sexes.

³⁴ Aḥmad Ridā' Hān, *al-ʿAtāyā n-nabawiyya*, X, 1, p. 139.

³⁵ *Ibid.*, X, 1, pp. 158 f.

³⁶ *Ibid.*, VI, p. 155.

³⁷ *Ibid.*, I, p. 178.

³⁸ Aḥmad Ridā' Hān, *Maḡmūʿi rasāʿil*, Karachi 1985, p. 51.

³⁹ Aḥmad Yār Hān Barelwī, *al-ʿAtāyā l-aḥmadiyya*, I, p. 36.

The most scathing criticism of the institute of *ziyāra*, visitation of shrines, and its concomitants, is given by the anonymous author of *al-Balāḡ al-mubīn*. This reformer brackets the acts of *pīr*-worshippers with the practices of idolaters. Idolaters, he argues, clothe their idols with gowns of silk and brocade; *pīr*-worshippers put on the graves of saints silk coverings; idolaters fix a day of a solar month for a pilgrimage to the idols, and all assembled together they bring offerings of flowers, sweets and gifts in money and kind, putting their heads on the threshold (of a sanctuary) in support of their vows. In the same way, the worshippers of a *pīr* fix a day of a moon month or a pilgrimage to a tomb, and congregated in large numbers they execute the same activities as the idolaters do for their idols. In addition, they organize obscene dancing parties of harlots. Another custom of the idolaters is to take their idols in procession. Similarly, *pīr*-worshippers construct mock tombs, called *ta'ziya*, in the days of 'Āšūrā', and take them out in procession⁴⁰. The anonymous author of *Tuhfat al-muwahhidīn* charges that a *mušrik* lies if he says that he worships saints in order that he might be in a better position to approach God. In reality, he worships them in order that trials might be averted and distress relieved⁴¹.

A bit less critical comments are made by Ismā'īl Šahīd. "It is conceivable", he admits, "that the visit of graves may serve a useful purpose if it is done spontaneously, and is not bound by fixed days and organized meetings. For the sight of a tomb reminds of death and life to come, so that it removes attachment to worldly goods. However, the visit of graves for any other motive, or allowing women to do this, or putting coverings on shrines, plastering them with gypsum, having any writing on them concerning dates of men,... building a tomb higher than a *bāhišt* (= a span measured by the extended thumb and a little

⁴⁰ *al-Balāḡ al-mubīn fī aḥkām rabb al-'ālamīn*, Lahore 1962, pp. 57 ff.

⁴¹ *Tuhfat al-muwahhidīn*, Lahore 1962, pp. 35 f.

finger), using shrines for ends that are specific for mosques, carry as a result that a shrine remains no longer a shrine but becomes an idol"⁴².

As is to be expected from *ahl al-ḥadīṭ* their verdict is most severe. Muḥammad Ismāʿīl as-Salafī, one of their followers, states in a *fatwā*, dated 4.9.64: The custom of *ʿurs* has solely been invented by commercially minded *ṣūfīs* of later generations. We consider pampering the stomach of those "holy men" (presumably the guardians of a shrine) a sin⁴³.

In the question of the cult of saints the Deobandīs again steer a middle course: "It is allowable", they concede, "to transfer the reward (for a good deed) to the soul of a respectable person⁴⁴, but it is *širk* to dedicate an animal to a saint and to sacrifice it at his tomb, for it is offering up to other than God"⁴⁵. Equally, offering a cover to be spread over the grave of a saint instills *širk*, such in contrast with the *kiswa* the Prophet himself has put on the Kaʿba. Honouring of it has not led to *širk*⁴⁶. And "it is definitely prohibited", the Deobandī spiritual director Rašīd Aḥmad Gangōhī warns, "to participate in an assembly of *ʿurs* with the habitual pandemonium so beloved by the vulgar"⁴⁷.

Even the Barelwīs, although as a rule anxious to consider the sentiments of the common believers, make some reservations in respect of the *ziyāra* rituals. Thus Aḥmad Riḍā' Hān cautiously observes: "It is permitted to put a cover on the mausoleum of saints, but not on the graves of ordinary people. It is surely allowable and laudable to light a

⁴² Ismāʿīl Šahīd, *Taḍkīr al-iḥwān*, pp. 200 f. & 210.

⁴³ Muḥammad Ismāʿīl as-Salafī, *Fatāwā-yi salafīyya*, pp. 6 & 11.

⁴⁴ Here reference is made to an episode recorded in *Miškāt al-maṣābīḥ*, book VI, ch. VII: "Saʿd ʿUbāda told God's Messenger that the mother of Saʿd had died and asked him what form of charity was best. When the Prophet replied that water was best, he dug a well and said it was for the mother of Saʿd".

⁴⁵ Rašīd Aḥmad, *Aḥsan al-fatāwā*, I, pp. 48 f.

⁴⁶ *Ibid.*, II, p. 376.

⁴⁷ Rašīd Aḥmad Gangōhī, *Fatāwā-yi rašīdiyya*, Delhi 1363/1944, III, p. 125.

lamp in honour of the soul of a holy man when visiting his shrine; but it is a baseless custom to lay on tombs of saints shaven hair of newly born children"⁴⁸. "During the celebration of the 'urs of 'Abdalqādir al-Ġilānī reciting with sweet singing is permissible as long as no use is made of the musical mode called Rāg and no beardless youths participate in it"⁴⁹. "If a circumambulation (*ṭawāf*) of a shrine of a *pīr* is performed as a mark of honour, it is not allowed, because this is an act of homage exclusively reserved for the Ka'ba. It is advisable to refrain from kissing a shrine, but there is no harm in kissing the threshold of a shrine; and the *ṣarī'a* does not forbid to walk backwards from the shrine with hands folded behind one's back"⁵⁰.

In conclusion we can say: the mere fact that so many *fatwās* deal with the multiple implications of popular culture indicates that in spite of holding great attraction it embarrasses the average Indian Muslim believer to a great extent. The even more curious thing about it is that the religious authorities, of whom we actually expect definite answers and evidence of a reliable consensus of opinion, turn out to be altogether at variance in their views on the issues, inducing them to brand colleagues a heretic, *kāfir*, apostate, or simpleton⁵¹. In other words, the various evaluations of local religion once again reveal that although externally the 'ulamā' may constitute a mighty power group to be feared by every kind of Muslim government, they internally represent a party strongly divided within itself.

⁴⁸ Aḥmad Riḍā' Hān, *as-Saniyya al-an'iqa fī fatāwā Afrīqa*, Karachi 1977, pp. 83 & 85 f.

⁴⁹ Aḥmad Riḍā' Hān, *al-'Atāyā n-nabawiyya*, X, i, p. 189.

⁵⁰ *Ibid.*, IV, p. 8.

⁵¹ Thus, for instance in *fatwās* issued in 1906 in al-Ḥaramayn Aḥmad Riḍā' Hān calls Deobandī apostates (see *Husām al-Ḥaramayn*, p. 25), while the latter denounce the followers of Aḥmad Riḍā' Hān as heretics (*Fatāwā-yi Dār al-'Ulūm*, III, p. 280).

REMARQUES SUR L'HISTOIRE DE °AZİZ BEN HĀLEH DU CYCLE EPIQUE HILALIEN

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Nous avons eu l'occasion, au cours d'une mission au Yémen oriental (région de al-Ḥadā'), mission qui avait pour but le relèvement de données archéologiques, épigraphiques, dialectologiques et folkloriques¹, de documenter une série de traditions liées aux Banū Hilāl. Il s'agit de matériaux historiques, toponymiques et narratifs.

De grands voyageurs comme C. M. Doughty, C. Landberg et St. J. B. Philby nous ont déjà donné de précieux renseignements sur les vestiges "hilaliens" parsemés dans les déserts d'Arabie². En même temps, B. Thomas, N. Rhodokanakis et plus récemment T. M. Johnstone ont publié des contes sur les Banū Hilāl recueillis dans le Rub^c al-Ḥālī et le Zofār³. Malheureusement, pour le Yémen la documentation est presque

¹ Les Universités de Florence, Pise et Venise ont participé à la mission, coordonnée par le professeur Pelio Fronzaroli. Un premier volume a été publié jusqu'à présent: *Studi yemeniti*, 1, Firenze 1985 (*Quaderni di semitistica*, 14).

² Voir C. M. Doughty, *Travels in Arabia Deserta*, London 1964; C. de Landberg, *Etudes sur les dialectes de l'Arabie Méridionale*, II, 3, *Daḥīnah*, Leide 1913; H. St. B. Philby, *Arabian Highlands*, Ithaca (N.Y.) 1952. Nous nous limitons dans cette étude à fournir des données bibliographiques essentielles; pour une bibliographie plus complète, voir notre article "Testimonianze hilaliene nello Yemen orientale", *Studi yemeniti*, 1, pp. 161-185.

³ B. Thomas, *Arabia Felix: Across the Empty Quarter of Arabia*, London 1932; N. Rhodokanakis, *Der vulgärarabische Dialekt im Dofār (Zfār)*, I, Wien 1908; T. M. Johnstone, "A St. George of Dhofar" *Arabian Studies*, 4 (1978), pp. 59-65. En ce qui concerne le Naḡd, voir l'intéressante version présentée par A. Blunt, *A Pilgrimage to Nejd, the Cradle of the Arab Race*, I, London 1881², pp. 169-171 (signalée par M. Galley, "Manuscripts et documents relatifs à la Geste hilalienne dans les bibliothèques anglaises", *Bulletin L.O.A.B.*, 12 (1981), pp. 185-186) et l'étude récente de A. Lerrick, *Taghribat Banī Hilāl al-Diyāghim. Variation in an Oral Epic Poetry of Najd*, Ph.D. Diss., Princeton 1984. S. Abdallah Sowayan a souligné l'importance des traditions hilaliennes dans la poésie "naba-téenne": il existe un genre poétique appelé *hlāli* par rapport à sa popularité à l'époque des

inexistante. Dans un ouvrage collectif récent sur l'Arabie du Sud publié à Paris en trois tomes, le nom Banū Hilāl n'est même pas mentionné⁴. Pourtant, nous avons pu le constater continuellement au cours de notre enquête de terrain, la tradition hilalienne et ses témoignages sont bien enracinés. Aussi nous partageons l'opinion de Philby qui écrivait en 1939:

"In the southern part of the peninsula their legend is peculiarly in vogue, in spite of what one might imagine to be the superior claims of the °Adites, Sabaeans, Himyarites, and others. Abu Zaid al Hilali, their traditional hero, is a familiar name on the lips of men in these parts, whereas the Queen of Sheba and other great personalities of historical times are but blurred memories"⁵.

Nous avons choisi, parmi tout les données recueillies, un récit traditionnel, l'histoire de °Azīz ben Hāleh, récit qui semble être fort connu dans la région de al-Ḥadā' et la Bilād °Anṣ (à l'Est de Ḍamār). En effet, la population locale accorde une grande importance à cette histoire: les événements qui y sont racontés se seraient déroulés dans les villages, les montagnes et les vallées de cette zone. En plus, ce récit a des parallélismes dans le Rub' al-Ḥālī, dans d'autres régions d'Arabie, dans les zones de diffusion de la recension syrienne de la *Sīrat Banī Hilāl*⁶.

Dans le présent article, notre recherche suivra une double direction: d'abord nous essaierons d'identifier les lieux qui sont mentionnés dans le récit, ainsi que les autres sites hilaliens, et ensuite d'analyser quelques éléments significatifs, en les confrontant à d'autres versions yéménites ou à celles d'autres régions. Avant d'entreprendre notre recherche, nous

Banū Hilāl (*Nabati Poetry. The Oral Poetry of Arabia*, Berkeley-Los Angeles-London, 1985, p. 139).

⁴ J. Chelhod et al., *L'Arabie du Sud. Histoire et civilisation*, Paris 1984-85, 3 vols.

⁵ H. St. J. B. Philby, *Sheba's Daughters*, London 1939, p. 333 (signalé par H. T. Norris, "The Rediscovery of the Ancient Sagas of the Banū Hilāl", *BSOAS* 51 (1988), p.475).

⁶ Cf. Canova, "Testimonianze hilaliane", pp. 176-178.

voulons rappeler les grands moments de l'histoire de ʿAzīz ben Ḥāleh⁷:

- I. Abū Zayd al-Hilālī pratiquait le *coitus interruptus*, si bien que les gens de sa tribu se désespéraient à l'idée que leur chef ne leur donnerait jamais d'héritier. Sa soeur, en cachette, prit la place de sa femme et grâce à un stratagème atteignit son but. Elle donna le jour à ʿAzīz, qui fut appelé ben Ḥāleh ('fils de son oncle') puisque Abū Zayd était à la fois son père et son oncle.
- II. Abū Zayd apprit un jour que sa femme ʿAlya était sur le point d'épouser un émir, contre sa volonté, à cause de sa longue absence au Maghreb. Il retourna chez lui accompagné de son fils-neveu ʿAzīz.
- III. Le jeune ʿAzīz échangea ses vêtements contre ceux de ʿAlya, puis se présenta à sa place le jour du mariage. L'époux eut des soupçons, il trouvait que la mariée était trop vigoureuse. Il pensa que c'était un homme. Sa mère lui conseilla de soumettre son épouse à une série d'épreuves. La plus importante consistait à appuyer un fer rouge sur l'aine de sa femme: un homme supporterait l'épreuve, une femme hurlerait de douleur. ʿAzīz garda le silence, mais il égorgea le malheureux mari et s'enfuit.
- IV. ʿAzīz retrouva non loin de là Abū Zayd et ʿAlya. Souffrant de la soif, il se dirigea avec ses compagnons vers un puits. Le bruit fait par un animal effraya Abū Zayd qui s'enfuit. ʿAzīz alors descendit dans le puits et remonta avec l'eau, les sandales que son oncle avait abandonnées et une gazelle. Malheureusement la blessure de ʿAzīz s'infecta et il mourut. Abū Zayd l'enterra près du puits. ʿAlya se suicida en se jetant sur la lance de ʿAzīz, laissée sur la tombe.

⁷ Voir la transcription et la traduction du texte recueilli à al-Barradūn en novembre 1982, "Testimonianze hilaliane", pp. 180-185.

Lieux hilaliens dans le Yémen oriental

L'enquête que nous avons effectué en 1986 nous a permis de recueillir huit autres versions – complètes ou fragmentaires – de ce récit. Ces versions contiennent de nouveaux motifs narratifs. Le noyau central est toujours le même et repose sur l'histoire de 'Azīz ben Ḥāleh. Les vers qu'il récita avant de mourir (*Sareynā 'alā 'Alya talāṭīn leyla*) semblent être connus de tout le monde, avec quelques changements.

Toutes ces versions présentent les mêmes éléments troublants de l'histoire: la transgression du tabou sexuel dans l'union frère-soeur et le suicide provoqué par l'amour de 'Alya envers le fils de son mari. Nos informateurs sont tous convaincus que les événements se sont déroulés dans cette région. Les lieux cités se trouvent dans un rayon de 15 km aux environs du Ġebel Isbīl⁸.

a) *al-Aqmar*, Le mariage de 'Alya se serait passé dans le village d'al-Aqmar situé sur les versants au Nord-Est du Ġebel Isbīl, à côté de Ḥammāt Diyāb; là 'Azīz, déguisé en femme, aurait pris la place de la mariée et aurait été blessé par l'époux.

b) *Ḥanakat Hilāl*. Après avoir traversé la plaine et la vallée au Nord-Est du Ġebel Isbīl, 'Azīz rejoignit une gorge étroite entre les montagnes, qui encore aujourd'hui porte ce nom en souvenir des Hilaliens.

c) *al-Ġirada*. Tout près de la Ḥanakat Hilāl, à côté du village d'al-Ġirada, se trouvent les ruines d'une digue qui arrêta le cours du Ġayl Šilwān où 'Azīz descendit pour prendre de l'eau pour ses compagnons et pour lui. Il fut enterré tout près, dans un lieu appelé as-Siqā. En effet, deux grandes tombes de pierres basaltiques bien taillées se trouvent à cet endroit; c'est là que, selon la tradition, reposent les corps de 'Azīz et de 'Alya.

⁸ Pour une description générale des caractères et de la distribution ethnique, voir S. Mazzoni, "L'esplorazione di superficie", *Studi Yemeniti*, 1, en particulier pp. 1-20; pour le matériel épigraphique voir A. Avanzini, "Problemi storici della regione di al-Ḥadā' nel periodo preislamico e nuove iscrizioni", *ibid.*, en particulier pp. 74-109; une analyse dialectologique a été effectuée par L. Bettini, "Note sull'arabo parlato al Baraddūn", *ibid.*, pp. 117-159.

Les habitants de la région affirment que d'autres lieux sont hilaliens, lieux où en général nous trouvons des ruines importantes, en particulier: d) *Hayd al-Halāl*. Sur cette montagne, à l'Est du massif du Ġebel Isbīl, résidait le sultan hilalien Ḥasan b. Sirḥān. C'est à partir de ce lieu que les Banū Hilāl, après une terrible famine causée par l'absence de pluies qui dura sept ans, commencèrent leur longue marche vers l'Ouest (la *taġrība*), jusqu'à la Tunisie. Le sultan Ḥasan cacha ses trésors dans les entrailles de la montagne, dans l'espoir d'un retour de son peuple⁹.

e) *Tombe de Sirḥān*. Dans le village d'al-Aqmar se trouve le mausolée de Sirḥān, père du sultan Ḥasan, de la première génération hilalienne, qui habitait dans le pays de Sarw wa-ʿUbāda. Sur sa tombe on a édifié une *qubba*, ornée d'une inscription himyarite¹⁰ et d'un vers en arabe qui célèbre la joie et la fortune triomphant de l'envie. Sirḥān est vénéré comme un *walī*.

f) *Hammat Diyāb*. Sur une colline au Nord du Ġebel Isbīl, parsemée de ruines, se trouve l'ancienne forteresse de Diyāb b. Ġānim, dont elle a pris le nom.

On a qualifié d'hilalien beaucoup d'autres *ḥarā'ib* de la vallée, dans le territoire des Banū Hudayġa et des Tawbān, jusqu'à Baynūn plus au Nord. Il s'agit de ruines de forteresses, de digues, de citernes, où l'on trouve de grosse pierres bien taillées (*ḥaġar ḥabaš* 'abyssin'), que l'on attribue aux Banū Hilāl. Après leur départ, les habitants de l'endroit auraient perdu cette habileté si précise de tailleurs de pierres, se contentant de constructions plus grossières. L'opinion populaire confond les Banū Hilāl avec les Himyarites. Cette assimilation est influencée par l'existence de nombreuses stèles et de nombreux petits autels portant le symbole lunaire bien connu dans l'ancien culte sud-arabique. On y voit

⁹ Les informations sur les trésors cachés (par les Himyarites) sont très fréquentes. al-Hamdānī consacre à cet argument un entier *bāb* de son *Iklīl*, *ġuz*' 8, édit. Muḥammad b. 'Alī b. al-Ḥasan al-Akwa', Sanaa 1979, pp. 191-195. Voir aussi, A. von Kremer, *Über die südarabische Sage*, Leipzig 1866, p. 138.

¹⁰ Le texte est publié dans Avanzini "Problemi storici", pp. 93-94 (Av. Aqmar 2).

l'emblème hilalien, *ʿalāmat Banī Hilāl*¹¹. On pense que les hilaliens sont des Himyarites, ou qu'ils sont arrivés dans la région peu après eux, qu'ils les ont vaincus en s'emparant ainsi de leurs forteresses. Il est certain en tout cas que les Banū Hilāl ont séjourné pendant longtemps dans le Yémen et ont contribué à sa prospérité.

Analyse comparative de l'histoire de ʿAzīz

Nous avons voulu vérifier si l'histoire de ʿAzīz existe dans la *Sīrat Banī Hilāl*, et dans l'affirmative, en relever les changements. Dans ce but, nous avons examiné la littérature hilalienne, dans un cadre qui renferme le plus possible des aspects et des développements de la tradition narrative épique populaire, en particulier des récits oraux, des oeuvres imprimées et des manuscrits.

Pour ce qui est de la tradition orale, nous avons remarqué que l'histoire de ʿAzīz a une large diffusion qui va du Rub^c al-Ḥālī jusqu'au Maghreb, même si cet épisode semble être plus connu en Arabie, surtout dans les terres qui vont de l'Oman au Yémen. Hasan el-Shamy, qui a re-

¹¹ Déjà à la fin de siècle dernier Anne Blunt proposa la thèse selon laquelle les Hilaliens adoraient la lune (*The Celebrated Romance of the Stealing of the Mare*, London 1892, p. 121 cité par Mukhlis, *Studies and Comparison*, pp. 21 et 27. Carlo Landberg aussi fait allusion au culte lunaire: "Si j'ose exprimer mon opinion personnelle, je crois qu'il faut voir dans l'extension supposée et légendaire des B. Hilāl, au Sud et au Nord, une réminiscence du culte de la lune, qui était le facteur principal de la religion des anciens Sabéo-Arabs" (*Études sur les dialectes de l'Arabie Méridionale*, II, 3, p. 1708). Sur l'importance du symbole lunaire dans le contexte sudarabique ancien, voir M. Höfner, "Südarabien", dans *Götter und Mythen im Vorderen Orient*, hrsg. H. W. Haussing, I, Stuttgart 1965, pp. 516-517 s.v. Mondsichel und Schreibe. À Saba, Qaṭaban et Ḥaḍramawt croissant lunaire et disque se trouvent toujours associés, à la différence de ce qui arrive dans l'Arabie centrale et septentrionale, où le symbole lunaire est parfois isolé. L'interprétation n'est pas sûre: A. Grohmann se demande s'il s'agit du symbole du dieu lunaire, du dieu solaire ou bien de tous les deux. Cette dernière hypothèse semble la plus vraisemblable. Cela pourrait être confirmé par un passage d'al-Hamdānī, lequel nous renseigne en décrivant le château de Madr de l'existence d'une plaque avec l'image du soleil et de la lune (*ṣūrat aš-šams wa-l-qamar*) (*al-Iklīl*, VIII, p. 165). Cf. Höfner, "Südarabien", p. 516 et en outre pp. 443-444 de la même oeuvre, s.v. "Göttersymbole", B 13.

cueilli une importante bibliographie sur les contes populaires arabes, nous a informé que ce récit est aussi bien connu dans les pays du Golfe. Sur la base des sources à notre connaissance, nous avons pu comparer nos versions yéménites avec les textes publiés par Rhodokanakis et Thomas (Arabie du Sud)¹² et par ‘Abdalkarīm al-Ġuhaymān (“Arabie”, sans indication plus précise)¹³. Lucienne Saada a recueilli hors terrain (à Paris) une version fragmentaire, encore inédite, d’une personne du Ḥiḡāz¹⁴. Pour ce qui est de la zone syro-palestinienne, nous pouvons signaler le récit publié par ‘Abdarrahmān as-Sārisī, qui se déroule dans un lieu appelé Marḡ b. ‘Āmir, où les Banū Hilāl seraient passés pendant leur marche vers le Maghreb¹⁵. Les versions de l’histoire de ‘Azīz recueillies en Tunisie par A. Baker et L. Saada, bien que très intéressantes, semblent dériver d’une façon ou d’autres d’une source orientale, à cause des nombreuses coïncidences qu’elles renferment¹⁶.

A propos des éditions imprimées, notre épisode se trouve dans la recension syrienne de la *Tagrība*, et précisément après le meurtre du

¹² Rhodokanakis, *Vulgārar. Dialekt*, pp. 50-52; Thomas, *Arabia Felix*, pp. 219, 239-242.

¹³ ‘Abdalkarīm al-Ġuhaymān, *Asātir ša‘biyya min qalb ḡazirat al-‘arab*, I, Riyadh 1980, pp. 177-193.

¹⁴ Cette version rapporte “des faits inconnus ailleurs: il s’agit des rapports incestueux entre Bū Zīd et sa soeur, rapports désirés par cette dernière; de cette union sortit un fils” (L. Saada, “Documents sonores tunisiens concernant la geste des Banū Hilāl”, dans *Actes du II. Congrès international d’étude des cultures de la Méditerranée occidentale*, Alger 1978, p. 374, note 11).

¹⁵ ‘Umar ‘Abdarrahmān as-Sārisī, *al-Ḥikāya aš-ša‘biyya fī l-muḡtama‘ al-filastīnī. Dirāsa wa-nuṣūṣ*, Beirut 1980, pp. 80 et 420-423.

¹⁶ A. C. Baker, *The Hilali Saga in the Tunisian South*, Ph.D. Diss., Indiana University, Bloomington 1978, p. 147: son informateur principal, al-Ḥāḡg ‘Abdassalām, révèle que sa source est une édition de la *Tagrībat Banī Hilāl* achetée lorsqu’il était au Liban et en Syrie avec l’armée française. Selon le rapsode Moḡammed Ḥsīnī, ses ancêtres seraient venus de Syrie (L. Saada, *La geste hilalienne, version de Bou Thadi*, Paris 1985, p. 29). Malgré la présence de nombreux éléments originaux, le déroulement des épisodes est en effet pareil à celui des versions orientales, mais différent des récits maghrébins publiés par T. Guiga, A. Ayoub et M. Galley.

souverain tunisien Zanātī Halīfa et les batailles pour conquérir les forteresses maghrébines. Selon les éditions, l'histoire est située dans la *Qissat as-sabʿ tuḥūt* ou dans les *Dīwān al-aytām* (ou *Dīwān al-yatāmā*)¹⁷. Nous sommes presque à la fin de la *Sīra* et cet épisode semble être une digression pour rompre le rythme fiévreux, mais n'ayant aucun lien réel avec les événements. Abū Zayd se trouve à la cour du sultan Ḥasan, au Maghreb, quand il reçoit un message de ʿAlya, qui est restée en Arabie. ʿAlya lui annonce son prochain mariage avec l'émir Nawfal. Souffrant de nostalgie, Abū Zayd retourne dans le Nağd, accompagné de ʿAzīz et de Yūnus (ou selon d'autres versions d'un autre de ses neveux, Yaḥyā ou Marʿī), qui mourra mordu par un serpent. L'histoire de ʿAzīz ne semble pas exister dans la recension "hiğāzienne" de la *Sīra*, d'inspiration égyptienne¹⁸.

On peut, même à partir des manuscrits de la *Sīrat Banī Hilāl*, relever des éléments de comparaison fort intéressants. Nous avons pu consulter plusieurs manuscrits de la Staatsbibliothek de Berlin-Ouest, aidés par les indications du catalogue de W. Ahlwardt (en feuilletant son précieux tome VIII dédié en grande partie aux romans chevaleresques, les *grosse Romane* de la littérature arabe, nous avons toujours été frappés par la passion avec laquelle le savant bibliothécaire de Berlin a décrit les gestes de ces héros arabes). Notre attention a été attirée en particulier par deux manuscrits de la collection Wetzstein qui relatent l'épisode de

¹⁷ On a utilisé le texte de la *Tağribat Banī Hilāl, aš-šāmiyya al-ašliyya* publié par la Maktabat al-Mašhad al-Ḥusaynī, Le Caire, s.d. (environ 1960), qui reprend l'édition Beirut 1884; l'autre édition égyptienne de la *Tağriba*, imprimée au Caire en 1960 par la Maktabat Muḥammad ʿAlī aš-Šubayḥ semble être une réduction de la version libanaise. L'histoire de ʿAzīz se trouve, dans ces trois éditions, respectivement aux pp. 541-553; 610-627; 293-300.

¹⁸ La *Sīrat al-ʿArab al-ḥiğāziyya* comprend plusieurs récits (*Kitāb al-ans wa-l-ibtihāğ, ar-Riyāda al-babiyya, Manāmāt al-malika Šiḥa, al-Alfāz az-zarīfa, ad-Durra al-munīfa, as-Sabʿ tuḥūt, Dīwān al-aytām*, etc.) publiés au Caire déjà à partir du siècle passé comme fascicules séparés. La partie de la *Tağriba* qui contient, dans la recension syrienne, l'histoire de ʿAzīz présente une rédaction très différente dans le *Kitāb ad-durra al-munīfa*; cf. M. Hartmann, "Die Beni Hilāl-Geschichten", *ZAOS*, 4 (1898), p. 306.

‘Azīz: le We. 819 et le We. 863¹⁹. Ils ont probablement une origine syrienne et remontent à la première moitié du XIX^e siècle. Nous devons mentionner aussi une autre version en vers qui fait partie des manuscrits de l’Ambrosiana, Ms. ar. CXXVI, version que nous sommes en train d’étudier²⁰. Le Vatican or. 287 rapporte l’histoire du retour de Abū Zayd du Maghreb, déguisé en poète, mais ne fait aucune allusion à ‘Azīz²¹. D’ailleurs cette histoire ne fait même pas partie de la *Sīra yamāniyya*, dont le manuscrit est conservé à la John Rylands Library de Manchester²².

Dans les limites d’un article, on ne peut pas procéder à une analyse comparative trop détaillée. Nous ne présenterons que des observations d’ordre général, qui permettront de mettre en évidence quelques traits fondamentaux de comparaison. On examinera donc, d’après les différentes versions, la personnalité de Abū Zayd, le problème du nom de ‘Azīz, les épreuves de courage qu’il a dû affronter, sa mort, le personnage de ‘Alya.

1. Selon la tradition des *šū‘arā’* égyptiens, Abū Zayd est le héros principal, qui concentre sur sa personne toutes les qualités: courage, valeur, sagesse, art de la médecine, éloquence. Quelquefois il apparaît sans scrupules et fort rusé, jaloux de l’héroïsme des autres, comme dans l’histoire de Ḥafāḡī ‘Āmir, mais ses actes sont toujours dictés par le bien de sa tribu²³. C’est lui le vrai chef militaire de la conquête hilalienne, même si le destin réservera à Diyāb b. Ġānim l’orgueil de

¹⁹ Cf. W. Ahlwardt, *Verzeichniss der arabischen Handschriften der königlichen Bibliothek zu Berlin*, VIII, Berlin 1896, n.° 9336 et 9332.

²⁰ Cf. O. Löfgren – R. Traini, *Catalogue of the Arabic Manuscripts in the Biblioteca Ambrosiana*, I, Vicenza 1975, CXXVI, 1 (= C 89 inf.).

²¹ Cf. G. Levi Della Vida, *Elenco dei manoscritti arabi islamici della Biblioteca Vaticana*, Città del Vaticano 1935, Vat. ar. 2873.

²² Selon la description synthétique de A. Mingana dans le *Catalogue of the Arabic Manuscripts in the John Rylands Library*, Manchester 1934, n.° 623-627 (139-143).

²³ Voir le profil de Abū Zayd al-Hilālī tracé par A. Abnoudy, *La geste hilalienne. Impressions et extraits*, Le Caire 1978, pp. 34-37.

vaincre le souverain des Zanāta. Dans les versions égyptiennes, il ne meurt pas, ou plutôt la *Sīra* se conclut avant sa mort; toutefois dans les versions syriennes il est tué par *Diyāb*, en même temps que les autres grands héros hilaliens²⁴.

Ce personnage est bien différent dans l'Arabie du Sud. On lui reconnaît une force extraordinaire, mais il est tellement jaloux du prestige qu'il avait au sein de la tribu qu'il ne tolérait aucun rival. Sa haine ne s'assoupissait que lorsqu'il avait éliminé son adversaire, réel ou seulement potentiel. On raconte qu'il ne voulait pas d'enfant, de peur de leur transmettre sa puissance et le commandement des Banū Hilāl. Mais le destin fit naître ʿAzīz, enfanté par sa soeur qui, au moment où il allait reculer, l'avait piqué avec une aiguille au dos. Quand ce jeune devint un preux chevalier, Abū Zayd fut dévoré par le désir de le faire mourir. D'après une version du Rubʿ al-Ḥālī, il essaya de l'abandonner dans le désert, après avoir blessé son chameau et tenté de le tuer à coups de lance²⁵. Mais son dessein ne réussit qu'à la fin de notre histoire, à cause de la blessure que l'époux avait fait à ʿAzīz. Abū Zayd craignait qu'il ne puisse se vanter devant les Hilaliens de la libération de ʿAlya, de ses exploits, d'être descendu dans le puits alors que lui avait eu peur: une humiliation insupportable pour son orgueil.

La version recueillie par al-Ġuhaymān montre une cruauté bien plus grande. Abū Zayd ne se contenta pas de faire mourir ʿAzīz en faisant tomber de l'eau sur sa blessure, il réussit aussi à éliminer le fils de ʿAzīz (petit fils de Abū Zayd) en le faisant tomber de cheval. Il avait peur que le jeune homme ne puisse un jour venger son père ʿAzīz²⁶.

2. Il nous semble intéressant de nous arrêter un instant sur le nom de notre héros, ʿAzīz. Dans la traduction du texte yéménite, nous avons

²⁴ Cf. Hartmann, *Die B. Hilāl-Geschichten*, p. 308 note 1. La mort de Abū Zayd est décrite dans le *Dīwān al-aytām, Taġrība*, pp. 583-586. Selon une remarque de Thomas, dans les versions du Rubʿ al-Ḥālī c'est Abū Zayd qui tue *Diyāb* b. Ġānim (*Arabia Felix*, p. 221 note 1).

²⁵ Thomas, *Arabia Felix*, p. 219.

²⁶ al-Ġuhaymān, *Asātīr šaʿbiyya*, I, 191-193.

proposé la double signification de 'fort' et 'cher', avec une préférence pour la seconde²⁷. Les différentes versions représentent en réalité 'Azīz sous les deux aspects: il a la force de résister courageusement aux épreuves auxquelles l'avait soumis son "mari" et d'agir en preux en d'autres circonstances; mais il a aussi un visage délicat, sans barbe, il porte de longues tresses si bien qu'il peut se faire passer pour 'Alya, déguisé sans éveiller aucun soupçon²⁸. Il est aimé de son peuple.

D'autres problèmes, et pas seulement onomastiques, apparaissent surtout pour ce que est du *nasab* de 'Azīz, qui dans les versions de l'Arabie du Sud est appelé ben Hāleh ou ben Hālah (= ibn Hālihi): c'est en effet le fils de son oncle Abū Zayd. Dans une autre version yéménite que nous avons recueillie, 'Azīz est le fils de Abū Zayd et de sa fille; dans ce cas sa mère est aussi sa soeur²⁹! On doit reconnaître qu'il y a dans ces contes une certaine anarchie sexuelle...

Dans les versions imprimées, manuscrites et orales (à l'exception de celle de la péninsule arabique), 'Azīz est toujours le fils de la soeur d'Abū Zayd, mais il a une paternité respectable: ibn Hālid³⁰. Son père serait mort pendant la *Tagrība*, dans la campagne d'Égypte, tué par le roi Firmand; le petit orphelin aurait été élevé par sa mère Šīḥa sous la tutelle de son oncle Abū Zayd³¹.

L'étroite relation, phonétique ou graphique, entre Hālid et Hālih est bien évidente. Nous nous trouvons devant deux possibilités: les Arabes du Sud, malicieusement ou par les reliquats du "paganisme", ont

²⁷ Canova, "Testimonianze hilaliane", p. 181. Il faut remarquer qu'au Sud du Gebel Isbil, 'Azīz semble être connu sous le nom de Hāli ben Hāleh.

²⁸ We. 863, ff. 69b-73b; al-Ḡuhaymān, *Asāṭir šā'biyya*, I, 185; *Tagrība*, p. 546: il était tellement beau qu'il portait un voile sur son visage, pour se protéger contre le mauvais oeil. Le déguisement n'est pas une nouveauté pour 'Azīz. Dans un autre manuscrit de Berlin, il se présente au roi 'Abs déguisé en fille, avec le nom de 'Azīza fille de la soeur d'Abū Zayd; le roi tombe amoureux (We. 804, ff. 18a-19b; Ahlwardt n° 9318 p. 366).

²⁹ Version enregistrée chez les Banū Ḥudayḡa, le 22. 11. 1986.

³⁰ We. 819; We. 863; Ambrosiana ms. ar. 126; *Tagrība*, etc.

³¹ *Tagrība*, pp. 545-546.

fait de ce ʿAzīz le fils incestueux d'une personnage illustre comme Abū Zayd, en souillant la noble tradition hilalienne; ou bien ce sont les conteurs ou les rédacteurs syriens ou égyptiens qui ont voulu redonner à ʿAzīz un père comme il faut, dans le respect de la morale islamique, effaçant ainsi la scandaleuse transgression sexuelle évoquée par le nom du héros. De toute façon, nous devons constater que les deux versions coexistent, même si c'est dans des zones différentes.

Nous avons discuté avec notre collègue égyptien qui s'intéresse aux gestes populaires, le poète ʿAbdarrahmān al-Abnūdī, sur ce problème. Il a jugé la version yéménite inconcevable, affirmant que jamais un *šāʿer* égyptien ne tacherait l'honneur du héros Abū Zayd en récitant en public de telles infamies.

La façon par laquelle le rédacteur du manuscrit We. 863 élude le problème de la paternité de ʿAzīz est significative. Pour enlever tout doute, il précise: "ʿAzīz n'est pas le fils de la soeur de Abū Zayd, comme on le dit, sa soeur n'avait pas d'autre enfant que Badrān; c'est simplement une habitude que les Arabes ont quand ils s'adressent à quelqu'un de plus âgé, de dire *yā ḥāl*, par respect"³².

Dans d'autres versions on préfère appeler notre personnage ʿAzīz al-Qawm, le 'bien-aimé' le 'fort' de la tribu, en laissant dans le vague sa paternité³³. Dans ce cas aussi le nom révèle une interprétation qui n'engage pas trop le narrateur. Dans une version tunisienne ʿAzīz est le fils de la soeur d'Abū Zayd, Salma, et son père est Mannāʿ, frère du sultan Ḥasan³⁴.

3. ʿAzīz démontre son courage en surmontant une série d'épreuves, la plus importante dans notre conte yéménite est celle du fer rouge posé sur l'aine. Ce fer est appelé *ših* 'broche'. Dans le récit de l'Arabie centrale publié par al-Ġuhaymān, ʿAzīz est frappé sur la main droite,

³² We. 863, f. 69b.

³³ Baker, *Hilali Saga*, pp. 308-315/515-521. Dans le *Tagrība*, ʿAzīz al-Qawm est *laqab* de ʿAzīz ibn Ḥālid.

³⁴ Saada, *Geste hilalienne*, pp. 161, 289 sq.

d'après la croyance commune que la veine céphalique se trouve dans le bras droit chez l'homme et dans le bras gauche chez la femme³⁵. Dans les textes publiés par Thomas et Rhodokanakis, le coup est donné sur la cuisse gauche³⁶. Dans le manuscrit We. 863 nous trouvons que Nawfal frappe °Azīz à l'épaule avec un poignard empoisonné³⁷. Le poison est employé aussi dans la recension syrienne: le mari prépare deux šīš trempant le premier dans le sang et le second dans le poison. Une femme frappée par une broche ensanglantée se soumet alors que le sang excite un homme. °Azīz réagit naturellement comme un homme, alors Nawfal le frappa avec le fer empoisonné³⁸. Dans les versions maghrébines l'épreuve est effectuée avec deux šāš, 'turbans': le premier est trempé dans le sang, le deuxième dans le poison³⁹.

Les trois mots arabes *sīḥ*, *šīš*, *šāš* montrent une double relation: sémantique pour les deux premiers mots (*sīḥ* et *šīš*), phonétique ou graphique pour les deux derniers (*šīš* et *šāš*). Cette confusion aurait porté à la diversification broche-poignard/turban. Ce que nous a fait remarquer le prof. Cachia est très intéressant: le jeu de mot *šīš/šāš* existe aussi dans les *mawāls* égyptiens.

En premier lieu, on peut supposer, comme dans le cas Hālih-Hālid, qu'il y a eu un processus de modification et d'évolution commun dans la tradition orale. Nous ne pouvons pas non plus rejeter l'hypothèse d'une mauvaise lecture d'un copiste ou d'un conteur populaire qui se servait de textes manuscrits.

Il s'agit de toute façon d'éléments très intéressants qui nous permettent de constater combien une tradition narrative peut changer et, en même temps, comment elle est le reflet d'une conception, d'une censure, d'une adaptation.

³⁵ al-Guhaymān, *Asāṭir ša'biyya*, I, 187.

³⁶ Thomas, *Arabia Felix*, pp. 240-241; Rhodokanakis, *Vulgärrar. Dialekt*, I, 50.

³⁷ We. 863, f. 75a.

³⁸ *Tagrība*, p. 550.

³⁹ Baker, *Hilali Saga*, p. 313/519; Saada, *Geste hilalienne*, p. 295 "coiffure".

4. ʿAzīz meurt à cause de sa blessure, mais dans des circonstances différentes selon les versions. Abū Zayd est aussi responsable, puisque par lâcheté il ne descend pas dans le puits prendre de l'eau pour ses compagnons ou bien, dans le récit du Zofār, il insiste pour que ʿAzīz, blessé, descende. Dans la version publiée par al-Ġuhaymān, Abū Zayd fait basculer l'outre que ʿAzīz lui avait donnée, de façon à ce que l'eau se renverse et tombe sur sa main⁴⁰. Dans les récits syriens, Abū Zayd se débarrasse du médicament acheté pour soigner ʿAzīz, après l'épreuve du puits (ici: une source) et sa honte devant la lâcheté montrée; ou bien il évite de bander étroitement la blessure de ʿAzīz comme il l'avait fait jusque-là, pour que le poison arrive au cœur⁴¹. Dans la version du Rub^c al-Ḥālī, ʿAzīz montre encore une fois son courage et son mépris pour la mort, en s'enlevant le fer dans sa chair dès qu'il trouve un endroit convenable pour creuser sa tombe⁴².

Certaines fois, nous trouvons la description des rites qui suivirent son ensevelissement. Dans notre version yéménite Abū Zayd laisse sur la tombe de ʿAzīz sa lance, et c'est en se jetant sur elle que ʿAlya se suicida⁴³. Dans d'autres contes on dépose des pierres pour indiquer la tête et les pieds du mort, ou bien son épée coupée en deux⁴⁴. La narration la plus intéressante est celle qui est rapportée par al-Ġuhaymān. Abū Zayd lava le corps de ʿAzīz, le parfuma et le déposa dans le suaire; ensuite il l'enterra, il arrosa sa tombe avec de l'eau de son outre, déposa sur sa tombe la bague et les vêtements du mort et enfin égorgea son chameau. Tout cela parce que le jour où l'homme ressuscitera, il pourra retrouver toutes ses affaires pour aller à la réunion (au jugement dernier)⁴⁵. Dans différents contes aussi bien Abū Zayd que ʿAlya

⁴⁰ al-Ġuhaymān, *Asāṭir šaʿbiyya*, I, p. 189.

⁴¹ as-Sārīsī, *al-Ḥikāya aš-šaʿbiyya*, p. 422; *Tagriba*, p. 552.

⁴² Thomas, *Arabia Felix*, p. 241.

⁴³ Canova, "Testimonianze hilaliane", pp. 184-185.

⁴⁴ Rhodokanakis, *Vulgärrar. Dialekt*, I, 52.

⁴⁵ al-Ġuhaymān, *Asāṭir šaʿbiyya*, I, p. 190.

récitent des vers en guise d'élégie, dans la tradition de l'ancienne *martīyya*.

Selon les témoignages yéménites, la tombe de ʿAzīz se trouve à al-Ġirada avec celle de ʿAlya. Les versions de la *Tagrība* manuscrites ou imprimées la situent à Ġūṭā, dans la terre de Hawrān⁴⁶. Dans le conte palestinien, la tombe serait à côté de Ġazza⁴⁷. Dans ce cas, le narrateur adapte la localisation à une zone géographique qui lui est plus proche. C'est un peu comme pour le puits de Naqwa ou Naḡwa, où mourut un des fils du sultan Ḥasan. Cet endroit est situé entre Douz et Matmata, à côté de Dongola, à Ġazza ou dans le Naḡd, selon que les narrateurs sont tunisiens, soudanais ou arabes du Mašriq⁴⁸.

5. ʿAlya⁴⁹ dans les versions yéménites semble éprouver un vif sentiment pour le fils de son mari, ʿAzīz. Cette passion provoquera son suicide. Les tombes de ʿAzīz et ʿAlya se trouvent l'une à côté de l'autre; dans le conte du Zofār un arbre poussa pour les protéger par son ombre⁵⁰.

Dans les autres versions, les sentiments de ʿAlya pour ʿAzīz ne vont pas au-delà de la reconnaissance pour l'avoir libérée d'un mariage humiliant et au-delà de l'émotion devant la fin tragique du héros. Dans le manuscrit We. 819, il semble qu'il existe un sentiment plus profond. Après avoir enterré ʿAzīz dans le Naḡd, Abū Zayd ordonna à un vendeur de sel qui avait assisté à la scène de n'en parler à personne. Mais

⁴⁶ We. 819, f. 13a; We. 863, f. 76b; Ambrosiana ms. ar. 126, f. 15a; *Tagrība*, p. 551.

⁴⁷ as-Sārisī, *al-Hikāya aš-šaʿbiyya*, pp. 422-423.

⁴⁸ Cf. Baker, *Hilali Saga*, pp. 117, 121, 622 sq.; M. Galley-A. Ayoub, *Histoire des Banī Hilāl*, Paris 1983, pp. 95, 105; A. Guiga, *La geste hilalienne*, Tunis 1968, pp. 46 sq.; Saada, *Geste hilalienne*, p. 291; We. 819, f. 24a; We. 863, f. 70a; S. H. Hurreiz, *Jaʿaliyyin Folktales*, Bloomington 1977, p. 100. H. T. Norris écrit à propos du puits de Naqwa ou Jawfa: "This same well is identified with Kusugu well in Daura in Hausaland" (*Antar*, London 1985, p. 27, 37 note 20).

⁴⁹ Il y a différentes graphies pour ce nom (ʿĀliya, ʿAlyā, ʿAlya), pour un phénomène de réduction; cf. Hartmann, *Die B. Hilāl-Geschichten*, p. 310 note 2.

⁵⁰ Rhodokanakis, *Vulḡār. Dialekt*, I, 17. Dans cette version on ne parle pas de ʿAlya, mais de la fille du sultan.

celui-ci en informa ʿAlya, qui se désespéra et arracha ses vêtements. Elle avait un jeune esclave qui portait le nom de ʿAzīz; sous l'effet de la grande affliction, elle le saisit et le jeta sous les chameaux. L'esclave mourut. On essaya de la consoler, mais une vieille affirma qu'elle ne pleurerait pas pour ce ʿAzīz, mais pour ʿAzīz fils de la soeur d'Abū Zayd. On voulait tuer la vieille pour ses calomnies, mais l'entourage de ʿAlya savait que c'était la vérité⁵¹.

ʿAlya demeure une épouse patiente et fidèle à Abū Zayd, malgré sa longue absence. Elle s'était éloignée de la caravane hilalienne en marche vers le Maghreb après s'être disputée avec Ġāziya⁵². as-Sārisī rapporte une autre histoire. Parcourant la Palestine septentrionale, Abū Zayd était à la tête des Banū Hilāl et ʿAlya en queue avec les femmes. Ils durent à un certain moment traverser un petit cours d'eau; ʿAlya releva sa robe, faisant voir ses *ḥulḥāl*. Les autres femmes de la tribu y virent un mauvais signe du destin et la supplièrent de retourner au Nağd. C'est ce qu'elle fit, sans pouvoir avertir Abū Zayd à qui on fit croire qu'elle était morte à mi-chemin. Le héros hilalien acheta une *rabāba* et se mit à chanter son chagrin. Un jour reçut un message de ʿAlya annonçant ses noces; c'est alors qu'il partit⁵³.

ʿAlya était la mère de Šabra et Rayya et aucun *ḥakarwātī* syrien ou aucun *šāʿer* égyptien n'oserait mettre en doute le fait qu'Abū Zayd en soit le père. Tout ceci s'oppose directement aux traditions de l'Arabie du Sud, où comme nous l'avons vu on est convaincu qu'Abū Zayd ne voulait pas d'enfants et n'en avait pas, mis à part ce ʿAzīz conçu grâce à la ruse féminine. Dans un des récits hilaliens publiés par Thomas on arrive à attribuer trois enfants à notre héros, mais c'est lui même qui doute d'en être le père. Il les emmena dans le désert et les soumit à des épreuves de courage et de sagacité. C'est ʿAzīz le seul qui réussit à les

⁵¹ We. 819, f. 14a.

⁵² *Tagrība*, pp. 321-329.

⁵³ as-Sārisī, *al-Ḥikāya as-šāʿbiyya*, p. 420.

surmonter; Abū Zayd le reconnut comme son fils, mais à partir de ce moment-là il ne désira que sa mort⁵⁴.

Il s'agit en effet d'une attitude qui ne correspond pas bien aux sentiments des Arabes, dans lesquels la descendance et le lignage gardent une place privilégiée.

Conclusion

Nous pourrions multiplier les exemples et les comparaisons. Le dynamisme de la tradition narrative hilalienne est un fait que les pages qui précèdent devraient avoir bien illustré. Même si plusieurs contes présentent différents motifs inspireurs, nous croyons devoir considérer cette tradition comme un tout, à cause de la particulière évolution de l'art des conteurs. Ces contes se sont développés parfois autour d'un personnage ou d'une anecdote locale et l'histoire de 'Azīz "fils de son oncle" pourrait bien en représenter un exemple. Son écho est arrivé jusqu'aux centres de la récitation professionnelle ou de la rédaction des manuscrits et, après l'adaptation inévitable pour répondre aux valeurs morales de la société islamique, le récit a été mis en circulation dans les circuits traditionnels, s'insérant très vite dans l'ensemble de la *Sīrat Banī Hilāl*. Le cycle épique hilalien semble souvent être composé par de nombreux épisodes juxtaposés, avec une cohérence relative par rapport à la progression des événements; cette structure présente une possibilité de dilatation et d'absorption dont les conteurs ont largement profité. L'histoire de la tribu se développe génération après génération, *qissa* après *dīwān*, dans une conception linéaire du cours des événements, mais avec plusieurs digressions.

Il nous semble intéressant que cette multiforme tradition ait absorbé même des contes d'origine sudarabique; par quelles voies? Il n'est pas possible malheureusement de l'établir. De toute façon notre version yéménite garde toute sa spécificité et se présente très éloignée des thèmes chers aux *šū'arā'* et aux *ḥakawātīyya*, où dominent les grandes batailles,

⁵⁴ Thomas, *Arabia Felix*, pp. 219-222.

les conquêtes, les duels entre héros adversaires, parfois le merveilleux et la magie. Dans l'Arabie du Sud le conte est beaucoup plus anecdotique et présente des liaisons et des situations inconnues, à peu d'exceptions près⁵⁵, dans la littérature arabe populaire et dans celle d'*adab*. Vraisemblablement il enfonce ses racines dans un fond de mythes et de fables qui constitue la spécificité culturelle de l'ancienne *Arabia Felix*. Le professeur Raif G. Khoury, en soulignant l'importance et l'autonomie des traditions yéménites dans le contexte arabe, n'exclut pas la possibilité d'influences mutuelles entre le Yémen, l'Iran et l'Éthiopie avant l'Islam. On voit les dimensions que devrait prendre une recherche comparative pour aboutir à des résultats valables. De notre côté, nous espérons que les hypothèses avancées à partir du conte de ʿAzīz ben Ḥāleh pourront élargir les perspectives de la recherche actuelle sur la *Sīrat Banī Hilāl*, avec l'introduction dans le débat sur la problématique de la genèse et de la diffusion extraordinaire des contes hilaliens.

⁵⁵ Le thème de l'inceste est très commun, à notre connaissance, seulement dans le patrimoine narratif de la Haute Égypte et surtout du Soudan, comme l'étude de A. H. Shahi et H. T. Moore l'a bien illustré (*Wisdom from the Nile*, Oxford 1978). Hasan el-Shamy a remarqué à ce propos: "In traditional Arab cultural expressions (folklore) the Oedipus complex is practically non-existent (...). In contrast to the Oedipal situation, Arab cultures teem with expressions of love between brother and sister. Hundreds of examples of this vital affective tie can be cited" ("The Brother-Sister Syndrome in Arab Family Life, Socio-Cultural Factors in Arab Psychiatry: A Critical Review", *International Journal of Sociology of the Family*, 11, 1981, pp. 318-320). Mais il faut dire que ce rapport n'arrive pas aux conséquences extrêmes qu'on trouve dans l'histoire de ʿAzīz. Pour l'Égypte, on ne peut pas oublier l'influence qu'un mythe comme celui du couple divin Isis et Osiris a pu exercer.

THE CELEBRATION OF 'ĀŠŪRĀ' IN SUNNĪ ISLAM

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To S. Bashear,
in memoriam.

Muslim scholars show a tendency to consider an innovation the joyful celebration of 'ĀšŪrā' among the Sunnites, innovation which would have been established in order to counteract the Šī'ī festival. This attitude implies that the mournful celebration of 'ĀšŪrā' was older than the joyful one. However, it is difficult to ascertain the character of 'ĀšŪrā' festival in early Islam. Further research is to be done in this field, as well as in that of the association of 'ĀšŪrā' with other non-Islamic festivals. In my paper, I will describe the main characteristics of the celebration of 'ĀšŪrā' among the Sunnites in medieval Islam, paying special attention to a specific practice, that of liberal spending on one's household (*at-tawsī' alā l-'iyāl*). The case of this practice may serve to shed some light on the development of 'ĀšŪrā' festival.

1. The Islamic festival of 'ĀšŪrā' takes place the 10th (or, according to some traditions, the 9th) of *muḥarram*, the first month of the Muslim lunar calendar, and it is singled out by voluntary fasting in the works of *fiqh*¹. The origins of this fast are explained in two different ways in *hadīth* literature. According to some traditions, the fast of 'ĀšŪrā' was practised by the Arabs in Gāhiliyya times. According to another wide-

¹ See on the voluntary character of 'ĀšŪrā' fast, Mālik, *al-Muwatta'*, *riwāya* by Yaḥyā b. Yaḥyā al-Layṭī, Beirut 1981, pp. 242-243; *riwāya* by aš-Šaybānī, Cairo(?) 1979, p. 131 (with mention of Abū Ḥanīfa's doctrine). Cf. the commentaries by az-Zurqānī (4 vols., Cairo 1961-62), II, 177-179 and by Abū l-Walīd al-Bāḡī (7 vols. in 6, Cairo 1912-13), II, 57-59. Ibn Rušd, in his *K. bidāyat al-muḡtabid* (2 vols. in 1, Cairo s.d.), I, 213-214 points out that there is unanimity on the commendable character of 'ĀšŪrā' fast; so is the opinion of Ibn Ḥazm in his *Muḥallā* (11 vols. in 8, Cairo 1929), VII, 17-18.

spread tradition, the Prophet established the fast of 'Āšūrā' in imitation of a Jewish practice, with which he came into contact after his arrival in Medina; later on, Muḥammad ordered the Muslims to perform the obligatory fast in *ramadān* and this month, consequently, substituted the day of 'Āšūrā'². At some time during this development, the Prophet wanted to distinguish the Muslim fast of 'Āšūrā' from that of the Jews, so he ordered the believers to fast the 9th of *muharram* instead of the 10th and from this arises the *ihṭilāf* on which day 'Āšūrā' falls³. The Jewish practice followed by the Prophet was clearly the Day of Atonement or Yom Kippur, the tenth day of the first month of the Jewish calendar; the idea of "atonement" was preserved in the Muslim festival in a tradition which says that the fast of 'Āšūrā' is an expiation (*kaffāra*) for a whole year⁴. Once *ramadān* became the fixed period for obligatory fast, 'Āšūrā' remained, as mentioned, a day of supererogatory fast in the legal theory. However, it maintained a special place among Muslim festivals (*'īd*, pl. *a'yād*) as it is shown in the *faḍā'il yawm 'Āšūrā'*⁵.

² See A. J. Wensinck et al., *Concordance et Indices de la tradition musulmane* (7 vols., Leiden 1936-1969), IV, 223-224 and *EP*, s.v. "Āshūrā"; see also 'Abdarrazzāq, *al-Musannaf* (11 vols., Beirut 1970-1972), IV, 285-291, and Ibn Abī Šayba, *al-Musannaf* (5 vols., Hyderabad 1966-70), III, 5-9. Ibn Durayd stated that the form *fā'ūlā'* did not exist in Ġāhiliyya times, but Ibn Abī Ġamra (see note 5) refuted it on the basis of the *ḥadīth* which says that the Arabs used to fast "on 'Āšūrā' day during the Ġāhiliyya". An attempt to reconcile the two traditions on the origins of 'Āšūrā' fast is to be found in Abū l-Walīd al-Bāḡī, *op. cit.*, II, 57-58. S. D. Gotein has pointed out the coincidences between *ramadān* and Yom Kippur, the day of fast of the Jews which is the precedent of 'Āšūrā': see his "Ramadān, the Muslim month of fasting", *Studies on Islamic history and institutions*, Leiden 1966, pp. 90-110.

³ See Ibn Rušd, *op. cit.*, I, 214. The fast on the 9th of *muharram* is called *tāsū'ā'*. Ibn Abī Ġamra (see note 5) deals at length with the etymology of both 'Āšūrā' and Tāsū'ā'.

⁴ See *Concordance*, loc. cit., al-Muzanī, *al-Muḥtaṣar* (margins of Sāfi'ī's *K. al-Umm*, 7 vols. in 3, Cairo 1903-8), II, 26; Ibn Abī Ḥātim, *ʿIlal al-ḥadīth* (2 vols. Beirut 1405/1985), I, 241, num. 702. The tradition is very often quoted in the works dealing with 'Āšūrā'. On the concept of *kaffāra* in Islam see the article of J. Chelhod in *EP*.

⁵ Chapters on this matter are to be found in the *ḥadīth* collections. 'Umar b. Aḥmad b. Šāhīn (d. 385/995) wrote a *K. faḍā'il 'Āšūrā'* and so did the Andalusian Qāsim b. Ibrā-

Where do these *faḍā'il* come from? There are several explanations about the excellences 'ĀšŪrā', usually connected with the fact that God bestowed *karāmāt* on his prophets on that day. So, for example, on 'ĀšŪrā' day Adam and David were forgiven, Noah's ark landed, Abraham was saved from the fire, Solomon was given his *mulk*, the sea was divided for the children of Israel and Pharaoh was drowned, Jesus ascended into the sky, etc.⁶ It is worth noting that very seldom Muslim sources record the event that is generally agreed to have given rise to the Jewish festival of Yom Kippur, a day of fasting and atonement, a day when forgiveness is granted to all who repent fully. That event was the descent of Moses from Sinai with the second Tablets of the Law⁷. In Judaism there are other explanations about the origins of the Day of Atonement: according to some sources, in that day Jacob heard of Joseph's death and mourned for him; it is also considered the day of the circumcision of Abraham and the day of the Akedah, the binding of Isaac⁸. Because of these different explanations there is no agreement in

hīm b. Qāsim b. Yazīd al-Anṣārī (d. 446/1054, see Ibn Baṣkuwāl, *K. aṣ-Ṣila*, ed. Cairo 1955, num. 1015), both works lost (the former is not mentioned in *GAL*, I, 165, SI, 76 nor in *GAS* I 209-210). I have been able to consult three works of this genre: Ibn Abī Ġamra al-Ṭrāqī al-Mālikī (10th/15th century), *In'ām Allāh 'alā l-anām bi-faḍl ša'n 'ĀšŪrā' bayna l-ayyām*, ms. Topkapi A. 566, 21 f.; 'Alī b. Muḥammad al-Uḡhūrī al-Mālikī (d. 1066/1656, see *GAL*, II, 317-318 and SII, 437), *Faḍā'il yawm 'ĀšŪrā'*, ms. Bibliothèque Nationale Paris, num. 3244, f. 153-175; 'Abdarrahmān b. Muḥammad aṣ-Šanāwī aṣ-Šahāwī aṣ-Ša'ūdī al-Aḥmadī aṣ-Šaḍīlī (d. after 1066/1656), *Galā' al-abṣār bi-dīkri bā'd mā warada fī faḍā'il 'ĀšŪrā' min al-ātār wa-l-aḥbār*, ms. Bibliothèque Nationale Paris, num. 5651, f. 370a-405a.

⁶ aṣ-Šanāwī, f.376b, cf. al-Uḡhūrī, f. 153b-154a and Ibn Abī Ġamra, f.7b, where other events are mentioned: the people of Yūnus were forgiven, Jonas was saved from the whale, Joseph was set free out of jail. According to other lists recorded by the same authors, God created ten things on 'ĀšŪrā'. See also Ibn al-Ġawzī, *Kitāb al-mawḍū'āt* (3 vols., Medina 1966-68), II, 202 and Qāḍī an-Nu'mān, *Da'ā'im al-islām* (2 vols., Cairo 1951-60), I, 338. It is also said that on 'ĀšŪrā' *taqūm as-sā'a*.

⁷ I have found mention of this fact in Ibn al-Ġawzī, *Mawḍū'āt*, II, 200 and aṣ-Šanāwī, f.374a.

⁸ See *Encyclopaedia Judaica* (16 vols., Jerusalem 1971-72), s.v. "Day of Atonement".

Judaism about the nature of the day. As Hawting has put it, "the majority view [among the Jews] is that it is a day of fasting, certainly, but a day with a positive and joyful character ... In contrast, some saw the day as one of mourning and self-mortification ..., so that, together with abstention from food or drink, it was demanded such things as constant standing in prayer, going without sleep, wearing sackcloth and ashes, and weeping"⁹. This latter interpretation, in Hawting's view, would have influenced the Šī'ī celebration of 'Āšūrā', which happened to be the day when Ḥusayn was killed in Karbalā' in the year 61/680: "Just as in Judaism there were those who saw the Day of Atonement a day of joy and others as a day of sorrow, so in Islam there were similarly competing notions about the 10th of *muḥarram*, 'Āšūrā' day. It seems that the Šī'ī'a had to struggle to uphold a mournful conception of the day in the face of a tendency to associate it with events which indicated God's blessings on mankind"¹⁰, some of which I have already pointed out. Hawting has also stressed that Šī'ī 'Āšūrā' does not seem to be associated with fast. This practice appears not to have been of great importance either in the popular celebration of the same day among the Sunnites, in spite of the *fuqahā*'s stressing of the fast as the only well-established *sunna* of 'Āšūrā'.

2. The popular practices among the Sunnites connected with 'Āšūrā' seem to have developed especially in North Africa and Egypt. There are several studies dealing with the modern celebration of 'Āšūrā' in Morocco and Tunis. Its main features have been briefly described by Ph. Marçais¹¹: the supererogatory fast recommended in that day has almost no

⁹ G. R. Hawting, "The Tawwābūn, Atonement and 'Āšūrā'", *Jerusalem Studies in Arabic and Islam* 17 (1994), pp. 166-181.

¹⁰ *Ibid.*, cf. the statement of al-Maqrīzī in paragraph 3.

¹¹ *Ef.*, s.v. "Ashūrā' in the Maghrib", with bibliography; see also E. Doutté, *Magie et religion dans l'Afrique du Nord*, Paris 1984, pp. 526-534. Abū 'Ubayd al-Bakrī reports that on 'Āšūrā' day oxes were sacrificed in Qayrawān and a big fair took place in Monastir: *Description de l'Afrique septentrionale*, ed. and transl. by M. G. de Slane, Paris 1965, pp. 60 and 79; on the celebration of 'Āšūrā' in Monastir see also Qāḍī 'Iyāḍ, *Tartīb*

importance, whereas almsgiving is a widespread practice; the children of the Qur'ānic schools ask money for their teachers¹²; the cemeteries are visited and the dead remembered; special dishes are prepared, using eggs and chickens; rites of fire, marriage and carnival are attested in various regions of North Africa.

We find information about similar and other practices in the *Kutub al-bida'* written by scholars who lived in Egypt like Ibn Taymiyya (d. 728/1328) and Ibn al-Ḥāḡḡ (d. 737/1336)¹³. Both of them describe and condemn the "innovations" introduced in the celebration of 'ĀšŪrĀ' among the Sunnites:

- it is a day of joy and happiness (*al-farah wa-s-surūr*);
- chickens are slaughtered and *al-ḥubūb* are cooked in a special way¹⁴;
- *ziyārat al-qubūr* is performed;
- the application of henna by the women on their bodies is considered almost a duty;
- the women make also a special linen-cloth to be used as a shroud in order to stop Munkar and Nakīr approaching the corpses;
- to perfume with incense a prisoner is believed to get him out of jail;
- women and men bathe (*al-iḡtisāl*) and colour the eyelids with *koḥl* (*al-iktihāl*)¹⁵;

al-madārik (8 vols., Rabat s.d.), VI, 252.

¹² It was a custom in the Maghrib to give gifts to schoolteachers on 'ĀšŪrĀ' and other festivals: see F. de la Granja, "Fiestas cristianas en al-Andalus (Materiales para su estudio). II." (*Al-Andalus* XXXV (1970), pp. 119-142), pp. 131-132, and H. R. Idris, "Fêtes chrétiennes en Ifrīqiya à l'époque zirīde", *Revue Africaine* 98 (1954), pp. 261-276.

¹³ Ibn Taymiyya, *Kitāb iqtidā' aš-širāt al-mustaqīm*, s.l., 1325/1907, p. 144; transl. by M. Umar Memon, *Ibn Taymiyya's Struggle against Popular Religion*, Paris 1976, pp. 246-248; *Maḡmū' fatāwī šayḥ al-islām Aḥmad b. Taymiyya* (30 vols., Riyad 1381-83), XXV, 299-317; Ibn al-Ḥāḡḡ, *al-Madḥal* (4 vols. in 2, Cairo 1348/1929), II, 289-291. Ibn al-Ḥāḡḡ is quoted by al-Wanšarīsī, *al-Mīyār al-mu'rib* (13 vols., Rabat 1981), II, 489.

¹⁴ 'Abdarrāḥīm b. al-Ḥusayn al-ʿIrāqī aš-Šāfi'ī (d. 806/1403) wrote a *fatwā* declaring permitted *akl ad-daḡāḡ wa-l-ḥubūb yawm 'ĀšŪrĀ'* (see GAL II, 65-66 and Ibn Abī Ġamra, f.8b). al-ʿIrāqī appears in Abī Ġamra's works as a supporter of the popular practices of 'ĀšŪrĀ'.

¹⁵ On this practice see also al-Bayhaqī, *Šu'ab al-imān* (ed. Abū Muḥammad as-Sa'īd

– people use to ask forgiveness (*al-muṣāfaḥa*) from each other;
 – it is also a day of liberal spending on one's household and relatives (*at-tawsī' alā l-iyāl*) and, more generally, of almsgiving to the poor and the orphans¹⁶.

The survival of some of these practices in spite of the prohibition of the *fuqahā'* is attested by Lane: "It is a common custom of the Muslims of Egypt to give what they can afford in alms during the month of Moḥarram, especially on its first ten days, and more especially on the tenth day ..."¹⁷; "... a dish, which it is the custom of the people of Cairo to prepare on the day of Ashoorā', ... is called 'ḥoboob', and is prepared with wheat, steeped in water for two or three days, then freed from the husks, boiled and sweetened over the fire with honey or treacle; or it is composed of rice instead of wheat; generally, nuts, almonds, raisins, etc. are added to it"¹⁸.

b. Basyūnī Zaḡlūl, 9 vols., Beirut 1990), III, n° 3797.

¹⁶ Other practices are mentioned in the works of Ibn al-Ġawzī, Ibn Abī Ġamra, al-Uḡhūrī and aṣ-Šanāwī: a special prayer; *ziyārat 'ālim*; to visit the sick; to stroke with the hand the head of an orphan (this practice is mentioned in the Torah according to al-Uḡhūrī, f. 163a and aṣ-Šanāwī, f. 388a-388b); to cut the nails; to recite the *sūrat al-iḥlās* one thousand times, etc.

¹⁷ E. W. Lane, *An Account of the Manners and Customs of the Modern Egyptians*, London 1860, p. 426. The *qādī* Ibrāhīm b. 'Arafāt al-Qanā'ī (d. 744/1343) used to give one thousand dinars as alms every year on 'Āšūrā' day (aṣ-Šafadī, *al-Wafī bi-l-wafayāt*, VI, ed. S. Dederig, Wiesbaden 1972, p. 55, num. 2495). I have not been able to consult B. Langner, *Untersuchungen zur historische Volkskunde Ägyptens*, Berlin 1983, pp. 51-62, where she deals with the Egyptian festivals.

¹⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 429. Huda Ša'rawī remembers in her memoirs (*Harem Year. The memoirs of an Egyptian feminist*, tr. M. Badran, London 1986, p. 46): "For the 10th of muharram, *yawm al-Ashura*, we made *ashura*, a special wheat pudding with nuts and dried fruits". A dish called *ašūra* is also made in Turkey according to the following recipe: 1/2 kg grains of wheat (soaked overnight and cooked separately with water); 100 gr. chick-peas and 100 gr. cannellini beans (soaked overnight and cooked separately with water); 2 handfuls of rice added later on; dried figs, raisins, apricots and chestnuts (stewed and added to above); sugar; decorated with hazelnuts, walnuts, almonds, pomegranate, seeds and sprinkled with rose-water. So it is cooked in the vicinity of Karamüsel near Istanbul. I owe this information to Dr. G. R. Hawting, whom I wish to thank for his comments and suggestions.

3. Some of the popular practices of 'ĀšŪrā' have been seen as imitation of the Jews. According to al-Uğhūrī and aš-Šanāwī, *al-igtisāl*, *al-iktihāl* and *lubs al-kattān* were performed by the Jews of Medina and Ḥaybar¹⁹. R. Brunschvig sees in the slaughtering of chickens a probable influence of the *kapparot*, a custom practised on the day before the Day of Atonement (also on the eve of the New Year or *rōš ha-šānā*) in which the sins of a person are symbolically transferred to a fowl, usually a cock or hen; sometimes plants were used (e.g., beans, peas)²⁰. On his part, Lane says that the custom of giving alms "seems to have been copied from the Jews, who are accustomed to abound in almsgiving and other good works during the ten days commencing with their New Year's day and ending with the Day of Atonement"²¹.

It is a common feature among the *fuqahā'* who condemn these practices to consider that they originated as a means to counteract the Šī'ī celebration of 'ĀšŪrā'²². On his part, al-Maqrīzī (d. 845/1442) states that the Ayyūbids singled out 'ĀšŪrā' as a joyful festival by way of liberal spending, special sweets, *al-iktihāl* and visiting the *ḥammām*, according to the customs of the Syrians imposed by al-Ḥağğāğ b. Yūsuf in the days of 'Abdalmalik b. Marwān, the aim of al-Ḥağğāğ being to insult the followers of 'Alī b. Abī Tālib²³. If al-Maqrīzī is to be be-

¹⁹ See al-Uğhūrī, f. 159b and aš-Šanāwī, f. 392b; see also fn. 16 on *maṣḥ ra's yatīm*.

²⁰ *La Berbérie orientale sous les Hafšides* (2 vols., Paris 1947), II, 303-304, note 5 (see also p. 272) and *Encyclopaedia Judaica*, s.v. "Kapparot", where it is said that this custom appeared in the 9th century.

²¹ *Op. cit.*, p. 426, note 1.

²² This is especially the case of Ibn Taymiyya, but the same idea can be found in Ibn Abī Ġamra, al-Uğhūrī and aš-Šanāwī.

²³ *Kitāb al-ḥiṭat* (4 vols., Cairo 1324-26), II, 365; see also II, 289 on a strife between Šī'ites and Sunnites on 'ĀšŪrā' day in the year 363/973. The Fāṭimid caliph al-Mu'izz (341/953-365/975) complained to Qāḍī an-Nu'mān on the fact that 'ĀšŪrā' was celebrated as *yawm 'id wa-surūr* (see an-Nu'mān, *Kitāb al-mağālis wa-l-musayyarāt*, Tunis 1978, pp. 397-398). The Fāṭimids do not seem to have succeeded in imposing the Šī'ī celebration of 'ĀšŪrā' on their North African subjects, the only influence left being the visit to the burial place of the head of the al-Ḥusayn in Cairo: see Lane, *op. cit.*, p. 429ff.

lieved, that would mean that already in al-Ḥaḡḡāḡ's time 'Āšūrā' was celebrated by the Šī'ī as a day of mourning and that until that moment it had no special significance as a joyful festival for the Sunnites²⁴.

Following the idea underlying the text of al-Maqrīzī, other Sunnite scholars insist on the fact that the above mentioned practices of 'Āšūrā' were "innovations" and that traditions were invented in order to support them and make them appear as *sunan*. Among these false traditions we find: "who colours his eyelids with kohl on 'Āšūrā' day will avoid any eye disease during the year", "who bathes on 'Āšūrā' day will not be sick during the year"²⁵, "who spends liberally on his household on the day of 'Āšūrā', God will bestow plenty upon him throughout the remainder of the year" (*man wassa'a 'alā nafsīhi wa-ablihi/iyālihi (fī n-nafaqa) yawm 'Āšūrā' wassa'a llāh 'alayhi sā'ir as-sana*). This tradition, which I will refer to as the tradition on liberal spending, deserves further attention.

4. The *matn* of this tradition, with the variants I have recorded²⁶, is to be found with different *isnāds*. In a), b), c) and d) I give a selection of the *isnāds* quoted several times with mention of the authors who recorded them; in e) and f) I give two *matn* variants which I shall refer to in the following paragraphs.

a) ... Yūnus b. 'Abdala'lā (d. 264/877, Egypt) ← Sufyān b. 'Uyayna (d. 198/813, Kūfa, Mecca) ← Ġa'far al-Kūfī (d. c. 154/770) ← Ibrāhīm b. Muḥammad b. al-Muntašir al-Hamdānī al-Kūfī (d. after 100/718) ← Muḥammad b. al-Muntašir b. al-Aḡda' al-Hamdānī al-Kūfī²⁷ ← the Pro-

²⁴ The Būyids were the first to establish officially the Šī'ī celebration of 'Āšūrā' in the year 352/963: see H. R. Idris, *Le Berbérie orientale sous les zīrides (X-XII siècles)* (2 vols., Paris 1962), II, 711, note 136.

²⁵ On these traditions see Ibn al-Ġawzī, *Mawḏū'āt* II, 199-205; Ibn Taymiyya, *Fatāwā* XXV, 312; they are quoted by Ibn Abī Ġamra, al-Uḡhūrī and aš-Šanāwī.

²⁶ There is also a very long variant where Abū Hurayra reports that the Prophet recommended liberal spending on 'Āšūrā' together with other practices: see Ibn al-Ġawzī, *Mawḏū'āt* II, 200-201 and cf. II, 202-203. See also al-Bayhaqī, *Šu'ab*, III, n° 3795.

²⁷ On these transmitters see Ibn Ḥaḡar, *Tahḏīb at-tahḏīb* (13 vols., Hyderabad 1907-

phet. Ibn al-Muntašir and Ibn 'Uyayna state that they put to the test the tradition for sixty years and found that it worked²⁸. Ibn Taymiyya deals at length with this transmission, apparently because it was the most difficult to refute, as all the transmitters are considered *ṭiqa* in the *riḡāl* works and appear in the six canonical collections. However, the fact that there is no Companion mentioned by al-Muntašir (who belongs to the generation of the Successors) gives room to Ibn Taymiyya's refutation²⁹. Ibn Taymiyya does not seem to be aware of the variant of this transmission recorded by al-Bayhaqī where it is Ibrāhīm b. Muḥammad b. al-Muntašir who, without even referring to his father, cites the tradition on liberal spending as a mere saying ("kāna yuqālu")³⁰.

b) ... Haysam b. Šaddāh ← Sulaymān b. Mihrān al-A'maš (d. c. 148/765, Kūfa) ← Ibrāhīm an-Naha'ī (d. 96/715, Kūfa) ← 'Alqama b. Qays al-Kūfī (d. 62/681) ← 'Abdallāh b. Mas'ūd³¹ ← the Prophet³². According to Ibn Abī Ġamra and al-Uḡhūrī, this tradition was included by Sulaymān b. Aḥmad at-Ṭabarānī (d. 360/971) in his *al-Mu'ğam al-kabīr*,

1909), XI, 440-441 (Yūnus); *GAS* I, 96 (Ibn 'Uyayna); *Tahdīb* II, 84-86 (Ġa'far); *Tahdīb* I, 157-158 (Ibrāhīm); *Tahdīb* IX, 471 (Muḥammad).

²⁸ See Ibn Taymiyya, *Fatawī* XXV, 300 and 313; Ibn Abī Ġamra, f. 9b; aš-Šanāwī, f.384b-385b. I have not been able to check the *Musnad* of al-Ḥumaydī (ed. Ḥ. R. al-A'zamī, 2 vols., Beirut-Cairo 1380-82) where Ibn 'Uyayna's transmissions are abundant.

²⁹ In J. Schacht's view, however, that would be evidence in favour of its being an old tradition, according to his principle "isnāds have a tendency to grow backwards": see *The Origins of Muḥammadan Jurisprudence*, Oxford 1950.

³⁰ *Šu'ab*, III, n° 3796. The *riwāya* of Muḥammad b. al-Muntašir is also found as a mere saying, without any mention of the Prophet.

³¹ Haysam, according to Ibn al-Ġawzī, was considered *maḡhūl* by al-'Uqaylī (d. 322/934: *GAS* I, 177) and dismissed by Ibn Ḥibbān. For the other transmitters see Ibn Ḥaḡar, *Tahdīb* IV, 222-226 (al-A'maš); *GAS* I, 403-404 (Ibrāhīm); *Tahdīb* VII, 276-278 ('Alqama).

³² Ibn al-Ġawzī, *Mawḏū'āt* II, 203; Ibn Abī Ġamra, f.10a-10b; al-Uḡhūrī, f.157b; aš-Šanāwī, f.384b-385b.

where it indeed appears³³. It is also quoted by Ibn al-Aṭṭir (d. 606/1209) in his *Ġāmiʿ al-uṣūl* in the chapter *fī faḍl an-naḥāqā*³⁴. His source is the work of the Andalusian Razīn b. Muʿāwiya (d. c. 535/1140), *K. at-tağ-rīd fī l-ḡamʿ bayna l-Muwattaʿ wa-ṣ-Ṣiḥāḥ al-ḥams*, still unpublished³⁵. It seems therefore that Razīn thought the tradition was included either in the *Muwattaʿ* or in the collections of al-Buḥārī, al-Muslim, Abū Dāwūd, an-Nasāʿī or at-Tirmidī³⁶. But it is found in none of the extant versions of these works³⁷, as can be checked through the Concordance. Among others, al-Uḡhūrī pointed out this fact: he considers very odd (*ʿağīb*) that Ibn al-Aṭṭir quotes it in his *Ġāmiʿ* and still odder that Ibn al-Aṭṭir's brother keeps mentioning it in his *Iḥtiṣār Ġāmiʿ al-uṣūl*, both stating that the tradition is to be found in al-Buḥārī's and al-Muslim's collections. In my opinion, it is Razīn's work where the explanation of this "oddity" is to be found. Two possibilities can be taken into account: either Razīn included it because he agreed with its contents, disregarding the fact that it was not mentioned in the canonical collections, or he found the tradition on liberal spending in the version at his disposal of one of those collections. The first possibility would be supported by the fact that the *ḥadīth* on liberal spending on ʿĀṣūrā was known in al-Andalus since the days of ʿAbdarraḥmān II (206/822-238/852), as I shall mention. The second possibility could be supported by the fact that there is some evidence on the transmission in al-Andalus of a version of al-Buḥārī's collection which was not the usual one³⁸. Maybe

³³ See at-Ṭabarānī, *al-Muḡam al-kabīr*, 10 vols., Beirut 1983, vol. X, p. 94, n. 10.007.

³⁴ Ed. by ʿAbdalqādir Arnāʿūt (10 vols., s.l., 1969), IX, p. 527.

³⁵ On him see *GAL* SI 630.

³⁶ These are the collections he used according to Ibn Ḥayr, *Fabrāsa* (2 vols., Zaragoza 1894-95), I, p. 123.

³⁷ A similar problem with Razīn is also found in Ibn al-Aṭṭir, *Ġāmiʿ*, I, 334, n° 118. I owe this reference to Prof. M. Cook, whom I thank for his comments on this paper.

³⁸ See Ibn Baṣkūwāl, *op. cit.*, num. 1169, biography of Muḥammad b. ʿAlī b. Maḥmūd al-Warrāq (5th/11th century). On the existence of different versions of al-

the extant manuscripts of Razīn's work will shed some light on this matter, but unfortunately I was unable to consult them.

c) ... Šu^cba b. al-Ḥaġġāġ (d. 160/776, Wāsiṭ, Baṣra) ← Abū z-Zubayr Muḥammad b. Muslim al-Makkī (d. 120/737) ← Ġābir b. 'Abdallāh (d. 77/696 or 94/712)³⁹ ← the Prophet⁴⁰. Ibn Abī Ġamra and al-Uġhūrī mention that Abū 'Umar b. 'Abdalbarr (d. 463/1070) quoted the same tradition in his *al-Istidkār li-madāhib fuqahā' al-amṣār wa-'ulamā' al-aqtār fī mā taḍammanahu l-Muwatta' min ma'ānī r-ra'y wa-l-ātār* with an *isnād ġayyid 'an 'Umar b. al-Ḥaṭṭāb*. I have not been able to check this reference as the *ḥadīṭ* does not appear in the only volume published until now⁴¹.

d) There is also a *matn* variant which goes: *man kāna dā ġudda wa-may-sara fa-wassa'a 'alā nafsihi wa-'iyālihi ya'nī yawm 'Āšūrā' wassa'a llāh 'alayhi l-ḥayrāt ilā ra's as-sana al-mustaqbala* ("who is rich and wealthy and spends liberally on himself and his dependents, i.e. on 'Āšūrā' day, God will bestow upon him his blessings until the first day of the following year")⁴².

e) There is evidence of a *matn* variant which mentioned the practice of liberal spending in connection with the eve of 'Āšūrā' (*at-tarwī'a laylat 'Āšūrā'*), as we shall see in the following paragraph.

Buḥārī's collection see F. Rosenthal, *The technique and approach of Muslim scholarship* (Roma 1947), pp. 20, 31.

³⁹ On these transmitters see *GAŚI*, 92 (Šu^cba); Ibn Ḥaġar, *Tahdīb* IX, 440-443 (Abū z-Zubayr); *Tahdīb* II, 42-43 (Ġābir).

⁴⁰ Ibn Abī Ġamra, f.10a (where "Sa'id" is mentioned instead of Šu^cba); al-Uġhūrī, f.157b; aš-Šanāwī, f.384b-385b. As in the version a), the transmitters state that they put the tradition to the test and found it to be true. Another version ending with Ġābir before the Prophet in al-Bayhaqī, *Šu'ab*, III, n° 3791.

⁴¹ Ed. by 'Alī n-Naġdī Nāṣif, s.l., s.d. aš-Šanāwī records: *wa-kāna l-imām 'Umar b. al-Ḥaṭṭāb yaqūlu: aktirū ḥayr buyūtikum fī laylat 'Āšūrā' wa-yawmibi wassi'ū fihi 'alā ahālī-kum*.

⁴² aš-Šanāwī, f. 384b-385b. This *ḥadīṭ* was transmitted by Abū Bakr Aḥmad b. 'Alī al-Ḥaṭīb al-Baġdādī with a defective *isnād*.

5. According to the *isnāds* mentioned, it seems safe to conclude that the *ḥadīṭ* on liberal spending was known in Kūfa and Mecca in the times of Ibn ʿUyayna (2nd half of the 2nd/8th c.) and in Baṣra around the same time. Between the 2nd/8th and the 3rd/9th c., the *ḥadīṭ* was known in Egypt (through Yūnus b. ʿAbdalaʿlā) and in Medina. This latter fact is attested in an interesting passage of the *Kitāb al-bidaʿ* written by the Andalusian Muḥammad b. Waḍḍāḥ al-Qurṭubī (d. 287/ 900)⁴³. In it another Andalusian, Saʿīd b. Ḥassān (d. 236/850) says that his Medinese teacher ʿAbdallāh b. Nāfiʿ (d. 206/821)⁴⁴ told him not to transmit the *ḥadīṭ* on liberal spending during the night of ʿĀšūrāʾ (*at-tawsiʿa laylat ʿĀšūrāʾ*) out of fear that it will be considered a *sunna*⁴⁵. On his part, a third Andalusian, Yaḥyā b. Yaḥyā al-Layṭī (d. 234/848)⁴⁶ states that he spent the night of ʿĀšūrāʾ in Medina in the company of Mālik b. Anas (d. 179/795) and in Egypt in the company of al-Layṭ b. Saʿd (d. 175/791), Ibn al-Qāsim (d. 191/806) and Ibn Wahb (d. 197/813) and none of them mentioned or did anything related to that *ḥadīṭ*. If we accept this statement, it will mean that the *ḥadīṭ* on liberal spending on ʿĀšūrāʾ reached Medina between 179/795 (death of Mālik) and 206/850 (death of Ibn Nāfiʿ) and Egypt between 197/813 (death of Ibn Wahb) and 264/877 (death of Yūnus b. ʿAbdalaʿlā) but it could also mean that all those scholars knew and ignored it. In al-Andalus, the *ḥadīṭ* on liberal spending is quoted by ʿAbdalmalik b. Ḥabīb (d. 238/852), a contemporary of the aforementioned Saʿīd b. Ḥassān, in a poem dedicated to the *amīr* ʿAbdarrahmān II⁴⁷. Two conclusions can be

⁴³ Ed. and transl. by María Isabel Fierro, Madrid 1988, num. VI, 8c; see also pp. 113-114 of the study.

⁴⁴ On him see Ibn Ḥaḡar, *Tabdīb* VI, 51-52.

⁴⁵ Ibn Nāfiʿ is recorded in al-Bayhaqī, *Šūʿab*, III, n° 3793 and 3794 as a transmitter of the tradition on liberal spending. The anecdote found in the *Kitāb al-bidaʿ* thus seems to point to a change of his mind.

⁴⁶ He is the famous transmitter of the *Muwattaʿa*. On him see *op. cit.* in the fn. 43, p. 13.

⁴⁷ See Qādī ʿIyāḍ, *Madārik* IV, 140 and J. Aguadé, *El "Tārīj" de ʿAbd al-Malik b.*

drawn from this fact. Firstly, 'Abdalmalik never visited Iraq, so he must have learned that *ḥadīṭ* either in Ḥiğāz or in Egypt and this confirms the *terminus ante quem* of its spreading in those regions. Secondly, 'Abdalmalik b. Ḥabīb considered it a sound *ḥadīṭ*, as in his poem he invites the Umayyad *amīr* to follow it⁴⁸. This attitude implies that during his *riḥla* Ibn Ḥabīb met 'ulamā' who were transmitting that tradition as the words of the Prophet and who agreed with the practice.

It has been possible to establish the *terminus ante quem* of the existence of the *ḥadīṭ* for Kūfa, Baṣra, Ḥiğāz, Egypt and al-Andalus. To establish the *terminus post quem* is a more difficult matter. The evidence of the *isnāds* a) and b) could be interpreted in the sense that it was formulated in Kūfa at the time of Ibrāhīm an-Naḥā'ī and Ibrāhīm b. Muḥammad b. al-Muntašir, i.e., in the 2nd half of the 1st/7th century. This was the time when el-Ḥağğāğ b. Yūsuf (d. 95/714) was governor of Kūfa, so maybe al-Maqrīzī was right after all when he stated that the practices connected with 'Āšūrā' as a joyful festival originated in al-Ḥağğāğ's time. However, the only safe conclusion with the available data is that the tradition on liberal spending was well known between the end of the 2nd/8th century and the beginning of the 3rd/9th century, enjoying the support of some Sunnī scholars.

6. According to some versions of a), Muḥammad b. al-Muntašir transmitted the tradition on liberal spending without tracing it back to the Prophet, that is, as a mere saying. At the same time, I have pointed out that the tradition is usually accompanied by a *ziyāda* where some of the transmitters say that they put the tradition to the test and found it to be true. This could mean either that 1) the practice of liberal spending on 'Āšūrā' was a new one or at least was not well established and was thus in need of being praised in order to gain support; 2) it was an old practice which was being challenged and was thus in need of

Ḥabīb, Madrid (1991) with a translation of the poem.

⁴⁸ It is difficult to assess whether 'Abdalmalik b. Ḥabīb wanted to introduce the practice in al-Andalus or was simply reminding the *amīr* of it in order to get his share of his "liberal spending".

proofs of its being commendable; so, Muḥammad b. al-Muntašir started by saying “*kāna yuqāl man wassa‘a ‘alā ‘iyālihi yawm ‘Āšūrā*” and the saying was eventually transformed into a prophetic tradition.

The first possibility can lead us to accept the view of scholars like Ibn Taymiyya and al-Maqrīzī who thought that this and other practices were invented in the 2nd half of the 1st/7th century in order to make of ‘Āšūrā’ a joyful festival and therefore an insult for the followers of Ḥusayn b. ‘Alī.

The second possibility leads us on the contrary to assume that it was an old practice that started to be challenged by the end of the 1st/7th century.

What follows are some general remarks on the possible origin of the practice of liberal spending.

7. In Judaism there is a close relationship between festivals and charity: “The Pentateuch ... insists that the needy be remembered when the festivals are celebrated”⁴⁹. Almsgiving brings to the doer many blessing and among them there is atonement for sin⁵⁰. Although charity does not appear to be a specific practice of the Day of Atonement, it is so on the eve of that day: “It is customary to send gifts to the poor, and a duty to ask forgiveness from one another and to appease each other”⁵¹. According to the tradition e), liberal spending took place on *laylat ‘Āšūrā*, i.e. on the eve of the 10th of *muḥarram*. However, I have not found any reference to liberal spending *on one’s household* as a Jewish practice on the Day of Atonement or its eve.

⁴⁹ *Encyclopaedia Judaica*, s.v. “Charity”.

⁵⁰ *Ibid.* The same idea is found in the *ḥadīṭ* literature: see A. J. Wensinck, *A Handbook of Early Muḥammadan Tradition*, Leiden 1927, p. 19 (*Alms as atonement*). Mālik says in his *Muwatta’*: “*ṣadaqa* is the impurities of people which they wash off themselves”.

⁵¹ *Encyclopaedia Judaica*, s.v. “Day of Atonement”, p. 1381. As I have pointed out, to ask forgiveness is also a Muslim practice of ‘Āšūrā’; the *igtisāl* of the Muslims has also a parallel among the Jews: “During the geonic period, the custom of ritual immersion on the eve of the Day of Atonement was introduced” (*loc. cit.*).

In the *ḥadīth* literature there are many traditions which stress that it is a duty for the Muslims to give *an-naḥaqa* to their own relations (*‘alā ahlihi wa-‘iyālihi*)⁵². At the same time, to neglect the family or household and to omit taking good care of them (*idā‘at al-‘iyāl*) are considered a sin⁵³. This *naḥaqa ‘alā l-‘iyāl* is a variety of almsgiving and thus we find it mentioned in the chapters devoted to *ṣadaqa* and *zakāt*. Now, there is some evidence that the fast of ‘Āšūrā’ ended with the *zakāt al-fiṭr*. Qays b. Sa‘d b. ‘Ubāda, a Companion of the Prophet⁵⁴, is reported to have said: “We used to perform the fast of ‘Āšūrā’ and to give the alms of fast breaking. When *ramadān* and (its) *zakāt* were revealed, those practices were neither ordered nor forbidden and we kept doing them”⁵⁵. At the same time, there is also some evidence that fast and *zakāt al-fiṭr* started to be associated only with *ramadān*. For example, ‘Alī is reported to have said: “The fast of *ramadān* abrogated any other fast and the *zakāt* abrogated any other almsgiving”⁵⁶. The revelation of *ramadān* as the month of fast and *zakāt al-fiṭr* appears thus as having disrupted the same practices on ‘Āšūrā’: some Muslims kept performing them on that day, while others started to oppose them. However, once again I have not found any reference to alms or liberal spending *on one’s own relations and household* as a specific practice associated with the breaking of fast or with the eve of fast⁵⁷.

⁵² See, *Concordance*, s.v. “*‘iyāl*” and Wensinck, *Handbook*. A man’s *‘iyāl* are “the persons whom he feeds, nourishes or sustains; or the persons who dwell with him, and whose expenses are incumbent on him, as his young man or slave, his wife, and his young child; the dependants for sustenance”: E. W. Lane, *An Arabic-English Lexicon*, 8 vols., London 1863-93, s.v. *‘iyāl*.

⁵³ See, for example, Zayd b. ‘Alī, *Corpus iuris*, ed. and transl. by E. Griffini, Milano 1919, p. 98.

⁵⁴ On him see Ibn Ḥaḡar, *Tabḏīb* VIII, 395-396.

⁵⁵ Ibn ‘Abdalbarr, *at-Tamhīd li-mā fi l-Muwatta‘a’ min al-ma‘ānī wa-l-asānīd* (16 vols., Rabat 1967-85), XIV, 322.

⁵⁶ *Ibid.*, X, 118.

⁵⁷ T. Fahd lists among the features of an Islamic festival the following: “une générosi-

This leads to trying in another direction. In the version d) of the tradition on liberal spending ‘Āšūrā’ and the New Year (*ra’s as-sana*) are mixed together⁵⁸. The celebration of the New (solar or lunar) Year is usually associated with the giving of gifts: this happens in the *rōš ha-šānā* of the Jews⁵⁹, in the *yannayr* of the Christians⁶⁰ and in the Persian *nayrūz*⁶¹. Now, ‘Āšūrā’ was fixed on the tenth day of the first month of the Muslim calendar⁶². This association with the beginning of a new year could have transferred to ‘Āšūrā’ some of the practices peculiar to the celebration of New Year’s day and among them liberal spending on one’s own relations and household⁶³.

té qui se manifeste par des réjouissances familiales des festins, des plats et friandises appropriés à chaque fête, des spectacles et divertissements, une animation dans les rues, des achats qui sortent des l’ordinaire, etc., bien que cet aspect ne fasse pas intrinsèquement partie de l’idée de fête, du moins à ses origines” (“Les fêtes de l’Islam”, *Revue des Etudes Islamiques* XLVII (1979), pp. 191-205, p. 203).

⁵⁸ In the 8th/14th century, Ibn ‘Arafa “autorisait-il les particuliers à marquer ce jours (1er janvier) par des libéralités envers leurs proches. Le premier jour de l’année julienne, concurrancé par ‘āshūrā’ n’est plus guère aujourd’hui remarqué que dans les campagnes”: Brunschvig, *La Berbérie orientale*, II, 306.

⁵⁹ *Encyclopaedia Judaica*, s.v. “Rosh ha-Shanah”.

⁶⁰ See F. de la Granja, “Fiestas cristianas en al-Andalus (Materiales para su estudio). I.” *Al-Andalus* XXXIV (1969) pp. 1-53. See also Idrīs b. Baydakin at-Turkumānī (8th-9th/14th-15th centuries), *Kitāb al-lumā’ fi l-ḥawādīt wa-l-bidā’* (ed. S. Labib, 2 vols., Wiesbaden 1986), I, 293-298, where the author condemns “*mā yaf’aluhu l-muslimūna fi nayrūz an-našārā wa-mawāsimehim wa-l-‘yād min tawassu’ an-nafaqa*”.

⁶¹ See *EP*, s.v., “*nayrūz*”, M. Espéronnier, “al-Nuwayrī: Les fêtes islamiques persanes chrétiennes et juives”, *Arabica* XXXII (1985), pp. 80-101.

⁶² “On which day of the Arabian year the fast was originally observed cannot be ascertained owing to our defective knowledge of the calendar of the period; naturally its observance coincided with the Jewish on the 10 Tishrī and so fell in the Autumn”: *EP*, s.v., “*āshūrā*” (A. J. Wensinck).

⁶³ While this paper was in the process of being published, an excellent study appeared written by S. Bashear, “*Āshūrā*, an early Muslim fast”, *Z.D.M.G.* 141 (1991) pp. 281-316.

POPULAR RELIGION AND POLITICS IN THE MIDDLE EAST (MIRACLES IN MUSLIM AND COPTIC EGYPT)

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The close relationship between religion, official and popular alike, and politics have been frequently manifested through history. Speaking about the region of the Middle East and North Africa we may refer to such well-known cases from the history of recent years as the stories about the keys which Iranian soldiers were reported to wear in the Iraq-Iran war to be able to enter Paradise more easily after they suffered martyrdom. Or we may recall the October war in 1973 when a pamphlet was circulated among Egyptian soldiers before crossing the Suez Canal and it allegedly stated that the Prophet Muḥammad appeared to Vice-President Ḥusayn aš-Šāfi'ī in a dream encouraging him with this word: *u'burū*, that is "Cross!". As another example from a third type of Islamic countries the case of the late President Sekou Touré's Guinea may be cited where the anti-imperialistic propaganda was underlined by the statement that imperialism is identical with the Dağğāl, the Antichrist who must be resisted and fought with every means.

The present paper, however, does not aim at collecting a group of similar cases which may occur quite accidentally but wishes to examine several phenomena of the religious sphere which have a broader significance and which, in our view, seem to have heralded important changes or even turning points in Islamic and Christian movements, consequently in the history of the Middle East in general.

If we look at the history of this area we might be tempted to discover certain periodical changes in the rise of Islamic and nationalistic ideas which reveal a kind of tide-like course¹. More or less the same can be said in connection with the history of Coptic Christianity. Accord-

¹ For the case of Egypt, see e.g. Vatikokis 1980.

ingly, the last century witnessed the emergence of Pan-Islamism while most decades in this century were overwhelmed by the preponderance of the ideas of Arab nationalism which arrived at its peak with the Nasserist ideology. The latter suffered a devastating defeat in 1967 which gave way to the rise of the Islamic trend in general and Islamic fundamentalism in particular. Quite obviously, the logical reaction to the trauma caused by the Six-Day War was to emphasize that while an ideology connected to a certain person could be defeated but Islam, which is a greater unifying factor than Arab nationalism, never.

As the long history of Islam shows, the offensive of the religious trend has been frequently accompanied by an eager wish to recover the lost strength by proving the truth in Koranic statements. A sign of this effort in the seventies might be the news about the discovery of the Cave of *Ahl al-Kahf*, the People of the Cave, the Koranic legend of the Seven Sleepers. It is well-known that *Sūrat al-Kahf* (*Sūra XVIII*) had an enormous importance in Muḥammad's efforts to justify his claims to prophethood². The Egyptian semi-official daily, *al-Abrām* published the news about the archaeological discovery of the Cave on the 4th of June in 1976, so practically on the eve of the ninth anniversary of the Arab-Israeli war. The year 76 could be more than pure coincidence, since a certain tentativeness can be found in its choice, namely in the fact that if we change the tens and units in the number, we get 67, the year of the war as if to suggest that Muslims received this great reassurance in the year of their political and military defeat. The news about the Cave appeared in *al-Abrām* on the page called *al-fikr ad-dīnī*, "The Religious Thought" which column was a characteristic sign of the Islamic revival in Egypt under President Sadat in the seventies.

One week later another article in the same column cited religious authorities who emphasized that the discovery proved the eternal miracle of the Koran. One of them pointed out the importance of discovering sites of other Koranic events in order to strengthen the Muslims'

² See e.g. the different commentaries on *Sūra XVIII*. For the Seven Sleepers in general, see Jourdan 1983 with a long bibliography.

faith. They also stressed that Muslim youths could draw strength from the parable of the youths of the Cave who were regarded as the symbols of firm faith.

In the same year, the Kuwaiti monthly, *al-ʿArabī* published a longer article in November which refuted the views of Massignon and other scholars who identified *Ahl al-Kahf* with the Seven Sleepers of Ephesus (al-ʿUmrānī 1976). The cave mentioned by the article in *al-Abrām* was located in ar-Raqīm, a place lying about 8 kilometres from the Jordanian capital, Amman. The man who initiated archaeological excavations on the site of the cave was Muḥammad Taysīr Zubyān, the Chairman of the *Rābiṭat al-ʿulūm al-islāmiyya*, the Union of Islamic Sciences in Jordan. He gave a detailed account of his efforts to start excavation work in the cave³.

Actually he went to the spot at first in 1953 and visited the cave. He, however, tried in vain to convince the English director of the Jordanian Department of Antiquities to excavate the site⁴. It was only in 1963 that the new Director of the Department gave his consent to carry out the necessary works in the cave and in its neighbourhood. Among the finds in the cave there were eight tombs and the jawbone of an animal, possibly of a dog. The drawing of the figure of a dog was also discovered on a wall inside the cave. The archaeologists also found the ruins of two mosques, one of them converted from a Byzantine church which stood above the cave (Zubyān 1978:73f).

On the basis of this archaeological evidence Zubyān came to the conclusion that the cave must be identical with the cave referred to by the Koran. He also considered the similarities in the topography of the excavated cave and the description of the cave of *Ahl al-Kahf* in the Koran as decisive for establishing the identity of the two caves. Accordingly, the eight tombs could not have been anything else than the resting place of the Seven Sleepers and their dog, Qiṭmīr. After the excava-

³ Zubyān 1978:39ff. See also Lescot 1968.

⁴ Lescot 1968:5 knows only about six tombs.

tions a new mosque was built in the vicinity of the cave and King Husayn of Jordan was also invited to attend the opening ceremony in 1970 (*ibid.* 78f). The Jordanian Department of Antiquities erected a commemorating tablet by the cave which stated that this was the Cave of the Seven Sleepers mentioned in the Koran (*ibid.* 69). In 1977 the neighbouring village of ar-Rağib was officially renamed ar-Raqīm to be in harmony with the Koranic text (*ibid.* 170).

According to Zubayān the Seven Sleepers lived in the time of Traian and slept until the reign of Theodosius (*ibid.* 34f). He also tried to show that the Cave has been known by the Arabs as the Cave of ar-Raqīm since ancient times (*ibid.* 103). The fact that the site has been a place of worship stands beyond doubt as a small event related incidentally by Zubayān corroborates it. Speaking about the remains of an olive tree from Roman times he mentions that several years ago an old *hağğ* cut out the fruit bearing tree because people visited it regularly to get *bara-ka*, "blessing" from it and he feared that this custom would turn into 'ibāda, "veneration" (*ibid.* 115).

Apart from the encouragement given to the archaeological work, Zubayān did his best to spread the news about the discovery of the Cave of ar-Raqīm in the whole Islamic world. Although he had already published an article about the cave in Damascus in 1953 (*ibid.* 109) his real activity started in the seventies. In 1971 he went to see the Sheikh of al-Azhar and informed him about the discovery. In the same year he gave a lecture on it in the *Ğam'iyat aš-Šubbān al-Muslimīn*, the Society of Muslim Youths in Cairo (*ibid.* 116f). In 1978 he published his book about the discovery of the Cave and referring to other Muslim scholars' views he summarized the significance of the event in the following comparison: the Seven Sleepers lived in an age of oppression which characterized the situation of Muḥammad's followers in the early Meccan period and which characterizes the present situation in which governments are afraid of the Islamic *da'wa* (*ibid.* 201f).

It cannot have been a sheer coincidence that Islamic religious circles took a real interest in the story of the Cave of ar-Raqīm only in the seventies, that is more than a decade later than the real discovery took

place. These years were a period of political frustration for the Arab and Islamic countries. An Indian Muslim theologian characterized it as the struggle between belief and materialism represented by the Jews and Christians (*ibid.* 177-183). Failures on the political scene must have led logically to the conclusion that these can be compensated and corrected on the religious level by bolstering the standard of faith among Muslims.

Looking back to the long history of Islam to demonstrate the attempts to prove the reality of Koranic revelations we may refer to such well-known stories as the journey of Sallām to the wall of Yāğūğ and Māğūğ or the expedition of Muḥammad ibn Mūsā to find the Cave of the Seven Sleepers. Both of these events occurred in a time when the Caliphate was engaged in a bitter struggle against the Muʿtazilites and wanted to prove the reality of Koranic miracles wishing to defeat them with their own arms (Arkoun et al. 1978:211). Besides, it was also the time when Turks appeared on the Muslim scene, so Sallām's journey was of paramount importance in this respect, too (*ibid.* 212f). All these circumstances show that both journeys had an ideological and political significance as well.

As another example of the efforts to show the trustworthiness of Koranic references, the numerous stories about the discovery of the legendary city of Iram may also be cited⁵. These obviously fit in the picture of the eagerness of Southern Arabs to demonstrate their cultural superiority over their Northern brethren (Vadet 1969).

If we return to examine the appearance of the Islamic trend in recent years we may also refer to another article in the same issue of *al-Abrām* already mentioned. This article speaks about the efforts of religious authorities in the Governorate of Šarqiyya to purify the *mūlids* from innovations and jugglery. Practically, this would have meant the abolition of traditional processions which accompany *mūlids*.

A similar attempt can be registered from Libya. Islamic revival here also appealed to the community as a whole but it was also encouraged

⁵ For this, see e.g. *EJ*¹ and *EJ*² "Iram".

to make use of Qaddafi's "Third Universal Theory". So, it is not surprising at all that this kind of Islamic movement has taken a hostile stand towards the different forms of popular religion. According to the Libyan weekly, *az-Zahaf al-Ahdar*, the revolutionary forces in Sūq al-Ġum'a attacked the nests of jugglery and swindle⁶. The newspaper rejected what it called "yellow traditional culture". By this expression, the article seemingly meant the culture of those who sit in the *zāwiyas*, beating the drums, practising swindle and leading the life of dervishes.

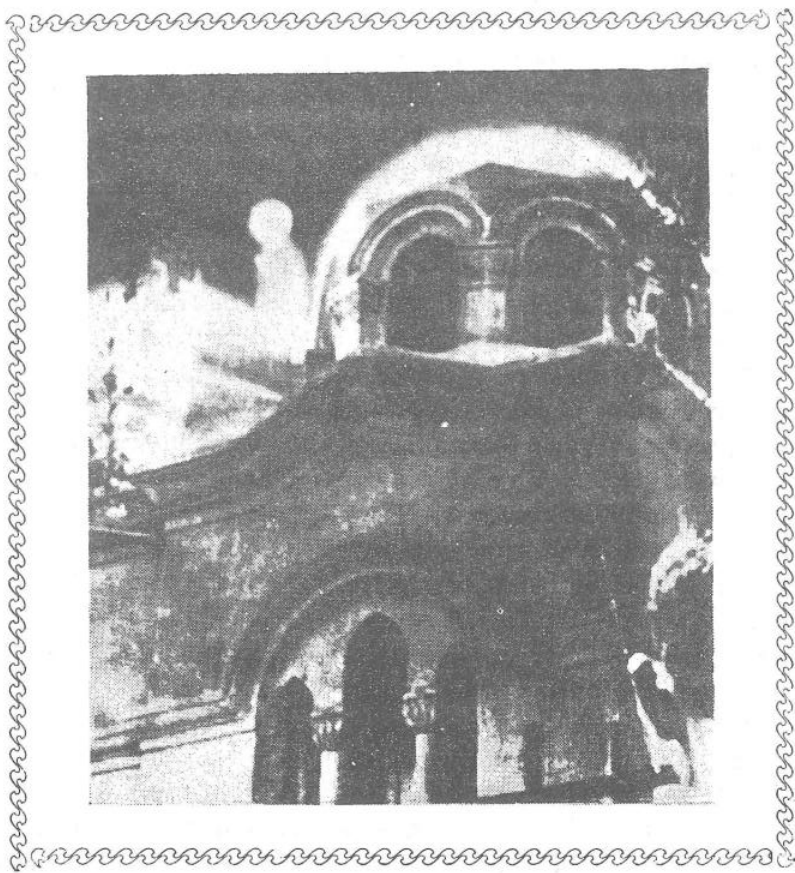
After examining the responses of Islam which were given to the challenges of the age in a special sphere, let us turn our attention to the reactions of the Egyptian Copts, the biggest Christian community in the Middle East. As a matter of fact, on the level of religion they reacted to the defeat in 1967 more quickly than the Muslims. In the spring of 1968 the Egyptian press gave great publicity to the miraculous apparitions of the Virgin Mary in her church in Zaytūn, a suburb of Cairo. The events started on the 2nd of April when workers in a neighbouring garage caught sight of a figure who moved slowly around the domes of the church. These apparitions⁷ occurred until 1969 and usually took place among the following circumstances: the Virgin appeared at night for different periods of time and the apparitions were usually accompanied or preceded by such phenomena as the appearance of strong light, pigeons, clouds.

The Coptic Orthodox Church published a little book on this miraculous event which contained the whole story and the testimonies of eyewitnesses together with the report of the fact-finding commission sent out by Pope Kyrillos VI⁸. First of all, the book stated that in these difficult times the apparition had a message to the nation, the countries of the Middle East and the whole human race (Gregorios 1969:57, 65).

⁶ See, *az-Zahaf al-Ahdar*, 24 February 1986, no. 334, p. 2.

⁷ Usually the term *tağallī* is preferred to *zuhūr*.

⁸ See Gregorios 1969. For a rather sceptic account of the apparitions, see Meinardus 1970:264-269.



The apparition of Virgin Mary in Zaytūn in 1968 (photo).

Special emphasis was laid upon the claim that God will not leave the Egyptians after their national catastrophe and will help them to victory. In addition to these interpretations, the *mu'ğiza*, "miracle" was also expected to boast religious feeling among the believers and to cause miraculous healing in several cases. The apparition must have reminded the Egyptians of the journey of the Holy Family and that Egypt has been sharing divine blessings since two thousand years.

The booklet also disclosed a more concrete cause of the apparitions when it said that Christian pilgrims, who could not visit now the Virgin Mary in Jerusalem because of the Israeli occupation, could come to see her in the Church of Zaytūn (*ibid.* 34). This sounded quite logical since the apparitions started before Easter, in the period when Christians usually prepared themselves to make the pilgrimage to Jerusalem.

Pope Kyrillos VI did not go personally to the Church but declared the apparition of Virgin Mary a reality. *al-Abrām* published the Pope's statement together with a picture of the Virgin above the Church on its front page and it was given a special attention in the Egyptian press (*ibid.* 43). As a characteristic of general national enthusiasm, even the ruling Arab Socialist Union took part in the arrangements to facilitate the access of visitors to the Church (Şādiq 1986:40). In short, according to the opinion of the Coptic Church, the miracle of the apparition and its message concerned the whole Egyptian nation.

There were also reports about cases of miraculous healing which occurred during the apparitions but this point was not particularly stressed⁹. This attitude might have been in accordance with the attempt to give priority to the idea of a united nation rather than to emphasize the importance of the believer as a member of a religious community.

After these general traits it will be worth to examine some specific features of the apparitions. The Virgin appeared in ten different forms (Gregorios 1969:77-110) among which two showed her over a tree. An eyewitness claimed that he saw her on a tree among the branches (*ibid.* 80f) and another one insisted on seeing her over a palm-tree (*ibid.* 82,

⁹ al-Anbā' Gregorios' book does not contain such stories.

106ff).

This peculiar form of appearance may suggest the survival of some elements of the ancient Egyptian tree-cult. As is well-known the ancient sky goddesses like Hathor, Nut and Isis played a major role in this cult¹⁰. They were usually represented sitting among the branches of trees. The most important sacred trees were the date-palm, acacia and sycamore. The age-old veneration accorded to the famous tree in the Cairene suburb of Maṭariyya offers a good example of how the object of an ancient tree-cult became Christianized.

To show the popularity of these ideas about the close relationship between the Virgin and the tree reference may also be made to a famous icon in the church of the Virgin Mary in Ḥāret Zuweyla in Cairo which depicts the Virgin among the branches of a tree¹¹. Only the upper part of her body can be seen as if she were growing out of the tree. Actually, the iconography of this form, irrespective of its present interpretation, seems to be in complete harmony with the usual representations of the ancient tree-goddesses.

As for the pigeons accompanying the apparitions of the Virgin they also deserve some remarks. In the interpretation of the author of our booklet, they could be the souls of saints because the pigeon symbolizes the lightness of the soul and its quickness (Gregorios 1969:120). He also referred to the well-known fact that the Holy Spirit appeared in the form of a pigeon at the river Jordan. What is more interesting for us, is his claim that the ancient Egyptians represented the souls in the form of pigeons on the tombs and in the temples. By this, he practically expressed a wish to include the heritage of the ancient Egyptian past among the components of the apparition, so he accepted this as an important factor in creating national unity and strengthening the consciousness of national identity.

As a third motif of ancient Egyptian origin we may allude to the

¹⁰ See e.g. Buhl 1947.

¹¹ For a picture of the icon, see e.g. *Coptic Egypt* 40f. The tree here represents the tree of Jesse, the "Tree of Prophecies".

descriptions which present the Virgin as radiating immense light¹². This figure resembles very much the woman dressed in the Sun who appeared in the revelations of St. John and whose origin can ultimately be traced back to ancient Egypt (Boll 1914:98ff).

The next important apparition of the Virgin Mary occurred in the church of Dumyāna in the Cairene suburb of Šubrā. Her first appearance above the church was observed on the 25th of March in 1986. So, again the apparition took place in the period preceding Easter. Similarly to the events in 1968, the apparitions continued after this for a number of months. To emphasize the interrelatedness of the two events, the official report prefaced by Pope Šenūda III himself, indicated the hidden numerical connection between 1968 and 1986 explaining that by changing the numbers 8 and 6 we get 68 which necessarily points to the year 1968 (Šādiq 1986:31).

The outward circumstances were really the same as in 1968 with the difference of the Virgin appearing this time not only over the church but also inside under the cupolas and on the altar-screen and not only at night but also in day-time.

The political situation has, however, completely changed. Egypt has been stricken by sectarian conflict between Muslims and Copts, the unifying ties of Egyptian nationalism have loosened, the two communities seemed to have taken their own paths¹³. The interpretation of the Coptic Orthodox Church considered the apparition as a possibility to strengthen the faith of the believers and like in 1968 saw in it a good opportunity for pilgrims to see the Virgin in Cairo without the necessity of visiting Jerusalem (Šādiq 1986:129).

In contrast to the report about the apparitions in 1968, the official

¹² This motif actually appears in every description of the apparitions.

¹³ In these years clashes between the two communities have become daily events. The atmosphere is well characterized by the so-called "war of stickers" in which both Muslims and Copts wanted to demonstrate their religious identity by placing stickers on cars. Finally, the government put an end to these openly provocative acts by banning the use of stickers in 1985. For the Muslim-Copt conflict in general, see e.g. Ansari 1984.

report this time particularly stressed the occurrences of miraculous healings¹⁴. We may discern a definite tendency in this to raise the religious morals of individual believers first of all and then to increase their level of faith and their feeling of identity. Also, in contrast to what happened in 1968, Muslim mass media have remained silent and have not published reports about the apparitions. This again suggests that on this occasion the event has not become a national cause but remained the internal affair of the Copt community.

Finally, if we want to make a comparison between the attitudes of official Muslim and Copt circles towards such miraculous events as the discovery of the Cave of *Ahl al-Kahf* and the apparitions of Virgin Mary, the following common traits should be pointed out:

1) In both cases official circles were ready to approve and accept phenomena which basically belong to the sphere of popular religiosity.

2) To make, however, the official control felt, Muslim authorities emphasized the conformity of the archaeological finds in the Cave to the Koranic evidence. The Copts on their part stressed that the Virgin appeared in her form familiar from the icons and devotional pictures, besides the apparitions always took place in the churches¹⁵.

3) Their attitude to other phenomena of popular religion, which possibly could not have been kept under control was complete rejection. This is why certain Muslim circles tried, as we have seen to restrict practices related to the *mūlids*¹⁶ and in a parallel way, the Coptic report on the apparition in the church of Dumyāna affirmed that the event was not a *bid'a* "innovation" and it has nothing to do with *mūlids* (Şādiq 1986:88).

¹⁴ The main part of Şādiq's book is made up by the descriptions of such cases.

¹⁵ The latter point was especially stressed by Pope Şenūda III (Şādiq 1986:7).

¹⁶ As a possible change in policy I was surprised to hear on CNN International on the 27th of November 1994 that Egyptian government lifted a ban on Sufism imposed several decades ago because it prefers Sufism to politically motivated extremism. The report may not be completely accurate in this form but it certainly shows the existence of the dilemma.

If we look back to the history of the last decades it becomes evident that these miracles could not serve as unifying bonds between Muslims and Copts in Egypt after the national catastrophe of 1967 but they rather heralded the emergence of religious extremism and even contributed to its growth.

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KORAN QUOTATIONS IN THE
"DICTIONARY OF COMMON PEOPLE"
BY YŪSUF AL-MAĠRIBĪ

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There is no need to dwell on the importance of the famous *Dictionary of Common People* compiled by Yūsuf al-Maġribī (d. 1611) which has been preserved in the unique manuscript from the Sheikh Ṭaṭṭāwī collection in the Oriental Room of the Scientific Library of St. Petersburg University. It is known that the reason for the *Dictionary* was the wish of the compiler to prove that the spoken language of the Egyptians, the Egyptian dialect, was the "genuine Arabic or close to it"¹. Yūsuf al-Maġribī's position was that of a "supporter of the people's language" who rejected all notions describing the dialect as a low and vulgar form of the language². A natural and essential part of his arguments were Koran quotations in which he found the same words and figures of speech that are characteristic of the Egyptian dialect.

For instance, Yūsuf al-Maġribī – also known as the composer of songs of the folk type (the Egyptian *mawwāl*) – in his songs often used, for rhyming purposes, the same word with different meanings (the homonymous rhyme)³. One of his songs was composed on the rhyme for which the word *furqān* (of Aramean origin, meaning "liberation, redemption" in the Aramaic language) was used in the various meanings that it had acquired in Arabic, viz. the "Koran", "Holy Scripture", "proof", "distinction between good and evil", and – as Yūsuf al-Maġribī

¹ Yūsuf al-Maġribī, *Daf al-iṣr 'an kalām ahl Miṣr*. MS facsimile, with foreword and index by A. S. Awwad, Moscow 1968, p. 21. (Abbreviated to: al-Maġribī, *Dictionary*.)

² *Ibid.*

³ O. B. Frolova, "Mawwāls by Yūsuf al-Maġribī", *Manuscripts of the East: Historical and Philological Studies, Year-book for 1975*. Moscow 1982, pp. 163-167.

pointed out – “grace”, “victory”, “morning”, “the sea breaking apart”, “battle at Badr”:

al-Muṣṭafā l-badru a'ṭāhu l-ilāh furqān
furqāne rabbu l-warā anzal lahu furqān
lā zāla bi-n-naṣre wa-l-burbān humā furqān
furqān li-Mūsā w-lahu yōm Badr hū furqān⁴

To the Chosen Complete Moon, God gave the Koran.

In the morning, the Lord of the mankind gave Him the battle at Badr,
 It remains a victory and a proof, which is grace.

For Moses, the sea breaking apart and for Him, the day at Badr is a
 triumph.

When explaining the word *furqān*, the following words from the Koran are used: *wa-in ātaynā Mūsā l-kitāb wa-l-furqān* (2:53).

Beside *marwāls*, Yūsuf al-Mağribī made use of other poetic forms of folklore with Koranic words in them and found Koran quotations elsewhere.

When explaining the verb *sāqa* and the nouns *sāq* and *sāqa* and the dialectal expression *fulān yisawwaq iṣ-šerr* (someone sells/spreads evil) the following Koran quotations are cited: *yawma yukšafu 'an sāqin* (68:42), *wa-ltaffati s-sāqu bi-s-sāqi* (75:28), as well as the following *marwāl*:

Husnu l-ḥabīb šāqanī wi-š-šawqu qad šāquh
qabbaltu rigluh min al-ašwāqi bal sāquh
wi-lā'imī fih mu'ahhar dāma fī sāquh
mahqūre madrūbe man qad šāhaduh sāquh⁵

The beauty of my beloved attracted me, and passion led me to him.

I kissed his foot because of love, or rather his leg.

And he who blamed me was late because of him, it took him long to
 drag his feet.

⁴ al-Mağribī, *Dictionary*, L. 52b.

⁵ *Ibid.*, L. 46b.

Miserable and broken are the leg of him who has seen him (i.e. he has been charmed by him).

It is the Koran that Yūsuf al-Mağribī refers to when he speaks of songs and folk tales. Thus he writes: "A funny thing happened to me when I was with a friend. We were reading a story in which a man was treating another man to some food, and he offered him a chicken on this condition: he was not to eat any part of the chicken unless he could quote a suitable phrase from the Koran. At this, the guest took the breast, saying *wa-naza'nā mā fī ṣudūribim min gillin* (7:43), then he took a wing saying *wa-lā tā'irin yaṭīru bi-ğanāḥayhi* (6:38). Upon which, my friend addressed me remarking 'What would he have said if he wanted to eat the sauce?' To which I answered immediately *wa-qīla man rāqin* (75:27). All that was in my youth when we did not stick to ceremonies"⁶.

Yūsuf al-Mağribī reply to his friend contains a pun based on the assimilation of the sounds *n* and *r*, so that – when pronounced – the phrase *man rāq* sounds *mirrāq* or *murrāq* meaning heretics, which in its turn has another form, *marāqa*, meaning also sauce.

The above example proves that Yūsuf al-Mağribī made use of the phonetic peculiarities observed in reading the Koran aloud. Thus, when commenting on the vernacular pronunciation of the word meaning "saliva, spittle" and giving its phonetic variants, *buzāq*, *busāq* and *buṣāq*, he remarks that it is possible to read the Koranic word *ṣirāt* as *zirāt*, *ṣirāt* and *sirāt*⁷. When speaking of the incorrect dialectal pronunciation of the word for ginger (*ziṅğabīl*), he remarks that the correct pronunciation will be the one used in the Koran, *zanğabīl* (76:16), which proves that he noticed the phenomenon in the vernacular when the vowel *a* transforms into *e*, with the subsequent transition of *e* into *i*, a constant feature of the Egyptian dialect, which results in the different

⁶ *Ibid.*, L. 55.

⁷ *Ibid.*, L. 37.

forms of transcription used by European scholars who give *elli* and *illi* for "which", or *keda* and *kida* for "so", etc.

Koran quotations were used by Yūsuf al-Mağribī to support the words and phrases that were common for the Egyptian dialect of his time. For instance, when commenting on the phrase *er-rayyis indakk* "the master is exhausted", he explains, "the master's perception has diminished", and quotes from the Koran: *fa-dukkatā dakkatan wāḥīdatan* (69:14) and also: *ḡa'alahu dakkan* (7:143). Here the compiler remarks that *indakk* is a dialectal form of the passive voice while the correct form should be *dukka*⁸.

When dealing with the expression *fulān ḡalaq mā 'aleyh* "one covered the thing that was upon him", "one did what was wanted of him (one was true to his duty)", "one did his duty", Yūsuf al-Mağribī gives his version of the phrase: *aḡlaqa abwāb at-ṭalab minhu* "he closed the gate upon what was wanted of him". He gives the verbal forms (I, II, IV) *ḡalaqa*, *ḡallaqa*, *aḡlaqa*, which all have the same meaning, then he quotes the Koran: *wa-ḡallaqati l-abwāba* (12:23) with form II, remarking that form IV would be more correct⁹. In other words, the author of the *Dictionary* points out that the Egyptian dialect generally has form II for the causative meaning while the literary language has form IV; in arguing that the dialect and the literary language are equal, he gives quotations from the Koran where form IV is also replaced by form II. At the same time it may be suggested that the argument contains a criticism of the Koranic language since it uses the same forms as the language of common people.

The total number of Koran quotations in Yūsuf al-Mağribī's *Dictionary* amounts to 86. The Koran quotations in the *Dictionary* are first and foremost the evidence of a democratic process taking place in the Arab society of the 16th and 17th centuries in terms of the attitude towards the native tongue and literature. The Egyptians' public opinion,

⁸ *Ibid.*, L. 58b.

⁹ *Ibid.*, L. 50b.

which was expressed by Yūsuf al-Mağribī, no longer accepted the idea that their spoken language – the Egyptian dialect – was a low, vulgar, distorted language that was not sufficiently good for composing works of literature. As an argument in favour of his native tongue, Yūsuf al-Mağribī writes poems which are similar to folk songs (*marwāl*) and contain the homonymous rhyme and words from the Koran. When quoting from the Koran, he points out the phonetically acceptable vernacular standards of pronunciation, also supporting the dialectal grammatical forms with Koran quotations.

Yūsuf al-Mağribī's work reveals and exposes the deeply rooted process in the Arab society of the late Middle-Ages, when the written word and the oral tradition in literature were getting closer to one another, when a tendency was gaining strength to overcome the rigid standards of the Classical Arabic language. The verses from the Koran were used as an argument to prove the regularity and lawfulness of this democratic process. The growing activity of the process resulted in similar works by other authors. Consequently, Yūsuf al-Mağribī's *Dictionary* cannot be considered to be a unique sample of the kind, as it was previously believed by some scholars studying the dictionary¹⁰: namely in the 14th century, a famous poet Ṣafī ad-Dīn al-Ḥillī compiled a *Dictionary of Mistakes* (*al-Ağlātī*), in the 16th century a Syrian author Aḥmad at-Tībī wrote *A Complete Explanation of Things Found in the Language of Common People* (*al-Idāḥ at-tāmm li-bayān mā yaqa'u fī alsinat al-ʿawāmm*). Until recently, all these works were available in manuscript only.

It may be concluded that during the period of clerical predominance the verses from the Koran were used by progressive authors as a means to struggle against stagnation in the society of the time. At the same time, the use of Koran quotations was an evidence of living historical traditions and of the unity of the vernacular and the literary forms, with the differences between them unessential and of external character. The dichotomy of literary language and dialect was a common concern for the Arab world beginning from the Middle-Ages, and Yūsuf al-Mağribī

¹⁰ *Ibid.*, pp. 10-12.

was among those who tried to find an adequate solution to the problem. His views remain actual nowadays, and they should be taken into account by those modern linguists and political leaders who support a different point of view, i.e., by those who believe in the existence of a great difference between the literary Arabic language and the Arabic dialects.

LAS NORMAS DIETÉTICAS A TRAVÉS DE LOS CALENDARIOS ANDALUSÍES*

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Los textos para el estudio de la dietética en al-Andalus, igual que para el resto de área musulmana medieval, son muy variados. Un primer y básico grupo, referido a la alimentación en general, lo constituyen las fuentes histórico-geográficas, fuentes estas relativas a la producción y abastecimiento y, por tanto, indicativas, aunque de forma muy generalizada, de los productos básicos alimentarios y su distribución geográfica. Aparte de este grupo, los documentos básicos para el estudio de la dietética andalusí los constituyen:

- textos literarios, especialmente los de carácter poético y los del género de *adab*,
- tratados culinarios,
- obras de *hisba*,
- tratados geopónicos y *kutub al-arwā'* o, mejor dicho, el género de tipo práctico de los mismos, los calendarios,
- tratados médicos,
- obras de carácter jurídico, algunas de las cuales incluyen datos relativos a la reglamentación de determinados alimentos y usos alimentarios.

Evidentemente, es distinta la información que nos proporcionan fuentes tan dispares; en contrapartida, esta riqueza de matices nos permite realizar un estudio más profundo del tema, pero, al mismo tiempo me ha obligado a seleccionar los grupos de fuentes a tratar en este trabajo, dada la lógica limitación temporal de las intervenciones. Por todo ello, me voy a detener sólo en el análisis de dos de los grupos citados de fuentes:

* Este texto contiene ligeras modificaciones – casi todas ellas de carácter bibliográfico – en relación con la comunicación presentada al Congreso, dado el período transcurrido desde la celebración del mismo.

los calendarios y los tratados médicos de carácter fundamentalmente dietético, incidiendo en el primero de ellos.

Es decir, en este trabajo intento profundizar en el origen e interrelación de las normas higiénicas contenidas en diversas fuentes calendáricas, a través del análisis detallado de las mismas, para finalmente contrastarlas con algunas obras médico-dietéticas¹.

1. *Los kutub al-anwā'*: clasificación

Los *kutub al-anwā'* han sido definidos "como el resultado de una síntesis en la que entra una aparente amalgama de datos lingüísticos, folklóricos, dietéticos y agrícolas, junto con indicaciones de fiestas cristianas, árabes y persas, todo ello regido por la marcha anual de los *anwā'*"².

Dentro de este amplio grupo de textos, según algunos autores, cabría distinguir dos subgéneros: teórico y práctico. Para otros, este 2º grupo, práctico, el de los *kutub al-azmina* o almanaques constituye un género distinto, aunque muy cercano, al de los *kutub al-anwā'*. También cabría hacer distinción entre aquellos en los que prevalece el estudio filológico de los *anwā'*, en lugar de fijarse en el terreno conceptual de los mismos.

En el 2º subgénero del que me voy a ocupar, el de tipo práctico, se incluyen, en el Oriente musulmán, el *Kitāb al-azmina* de Ibn Māsawayh (m. 243/857)³ y en Occidente, el *Calendario de Córdoba*⁴, los primeros

¹ El tema ya fue tratado, aunque desde otra perspectiva, por J. Samsó en su trabajo *La tradición clásica en los calendarios agrícolas hispanoárabes y norteafricanos*, presentado en el 2º Congreso Internacional de Estudios Sobre las Culturas del Mediterráneo Occidental (Barcelona, 29 septiembre - 4 octubre 1975), Barcelona 1978, pp. 177-186.

² R. Muñoz, "Los *Kutub al-anwā'*", *Actas del XII Congreso de la U.E.A.I.*, (Málaga, 1984), Madrid, 1986, p. 625.

³ G. Troupeau, "Le Livre des Temps de Jean Ibn Māsawayh", *Arabica*, XV (1968), 113-142.

⁴ *Le Calendrier de Cordoue de l'année 961*, publié par R. Dozy. Nouvelle édition accompagnée d'une traduction française par Ch. Pellat, Leiden, 1961.

hasta ahora conocidos dentro de este grupo. Este último, el *Calendario de Córdoba*, es un *Kitāb al-anwā'* - *Liber anoe*, como se indica en la versión latina -, pero también es un calendario. Según otra clasificación, representaría el prototipo de calendario erudito, científico e interconfesional, redactado para el uso de las personas cultas de al-Andalus. En el extremo opuesto, tanto temporal como temático estaría el *Calendario Anónimo Granadino*⁵, prototipo popular, dirigido solamente a la población musulmana.

Entre ambos eslabones andalusíes extremos existen unos jalones intermedios constituidos por los *Calendarios* de Ibn 'Āšim (m. 403/1013)⁶ y el de al-Umawī al-Qurṭubī (m. 602/1206)⁷, fuentes, junto con el *Calendario de Córdoba*, del marroquí Ibn al-Bannā' (s. XIII-XIV)⁸. El granadino muestra una cierta dependencia con el de Ibn al-Bannā' y, a su vez, relacionados con ambos, se encuentran dos calendarios tardíos, del s. XIX: uno tunecino, estudiado por J. Samsó⁹, y otro marroquí, traducido al francés por A. Joly¹⁰, lo que parece suponer una fuente común, posiblemente andalusí, para todos. Por último, hay otros dos

⁵ J. Vázquez Ruiz, "Un Calendario anónimo granadino del siglo XV", *RIEI*, IX-X (1961-1962), 23-64. Este calendario podría ser más tardío, tal vez del siglo XVI, en opinión de J. Samsó, "Un calendrier tunisien - d'origine andalouse? - du XVI siècle", *Cahiers de Tunisie*, XXVI (1978), 69-70.

⁶ Su obra ha sido publicada recientemente: Ibn 'Āšim, *Kitāb al-anwā' wa-l-azmina - al-qawī fi š-šuhūr*. (Tratado sobre los *anwā'* y los tiempos - capítulo sobre los meses.) Estudio, traducción y edición crítica por M. Forcada Nogués, Barcelona, 1993.

⁷ Sobre estos dos autores andalusíes, aparte de la introducción a la edición del texto del primero (pp. 34-46), puede consultarse R. Muñoz, "Los *Kutub al-anwā'*", especialmente las pp. 627-635; J. Samsó y J. Martínez Gázquez, "Algunas observaciones al Calendario de Córdoba", *Al-Qanṭara*, II (1981) p. 325, n. 24.

⁸ H. P. J. Renaud, *Le Calendrier d'Ibn al-Bannā' de Marrakech*, París 1948.

⁹ J. Samsó, "Un calendrier tunisien", pp. 67-84.

¹⁰ A. Joly, "Un calendrier agricole marocain", *Archives Marocaines*, III (1905), 301-319.

textos, publicados por Ch. Pellat¹¹, que guardan una estrecha dependencia con el calendario cordobés, indicativo de una fuente primaria para todos ellos.

Durante los últimos años se ha despertado un evidente interés hacia el estudio de los *kutub al-anwā'*. Por una parte, se han dado a conocer nuevos textos, alguno de los cuales se consideraban perdidos y, por otra, se ha iniciado el estudio de nuevos temas o elementos contenidos en ellos o se ha avanzado en el de otros sólo conocidos parcialmente¹².

En definitiva, aunque el objeto final de este trabajo lo constituyen las fuentes andalusíes – tomando como punto de partida el *Calendario de Córdoba* –, no por ello se han obviado las orientales y norteafricanas antes aludidas, dada la estrecha conexión entre todas ellas.

Aparte de estos calendarios, que constituyen una obra o género literario independiente dentro de los *kutub al-anwā'*, tenemos otros incluidos en algunos de los tratados agrícolas andalusíes, tales como el de Ibn Wāfid (s. XI)¹³, aṭ-Ṭiġnarī (s. XI-XII)¹⁴ e Ibn al-^cAwwām (s. XII-

¹¹ Ch. Pellat, *Cinq Calendriers Egyptiens*, El Cairo, 1986. Los dos calendarios – contenidos en esta obra – estrechamente ligados con el de Córdoba son el llamado por Pellat *Calendario Largo* (pp. 2-101) y el *Anónimo de París* (pp. 130-203).

¹² En los últimos años, después de la presentación de esta comunicación, se han publicado dos calendarios andalusíes: el ya citado de Ibn ^cĀṣim y la *Risāla fī awqāt as-sana* (*Un calendario anónimo andalusí*). Edición, traducción y notas de M^a A. Navarro, Granada, 1990. La posible fecha de redacción de este texto se sitúa a mediados del siglo XIII.

¹³ Millás Vallicrosa, "La traducción castellana del 'Tratado de Agricultura' de Ibn Wāfid", *Al-Andalus*, VIII (1943), 322-324. El texto árabe aparece en la primera parte del tratado agrícola atribuido a Ibn Ḥaġġāġ – aunque, en realidad, incluye también la obra del primero –, *al-Muqni' fī l-filāḥa* li-Aḥmad b. Muḥammad b. Ḥaġġāġ al-Iṣbīlī, ^cAmmān, 1402/1982. El tratado de Ibn Wāfid comprende las pp. 64-66 de dicha edición, traducida al castellano por J. M^a Carabaza, Aḥmad b. Muḥammad b. Ḥaġġāġ al-Iṣbīlī: *al-Muqni' fī l-filāḥa*, (ed. microfichas), 2 vols., Granada, 1988.

¹⁴ *Kitāb zuhrat al-bustān wa-nuzhat al-adhān* es el título del tratado de agricultura de este autor granadino (s. XI-XII), obra de la que estoy ultimando su edición. El calendario ocupa los folios 7r-16v del ms. n.º 4 de la Colección de Códices Arabes del Archivo Municipal de Córdoba.

XIII)¹⁵. Los de Ibn Wāfid e Ibn al-^cAwwām son, fundamentalmente, calendarios de tareas agrícolas, aunque en el del 2º hay ciertas referencias, muy limitadas, al sistema de los *anwā'*. En el de aṭ-Ṭignarī tampoco aparece el término *anwā'*, pero gira en torno suyo, igual que sucede en calendarios tardíos – Ibn al-Bannā', egipcio¹⁶ y tunecino. Pese al interés de estos calendarios agrícolas andalusíes, ninguno de ellos presenta recomendaciones de tipo dietético, por lo que no los he podido utilizar para este trabajo.

2. Fuentes médico-dietéticas

Dentro de las obras médico-dietéticas andalusíes he seguido, básicamente, el *Kitāb al-ağdiya* de Avenzoar¹⁷ y del *Kitāb al-wuṣūl* de Ibn al-Ḥaṭīb (m. 776/1374)¹⁸ para contrastar con ellas los elementos incluidos en los calendarios. El *Kitāb al-ağdiya*, obviamente, hay que inscribirlo dentro del amplio apartado que constituyen los tratados de higiene árabes, en la línea de los *Regimina sanitatis* medievales.

Por su parte, el *Kitāb al-wuṣūl*, a diferencia de la anterior, obra eminentemente práctica, auna la teoría con la praxis. Además, y en ello radica su importancia en cuanto atañe a nuestro trabajo, tiene determinados elementos de tipo calendárico que, si bien no permiten clasificarla dentro del género de los *kutub al-azmina*, está muy próxima a ellos. Su relación más estrecha vendría dada con los calendarios de régimen bizantinos, en los que resulta del todo evidente la influencia de la dieta hipocrá-

¹⁵ Ibn al-^cAwwām, *Kitāb al-ḥilāḥa*, ed. y trad. cast. J. A. Banqueri; estudio preliminar y notas por J. E. Hernández Bermejo y E. García Sánchez, 2 vols., Madrid, 1988 (ed. facs. de 1802). El calendario ocupa las pp. 428-457 del 2º volumen.

¹⁶ Este calendario ha sido estudiado por R. Muñoz, "Un Calendario Egipcio del siglo XVIII (1ª parte)", *Awrāq*, I (1978) 67-81; (2ª parte), *Awrāq*, II (1979), 100-122.

¹⁷ Abū Marwān ^cAbdalmalik b. Zuhr, *Kitāb al-ağdiya* (*Tratado de los alimentos*), edic., trad. e introduc., E. García Sánchez, *Fuentes Árabe-Hispanas*, 4, Madrid 1992.

¹⁸ Ibn al-Ḥaṭīb, *Kitāb al-wuṣūl li-ḥifz aṣ-ṣiḥḥa fī l-fuṣūl* o "Libro de Higiene", ed. y trad. cast. por M^a C. Vázquez de Benito, Salamanca, 1984.

tica sobre el régimen alimentario que propugnan¹⁹. Otro punto de interés del *Kitāb al-wuṣūl* es el criterio médico que sigue, expreso en el prólogo, a veces en clara oposición al de los “astrónomos y astrólogos”. Así lo manifiesta, por ejemplo, en la distribución o duración de las estaciones, en la que se rige por criterios climáticos, en lugar de hacerlo por los astronómicos de equinoccios y solsticios²⁰.

Ambas obras, aunque no representen una excesiva originalidad, pues el tema ha sido frecuentemente tratado por los médicos árabes de todas las épocas dentro del género de los *Regimina sanitatis*, adoptan un método sistemático y acabado, además de incluir determinados elementos específicos andalusíes, que nos pueden permitir un análisis comparativo con los mismos elementos recogidos en los calendarios, aunque con bastantes reservas. Los calendarios no tienen en cuenta una serie de elementos – como la complexión, edad, modo de vida del individuo, entre otros – presentes en toda obra médica, por lo que las indicaciones sólo pueden tener un carácter general u orientativo.

3. Normas dietéticas recogidas por los calendarios

3.1 Normas de carácter general

Todo tratado árabe de higiene o dietética, como rama de la medicina, se encuentra inmerso en la tradición grecohelenística. La *diata* griega tenía un significado mucho más amplio que nuestro actual concepto restringido de “dieta”. Era el régimen de vida, la manera según la cual el hombre, mediante su actividad, se hallaba en relación viva y constante con su mundo circundante. El fundamento de la dietética clásica residía en el uso adecuado de las *sex res non-naturales*. Así, todo tratado árabe de higiene comprende seis puntos, esas “seis cosas no naturales”: 1) luz y aire, 2) comidas y bebidas, 3) trabajo y reposo, 4) sueño y vigilia, 5) excreciones y secreciones, apartado que también engloba el baño y las relaciones sexuales, 6) disposiciones o estados de espíritu – alegría,

¹⁹ E. Jeanselme, “Les calendriers de régime à l’usage des byzantins et la tradition hypocratique”, *Mélanges offertes à M. Gustave Schlumberger*, París 1924, pp. 217-237.

²⁰ Ibn al-Ḥaṭīb, *Kitāb al-wuṣūl*, text. ár., pp. 20-21, trad., pp. 59 y 60.

enfado, tristeza -, todas ellas necesarias para la recta ordenación del hombre y que, además, llegaron a convertirse en la clave explicativa de una ambiciosa visión de la medicina como "norma de vida".

Sin embargo, no todos estos puntos, todas las *sex res non-naturales*, están recogidos. El punto 2º - alimentos y bebidas - y el 5º - evacuación y repleción, sangría, purgantes, relaciones sexuales y baño, estos dos últimos unidos o como variantes -, son los dos únicos siempre presentes y, también, los más extensos, ya que la conservación de la salud o higiene se basa en estos dos principios - digestión de los alimentos y evacuación de los elementos residuales -, siguiendo las normas galénicas²¹.

La *Risāla fī awqāt as-sana* es el calendario que recoge un mayor número de indicaciones dietéticas y, muy especialmente las relativas a los alimentos y bebidas²². Por el contrario, el *Kitāb al-anwā'* de Ibn 'Āšim, el otro texto calendárico andalusí publicado en los últimos años, sólo recoge información de carácter dietético en el mes de junio²³.

En cuanto a los restantes aspectos, sólo hay una referencia al punto 4º - sueño - en el *Calendario anónimo granadino* y en el marroquí, relativa a mayo: "cuando entra mayo hay que abstenerse de dormir mucho"²⁴; otra se encuentra en la *Risāla fī awqāt as-sana* en el que se afirma que en el mes de abril "aparece el sueño"²⁵, entendiéndose con ello

²¹ Las referencias que sobre estos dos puntos aparecen en los calendarios utilizados - el de Córdoba, la *Risāla fī awqāt as-sana*, el de Ibn Māsawayh, el *Calendario Largo*, el de Ibn al-Bannā', el *Anónimo granadino*, el *Anónimo de París*, el marroquí, el egipcio y, en menor proporción, el tunecino - se han sistematizado en una serie de cuadros para, de esta forma, reflejar más vivamente las discrepancias o concordancias entre las mismas.

²² Por ello, he creído interesante incorporarlas a este trabajo, aunque en un principio no lo hiciera, ya que dicha obra se publicó después de la celebración del Congreso.

²³ La cita es la siguiente: "Hay plena libertad para beber medicinas a principios de este mes [junio] y para practicar la flebotomía". Cf. Ibn 'Āšim, *Kitāb al-anwā'*, text. ár. p. 40, trad. p. 222.

²⁴ J. Vázquez Ruiz, "Un calendario anónimo granadino", text. ár. p. 33, trad. p. 44; A. Joly, "Un calendrier agricole marocain", p. 307.

²⁵ *Risāla fī awqāt as-sana*, text. ár. p. 81, trad. p. 192.

que a partir de este mes la gente suele dormir más o, al menos, se tiene más sueño.

Encontramos otra referencia sobre las prendas de vestir más adecuadas para el mes de octubre en dos calendarios, en el de Córdoba y en el de Ibn al-Bannā'. Según el *Calendario de Córdoba*: "En octubre las gentes dejan sus vestidos blancos por los de seda cruda, los de lana y de otros tejidos", recomendación que también aparece en el calendario de Ibn al-Bannā' y en el *Calendario anónimo de París*²⁶.

En este tema los textos médicos son algo más extensos, pues Ibn al-Ḥaṭīb recomienda que para el otoño "los tejidos serán equilibrados, como de lana trenzada con seda, de lino mezclado con algodón, de pelo de cabra y pellizas de petigrís y de corderillo"²⁷. Por su parte, Avenzoar dice que "las prendas de seda son útiles en invierno, primavera y otoño; también son adecuadas las de algodón aunque las mejores son las forradas con pieles de animales comestibles. En verano las mejores son las de lino, especialmente las que están ya usadas y las finas"²⁸.

En las fuentes calendáricas son más abundantes, casi generales, las referencias a perfumes y ungüentos a emplear. El *Calendario de Córdoba* también se ocupa de los lugares apropiados para vivir y de los movimientos o ejercicios a realizar, todo ello incluido dentro de las normas de carácter general que recoge al comienzo de cada mes. Estas mismas recomendaciones aparecen en la *Risāla fī awqāt as-sana*, y son copia exacta de las recogidas en el *Calendario de Córdoba*.

3.2 Régimen alimenticio

Cada una de las estaciones del año, siguiendo la teoría humoral, está dominada por uno de los cuatro elementos – agua, tierra, fuego y aire – que constituyen la Naturaleza, con el predominio en cada una de ellas

²⁶ Cf. *Le Calendrier de Cordoue*, pp. 146 y 147; H. P. J. Renaud, *Le Calendrier d'Ibn al-Bannā'*, pp. 52 y 53; Ch. Pellat, *Cinq Calendriers Egyptiens*, p. 136.

²⁷ Ibn al-Ḥaṭīb, *Kitāb al-wuṣūl*, text. ár. p. 99, trad. p. 201.

²⁸ Ibn Zuhr, *Kitāb al-aḡḍiyya*, text. ár. pp. 121 y 122, trad. p. 136.

de uno de los cuatro humores del cuerpo animal y las parejas de naturalezas opuestas – caliente/frío y húmedo/seco. Por esta norma, de base empírica, se podía constatar el retorno regular de los mismos estados mórbidos a las mismas estaciones y establecer con facilidad el régimen a seguir para prevenir o combatir las enfermedades estacionales.

En el *Calendario de Córdoba* igual que en la *Risāla fī awqāt as-sana*, nos encontramos con normas de carácter general, dadas por meses, y no por estaciones como en el texto hipocrático *Sobre la Dieta*, aunque tales normas se repiten en los meses que pertenecen a la misma estación. Sólo en el mes de junio la *Risāla* omite estas reglas de carácter general. Así, en el mes de octubre, que pertenece al otoño, y cuya naturaleza es la tierra, fría y seca y dominada por la atrabilis, “los mejores alimentos y bebidas para tomar, lo mejores movimientos a ejecutar, los lugares más adecuados para vivir son aquellos que humectan los cuerpos, los calientan gradualmente y disuelven, por medio de su calor los elementos superfluos o residuos”²⁹. Como vemos, sigue la norma terapéutica de los *contraria contrariis* o alopatía – los mejores alimentos y bebidas a consumir son aquellos que tienen propiedades opuestas a las de la estación reinante –, en lo que se asemeja al *Anónimo de París*, muy relacionado con el de Córdoba, y al de Ibn Māsawayh.

Ambos calendarios continúan: “Esta estación es perjudicial para todas las edades, todas las naturalezas y en todos los lugares. Le es menos desfavorable a las personas que tienen calor y humedad en su naturaleza y una complejión equilibrada”³⁰.

Si nos acercamos a las obras médicas, vemos que, en este último punto, los criterios difieren. Para Ibn al-Haṭīb, “el otoño es una estación equilibrada, por sí misma y por analogía”³¹. Por el contrario, “tiene

²⁹ *Le Calendrier de Cordoue*, pp. 146 y 147; *Risāla fī awqāt as-sana*, text. ár. p. 129, trad. p. 225.

³⁰ *Ibid.*

³¹ Ibn al-Haṭīb, *Kitāb al-wuṣūl*, text. ár. p. 98, trad. p. 54.

una complexión dispersa y con marcadas diferencias”, en opinión de Avenzoar³².

Las recomendaciones, en líneas generales, son casi todas iguales, pues si la naturaleza del invierno es el agua, húmeda y fría, y el humor reinante la flema, los alimentos que se recomiendan para prevenir las enfermedades propias de esta estación son los calientes y secos, a los que añaden los grasos y picantes, dadas las propiedades de tales alimentos. En resumen, de acuerdo con las reglas hipocráticas³³, para mantener el justo equilibrio de los humores, que las influencias climáticas tienden a romper, hay que seguir un régimen copioso y nutritivo en invierno, restrictivo y ligero en verano y de transición durante los períodos de primavera y otoño; es decir, astringente, seco y caliente en invierno y suave, frío y húmedo en verano.

Sólo en el mes de diciembre el *Calendario de Córdoba* explicita normas concretas, que no aparecen en ninguno de los textos latinos del mismo³⁴ y que he esquematizado, junto con las relativas a los meses de enero y abril, ya que estos son unos de los más significativos para ver la interrelación de los diversos calendarios.

Las referencias que sobre los puntos 2º y 5º aparecen en los calendarios analizados las he sistematizado en una serie de cuadros para, de esta forma, reflejar más vivamente las discrepancias o concordancias entre las mismas. En primer lugar, se recogen los cuadros relativos a alimentos – en los que se incluyen también las bebidas –, tanto recomendados como

³² Ibn Zuhr, *Kitāb al-aghḍiyya*, text. ár. p. 10, trad. p. 46.

³³ Las obras hipocráticas que más influencia han ejercido sobre los autores árabes en materia dietética han sido *Sobre la dieta* y *La dieta salubre*, ambas dirigidas a personas sanas. Para las citas del *Corpus* hipocrático he seguido la ed. y trad. inglesa por W. H. S. Jones, “Loeb Classical Library”, Londres, 1967. Estas dos obras ocupan las pp. 224-447 y 44-59, respectivamente.

³⁴ Estas normas higiénicas concretas, posiblemente añadidas por el copista, no aparecen tampoco en la traducción latina del XIII publicada por J. Martínez Gázquez y J. Samsó, “Una nueva traducción latina del calendario de Córdoba (siglo XIII)”, *Textos y estudios sobre astronomía española en el siglo XIII*, ed. por J. Vernet, Barcelona, 1981, pp. 9-78.

prohibidos, referidos a los meses de diciembre, enero y abril (ver cuadros 1-6).

¿Que podemos deducir de todo esto? Ya hemos visto como la primera, y casi fundamental propiedad, tanto de las drogas como de los alimentos, es la que relaciona su acción con uno de los 4 elementos - agua, fuego, aire, tierra - que, de esta forma, determinan el carácter de su complejión - húmeda, caliente, fría o seca. Por tanto, para aplicar un régimen alimentario correcto, una dieta compensatoria con la que poder evitar las enfermedades "estacionales", nivelando el predominio humoral del individuo por un lado y de la estación por otro, hay que conocer la complejión de dichos alimentos.

El principal elemento a analizar es si la complejión del alimento recomendado o prohibido es la correcta.

Las carnes recomendadas por el *Calendario de Córdoba* para el mes de diciembre no están totalmente de acuerdo con la estación invernal, ya que la carne de cordero es caliente, pero también muy húmeda, igual que la de los pichones³⁵. Sin embargo, la carne de oveja era la más consumida en al-Andalus, en opinión de Avenzoar, razón por la que se recomendaría su consumo, pese a no ser la más adecuada para la época invernal. Por el contrario, resulta del todo correcta la prohibición del consumo de carne de vacuno mayor, que es basta, atrabiliaria, fría y seca.

En el grupo de hortalizas y verduras, es cierto que la berenjena, es fría y seca, según Ibn al-Ḥaṭīb, y "todos los medicos están de acuerdo en que la berenjena no es un alimento muy recomendable", como confirma Avenzoar³⁶. En general, para los médicos andalusíes, las verduras y hortalizas son frías y húmedas y, por tanto, nocivas durante el invierno. El *Calendario bizantino* recomienda tomar sólo las verduras que sean secas y calientes³⁷.

³⁵ Sin embargo, la carne de oveja era la más consumida en al-Andalus, en opinión de Avenzoar, razón por la que se recomendaría su consumo, pese a no ser la más adecuada para la época invernal. Cf. Ibn Zuhr, *Kitāb al-aǧḍīya*, text. ár. p. 21, trad. p. 18.

³⁶ *Ibid.*, text. ár. p. 57, trad. p. 85.

³⁷ E. Jeanselme, "Les calendriers de régime", p. 224.

Ibn al-Ḥaṭīb coincide en algunos puntos con el *Calendario de Córdoba*: recomienda en invierno, entre las frutas y aperitivos, los higos secos, pasas, almendras, alféncigos y dulces elaborados a base de azúcar y miel, todos ellos calientes, secos y con alto poder calorífico o nutritivo. Así, “la comida será a base de carne de cuadrúpedos o de aves, aliñadas con condimentos y especias, pero sin exceso”³⁸.

Para Avenzoar, siguiendo las teorías imperantes, “en invierno se deben ingerir mayor cantidad de alimentos, ya que la digestión es más fuerte en esta estación y estos deben ser más calientes y secos según vaya aumentado el frío y la humedad”³⁹.

Por lo que respecta a las conexiones entre los restantes calendarios, en el mes de enero vemos, dentro del grupo de los alimentos recomendados, una total coincidencia entre el de Ibn Māsawayh y el *Calendario Largo*, y una gran semejanza entre el granadino y el marroquí; el *Anónimo de París* guarda una mayor relación con los dos primeros y la *Risāla fī awqāt as-sāna*.

En cuanto al régimen prohibido, hay menos uniformidad en las opiniones de las diversas obras analizadas.

En el mes de abril, tanto en el apartado de los alimentos aconsejados como en el de los prohibidos, no hay unanimidad, sino una coincidencia parcial entre varios grupos de calendarios.

De estos datos, podemos deducir que, en el régimen alimentario, las normas no son todas iguales y estandarizadas, no pueden considerarse como algo ficticio o estereotipado. Se puede decir que las diferencias responden a usos locales - empleo del cordero y pichones en el *Calendario de Córdoba*, por ejemplo - y también a gustos personales del autor.

3.3 Evacuación

Otro de los puntos más ampliamente recogidos en los calendarios, junto con el 2º, es el 5º, dada la importancia concedida a la evacuación

³⁸ Ibn al-Ḥaṭīb, *Kitāb al-wuṣūl*, text. ár. p. 99, trad. p. 201.

³⁹ Ibn Zuhr, *Kitāb al-aḡḍiyya*, text. ár. p. 9, trad. p. 45.

en la dietética medieval.

a) *Relaciones sexuales*

El apartado de las relaciones sexuales – una de las formas de expeler los humores, de acuerdo con las teorías clásicas – ha sido, junto con el de la flebotomía, el punto en el que más se ha señalado la repercusión directa de la dieta hipocrática, que aconseja las relaciones sexuales en invierno, las recomienda aunque en forma moderada, en primavera y llega a prohibirlas en verano⁴⁰ (ver *cuadro 7*).

Como vemos, en estas normas los calendarios sólo concuerdan unánimemente en prohibir las relaciones sexuales durante el verano – aunque no hay acuerdo entre si la prohibición hay que extenderla a los restantes meses –, ni tampoco con los tratados médicos.

Para Avenzoar, “el coito no produce daño alguno cuando las personas lo ansían y sus cuerpos están fuertes; sin embargo, produce un grave daño si se realiza después de una copiosa comida o cuando el organismo está debil”⁴¹. Ibn al-Ḥaṭīb sólo lo desaconseja en otoño “que es la estación menos adecuada para practicarlo; se efectuará únicamente cuando exista una gran vehemencia y necesidad”⁴², en lo que se aparta de los restantes autores.

b) *Flebotomía y purgantes*

Los períodos, según la tradición hipocrática, en los que se autorizan las purgas⁴³ se basan en criterios astronómicos: equinoccios y solsticios y momentos de la aparición de ciertas constelaciones⁴⁴. Las fuentes calendáricas siguen estas normas, tal como se puede apreciar en los cuadros

⁴⁰ Hipócrates, *Sobre la Dieta*, III, LXVIII, pp. 368-381.

⁴¹ Ibn Zuhr, *Kitāb al-aḡḍiya*, text. ár. p. 113, trad. p. 131.

⁴² Ibn al-Ḥaṭīb, *Kitāb al-wuṣūl*, text. ár. p. 98, trad. p. 200.

⁴³ Hipócrates, *Aforismos*, III, pp. 134-137.

⁴⁴ Esta influencia ha sido estudiada por J. Samsó, “La tradición clásica en los calendarios agrícolas”, especialmente pp. 183-186; también hace referencia a ella en otro de sus trabajos, antes citado: “Un calendrier tunisien”, p. 80.

siguientes, aunque no siempre y con la misma fidelidad (ver cuadros 8 y 9).

Los criterios médicos, como se ha podido ir comprobando, hay veces que no concuerdan, al menos de forma total, con los astronómicos. Como norma general, los primeros tienen más en cuenta, aparte de los factores estacionales, las condiciones físicas y psíquicas del individuo — edad, régimen de vida, estado general.

La primavera es “la mejor época para la práctica de la flebotomía, ya que es una estación equilibrada”⁴⁵. Por el contrario, la evacuación no resulta muy recomendable en verano, estación en la que no se debe efectuar, “salvo en aquellos casos que sea absolutamente necesaria”; tampoco es aconsejable en otoño pese a que algunos médicos lo recomienden, ya que la complejidad dispersa de esta estación debilita el organismo, según Avenzoar⁴⁶. En efecto, dado su equilibrio, la primavera es la estación más propicia para la administración de drogas y la práctica de la flebotomía en opinión de los médicos⁴⁷; en ella se puede sangrar siempre que se considere oportuno⁴⁸.

Conclusiones

La patente influencia de la dietética clásica en las normas recogidas en los calendarios occidentales no es de extrañar, dado que la dietética árabe, como el resto de la medicina, se encuentra inmersa en la tradición grecolatina.

También resulta evidente la referencia directa a determinados puntos de dos obras del *Corpus* hipocrático: *Sobre la dieta*, especialmente el capítulo 3º, y *La dieta salubre*, aparte de otras como *Sobre los aires, las aguas y los lugares* y los *Aforismos*.

⁴⁵ Ibn Zuhr, *Kitāb al-ağdiya*, text. ár. p. 114, trad. p. 131.

⁴⁶ *Ibid.*, text. ár. p. 10, trad. p. 46.

⁴⁷ Ibn Sīnā es uno de los muchos autores que concuerda con estas normas. Cf. *Urğū-za fī t-tibb*, ed. y trad. franc. H. Jahier y A. Noureddine, París, 1956, p. 24.

⁴⁸ Ibn al-Ḥaṭīb, *Kitāb al-wuṣūl*, text. ár. p. 95, trad. p. 194.

En los *Calendarios* no se tienen en cuenta las circunstancias individualizadas: compleción, temperamento, edad, actividad y otros factores necesarios para poder aplicar con rigor y eficacia estas indicaciones, lo que los apartan de los tratados médicos o "científicos" y, por tanto, de la teoría individualizada de Galeno. Ello hace suponer que las normas iban dirigidas a una población no demasiado culta, fundamentalmente campesina y de, aquí, su prolongación hasta épocas relativamente cercanas - s. XVIII y XIX en los calendarios marroquí, tunecino y egipcios -, dado el carácter más conservador de los ambientes rurales.

El desacuerdo de determinadas normas higiénicas con las "científicas" respondería a este carácter eminentemente popular de los calendarios, a unos criterios locales y geográficos, aparte de los gustos personales del autor. Tales prácticas se harían consuetudinarias entre las clases populares, aunque su origen fuera culto.

Las normas no son iguales en todos los calendarios, algo ficticio, artificial o estereotipado que no responda a la realidad del individuo o de la zona. Resulta evidente una interconexión en determinados puntos, si bien también es cierto que existen diferencias, en algunos casos sensibles. Por tanto, el origen de estas contradicciones no hay que atribuirlo a una transmisión defectuosa de los textos, sino a unas exigencias y realidades concretas extraídas de la vida cotidiana.

La remota fuente de todas las prescripciones higiénicas podría ser, como se ha señalado en algunos trabajos, la medicina astrológica o *iatromatemática* de la que ya hablaba Tolomeo. El eje central de esta medicina es la teoría de climaterios, donde hay una serie de contraindicaciones quirúrgicas y terapéuticas que dependen de las posiciones astrales. Sin embargo, pese a su enorme atractivo, es esta una hipótesis en la que aún hay que profundizar.

cuadro 1
ALIMENTOS RECOMENDADOS
Diciembre

	<i>Cal. Largo</i>	<i>Cal. de Córdoba</i>	<i>Ibn al-Banna'</i>	<i>Cal. An. Granadino</i>	<i>Cal. An. de París</i>	<i>Cal. Marroquí</i>	<i>Cal. Egipcio</i>	<i>Risala</i>
<i>Ibn Máawayh</i> alim. calientes alim. picantes	alim. calientes		alim. calientes alim. grasos pájaros gallinas		pájaros			nueces higos
		pichones corderos de 2 años nueces higos dátiles	almendras higos ajos puerros		mostaza frituras			
dulces agua en ayunas	agua caliente en ayunas						dulces	

cuadro 2
ALIMENTOS PROHIBIDOS
Diciembre

<i>Ibn Múawayh</i>	<i>Cal. Largo</i>	<i>Cal. de Córdoba</i>	<i>Ibn al-Banná</i>	<i>Cal. An. Granadino</i>	<i>Cal. An. de París</i>	<i>Cal. Marroquí</i>	<i>Cal. Egipcio</i>	<i>Risala</i>
carne de vacuno		carne de vacuno carne de cabra					carne de vacuno	carne de vacuno
berenjenas limones		coles			gallinas legumbres pescados grasas frituras alimentos fríos		gallinas	
agua después de dormir		agua después de dormir		agua después de dormir		agua después de dormir	agua después de dormir	alimentos fríos agua después de dormir coliflor

cuadro 3
ALIMENTOS RECOMENDADOS
Enero

Ibn Maswayh	Cal. Largo	Cal. de Córdoba	Ibn al-Banna'	Cal. An. Grenadino	Cal. An. de París	Cal. Marroquí	Cal. Egipcio	Risala
alimentos ácidos alimentos calientes	alimentos ácidos alimentos calientes				alimentos grasos			alimentos calientes
carne de cordero	carne de cordero		carne grasa	carne grasa	manteca ajos	carne grasa		
manteca ajos	manteca ajos			ajos, seguidos de agua caliente pesado		ajos, seguidos de agua caliente pesado	puerros	
miel dulces <i>tarid</i>	miel dulces <i>tarid</i>				miel dulces <i>tarid</i>			<i>mabid</i> de dátiles e higos sopa de cebolla
hervido de zanahoria	hervido de zanahoria							
hervido de puerros	hervido de puerros		vino con un poco de agua agua caliente en ayunas				agua caliente en ayunas	
	agua caliente en ayunas				agua caliente en ayunas			

cuadro 4
ALIMENTOS PROHIBIDOS
Enero

Ibn Misawayh	<i>Cal. Largo</i>	<i>Cal. de Córdoba</i>	Ibn al-Banna'	<i>Cal. An. Granadino</i>	<i>Cal. An. de París</i>	<i>Cal. Merroquí</i>	<i>Cal. Egipcio</i>	<i>Risala</i>
coliflor espinacas acelgas	carne de vacuno carne de cabra pescado							carne de vacuno carne de cabra pescado
	rábanos cebollas lentejas				legumbres frías	alimentos con muchas especias	legumbres	legumbres frías
				sesos leche coagulada		leche coagulada		agua fría en ayunas

cuadro 7
RELACIONES SEXUALES

Autor/tes	Enero	Febrero	Marzo	Abril	Mayo	Junio	Julio	Agosto	Sep.	Octubre	Nov.	Dic.
Ibn Māsawayh	reducirlas			moderadas		prohibidas	prohibidas	prohibidas			moderadas	recomen.
Calendario Largo	reducirlas		moderadas	moderadas	recomend.	prohibidas	prohibidas	prohibidas		reducir	moderadas	
Cal. de Córdoba											recomen.	recomen.
Ibn al-Banna'			recomendadas	recomendadas		prohibidas	prohibidas	prohibidas				
Cal. An. Granadino				recomendadas		prohibidas	prohibidas	prohibidas		reducir		
Cal. An. de París						prohibidas	prohibidas	prohibidas			recomen.	recomen.
Cal. Marroquí		prohib.		recomendadas		prohibidas	prohibidas	prohibidas		reducir		
Cal. Tunecino				recomendadas								
Cal. Egipcio		malas al despertar					prohibidas	prohibidas		reducir		
Risala	con las mujeres					Se excitan mujeres y animales hembra	no se recomiendan			prohib.	abandon.	recomen.

cuadro 9
 FLEBOTOMIA Y PURGANTES
 Prohibidos

	Enero	Julio	Agosto	Septiembre	Octubre	Diciembre
Ibn Māsarwāyḥ	purgante	purgante flebotomía		flebotomía		flebotomía
<i>Cat. de Córdoba</i>		purgante				
Ibn al-Banna'		purgante flebotomía	purgante flebotomía			
<i>Cat. Marroquí</i>		flebotomía			flebotomía	
<i>Cat. Egipcio</i>		purgante			flebotomía	
<i>Risala</i>		purgante según la teoría de Hipócrates, Baños				sangrías y medicamentos

APPLICATIONS OF FOLK ASTRONOMY AND MATHEMATICAL ASTRONOMY TO ASPECTS OF MUSLIM RITUAL

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1 *Introduction*

Modern accounts of Islamic astronomy, with their emphasis upon technical achievements, tend to ignore the simple, popular astronomy which flourished alongside mathematical astronomy in the Islamic world throughout the medieval period. This popular tradition was far more widely practised than mathematical astronomy but has not yet received the attention it deserves.

Some work has been done on the way folk astronomy was used to regulate the agricultural activities, in that several medieval almanacs have been studied. Arab navigational astronomy, which can be viewed as a branch of folk astronomy, is rather well documented in the modern literature; in this case, most of the available texts have been published and studied. But popular astronomy had other practical applications in the Islamic context, which have only recently been studied in a preliminary fashion for the first time.

None of the general surveys of Islamic science stresses the importance of the ways in which that science, either at the highest level or at the simplest, practical level, was applied to three aspects of daily life in the Muslim community, namely:

- (1) the regulation of the lunar calendar by the sightings of the lunar crescent;
- (2) the organization of the times of the five daily prayers which are defined in terms of astronomical phenomena; and
- (3) the determination of the *qibla* or direction of Mecca which Muslims must face in prayer.

These particularly Islamic aspects of Islamic astronomy were of no interest to the medieval Christian West and so the distinctive Islamic flavour of the Islamic astronomical tradition is no longer discernible in early European astronomy. On the other hand, they are the only aspects of Islamic science that have remained important in the Muslim world until the present time. Since most of the extant sources have been studied only in this century, and in some cases only in the past few years, it is not surprising that these Islamic aspects of Islamic science are usually omitted in surveys of Islamic science. In this paper I shall discuss the two main trends in Islamic astronomy and then point to the areas of interaction and overlap of interest between them.

2 *Folk Astronomy*

In the *Qur'ān* it is written not only that God created the stars but also that men should be guided by them. Thus a general knowledge of the celestial phenomena visible by day and night without the trappings of any theory or computus was considered valuable in medieval Islamic society. Islamic folk astronomy, as I label this corpus of information and associated techniques, is recorded in a variety of different works, some published but very few translated, and most existing only in manuscript form.

One genre of Arabic literature on this subject consists of general treatises compiled in each of the different regions of the Islamic commonwealth extending from Andalusia to Central Asia. These describe the sun and its passage through the twelve signs of the zodiac; the resulting seasons and the associated agricultural activities and meteorological phenomena; the moon and its phases and its passage through the 28 lunar mansions; and also prominent star groups and their risings and settings. Such is the work of the ninth-century scholar Ibn Qutayba. It is essentially a compendium of pre-Islamic Arabian starlore and contains many references to the *Qur'ān* and pre- and early-Islamic poets. The basic notions of folk astronomy are also recorded in encyclopaedias and in references scattered throughout treatises on lexicography. The second

genre consists of calendars or almanacs for the solar year, sometimes arranged for a given lunar year. Of the former variety is the celebrated tenth-century *Calendar of Cordova*, representative of a large class of such works often including local (in this case, Andalusian) scientific folklore.

Beyond this, the techniques of popular astronomy were applied to the three problems of Muslim daily life which were also so amply treated by the astronomers working in the strictly scientific tradition – see Section 3.2. Thus the third major genre consists of independent works dealing with these particular problems, as well as certain general treatises in which these problems are discussed in detail, and, last but not least, legal texts. In Islamic society, law is sacred law, based on the *Qur'ān* and the sayings and actions of the Prophet Muḥammad, as well as on the consensus of the religious scholars over the generations. As such it deals with each of the religious obligations such as prayer at the right times and in the right direction; thus in this corpus of literature we find discussions of the way to regulate the lunar calendar by sighting the crescent, the way to regulate the times of prayer using shadow lengths by day and the lunar mansions by night, and the way to find the *qibla* by means of the sun, the stars, and even the winds.

Before we consider each one of these applications in turn, we should mention the simple astronomical practices of the Arab navigators. Most of what we know about them is contained in the writings of two South Arabian professionals from the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries, Ibn Māğid and Sulaymān al-Mahrī. Their major works have been published from the few surviving manuscripts, and a valuable study of them has been prepared by G. R. Tibbetts.

The tradition is characterized by the same central rôle of the lunar mansions as in the popular tradition of the Muslim landlubbers. But there are other independent features, such as the 32-division windrose, and simple techniques for measuring latitude and departure (*qiyās* and *masāfa*), which are, however, sufficiently sophisticated that they include a correction (*bāšī*) to latitude determinations using the Pole Star to account for the altitudinal variation of that star from the true celestial pole. The magnetic compass was well known to the Arab navigators of

the Mediterranean in the early thirteenth century and is first mentioned in the known astronomical texts in a book on instruments by the late-thirteenth-century Yemeni Sultan al-Ašraf. The only "instrument" used by the Arab navigators besides the compass was the *kamāl*, a simple knotted rope for determining latitudes by means of the Pole Star.

Certain features of Islamic navigational astronomy were clearly adapted from Indian or Persian navigational practice. In addition to this simple astronomical lore they possessed an intimate knowledge of shorelines from the Red Sea to the East Indies, and of the seasonal weather conditions in these waters. The early navigators developed all that they required of this practical science and before the Ottoman period (beginning of the sixteenth century) borrowed nothing from the scientific tradition.

In the Mediterranean during the Ottoman period, new techniques were adopted from Western navigational works. These are evident in the navigational atlas of the sixteenth-century Tunisian scholar aṣ-Ṣafāqusī, as well as an Ottoman navigational manual discovered a few years ago in Cairo (MS Dār al-Kutub *mīqāt* 570), which contains extensive tables for navigation that remain to be analyzed.

2.1 *The Lunar Calendar*

For the purpose of regulating the lunar calendar, and in particular, the religious festivals, the actual sighting of the lunar crescent was of prime importance. But the *Qurʾān* also implies that if the moon is for some reason obscured, one should estimate the beginning of the month. So a scheme of twelve lunar months of alternate 29 and 30 days was considered acceptable, with occasional local variations to take into account the first visibility of the crescent, especially for the beginning and end of Ramaḍān, the holy month of fasting.

A preliminary study of a few texts relevant to the regulation of the calendar in practice was published by H. P. J. Renaud in 1945, and nothing of consequence has been written on the subject since. I am currently gathering materials to undertake a new investigation of popular techniques for regulating the calendar.

2.2 *The Times of Prayer*

In Islam, the times of the five daily prayers are astronomically determined. Since they depend on the apparent position of the sun, they vary throughout the year and are dependant on terrestrial latitude. The day begins at sunset (because the calendar is lunar and the months begin with the sighting of the lunar crescent), and the first prayer begins at sunset. The second prayer begins at nightfall. The third prayer begins at daybreak (to be distinguished from the zodiacal light) and must be completed by sunrise. The fourth prayer begins shortly after midday (the definitions vary). The fifth prayer begins when the shadow of any object has increased beyond its midday minimum by the length of the object, and ends either when the shadow has increased again by the length of the object, or at sunset.

These definitions in terms of shadow increases result from an attempt to regulate the midday and afternoon prayers in terms of seasonal hours, the relationship being provided by a simple Indian formula which became known to the Muslims in the eighth century, connecting the time of day with shadow increases. In some circles there was also a prayer at midmorning. The three daytime prayers in Islam correspond to the prayers at the third, sixth and ninth seasonal hours of daylight practised by Syrian Christians, and evidence is not lacking to show that the Islamic institution of prayer at specific times owes its inspiration, in part at least, to Christian practice.

In their discussions of the prayer-times, the Muslim scholars working in the popular tradition often presented Hellenistic or Egyptian/Coptic arithmetical shadow schemes, with values of the midday shadow for each day of the solar (Syrian or Coptic) year. These shadow lengths served to regulate the midday prayer. Values for the beginning of the afternoon prayer could be easily found by adding the length of the gnomon to these midday shadows. Also advocated were simple arithmetical schemes of Indian and Hellenistic origin for reckoning the time of day in seasonal hours from shadow lengths. Discussions of the phenomena associated with evening and morning twilight, including the zodiacal light, also feature in the texts. None of the known legal books

dealing with the subject of the prayer-times states that one should consult the tables prepared for this purpose by the astronomers – see Section 3.2.

2.3 *The Sacred Direction*

In Islam the direction of prayer is towards the sacred Ka'ba in Mecca. But the *qibla*, as this direction is called in Arabic, is more than just the direction of prayer. Various ritual acts, such as recitation of the *Qur'ān*, pronouncing the call to prayer, and slaughter of animals for food, as well as burial of the dead, are to be performed facing in the *qibla*. In addition, various bodily functions are to be performed in a direction perpendicular to the *qibla*. Thus the *qibla* is of prime importance in the daily life of the pious Muslim, and I refer to it as the "sacred direction", a term not yet widely used amongst Islamicists, including even those with an anthropological bent.

The scholars working in the popular tradition presented ways to find the *qibla*, using the risings and settings of the sun and certain prominent fixed stars over the local horizon. The reason for the use of astronomical horizon phenomena for the *qibla* is easily explained: the Ka'ba in Mecca is itself astronomically aligned, a fact which was already well-known to the Meccans in the seventh century. The rectangular base of the Ka'ba has its major axis aligned with the rising of Canopus and its minor axis roughly with summer sunrise and winter sunset (and precisely with the southernmost setting point of the moon at midwinter!). Each sides and corners of the Ka'ba were from an early date (probably before the advent of Islam in the seventh century) associated with different regions of the known world. When the first generation of Muslims built mosques in localities as far apart as Andalusia and Central Asia, they oriented them in the same direction as the particular walls of the Ka'ba which they wanted their mosques to face. Some early mosques were, of course, converted from earlier religious edifices or built on their foundations, but only when the orientation of these was deemed acceptable as a *qibla*.

These early *qibla* directions were respected over the centuries and generally preferred to the *qiblas* computed by the astronomers. Inevitably there were differences of opinion, and in each main region of the Islamic world there was a variety of *qibla* directions (usually spanning a quadrant of the local horizon), each one at some time favoured by one group or another. Muslim scholars from the ninth to the sixteenth century produced a variety of schemes of sacred geography, in which the world was divided into sectors around the Ka'ba. These are quite distinct from the Islamic tradition of mathematical geography and cartography. Such schemes represent visually the supreme significance of the Ka'ba in Islamic belief as a pointer to the presence of God. Each sector of the world was associated with a particular segment of the perimeter of the Ka'ba, and the *qibla* in each sector was defined in terms of an astronomical horizon phenomenon. The crudity of the geographical information incorporated into these schemes contributed to the variety of directions used for the *qibla* in each region of the Islamic world.

This situation is reflected in the apparent confusion prevailing in the orientation of medieval mosques, a phenomenon which has long bewildered historians of Islamic architecture but which can now be regarded as explained. Considerable light on this subject has been cast by various medieval treatises, recently investigated for the first time, which discuss the problems of mosque orientation in specific regions.

3 *Mathematical astronomy*

In its earliest stages, the mathematical astronomy practised by the Muslim scientists was based on the Greek, Sasanian and Indian astronomical traditions. This activity began with translation and exegesis, but already by the ninth century it had acquired the distinctive Islamic feature by which it was characterized throughout the medieval period, and indeed until the nineteenth century. The sources for our knowledge of this scientific tradition are texts and instruments. Most of the texts exist only in manuscript form, preserved in the major libraries of Europe and the Near East. Of the instruments, some survive in various museums

around the world, others are known only from descriptions of them in texts.

Muslim astronomers compiled books either on the theoretical or practical aspects of their science, or both. A series of observation programs was conducted from the ninth to the sixteenth century, but the greatest scientific achievements of the Muslim astronomers were in the development of geometric models to explain the apparent motions of the planets and of mathematical methods and tables for solving problems of planetary and spherical astronomy.

The interest of Muslim astronomers in Ptolemy's planetary models increased over the centuries, and these models were modified and improved by them. On the more practical side, the astronomical handbooks, known as *zīğes* and consisting of tables and explanatory text, were the main tool of the medieval astronomer. The *zīğes*, of which close to 200 were compiled in the millennium beginning in the eighth century, contained tables for calendar conversion; tables of solar, lunar and planetary mean motions and equations (corrections to find the true positions); tables of stellar coordinates; tables of trigonometric functions; tables of spherical astronomical functions; tables of geographical coordinates, and tables for astrological purposes. With these, the astronomer could compute planetary positions, generate ephemerides, predict eclipses and forecast the appearance of the lunar crescent at the beginning of a given month – see Section 3.1, solve problems of spherical astronomy – particularly timekeeping – by trigonometric method, calculate the *qibla* for different localities using trigonometric or geometric methods – see Section 3.3, and compute horoscopes. Muslim astronomers also compiled extensive tables for different latitudes for timekeeping by the sun and stars, including tables for regulating the times of prayer, though these are not usually contained in *zīğes* – see Section 3.2.

Muslim scientists inherited the instruments of their Greek predecessors, such as the meridian quadrant, the armillary sphere, the astrolabe and the sundial. They themselves developed the alt-azimuth quadrant, the torquetum, the universal astrolabe, the polar and equatorial sundials, and various kinds of quadrants.

In the later period of Islamic astronomy – that is, from the eleventh to the sixteenth century – regional schools developed with rather different interests and specializations. These regions included Andalusia and the Maghrib; Egypt and Syria; the Yemen; Iraq, Iran and Central Asia; and India. From the ninth to the fifteenth century, Muslim scholars were the leading scholars of their day, and they solved all of the major problems which concerned them to their entire satisfaction. Indeed, after the fifteenth century there were no new problems to be solved, and Muslim astronomers carried on their tasks in traditional ways until the nineteenth century. By this time the cultural level of the Western world had risen to such an extent relative to the Islamic world that it was left mainly to Western orientalists to recover the Islamic scientific heritage, an undertaking which began in earnest in the nineteenth century and which is still in progress.

To a considerable extent, Muslim astronomers were writing for themselves and for each other. Their discoveries and developments in this field were, with but few exceptions, not all widely disseminated outside their own circles. Already in the eighth and ninth centuries, the techniques of mathematical astronomy were applied to the practical problems of the calendar, the prayer-times and the *qibla*. Over the centuries the solutions to these problems were substantially improved, and these activities provided a distinctively Islamic flavour to Islamic astronomy.

3.1 *Lunar Crescent Visibility Theory*

Astronomers from the eighth century onwards discussed the prediction of the visibility of the lunar crescent. The first Muslim astronomers adopted an Indian condition for visibility, namely: if the time between sunset and moonset is greater than or equal to 12 equatorial degrees (or 48 minutes of time), then the crescent will be seen. In eighth-century Baghdad astronomers such as al-Fazārī and Ya'qūb b. Tāriq introduced a modification to this condition to take account of the lunar latitude. In the early ninth century al-Hwārizmī compiled a table displaying the minimum ecliptic elongation between the sun and moon to ensure vis-

ibility, with values for each 30° of solar longitude computed for the latitude of Baghdad.

In later centuries other Muslim astronomers devised more complicated conditions and more sophisticated tables for predicting visibility. Information about crescent visibility for each month was often contained in the ephemerides which were prepared annually in various urban centres. But the extent to which the computations of the astronomers were used in practice is not clear. Certainly it varied from one location to another and from one period to another, depending on the popularity of the astronomer with the authorities, political and religious. Today the astronomers are rarely consulted in the regulation of the religious festivals, a situation which accounts for the annual confusion in various parts of the Islamic world over the determination of the beginning of Ramadan.

3.2 *Astronomical Timekeeping*

Prescriptions for regulating the times of the five daily prayers by means of shadow lengths and twilight phenomena are recorded in the *hadīth* literature and earliest legal texts. In Damascus at the beginning of the eighth century the Caliph ʿUmar II used a Graeco-Roman sundial to regulate the daytime prayers, clearly by means of the seasonal hours. The definitions of the times of prayer which are in use to this day appear to date from the mid eighth century. As noted above (Section 2.2), the times of the daytime prayers are defined in terms of shadow increases (as opposed to shadow lengths), the definition being derived from a simple Indian formula for timekeeping (see Section 2.2).

In the early ninth century, an astronomer in Baghdad, probably al-*Hwārizmī*, compiled a table displaying the lengths of the shadows at the midday prayer and at the beginning and end of the afternoon prayer. Values were given for each 6° of solar longitude and were computed specifically for Baghdad. In later centuries other Muslim astronomers compiled more sophisticated tables for regulating all of the prayer-times, as well as for finding the time of day from solar altitudes and the time of night from the altitudes of certain prominent stars, each of these

tables being computed for a specific latitude. In several Islamic cities in the medieval period there existed corpuses of tables for timekeeping, often containing tens of thousands of entries. Such corpuses included tables for the duration of morning and evening twilight and occasionally even tables displaying the effect of refraction at the horizon.

Astronomers in some urban centres, such as Cairo, Damascus and Taiz (Yemen), and later, Istanbul, specialized in astronomical timekeeping (*‘ilm al-mīqāt*) and the use of such tables. These astronomers were usually associated with the principal mosques and were known – at least in Egypt, Syria, and Turkey – as *muwaqqits* (professional timekeepers). Such scholars also made substantial advances in astronomical instrumentation, particularly in the development of sundials, quadrants and calculating devices.

In the modern Islamic world, the times of prayer for each day of the year for specific localities are displayed in newspapers, pocket diaries and wall calendars. As we now know, these tables have a history spanning more than a millennium.

3.3 *The Mathematical Determination of the Qibla*

Already in the eighth and early ninth centuries, Muslim astronomers turned their attention to the determination of the *qibla* by mathematical means using the geographical coordinates of Mecca and the locality in question. The earliest methods were approximate, but by the mid-ninth century a complicated solution equivalent to the accurate formula had been derived. Most Islamic astronomical treatises include a chapter on the determination of the *qibla*, either by accurate or approximate methods, and either by trigonometry or by geometric construction. Many sets of geographical tables, which were a feature of Islamic *zīj*es, display the *qibla* of each locality alongside the latitude and longitude.

In the early ninth century, an astronomer in Baghdad, probably al-Hwārizmī, compiled a table displaying the *qibla* as an angle to the local meridian, for each degree of latitude and longitude difference from Mecca (up to 20° for each argument). The table was based on an approximate formula. Several later Muslim astronomers compiled *qibla*-

tables, and in the mid-fourteenth century the Damascus astronomer al-Halīlī compiled a *qibla*-table based on an accurate formula; this table is without doubt one of the most sophisticated trigonometric tables computed in the Middle Ages.

There is little evidence to show that the astronomers were consulted on the matter of the *qibla*. Only a minority of medieval mosques are oriented in directions which correspond to those advocated by the astronomers. The prize examples are the mosques in the city of Tripoli (Ṭarābulus aš-Šām), founded by the Mamlūks in the fifteenth century. The religious architecture in this new city is oriented in a variety of different directions; none of these corresponds to the mathematically-determined *qibla* for Tripoli, which would have been known to any contemporary Syrian astronomer.

In the modern Islamic world mosques are usually oriented in directions computed by the local Survey Department and approved by the religious authorities. Calculation is deemed acceptable in this instance as in the case of tables for the times of prayer; only in the regulation of the calendar is it not trusted.

4 *Interaction between the Traditions*

Writers on popular astronomy and its applications are usually silent on the mathematical tradition. The “sciences of the ancients”, especially astrology and its handmaiden mathematical astronomy, were anathema to the majority of pious Muslims. There is nothing in the *Qur’ān* to necessitate the pursuit of mathematical astronomy, and the Prophet Muḥammad himself had spoken out against astrology as an obvious contradiction of God’s supreme power in the Universe. Thus, for example, legal scholars writing on the prayer-times never, to my knowledge, advocate the use of tables, or astrolabes or quadrants, or sundials, the standard tool of the *muwaqqits* who worked in the same establishments as the legal scholars in such cities as Cairo and Damascus.

In general, the Muslim astronomers had little interest in the popular tradition, although from the ninth century onwards it was well docu-

mented and readily available to them. Several Muslim astronomers deal with such topics as the lunar mansions, though without reference to ways of using them to regulate time of night. But they never even mention the astronomy of the navigators. No texts of navigational lore are known to have been compiled in the formative period of Islamic science before the eleventh century, and even the later texts do not seem to have circulated amongst the astronomers.

When Ibn Māğid presents to his reader a list of the treatises on astronomy and geography known to him, the works mentioned are mainly *ziğes* (Ptolemy's *Almagest*, and several others down to the fifteenth-century *Ziğ* of Ulug Beg of Samarqand) and geographical works, in addition to aṣ-Ṣūfī's treatise on the fixed stars and a compendium on astronomical instruments by the thirteenth-century Cairo astronomer al-Marrākuṣī. The only treatise on popular astronomy which he mentions is the no-longer-extant work by the ninth-century scholar Abū Ḥanīfa ad-Dīnawarī, which appears to have been an important source for Ibn Qutayba. Yet Ibn Māğid gives no indication in his writings of actually having used any of these works (with the possible exception of Abū Ḥanīfa's treatise).

The reader will have gained the impression that the two astronomical traditions were distinct and virtually independent, and this was indeed the case. A notable exception was in the astronomical activities of various scholars working in the Yemen, which was an active centre of astronomy from the tenth to the seventeenth century. There we find several authors compiling works on both mathematical astronomy and folk astronomy, and occasionally combining them. A particularly interesting example is the late-thirteenth-century Adeni scholar al-Fārisī, who compiled not only an extensive *ziğ* with tables computed specifically for the Yemen but also a treatise on popular astronomy. Yet neither al-Fārisī nor any of the other Yemeni astronomers mentioned navigational astronomy. Likewise, neither Ibn Māğid nor Sulaymān al-Mahrī, hailing from Oman and the Ḥadramawt, respectively, mentions any member of the Yemeni school of their works.

There were, however, some isolated cases of interaction in other parts of the Islamic world, of which the following are examples:

(1) The celebrated tenth-century astronomer of Shirāz, aṣ-Ṣūfī, compiled a book on the fixed stars and constellations. Although this work followed the Ptolemaic tradition of star catalogue and uranography, it also included a substantial amount of Arabian folklore on the stars. aṣ-Ṣūfī's book was widely disseminated in the Islamic Near East.

(2) In a twelfth(?) -century Egyptian (?) treatise on popular astronomy (MS Princeton Yahuda 4657 (4983), fols. 105v-106r), an anonymous author presents an orthogonal latitude-longitude grid with Mecca and various Islamic cities marked in the appropriate places. The grid is surrounded by a circle on which astronomical risings and settings are indicated. To find the *qibla* one should draw a line from one's own locality to Mecca on the grid, and see where that line produced cuts the circle to determine the appropriate astronomical direction for the *qibla*. Clearly the author realized that the *qibla* is a function of geographical coordinates, but he also wished to avoid any involvement in calculating it.

(3) In a thirteenth(?) -century Egyptian manual for muezzins and unsophisticated *muwaqqits* (MS Oxford Bodleian Or. 133,2), the anonymous author presents tables displaying the lunar mansions rising, culminating and setting at various times during the night. The compilation of tables was in general practised only by real astronomers. These Egyptian tables have their counterparts in contemporary Yemeni works.

(4) The fourteenth-century Damascene astronomer Ibn aṣ-Ṣāṭir made impressive contributions to the development of non-Ptolemaic planetary models, and was a master of spherical astronomy. Yet in a minor work on the times of prayer (MS Leiden Universiteitsbibliotheek 1111, fols. 108r-113r), he advocated the use of a simple approximate Indian formula for timekeeping. In his *zīg*, he proposed a series of only slightly accurate trigonometric procedures, and it is curious that a distinguished astronomer should have even considered mentioning such an approximate formula.

(5) In his major navigational manual, Ibn Māğid complains that the early-fifteenth-century Egyptian scholar Pseudo-Ibn al-Wardī, author of

a treatise on cosmography, had presented a scheme of sacred geography in which the sector for Sind and India was near to the sector for Ethiopia. Indeed, in Ibn al-Wardī's scheme of twelve sectors of the world around the Ka'ba – and in the earlier schemes on which it is based – only the sector for the Yemen separates these two. As Ibn Māğid remarked, Ibn al-Wardī had left out most of Arabia and the surrounding seas. In contrast, I know of no astronomers who even mentioned these schemes of sacred geography, let alone criticized them.

(6) In the navigational atlas of the sixteenth-century Tunisian scholar Aḥmad aṣ-Šarafī aṣ-Šafāqūsī (preserved in MSS Paris B.N. ar. 2273 and Oxford Bodleian Marsh 294), there is a scheme of sacred geography in which the world is divided into 40 sectors about the Ka'ba. This scheme is superimposed on a 32-division windrose, which, like aṣ-Šafāqūsī's maps of the coastline of the Iberian peninsula, appears to have been inspired by eastern navigational science.

(7) On the fly-leaf of a recension of the *Ziğ* of Ḥabaš, the leading astronomer of the ninth century, there is an unusual *qibla*-diagram (MS Berlin Ahlwardt 5750, fol. 169v). A semi-circle represents one-half of the world about the Ka'ba, divided into 18 sectors. Full circular schemes with 36 and 72 sectors were fairly common in Ottoman texts and on Ottoman instruments, but some of them reflect rather poorly the distribution of the various localities about the Ka'ba, even by the standards of medieval geography. However, in this half-diagram actual *qibla* values to the nearest degree have also been inserted, these highlighting the inconsistency of the distribution of the localities around the Ka'ba.

(8) Finally, we should include the astronomical tables for navigation found in the Ottoman navigational manual mentioned above. These represent the application of techniques of mathematical astronomy to navigation, but they must be studied before we can assess their significance.

5 Conclusion

The procedures of Arab navigation by the stars represent simple applications of popular astronomy to the problems of navigation, and for

many centuries these also were considered adequate for all practical purposes. In this paper I have shown that folk astronomy was also applied to the three religious needs of the calendar, prayer-times and *qibla*, to produce simple practical solutions. One reason why the astronomers were not generally consulted on these matters was that these simple solutions were considered adequate for practical purposes. Also, the solutions proposed by the astronomers were not comprehensible to the vast majority of the population, including the scholars of the sacred law. When the eleventh-century legal scholar al-Ḥaṭīb al-Baġdādī listed those aspects of science which were acceptable, he mentioned those aspects of popular astronomy which we have discussed above and none of the other concerns of the astronomers:

“The science of star nomenclature, the appearances of the stars, their risings and settings, their courses, finding one’s way by them, the wanderings of the Bedouin from their watercourses and wells according to the times (of the stars), the selection of time for their young cattle, the fertilization by their male animals, the knowledge of the rain according to the changing stars, their method of telling the good from the bad, the determination of the direction of the *qibla* by the stars, the knowledge of the time of prayer and the hour of the night by the appearances and settings of the stars.”

On the other hand, in his book on mathematical geography the celebrated eleventh-century scientist al-Bīrūnī complained about people who apparently understood the notions of terrestrial longitude and latitude but who could not determine the *qibla* properly:

“They become perplexed and they start talking about completely irrelevant phenomena such as the directions from which the winds blow and the risings (and settings) of the lunar mansions.”

In his book on timekeeping he again spoke out against such popular practices, this time targeting certain muezzins who “get goosepimples at the mere sight of computation or scientific instruments”. Elsewhere he suggested that prospective muezzins should study Euclid and Ptolemy. He would have been impressed by the achievements of the later Damascus school of *muwaqqits*.

There is much more basic research to be conducted on the history of astronomy in the lands of Islam and its practical applications to aspects of daily life. This is true of both the popular and the scientific traditions. But the number of scholars working in all aspects of Islamic science is small indeed, and the number concerned with popular science even smaller*.

Bibliographical notes:

Part 1

A bio-bibliographical survey of the sources for early (to ca. 1050) Islamic astronomy, including both the mathematical and the folk traditions, is contained in Sezgin, *GAS*, vols. V, VI and VII. For the later period the reader must have recourse to Suter, *MMA*; Brockelmann, *GAL*; Matievskaya & Rosenfeld, *MAMS*; and *Cairo Survey*.

Part 2

Introductory: For information on Islamic folk astronomy see Nallino, *Scritti*, V, pp. 152-197, and also the articles "anwā" (= pre-Islamic divi-

* Note added in proof:

In 1989 there was discovered a world-map centred on Mecca, with a highly sophisticated cartographical grid that enabled the user to find the direction and distance to Mecca from any locality between Andalusia and China. The map is engraved on an astronomical instrument made in Isfahan ca. 1710, and it is clearly a copy of an earlier map of the same kind. The coordinates of the 150 localities marked on the map are taken from the mysterious *Kitāb al-Aṭwāl wa-l-urūd li-l-Furs*, a work of unknown authorship that was the source of geographical tables of Naṣīr ad-Dīn al-Ṭūsī (Marāḡa, ca. 1260) and Uluḡ Beg (Samarqand, ca. 1425). A second tradition of such maps is attested by the geographical tables of Ibn aṣ-Ṣāṭir (Damascus, ca. 1350), Saṅḡar al-Kamālī (Yazd, ca. 1310) and ʿAbdarrāḡmān al-Ḥāznī (Marw, ca. 1120), in which *qibla*-values are given alongside the longitudes and latitudes of 250 localities. The longitudes and latitudes, as well as the *qibla*-values, were read from a map based on the coordinates of al-Bīrūnī (Central Asia, ca. 1025). Since al-Bīrūnī authored at least a dozen treatises on mathematical geography, of which only two are extant, there can be little doubt that he prepared a world-map similar to the Isfahan world-map tradition, but using a different selection of localities and different geographical coordinates. This was used by al-Ḥāznī to prepare his geographical table, which was then copied by Saṅḡar al-Kamālī, Ibn aṣ-Ṣāṭir and others. The available manuscripts allow a reconstruction of this map, which is currently in progress in Frankfurt.

sions of the year), "manāzil" (= lunar mansions), and "matla'" (= rising points) in *EP*², and the articles "Ibn Qutayba" and "al-Ṣūfi" in *DSB*. On medieval almanacs see for example Pellat, *Calendar of Cordova* and *Calendars*. The major works on Islamic navigational astronomy are Ferland, *Instructions nautiques*, and Tibbetts, *Arab Navigation*. The most important Arabic texts have been published in Damascus by I. Khoury. *The lunar calendar*: For an overview of calendars in the Islamic world see A. Grohmann, *Arabische Chronologie* (Leiden, 1966). See also the article "zamān" (= time) in *EP*¹. On the regulation of the lunar calendar see the somewhat outdated article H. P. J. Renaud, "Sur les lunes du Ramadan", *Hespéris* 32 (1945), pp. 52-68.

The times of prayer: On the definitions of the times of prayer see the article "mīkāṭ" (= timekeeping and the regulation of the prayers) in *EP*², and also J. Frank and E. Wiedemann, "Die Gebetszeiten im Islam", (1929), repr. in Wiedemann, *Aufsätze*, II, pp. 757-788. On the origin of the definitions of the prayers see D. A. King, "On the Times of Prayer in Islam", to appear (see already King, *IAI*, XVIII, pp. 193-196). On the use of shadow schemes for timekeeping see D. A. King, "A Survey of Medieval Islamic Shadow Schemes for Simple Timereckoning", *Oriens* 32 (1990), pp. 191-249.

The sacred direction: On the religious obligations associated with the sacred direction and for an overview of the popular methods used to determine it, see the articles "ḳibla (= sacred direction) (legal aspects)" and "Makka (as centre of the world)" in *EP*². See also G. S. Hawkins and D. A. King, "On the Orientation of the Ka'ba", *JHA* 13 (1982) pp. 102-109, D. A. King, "Astronomical Alignments in Medieval Islamic Religious Architecture", *Annals of the New York Academy of Sciences* 385 (1982), pp. 303-312, and *id.*, "The Sacred Geography of Islam", to appear.

Part 3

Introductory: A brief overview of Islamic mathematical astronomy is in D. Pingree's article "ilm al-hay'a" (= astronomy) in *EP*². For further information on the mathematical tradition and on instrumentation see the numerous articles in Goldstein, *Studies*; Hartner, *Studies*; Kennedy *et al.*, *Studies*; Kennedy *Festschrift*; King, *IAI* and *IMA*; Wiedemann, *Aufsätze*

and *Schriften*, as well as various other publications in Spanish and Russian. The overview of Islamic mathematical techniques in Berggren, *Episodes*, takes into consideration some of the astronomical material discussed in this paper.

On early Islamic astronomy see D. Pingree, "The Greek Influence on Early Islamic Astronomy", *JAOS* 93 (1973), pp. 32-43, and "Indian Influence on Sasanian and Early Islamic Astronomy and Astrology", *Journal of Oriental Research* (Madras) 34-35 (1964-66/1973), pp. 118-126; and A. I. Sabra, "Greek Science in Islam", *History of Science* 25 (1987), pp. 223-243. The astronomical activity in the later Muslim East is surveyed in E. S. Kennedy, "The Exact Sciences in Iran under the Seljuqs and Mongols", and "The Exact Sciences in Timurid Iran". in *CHI*, V, pp. 659-679, and VI, pp. 568-580, as well as H. Winter, "Persian Science in Safavid Times", *ibid.*, pp. 581-609. On astronomy in medieval Egypt and Syria, the Yemen, and the Maghrib see King, *IMA*, III, IV, and VIII, pp. 5-9, respectively. For Muslim Spain see now Samsó, *Ciencias en Al-Andalus*, and *idem*, *IAMS*.

Lunar crescent visibility theory: For some examples of the earliest Muslim activity with lunar crescent visibility see Kennedy *et al.*, pp. 140-163, *Kennedy Festschrift*, pp. 185-225, and also F. Bruin, "The First Visibility of the Lunar Crescent", *Vistas in Astronomy* 21 (1977), pp. 331-358.

Astronomical timekeeping: The major Islamic text on timekeeping is al-Bīrūnī's *Shadows*: translation and commentary in Kennedy, *Shadows*. A survey of all known Islamic tables for timekeeping is in King, *SATMI*. On the corpuses of tables used in Cairo, Damascus and Jerusalem, and Istanbul, see already King, *IMA*, IX, X and XII, respectively. On universal solutions see my contributions to the *Aaboe Festschrift* (general) and *Winder Festschrift* (Mamluk).

The mathematical determination of the qibla: A brief survey of Islamic mathematical methods for finding the *qibla* is in the article "*qibla* (astronomical aspects)" in *EP*². For some individual methods and tables see Kennedy *et al.*, *Studies*, pp. 621-629; King, *IMA*, XIII; D. A. King, "The Earliest Mathematical Methods and Tables for Finding the Direction of Mecca", *ZGAIW* 3 (1986), pp. 82-149, and corrigenda *ibid.*, 4 (1987/88),

p. 270; and J. L. Berggren, "A Comparison of Four Analemmas for Determining the Azimuth of the Qibla", *JHAS* 4 (1980), pp. 69-80.

Modern treatment: For a modern approach to these three problems see M. Ilyas, *A Modern Guide to the Astronomical Calculations of Islamic Calendar, Times & Qibla*, Kuala Lumpur: Berita, 1984. Universal tables for the prayer-times and the *qibla* have been published in Cairo (n.d.) by H. Kamāl ad-Dīn.

Part 5

The quotations are adapted from Heinen, *Cosmology*, p. 25, *Ali*, p. 12, and Kennedy, *Shadows*, I, pp. 75-76.

Bibliographical abbreviations:

Ali = J. Ali, trans., *The Determination of the Coordinates of Cities: al-Bīrūnī's Taḥdīd [nihāyāt] al-amākin*. Beirut: American University of Beirut Press, 1966.

Berggren, *Episodes* = J. L. Berggren, *Episodes in the Mathematics of Medieval Islam*. New York: Springer, 1986.

al-Bīrūnī, Shadows = Abū r-Rayḥān al-Bīrūnī, *Idrād al-maqāl fi amr az-ẓilāl*, no. 2. in *Rasā'il al-Bīrūnī*. Hyderabad-Deccan: Osmania Oriental Publications, 1948.

al-Bīrūnī, Taḥdīd = Abū r-Rayḥān al-Bīrūnī, *Kitāb taḥdīd nihāyāt al-amākin*. Ed. P. Bulgakov, *Mağallat Ma'had al-Mahtūtāt al-ʿArabiyya* 8 (1962).

Brockelmann, *GAL* = C. Brockelmann, *Geschichte der arabischen Literatur*, 2 vols. 2nd ed. Leiden: E. J. Brill, 1943-49, and Supplementbände, 3 vols. Leiden: E. J. Brill, 1937-42.

Cairo Survey = D. A. King, *A Survey of the Scientific Manuscripts in the Egyptian National Library. (Publications of the American Research Center in Egypt)*. Winona Lake, Indiana: Eisenbrauns, 1987.

CHI = *The Cambridge History of Iran*.

DSB = *Dictionary of Scientific Biography*. New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 16 vols., 1970-80.

- ET*¹ = *Encyclopaedia of Islam*, 1st ed., 4 vols. Leiden: E. J. Brill, 1913-1934.
- ET*² = *Encyclopaedia of Islam*, 2nd ed., 7 vols. to date, Leiden: E. J. Brill, 1960 to present.
- Ferrand, *Instructions nautiques* = G. Ferrand, *Instructions nautiques et routiers arabes et portugais*, vol. III: *Introduction à l'astronomie nautique arabe* (Paris, 1928). Repr. Frankfurt: Institut für Geschichte der Arabisch-Islamischen Wissenschaften, 1986.
- Goldstein, *Studies* = B. R. Goldstein, *Theory and Observation in Ancient and Medieval Astronomy*. London: Variorum Reprints, 1985.
- Hartner, *Studies* = W. Hartner, *Oriens-Occidens. Ausgewählte Schriften zur Wissenschafts- und Kulturgeschichte*, and *Oriens-Occidens II*, (ed. by Y. Maeyama). Hildesheim: Georg Olms, 1968 and 1984.
- Heinen, *Cosmology* = A. Heinen, *Islamic Cosmology. A Study of as-Suyū-tī's al-Hay'a as-saniyya fī l-hay'a as-sunniyya*. Beirut: commissioned by Franz Steiner Verlag, Wiesbaden, 1982.
- JHA* = *Journal for the History of Astronomy*.
- JHAS* = *Journal for the History of Arabic Science*.
- Kennedy *et al.*, *Studies* = E. S. Kennedy, *Colleagues and Former Students, Studies in the Islamic Exact Sciences*. Beirut: American University of Beirut, 1983.
- Kennedy, *Shadows* = E. S. Kennedy, *The Exhaustive Treatise on Shadows by Abū r-Rayḥān Muḥammad b. Aḥmad al-Bīrūnī. Translation and Commentary*. 2 vols. Aleppo: Institute for the History of Arabic Science, 1976.
- Kennedy, *Tahdīd* = E. S. Kennedy, *A Commentary upon al-Bīrūnī's Kitāb tahdīd [nihāyāt] al-amākin*. Beirut: American University of Beirut Press, 1973.
- Kennedy Festschrift* = D. A. King and G. Saliba, eds., *From Deferent to Equant: Studies in the History of Science in the Ancient and Medieval Near East in Honor of E. S. Kennedy, Annals of the New York Academy of Sciences* 500 (1983).
- King, *IAI* = D. A. King, *Islamic Astronomical Instruments*. London: Variorum Reprints, 1987.

- King, *IMA* = D. A. King, *Islamic Mathematical Astronomy*. London: Variorum Reprints, 1986.
- King, *Muwaqqits* = D. A. King, "On the Role of the Muezzin and *Muwaqqit* in Medieval Islamic Society", to appear in Stephen Livesey and Jamil Ragep, eds., *Proceedings of the Conference "Science and Cultural Exchange in the Premodern World" in Honor of A. I. Sabra, University of Oklahoma, Norman, Oklahoma, Feb. 25-27, 1993*, Leiden: E. J. Brill, 1995.
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- Matvievskaya & Rosenfeld, *MAMS* = G. P. Matvievskaya and B. A. Rosenfeld, *Matematiki i Astronomi Musulmanskogo Srednevekovya i ikh Trudy (VIII-XVIII vv.)*. 3 vols. Moscow: Nauka, 1983.
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- Pellat, *Calendars* = Ch. Pellat, *Cinq calendriers Egyptiens*. Cairo: Institut Français d'Archéologie Orientale du Caire, 1986.
- Samsó, *Ciencias el Al-Andalus* = Julio Samsó, *Las ciencias de los antiguos en Al-Andalus*, Madrid: Mapfre, 1992.
- Samsó, *IAMS* = Julio Samsó, *Islamic Astronomy in Medieval Spain*, Aldershot: Variorum, 1994.
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- Suter, *MMA* = H. Suter, "Die Mathematiker und Astronomen der Araber und ihre Werke", *Abhandlungen zur Geschichte der mathematischen Wissenschaften*, 10 (1900), and "Nachträge und Berichtigungen", *ibid.*, 14 (1902), pp. 157-185, repr. Amsterdam: The Oriental Press, 1982, and again in *idem*, *Beiträge zu Geschichte der Mathematik*

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- Wiedemann, *Aufsätze*: E. Wiedemann, *Aufsätze zur arabischen Wissenschaftsgeschichte*. 2 vols. Hildesheim: Georg Olms, 1970 ed. (originally published in the *Sitzungsberichte der physikalisch-medizinischen Societät zu Erlangen*, 1902-1928).
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18:1 (Brussels, 1992), pp. 5-23. [The first surveys of Islamic instrumentation.]

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Daniel M. Varisco, *The Almanac of the Yemeni Sultan al-Asbraf*, Seattle, Wash.: University of Washington Press, 1994. [A valuable contribution to our knowledge of medieval folk astronomy.]

POPULAR NARRATIVES IN ĠALĀLODDIN RUMI'S *MASNAVI*

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When Joseph von Hammer-Purgstall in 1851 presented his "Bericht über den zu Kairo i.J. 1251 (1835) in sechs Foliobänden erschienenen türkischen Commentar des Mesnewi Dschelaleddin Rumi's"¹ to the Austrian Academy of Sciences at Vienna, the scientific occupation with matters of Persian literature was still in its very beginnings. Thus his report only in the introductory pages contains a presentation of the said commentary; in its major portion, it supplies a listing of the 668 read headings given in the commentary together with short outlines of the passages concerned and occasionally full translations of the relevant tales. By doing so, it constitutes the first and almost complete table of contents of the *Masnavi* and until the publication of Reynold A. Nicholson's magnificent translation² was frequently quoted by Western scholars not having command of the original author's native language.

Hammer-Purgstall's report represents the first substantial introduction to a general Western public of a work which nowadays is unanimously appraised as one of the world's most significant mystical poems. Some cautious first translations from the *Masnavi* had been published as early as 1811 by Valentin von Hussard in the Vienna magazine *Fund-*

¹ Published in: *Sitzungsberichte der philosophisch-historischen Classe der Kaiserlichen Akademie der Wissenschaften* 7. Wien 1851, 626-640, 641-656, 693-707, 728-743, 762-777, 785-805, 818-833; also published in *Zwei Abhandlungen zur Mystik und Magie des Islams von Josef Hammer-Purgstall*, edited by Annemarie Schimmel. Wien 1974, 21-119 (followed by a concordance to Nicholson's edition, 121-137).

² *The Mathnawī of Jalālu'ddīn Rūmī*. Edited from the oldest manuscripts available: with critical notes, translation, & commentary by Reynold A. Nicholson. Vols. 2, 4, 6. London 1926, 1930, 1934 (*E. J. W. Gibb Memorial Series*. New Series IV. 2, 4, 6); references are to the reprint London 1977.

*gruben des Orients*³, the "first scholarly orientalist journal in [the] German language"⁴. Hammer himself (whose name was extended to Hammer-Purgstall only in 1835)⁵ in his *Geschichte der schönen Redekünste Persiens*, published in Vienna in 1818, in addition to reprinting parts of von Hussard's translation, had duly acknowledged the talent of the world's greatest mystical poet by presenting an abundant selection of poems from Rumi's *Divān-e Šams-e Tabrizi*⁶. From these beginnings up to the present day, Rumi has remained a favourite object of study for orientalists in East and West alike, culminating in the recent books of Annemarie Schimmel's⁷. However, any occupation with Rumi's poetry has mostly concentrated on matters of style, language and poetical imagery⁸. Though Rumi's employment of specific narrative materials to illustrate his ideas had been noted from the beginning, a comparative discussion of the sources and later versions of these tales has not attracted major attention. Most authors dealing with Rumi content themselves with a general reference to the method of 'illustrating mystical ideas by way of tales' as being a common trait of Sufi literature⁹. Some

³ "Mesnevi. Des Chodscha Mevlana Dschelaleddin Mohammed Sohn Mohammeds geboren zu Balch gestorben zu Konia (Iconium)". In: *Fundgruben des Orients* 2 (1811) 162-164, 3 (1813) 339-347, 4 (1814) 89-92, 5 (1816) 99-101, 6 (1818) 188-213.

⁴ Schimmel, A.: *The Triumphal Sun: A Study of the Works of Jalāloddīn Rūmī*. London/The Hague 1980², 388.

⁵ Hoffmann, B.: "Hammer-Purgstall, Joseph Freiherr von". In: *Enzyklopädie des Märchens* 6 (1990) 427-430.

⁶ *Geschichte der schönen Redekünste Persiens, mit einer Blütenlese aus zweyhundert persischen Dichtern*. Wien 1818, 166-198.

⁷ Schimmel, A.: *Die Bildersprache Dschelaleddin Rumis*. Walldorf 1949; ead. (see fn. 4); ead.: *Rumi. Ich bin Wind und du bist Feuer. Leben und Werk des großen Mystikers*. Köln 1986⁵.

⁸ Cf. e.g. the publications by Zarrinkub, 'Abdolhosein: *Serr-e nei* 1-2. Teheran 1364/1975; id.: *Bahr dar kuze*. Teheran 1366/1987.

⁹ Comments of this kind can be found in the most varied sources such as Tholuck, F.A.G.: *Blüthensammlung aus der Morgenländischen Mystik*. Berlin 1825, 54; Christensen,

notable exceptions to this rule have to be mentioned: Hellmut Ritter in his *magnum opus* on Faridoddin 'Aṭṭār¹⁰, one of Rumi's predecessors, ever so often touches on parallels to 'Aṭṭār's tales in Rumi's *Maṣnavi* and above all supplies exhaustive enumerations of other versions in the Islamic literatures, including occasional references to Western literature of folkloristic relevance; it is very much to be regretted that in the field of folk narrative research even such distinguished scholars as Haim Schwarzbaum had not been aware of this eminent publication¹¹. Arthur John Arberry in 1961 and 1963 published two volumes of translations¹² comprising altogether 200 tales from the *Maṣnavi* rendered in prose versions; his comparative notes, however, seldom exceed those already given in Nicholson's commentary. Moreover, though he knew of and mentioned Badī'uzzamān Foruzānfar's extensive compilation on the sources of the *Maṣnavi*'s tales and parables published already in 1954 he apparently did not have the opportunity to quote from it. Foruzānfar's publication¹³, the result of almost 25 years of study, quotes parallels to 264 of Rumi's tales from earlier Arabic and Persian literature mostly giving the text of the quoted versions in full. Without coming up to Western scientific standard, it nevertheless constitutes a most valuable contribution on the sources inspiring Rumi's tales. Apart from these major studies and a limited number of negligible presentations¹⁴

A.: *Persische Märchen*. Düsseldorf/Köln 1958, 279; Schimmel, A.: *Mystical Dimensions of Islam*. Chapel Hill, N.C. 1975, 316.

¹⁰ *Das Meer der Seele*. Leiden 1955, 1978².

¹¹ It is not quoted in either one of Schwarzbaum's two major publications: *Studies in Jewish and World Folklore*. Berlin 1968; *The Mishlé Shu'alim (Fox Fables) of Rabbi Berechiah ha-Nekdan*. Kiron 1979.

¹² *Tales from the Masnavi*. London 1961; *More Tales from the Masnavi*. London 1963.

¹³ *Ma'āhez-e qeṣaṣ va taṃsīlāt-e Maṣnavi*. Teheran 1347/1958², 1370/1991⁴; cf. the review by H. Ritter in: *Oriens* 8 (1955) 356-358.

¹⁴ E.g. Ğaloliddin Rumi. *Hikoyahoi xalqii Masnavi*. Dušanbe 1963; Baširi, 'Ali Akbar: *Dāstānhā-ye «Masnavi»*. Širāz 1343/1964; Yousofi, Gh. H.: "Mawlavī as Storyteller". In: Chelkowski, P. J. (ed.): *The Scholar and the Saint. Studies in Commemoration of*

mostly dealing with the sources of single tales¹⁵, it seems that an early judgement given by Germany's poetical genius Johann Wolfgang von Goethe, characterizing Rumi's method and his way of handling the materials as simply "abstruse"¹⁶, still today is valid for the approach of the major part of studies towards the contents of the *Maşnavi*.

However, an application of the methodical inventory of comparative folk narrative research to the narrative materials contained in Rumi's *Maşnavi* leads to a different appreciation. In order to permit a poignant conclusion, the present study is restricted to the roughly ten percent out of the *Maşnavi*'s total of more than 300 tales corresponding with international narrative types and motifs as outlined by the indexes of Antti Aarne and Stith Thompson¹⁷. The selection given supplies the basic stock for a demonstration of the various origins Rumi drew his material from, as well as an evaluation of the *Maşnavi*'s mediating role in passing on traditional narratives in Iran and the neighbouring countries influenced by Persian literature.

A substantial amount of the tales under consideration are dealing with animal protagonists. These fables and animal tales can be traced to a twofold origin, namely Indian and Greek tradition. To begin with, I

Abū'l-Rayhan al-Bīrūnī and Jalāl al-Dīn al-Rūmī. New York 1975, 287-306; Baykal, Ö.: "Animal Tales in the Mathnawī of Mevlānā Jalālu'd-Dīn Rūmī". In: *Erdem* 1 (1985) 615-620.

¹⁵ Browne, E. G.: "A parallel to the story in the Mathnawī of Jalālu'd-Dīn Rūmī, of the Jewish king who persecuted the Christians". In: *Islamica* 2 (1926) 129-134; Monaqqeh: "Tafsir-e yek hekāyat az Maşnavi". In: *Bāhtār* 2 (1313-14/1934-35) 703-706; Hillelson, S.: "The source of a story in the Mathnawī". In: *Journal of the Royal Asiatic Society* (1937) 474-477; Mortazā, M.: "Taḥlil-e yeki az tamsilāt-e Maşnavi". In: *Naşriye-ye Dāneşcade-ye adabiyāt-e Tebriz* 10 (1337/1958) 133-164, 293-315; Kappler, C.: "Le dialogue d'Iblīs et de Mo'āwiye dans le daftar II du Maşnavi de Mowlavi, beys 2604-2792. Une alchimie du cœur". In: *Studia Islamica* 16 (1987) 45-99.

¹⁶ *Goethes Werke*. Weimar ed. vol. 7: *Noten und Abhandlungen zum besseren Verständnis des West-östlichen Divans*. Weimar 1888, 59.

¹⁷ Aarne, A. and Thompson, S.: *The Types of the Folktale. Second Revision*. Helsinki 1961, 1973³ (quoted as AaTh); Thompson, S.: *Motif-Index of Folk-Literature* 1-6. Copenhagen 1955-1958² (quoted as Mot.).

should like to discuss the fable of the tame bear who killed the fly on his master's head, quoted in the second book of the *Mašnavi* (2, 1932)¹⁸. The text given here is the one in the recently published vol. 2 of *Tamšil va mašal*¹⁹ the collection of 'proverbs and their stories', based on materials collected within the past 20 years, which was originally begun by the Persian folklorist Sayyed Abolqāsem Anḡavī Širāzi²⁰.

In the old times there was a peasant who owned a garden. He had become friends with a bear. One day he had retired worn out and exhausted to the side of an irrigation channel. He was sleeping in the shade of a tree in the garden and had charged his friend, namely the said bear who was always together with him, not to allow the flies disturb him, so that he might be able to sleep awhile and refresh. According to the man's order, the bear took place near his head and did not allow the flies and gnats sting him. After some time an obtrusive fly appeared which did not leave, however much the bear would drive it away with his paw. He tried to drive it away with a handkerchief or a piece of wood or some grass, but he did not succeed, and after a moment the fly came back and settled on the man's face. By this the bear got extremely annoyed; he finally grabbed the man's axe and smashed it firmly and with all his

¹⁸ Here and at following instances the references are to the first lines of the stories discussed only; the numbers quoted refer to book and verse respectively of Nicholson's edition; this is at present available in an Iranian reprint, edited by Našrollāh Puḡavādī. vol. 1-4 (4: indexes). Teheran 1363/1984. Due to limitations of space the references for the tales discussed or mentioned had to be restricted to items of specific relevance. For a more recent discussion see also Marzolph, U.: *Arabia ridens. Die humoristische Kurzprosa der frühen adab-Literatur im internationalen Traditionsgeflecht*. Vols. 1-2. Frankfurt am Main 1992, especially vol. 1, 98-101.

¹⁹ Vakiliyān, Aḡmad: *Tamšil va mašal* 2. Teheran 1366/1987, 113-114.

²⁰ Anḡavī Širāzi, Abolqāsem: *Tamšil va mašal* 1. Teheran 1352/1973, 2537/1978²; see also Marzolph, U.: "Seyyid Abolqāsem Anḡavī Širāzi (1921-1993) und das iranische Volkskundearchiv". In: *Fabula* 35 (1994) 118-124.

strength on the fly. The stroke of the axe of course went together with the splitting of the man's head and his death.

This version of the story was collected from the oral (?) of Šāhande Seifi-zāde, a 23-year old worker from Marand in the western Iranian Province of Āzarbāiğān-e šarqi, in 1351/1972. Although no clear identifications are given, it seems as if the printed version in modern Persian is but a translation of a version originally told in Azeri Turkish. Even if this question cannot be clarified, the text certifies to the popularity of the tale in modern Iranian popular tradition, where it is said to have given rise to the proverbial expression *dusti-ye hers* (or: *dusti-ye hāle-ye herse*; "the bear's friendship"), characterizing a fool's friendship as being well meant but doing evil service²¹.

The tale is classified in the international type-index as AaTh 163 A*: 'The Bear Chases away the Flies'. Quoting it as an example for tales in the *Maṣnavi* drawn from Indian sources, a first comment should concentrate on the earlier literary versions before returning to contemporary oral variants. It has been pointed out by previous research²² that tales extremely similar to the one quoted above already appear in ancient Indian literature such as the Buddhist *Makasa-Jātaka* (no. 44) and *Robiṇi-Jātaka* (no. 45). Even if these Indian versions cannot be dated exactly, in any case they are nearer in content to Rumi's tale than similar fables from Greek tradition, such as the one of the scaldhead and the fly, documented in Phedre's collection (5,3). The tale's popularity in subsequent centuries in the Near East most probably is not only due to its quotation by Rumi: Foruzānfar²³ has pointed out and rendered in full a lengthy adaptation of the tale figuring in *Farā'ed as-solūk*, a compilation finished in 610/1213, being considerably older than the *Maṣnavi*

²¹ Cf. Dehḥodā, 'Ali Akbar: *Aṃṣāl va hekam* 2. Teheran [1352/1973], 837-838; Borqā'i, Yahyā: *Kaveši dar aṃṣāl va hekam-e fārsi*. Teheran 1351/1972, 261-264.

²² Wesselski, A.: *Der Hodscha Nasreddin* 1. Weimar 1911, 272, no. 280; Schwarzbaum 1968 (see fn. 11) 362-363; Uther, H.-J.: "Fliege auf des Richters Nase". In: *Enzyklopädie des Märchens* 4 (1984) 1284-1290.

²³ Foruzānfar (see fn. 13) 62-65.

and probably constituting the intermediary that Rumi relied upon. Furthermore, the tale is rendered in the 15th century in Ḥosein Vā'ez Kāšēfi's *Anvār-e Soheili*; a version depending hereupon was orally transmitted to E. G. Browne while travelling in Iran at the beginning of the 20th century²⁴. Meanwhile, in the European tradition the adaptation in Jean de La Fontaines collection (8,10) made the tale a favourite subject of fabulists, resulting in such widely read versions as the German one created by Johannes Hagedorn in the early 18th century²⁵. Most likely La Fontaines collection and the versions deriving from it are to be credited with the popularity of the tale in contemporary Western oral tradition, where it is documented in Ukrainian, White Russian, Latvian, Estonian, Frisian, and German versions²⁶. Near Eastern versions other than the one mentioned have been collected in Urdu²⁷, Tāg'ik²⁸, and Turkish²⁹, the latter version originating from the province of Kars, directly neighbouring the Iranian territory of Āzerbāijān.

Additional tales of Indian origin figuring in the *Mašnavi* might be touched upon more rapidly, such as AaTh 92: 'The Lion Dives for His own Reflection' (1,900); AaTh 1317: 'The Blind Men and the Elephant' (3,1259)³⁰; AaTh 92 A: 'Hare as Ambassador of the Moon' (3,2738);

²⁴ Chauvin, V.: *Bibliographie des ouvrages arabes* 2. Liège & Leipzig 1897, 118, no. 99; Browne, E. G.: *A Year Amongst the Persians*. Cambridge 1927, 198-199.

²⁵ Hagedorn, J.: *Sämmtliche Poetische Werke* 2. Hamburg 1757 (reprint Berlin 1968), 36-38: 'Der Bär und der Liebhaber seines Gartens'.

²⁶ For these informations and some of the following I am very much indebted to the archives of the *Enzyklopädie des Märchens*, Göttingen.

²⁷ Kljagina-Kondrateva, M. I. and V. L. Kraseninnikov: *Indijskie skazki*. Moscow 1958, 73-74.

²⁸ *Svod tadžikskogo fol'klora* 1. ed. I. Levin, Dž. Rabiev and M. Javic. Moscow 1981, 161 (T 075).

²⁹ Eberhard, W. and P. N. Boratav: *Typen türkischer Volksmärchen*. Wiesbaden 1953, 53, no. 38.

³⁰ Cf. Uther, H.-J.: *Behinderte in populären Erzählungen*. Berlin & New York 1981, 79, fn. 96; Gramlich, R.: *Muḥammad al-Gazzālī's Lehre von den Stufen zur Gottesliebe*.

AaTh 246: 'The Fishermen and the Three Fishes of Different Intelligence' (4,2202); AaTh 150: 'The Three Teachings of the Bird' (4, 2245)³¹; AaTh 52: 'The Ass without a Heart' (5,2326)³²; AaTh 80 A*: 'Who Gets the Beehive' (6,2457). In most of these instances the collection of *Kalīla wa-Dimna* was the source inspiring Rumi's tales, the title even being quoted by him.

By no means all fables and animal tales in the *Maṣnavi* are derived from Indian sources. At least two fables can be proved to be taken from the Greek tradition linked with the name of Esope. As an example I shall quote a Tāġik version³³ of a tale rendered in the sixth book of the *Maṣnavi* (6,2632), listed as AaTh 278: 'Rat and Frog Tie Paws Together to Cross Marsh'. The Tāġik version has been collected in 1961 from Xomid Azizov in Ġalġut, a village east of Dušanbe.

One day a mouse and a frog became friends. After they had become friends, they went together to a sunny place and talked to each other. They said: "Now, after having become such friends, what shall we do?" The mouse said to the frog: "Friend, I shall go into the house of the old woman and fetch a string. We shall pull this string and attach it to our feet. Each time we shall want to see each other, we shall pull the string; coming together we shall talk to each other at this sunny place. After our conversation you will dive into your pond and I shall go into my hole.

Thus decided, they talked with each other for some days. One day, however, the mouse had come to the sunny place and was sunbathing when a hawk came down from the air, from the sky, grabbed the mouse and took it up into the sky. The frog was pulled after the mouse, out of the pond and into the sky. Afterwards the

Wiesbaden 1984, 31-32 (A 29).

³¹ Marzolph, U.: "Lehren: Die drei L. des Vogels". In: *Enzyklopädie des Märchens* 8, 2-3 (1995) (in print).

³² Barag, L. G.: "Eselherzfabel". In: *Enzyklopädie des Märchens* 4 (1984) 442-445.

³³ *Svod tadžikskogo fol'klora* (see fn. 28) 245 (T 280).

string broke, the frog got loose, fell onto the ground and said: "Cursed be the father of that one who gets friends with somebody of another kind!"

This tale is abundantly documented in medieval Latin fable collections as well as those of the 16th century onwards in the various Western national literatures, for which the recently published catalogue of German fables indicates more than 100 references³⁴. But there is a distinct difference between the Esopic fable and the version as given above, corresponding in content with the one quoted by Rumi. In the Esopic tradition, usually the mouse seeks the aid of the frog in order to cross a river. When tied together the frog perfidiously tries to drown the mouse. The mouse however struggles valiantly until finally an eagle carries both of them away and devours them. Thus, Rumi in this case has only picked up the general frame and altered the course of the story considerably. The individual traits introduced by him allow all the better to identify the close relation of the (four) existing Tāğik variants with Rumi's version, from which they are obviously derived. The oral versions again have altered the end of the story: Whereas in the *Mašnavi* the frog caught by the raven is compelled to admit that "this is the fit punishment for that one who, like persons devoid of honour, consorts with a rascal" (6,2949), both published Tāğik versions³⁵ let the string break and set him free, leaving the frog to ponder upon his wrong behaviour in safety. Two more Oriental versions of this tale have been collected: A Punjabi version clearly being derived from the *Mašnavi*³⁶; and an Indonesian version keeping in accordance with the Esopic tradition, most likely having been introduced to Indonesia by European tra-

³⁴ Dicke, G. and K. Grubmüller: *Die Fabeln des Mittelalters und der frühen Neuzeit*. München 1987, 185-191, no. 167.

³⁵ *Svod tadžikskogo fol'klora* (see fn. 28) 232 (T 229), 245 (T 280); further variants include T 110, T 330 (not published).

³⁶ Sheikh-Dilthey, H.: *Märchen aus dem Pandschab*. Düsseldorf & Köln 1976, 152, no. 46.

vellers or colonialists³⁷. Apart from one other fable apparently derived directly from Esopic tradition, AaTh 214*: 'The Ass Envy the Horse in Fine Trappings' (5,2361)³⁸, there is at least one instance of a Greek fable passed on to Rumi by way of intermediary instances in Arabic literature, such as the 10th century *Naṭr ad-durr*; the fable concerned is the internationally documented tale-type AaTh 51: 'The Lion's Share' quoted in the first book of the *Maṣnavi* (1,3013)³⁹.

Arabic literature, besides serving as an intermediary for tales of Indian or Greek origin, has contributed a substantial amount of Rumi's narrative repertoire in its own right. In contrast to the tales of Indian and Greek origin mostly being classified as fables, the tales derived from Arabic literature almost exclusively belong to jocular categories. The example quoted here is the source of a story in the second book of the *Maṣnavi* (2,3176), classified as AaTh 1242 B: 'Balancing the Mealsack'.

Once a hermit came passing, carrying on his neck a stick with two baskets fastened to its ends that almost smashed him [because of their weight], one of them containing wheat, the other dirt. Somebody said to him: What is that? He replied: I counterbalanced the wheat with this dirt because it made me bend over to one side. Somebody took the basket of dirt, turned it about and filled the wheat in two [equal] halves into the baskets, saying: Now carry it. He carried it and, when finding it light in weight, exclaimed: How clever you are!

This is the version given in the *ʿUyūn al-ahbār* ("Sources of stories") of the 9th century Arabic author Ibn Qutayba (d. 276/ 889)⁴⁰. There is another instance of this tale in Arabic literature prior to the *Maṣnavi* in al-Ḥuṣrī's (d. 413/1022) *Ġamʿ al-ġawāhir* ("Collecting of the Jewels"),

³⁷ Vries, J. de: *Volksverhalen uit Oost-Indie* 1. Zutphen 1925, 220, no. 48.

³⁸ Köhler, I.: "Esel und Pferd". In: *Enzyklopädie des Märchens* 4 (1984) 435-440.

³⁹ See Marzolph, U.: "Fabel, Dichtung. 7: Arabische Literatur". In: *Lexikon des Mittelalters* 4 (1987) 208; cf. Schwarzbaum 1979 (see fn. 11) 286-289, no. 52.

⁴⁰ Ibn Qutayba, ʿAbdallāh b. Muslim: *ʿUyūn al-ahbār* 2. Cairo 1963², 38.

almost identical in wording and clearly relying on the quoted version⁴¹. Rumi, by employing this tale as a “story illustrating the fertility of esoteric knowledge”⁴², altered its contents by changing the protagonist’s position. In the *Maṣnavi* a bedouin riding a camel with two saddlebags is advised by a philosopher. Before acting accordingly, the bedouin questions the philosopher on the value of his seemingly precious advice. When the philosopher admits not to own a single camel but running around naked and barefoot, the bedouin is quite content with his own foolishness, being on the other hand well provisioned. Oskar Mann in 1908/9 collected a Tāǧik-version in Fārs clearly depending on the *Maṣnavi* as shown by the fact that it also contains the expanded ending⁴³. In addition to these versions there exists a limited number of Western variants, resulting in the tale’s listing in the international type index; the versions quoted as references are a Wallonian text published in 1885⁴⁴ and two texts collected in the United States of America in the federal states of Arkansas and Missouri respectively⁴⁵. It might be regarded as futile searching for a direct connection between the medieval Oriental versions and the modern Western ones; however, the sheer existence of the Oriental versions testifies to an origin of the tale dating back to times probably suggested by one of the American editors, who supposed it to be “hoary with age”⁴⁶ at the turn of the 20th century.

⁴¹ al-Ḥuṣrī al-Qayrawānī, Ibrāhīm b. ‘Alī: *Ġam‘ al-ǧawāhir fī l-mulāḥ wan-nawādir*. ed. ‘A. M. al-Biḡawī. Cairo 1372/1953, 308.

⁴² Nicholson in the *Maṣnavi*-edition, vol. 7 (commentary) 350.

⁴³ Mann, O.: *Die Tāǧik-Mundarten der Provinz Fārs (Kurdisch-Persische Forschungen 1)*. Berlin 1909, 86-88. 43cf. Laport, G.: *Les Contes populaires wallons*. Helsinki 1932, 88.

⁴⁴ Cf. Laport, G.: *Les Contes populaires wallons*. Helsinki 1932, 88, no. *1205.

⁴⁵ Cf. Baughman, E. W.: *Type and Motif-Index of the Folktales of England and North America*. The Hague 1966, J 1874.2.

⁴⁶ Cf. Randolph, V.: *The Devil’s Pretty Daughter and Other Ozark Folk Tales*. New York 1955, 221.

Several other jocular tales in the *Masnavi* are taken from Arabic sources, such as Mot. X 121.1: 'The Squinteyed Son and the Bottle'⁴⁷ (1,327), Mot. J 2483: 'The House without Food and Drink' (2,3116)⁴⁸, Mot. J 2317: 'Well Man Made to Believe He Is Sick' (3,1522)⁴⁹, Mot. U 133.1: 'Tanner Prefers Smell of Dung to that of Perfume' (4,257)⁵⁰, AaTh 1373: 'The Weighed Cat' (5,3409)⁵¹, Mot. J 1193.2: 'The Value of a Blow' (6,1293).

By enumerating references to tales prior to Rumi's *Masnavi* as well as those posterior, it becomes obvious that Rumi's versions are just one link in a chain of tradition extending in time and space. In the cases discussed, Rumi modelled his tale after previously existing patterns inspired by Indian, Greek, Arabic or earlier Iranian tradition. On the other hand, he is to be regarded as the first documented instance of a number of tales which in later times have become part of the traditional stock of international folktale, such as Mot. J 1919.1: 'The Remodelled Stork' (2,323), AaTh 1716*, 1965: 'Nonsense Story' (3,2609)⁵², AaTh 951 A*, 951 C: 'The Disguised King Joins the Thieves' (6,2816)⁵³.

⁴⁷ Cf. Marzolph, U.: "Der Schieler und die Flasche. Zur Rezeption einer arabischen Anekdote in der persischen mystischen Literatur". In: *Oriens* 32 (1990) 124-138.

⁴⁸ Cf. Marzolph, U.: "Das Haus ohne Essen und Trinken. Arabische und persische Belege zu Mot. J 2483". In: *Fabula* 24 (1983) 215-222.

⁴⁹ Cf. Chauvin (see fn. 24) 6 (1902) 138, no. 291; Marzolph, U.: *Typologie des persischen Volksmärchens*. Beirut 1984, 198 (1332 [b]); Ibn Qutayba (see fn. 39) 2,41.

⁵⁰ Cf. Galmés de Fuentes, A.: "Un conte d'al-Ghazālī et le fabliau français Du vilain asnier". In: *Romance Philology* 39 (1985) 198-205; Tubach, F. C.: *Index Exemplorum*. Helsinki 1969, no. 3645; extensive discussion in Marzolph (see fn. 18) vol. 1, 173-180.

⁵¹ Marzolph, U.: "König und Räuber". In: *Enzyklopädie des Märchens* 8,1 (1994) 167-171.

⁵² Boratav, P. N.: "Gesellen: Die schadhafte G". In: *Enzyklopädie des Märchens* 5 (1987) 1147-1151.

⁵³ Cf. Marzolph, U.: "Katze: Die gewogene K.". In: *Enzyklopädie des Märchens* 7 (1993) 1113-1117.

For almost half of the tales under consideration, contemporary oral versions have been collected, either in Iran or in those neighbouring regions that were at some time in the course of their history or still are directly subjected to Iranian cultural influence. In addition to the ones quoted already one might mention Mot. J 551.5: 'The Bald-headed Parrot' (1,247)⁵⁴, AaTh 1698 I: 'Visiting the Sick' (1,3360), AaTh 1423: 'The Enchanted Pear Tree' (4,3544)⁵⁵, AaTh 1525 D: 'Theft by Distracting Attention' (6,467), AaTh 1626: Dream Bread (6,2376), AaTh 1645: 'The Treasure at Home' (6,4206)⁵⁶.

Thus the *Mašnavi* in several instances constitutes one of the invaluable 'missing links' which the comparative researcher in folk narrative is constantly looking for. Without overestimating the *Mašnavi*'s role, it might justly be stressed that it did have a considerable effect on the Oriental oral tradition in those countries that could appreciate its original language. Its everlasting popularity in Iran, documented by such instances as frequent quotations in modern schoolbooks⁵⁷, most certainly accounts for a vivification of the dynamics of the Iranian oral tradition without which many nowadays cherished popular tales would never have managed to gain a new life by rising beyond the bonds of written literature.

⁵⁴ Cf. Christensen, A.: *Contes persans en langue populaire*. København 1918, 63-64, no. 7.

⁵⁵ Bratcher, J.T.: "Birnbäum: Der verzauberte B". In: *Enzyklopädie des Märchens* 2 (1979) 417-421.

⁵⁶ Cf. Haarmann, U.: "Der Schatz im Haupte des Götzen". In: *Die islamische Welt zwischen Mittelalter und Neuzeit. Festschrift H. R. Roemer*. Beirut 1979, 198-229.

⁵⁷ Cf. e.g. *Ketāb-e Fārsi-ye dovvom-e dabestān*. Teheran 1343/1964, 136-137 (2,1932); *Fārsi. Čahārom-e dabestān*. Teheran 1353/1974, 159-161 (1,1547); cf. also Āzar-Yazdi, M.: *Qeṣṣehā-ye ḥub barāye baččehā-ye ḥub*. 4: *Qeṣṣehā-ye bar-gozide az Mašnavi-ye Moulavi*. Teheran 1343/1964, 1349/1970⁴.

DES INFLUENCES PREISLAMIQUES DANS UNE LEGENDE HAGIOGRAPHIQUE TURQUE

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Le grand turcologue russe Vladimir Alexandrovich Gordelevskij (Gordelevskii), (1876–1956) est connu par ses recherches sur le terrain particulièrement actives. Son immense érudition vient alors soutenir une curiosité orientée vers les problèmes peu ou pas étudiés, mais toujours importants. Une épisode de ses études sur le terrain fait l'objet de la présente communication.

Lors de son voyage en Anatolie en 1913, V. Gordelevskij s'efforça de collecter des renseignements sur les croyances et les coutumes de la secte des Kyzylbachs (Kızılbaş). Il parvint à surmonter la réserve de la plupart des Kyzylbachs et de leurs chefs spirituels, mais il tint compte également du contexte sunnite qui aurait considéré avec hostilité un intérêt trop prononcé dans cette direction. Le fruit de ce travail d'observation est l'article "Éléments de la vie religieuse des Kyzylbachs d'Asie mineure", publié en 1922 dans la revue "*Novii Vostok*"¹.

Dans cet article le nom "Kyzylbach" est caractérisé comme un "terme indéterminé", contenant "un ensemble ethnographique et religieux complexe"². Il renferme, sur la base de l'antiquité anatolienne, les couches culturelles iraniennes à l'est et chrétiennes à l'ouest. On constate également l'influence de ce deux civilisations sur l'aire géographique: une ligne nord – sud tracée entre la mer Noire et la mer Méditerranée coupe la partie péninsulaire de l'Asie mineure. A l'est dans les croyances

¹ "Iz religioznoi jizni kizilbachei Maloi Azii", *Novii Vostok*, Moskva, 1992, N° 1, pp. 259-278, réédité: Akademik V. A. Gordlevskii, *Izbrannie sotchineniya*, Tom I, Moskva, 1960, pp. 255-275.

² *Ibid.*, p. 258.

des Kyzylbachs prédomine l'aspect irano-chiite, à l'ouest on sent l'impact du christianisme anatolien.

On voit l'influence de ces deux domaines culturels sur le folklore dans une légende sur Hadji Bektach. V. Gordelevskij l'a notée à Sivas, et son action se déroule précisément dans cette vaste zone d'osmose et d'interférence culturelle. Le savant russe souligne que la légende a été recueillie lors de son étude des croyances des Kyzylbachs, parmi lesquels les traditions concernant Hadji Bektach sont fort nombreuses. Elle a été publiée en 1916 dans la revue "Etnografitcheskoe obozrenie" sous titre "Traditions et légendes ottomanes, 3-eme partie"³.

En voici le contenu:

"*La distribution des terres (baguette de mûrier)*. Le grand-père de Hadji Bektach, Ahmed Yaçevi, répartissait les terres entre les derviches. Il déversa devant eux trois mesures d'un quart de millet.

- Voila, dit-il, celui qui parviendra à faire la prière à trois prosternations sur ce tas de millet, je lui donnerai le pays de Roum (Asie mineure). Les derviches essayèrent comme il pûrent, mais en vain - le tas s'effondrait. Hadji Bektach s'approcha et doucement, comme s'il était suspendu en air, exécuta la prière sur le tas. Alors Ahmed Yaçevi jeta en direction de l'Asie mineure une baguette de mûrier et dit:

- Là, où tombera la baguette, construis un tekke.

Hadji Bektach se transforma en pigeon et s'envola. A Souloudja, près de Kirchehir vivaient quatre-vingt mille popes grecs. Parmi eux il y avait une femme. Un jour, l'inspiration la saisit.

- Un homme s'est élevé au dessus de vous, dit-elle. Mais les popes se mirent à rire et lui dirent:

- On voit que tu as encore envie d'un homme.

L'origine de l'appellation.

Tout d'un coup, il virent un pigeon survoler le monastère. Un des popes se transforma en faucon et voulut attaquer le pigeon; mais le pi-

³ V. A. Gordlevskii, "Osmanskieskazaniya i legendi (Seriya tretiya)", *Etnografitcheskoe obozrenie*, Moskva, 1916, livre CX, N° 3-4, pp. 1-41. Réédité: Akademik V. A. Gordlevskii, *Izbrannie sotchineniya*, Tom I. pp. 383-402 (386-387).

geon se jeta sur le faucon et lui creva les yeux, si bien que le sang coula. De ce jour les descendants de se pope furent appelés les yeux rouges. Mais les popes ne croyaient toujours pas et continuaient à rire. Tout d'un coup, les peaux de mouton sur lesquelles ils priaient disparurent.

Alors les popes s'approchèrent de Hadji Bektach en pleurant et le supplièrent de leur pardonner. Magnanime, Hadji Bektach les nomma surveillants des tekkes de tous les coins du monde."

Ici le fil du récit s'interrompt et suit une présentation où l'on perçoit la narration de V. Gordelevskij lui-même:

"Immaculée Conception.

Hadji Bektach s'installe en Asie mineure. Ses monastères deviennent de plus en plus florissants. En conséquence de quoi, des querelles surgissent entre les Bektachis concernant les terre wakf. Les gardiens du tekke où reposent les cendres Hadji Bektach, les Albanais, cherchant à garder entre leurs mains l'administration des terres, affirment que Hadji Bektach était adepte du célibat. Alors la lignée héréditaire évincée propage pour la défense de se droits la légende de son origine miraculeux. Elle raconte comment un jour Hadji Bektach saigna du nez. La servante plaça sa main sous son nez et recueillit trois gouttes de sang. "Mets ce sang un endroit propre" lui dit Hadji Bektach. La servante chercha longuement un endroit où abriter le sang sans parvenir à en trouver un. Alors elle décida de l'avaler, considérant que sans doute son coeur constituait un réceptacle pur. La servante conçut et mit au monde un garçon. C'est de lui que descend le lignée des "enfants spirituels" de Hadji Bektach, connus sous le nom de Çelebi (Tchelebi)."

Dans cette légende sous la couverture de la piété et de l'esprit missionnaire islamique l'on perçoit clairement les emprunts et les influences non musulmanes. L'opposition stéréotypée entre le pigeon et le faucon souligne la victoire du bien et de l'innocence sur le mal et la rapacité, elle n'est pas sans rappeler le mythe d'Ormuzd et a Ahriman. Le dogme chrétien de l'immaculée conception est tourné en dérision, lors de la description de l'intuition de la femme chrétienne parmi les moines, puis il est pieusement repris en compte pour justifier les droits héréditaires et la légitimité des leaders bektachis. La baguette de mûrier d'Ahmed Yase-

vi évoque la massue d'Hercule et la bâton de Moïse, bien qu'elle soit plus légère et franchisse des distances plus importantes. La métamorphose de Hadji Bektach en pigeon a des liens avec le chamanisme sibérien, la lointaine patrie des Turcs ottomans, mais c'est le christianisme qui détermine sa forme et son contenu exacte. L'oeuvre de mission que Hadji Bektach confie magnanimement au néophytes musulmans est présente dans le judaïsme et se transforme en une tradition largement répandue dans la hagiographie chrétienne. D'autres éléments du conte peuvent également être l'objet d'interprétations diverses, comme la lévitation durant la prière, les conditions où elle peut être réalisée, ou bien l'intervention surnaturelle qui peut contrecarrer ses buts etc.

Nous nous permettons encore quelques remarques, compte tenu du fait que l'on a beaucoup écrit et que l'on continue d'écrire sur le légendaire Hadji Bektach. Les empreintes que l'on décèle dans le récit hagiographique ne sont pas seulement des renseignements servant à caractériser les actions du célèbre derviche. On peut dire qu'ils déterminent aussi le caractère et la destinée de l'ordre soufi qui porte son nom. Selon la tradition, c'est à Hadji Bektach que revint l'honneur de bénir pour la première fois les jeunes janissaires (la légende précise que cela eut lieu à Amassia); ce qui fit de lui le protecteur de la "force de frappe" de l'expansion ottomane, gagnant à la cause islamique de nouveaux territoires et de nouveaux peuples. Simultanément, il est considéré comme le patron des Kyzylbachs qu'il a introduit dans la "vrai foi". Les résultats de son activité missionnaire sont cependant, dans une optique sunnite, plus que douteux. Durant les siècles, le bektachisme joua un rôle central dans le corps des janissaires, mais les descendants du rude derviche, les Tchelebi, entourés de vénération, sont les dirigeants reconnus et les protecteurs des Kyzylbachs. Le tombeau présumé de Hadji Bektach, dans la ville du même nom, se trouve dans l'emplacement d'une église dédiée à St. Charalampos, et fut, des siècles durant, un lieu de pèlerinage pour les musulmans Kyzylbachs ou Sunnites, aussi bien que pour les chrétiens. La population des régions visitées par V. Gordelevskij décrit le promoteur de l'Islam avec une auréole, tel un saint chrétien. On prétend qu'il

émet une lumineuse qu'il dissimule sous un signe étoilé (de façon comparable à Moïse, ainsi que le note le savant russe).

Au moment où cette légende fut recueillie, le public européen prit connaissance de certaines traditions kyzylbaches, contenues dans un recueil bektachi manuscrit du XIX^e siècle. Elles furent traduites et publiées en Allemagne par R. Tschudi⁴, et V. Gordelevskij leur fit un écho positif⁵. Durant les quelques décennies suivantes, la littérature orientaliste s'enrichit de recueils consacrés à Hadji Bektach et à ses disciples, en langue turque ou langues européennes. L'on y trouve des variantes proches où éloignées de la légende notée il y a 75 ans à Sivas par le grand savant russe. La légende ici présentée peut servir de matière à comparaison avec ce qui a été publié depuis. En Bulgarie, parmi les musulmans, il y a une minorité kyzylbache non négligeable dont la littérature orale populaire présente aussi de l'intérêt pour les chercheurs.

⁴ *Das Vilâjet-nâme des Hadschim Sultan*. Eine türkische Heiligenlegende zum ersten Male herausgegeben und ins Deutsche übertragen von Dr Rudolf Tschudi. Berlin, 1914, xii + 96 + 107. (= *Türkische Bibliothek*, 17.)

⁵ "Jivaya starina", God. izd. XXIV, vip. III, Petrograd, 1916, pp. 322-324. Réédité: Akademik V. A. Gordlevskii, *Izbrannie sotchineniya*, Tom IV, 1968, pp. 539-540.

VISION POPULAIRE DE LA FEMME EN SYRIE AUX VI^e ET VII^e / XII^e et XIII^e SIECLES

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C'est un fait bien connu que le caractère élitiste, aristocratique, littéraire et savant des sources du Moyen-Age arabo-musulman nous rend fort difficile la tâche d'approcher la vie quotidienne, populaire et concrète des hommes et des femmes de cette époque. Pour s'en convaincre il n'est que de jeter un coup d'oeil sur les titres des ouvrages historiques et biographiques qui ne s'occupent, la plupart du temps, que des notabilités, des *a'yan*, ou des spécialistes dans une branche quelconque du savoir, comme c'est le cas dans les diverses sortes de *Ṭabaqāt*.

Mais cette tâche déjà difficile pour ce qui touche à l'ensemble de la société le devient plus encore si, comme nous voudrions le faire ici, on désire étudier la face féminine de cette vie quotidienne et populaire à la même époque. Dans ce dernier domaine en effet les sources consultées s'attachent quasi exclusivement aux femmes qui ont brillé soit par leurs activités où leurs alliances sur le plan politique, soit à celles qu'on a pu appeler les "femmes savantes"¹.

Pour étayer la réflexion qui précède, nous avons procédé à un sondage qui couvre le VII^e/XIII^e siècle dans l'ouvrage biographique connu d'ad-Dahabī, le *Kitāb al-ʿibar fī man ʿabar*², en le complétant, pour la partie qui manque dans l'édition de S. Munaġġid, les années 686 et 687 H., par la partie correspondante de l'ouvrage non moins classique d'Ibn Kaṭīr, *al-Bidāya wa-n-nihāya*³. Nous en arrivons ainsi aux conclusions

¹ Cf. l'article de A. Nègre, in *BEO* (XXX) 1978: "Les femmes savantes chez Dahabī", pp. 119-126.

² Cf. le volume V consacré aux personnages du VII^e/XIII^e édité par Ṣalāh ad-Dīn al-Munaġġid, Kuwait, 1965.

³ Edition du Caire, le volume XIII, pp. 309 à 313.

suyvantes: sur un total de 1034 biographies recensées par ad-Dahabī tout au long du siècle, 35 seulement touchent des femmes. Proportion infime, comme on peut le voir. A l'intérieur de ce dernier groupe fort restreint, l'écrasante majorité des personnages recensés, comme on pouvait s'y attendre chez ad-Dahabī, appartient au monde des spécialistes du ḥadīṭ, qu'il s'agisse de véritables muḥaddiṭāt ou de femmes qui ont rapporté un ḥadīṭ (rāwiyāt) ou en ont reçu des samāʿs. Le reste des biographies recensées, soit huit d'entre elles, se partage entre une femme ascète, une autre prédicatrice (wāʿiza), et quelques personnalités célèbres soit par leur naissance⁴, soit par le rôle politique éminent qu'elles ont joué comme c'est le cas pour Šaġar ad-Durr, morte en 655.

On peut en conclure que ce genre de source historique classique et pourtant non spécialisée, ne s'intéresse, en fait, qu'aux femmes qui se sont fait un nom, dans le domaine des sciences religieuses, celles du ḥadīṭ quasi exclusivement, ou par la notabilité de leurs origines.

Ce n'est donc pas à ce genre de sources qu'il faut s'adresser si l'on veut essayer de surprendre quelques chose de l'aspect populaire et familier du monde féminin en Syrie durant le Moyen-Age; mais à d'autres sources d'information, si elles existent, moins préoccupées de "science"⁵ ou de piété. Mais il faut ajouter immédiatement que cette seconde série de sources ne se préoccupe pas plus que la première, ni directement, de la vie quotidienne des femmes de cette époque. Cependant, c'est le caractère plus personnel, plus autobiographique de certaines d'entre elles qui va permettre à leurs auteurs de nous glisser, en quelque sorte, à certains endroits de leurs oeuvres, quelques notations précieuses qui intéressent directement notre propos. Nous en avons retenues deux: le *Kitāb al-*

⁴ Vg. la soeur d'al-ʿĀdil, Sitt aš-Šām, morte en 617, la femme d'al-Ašraf, m. en 640, l'année du siècle, après celle de 699, où le plus grand nombre de décès féminins est recensé par Dahabī. Cf. *Ibar*, pp. 163-165, et 397-407. Cf. également Rabīʿa Ḥātūn la soeur de Šalāḥ ad-Dīn, m. en 643, Fāṭima sa petite-fille, m. en 678 et la petite-fille de Qalāwūn Gāziya Ḥātūn, morte en 687: cf. *Bidāya*, XIII, p. 358. Pour Šaġar ad-Durr, cf. *Ibar*, p. 655.

⁵ Il s'agit exclusivement de sciences religieuses, selon le sens du mot *ʿilm* et de ses dérivés *ʿulūm* et *ʿulamāʾ* à cette époque.

ʿtibār, d'Usāma Ibn Munqid̄ le seigneur de Šayzar, grand guerrier, voyageur et chasseur, mort en 584, et le Supplément (*Dayl*) au *Kitāb ar-raw-datayn*, ou Biographies des personnages des VI^e et VII^e siècles (*Tarāğim riğāl al-qarnayn as-sādis wa-s-sābiʿ*) d'Abū Šāma, mort en 665⁶.

Pour ce qui est d'Usāma Ibn Munqid̄, notons d'abord qu'il y a quelque paradoxe à vouloir trouver des notations populaires sur la vie des femmes au VI^e/VII^e siècle chez l'un des auteurs de l'époque peut-être les plus marqués par son caractère aristocratique. Cependant, si nous utilisons la division tripartite bien connue de Duby⁷ qui s'appliquerait assez bien, quoique occidentale, à la société féodale du monde islamique, nous constatons que si Usāma appartient bien à la classe des "chevaliers", il ne fait en aucune façon partie de celle des "prêtres", entendons en contexte musulman, des savants religieux, comme c'était le cas pour ad-Da-habī. C'est un fait qu'il est un des rares auteurs de l'époque, peut-être le seul à nous fournir, grâce au caractère autobiographique, personnel, anecdotique et réaliste de son oeuvre, quelques précieuses remarques concernant le sujet qui nous intéresse.

Disons d'abord que la femme en général tient une place particulièrement importante dans son ouvrage autobiographique; ce dernier comprend même une sorte de chapitre étalé sur 17 pages, sur la bravoure des femmes⁸. Les notations non suivies, mais pertinentes pour notre sujet, sont également très nombreuses; nous en avons dénombré une soixantaine sur un ouvrage qui n'atteint pas les trois cent pages. On voit ici,

⁶ Nous citerons le premier dans la réédition de P. Hitti, parue à Beyrouth récemment (1981) à ad-Dār al-Muttaḥida li-n-Našr, et le second dans l'édition de Muḥammad al-Kawṭarī, Le Caire, 1947.

⁷ Cf. *Le chevalier, la femme et le prêtre*, Hachette, Paris, 1981. Il faut évidemment transposer le deuxième vocable pour ce qui concerne le monde musulman à la même époque où la division correspond cependant assez bien à la société du Moyen-Orient arabo-musulman.

⁸ Usāma, *ʿtibār* 152-169. Plus encore que la *butūla*, c'est la *naḥwa* de ces femmes qui est mise en évidence dans des histoires très concrètes et parfois pittoresques; cf. spécialement p. 160 où ce dernier terme, qui inclut la fierté et qui fait partie du vocabulaire chevaleresque de l'époque, revient trois fois.

pour nous en tenir à un critère quantitatif assez extérieur que la proportion de *ad-Dahabī* est nettement dépassée⁹. Compte tenu du caractère autobiographique de l'ouvrage, ces notations touchent évidemment d'abord les personnages féminins de sa propre famille, aristocratique s'il en fût: sa mère, sa soeur aînée et, chose plus curieuse mais qui s'explique psychologiquement chez quelqu'un qui rédige ses mémoires à un âge très avancé, sa grand mère¹⁰. Usāma en parle toujours d'une manière très personnelle qui nous permet déjà de saisir un côté plus intime et réaliste que nous ne retrouverons pas ailleurs.

Côté amusant et cocasse parfois, par exemple lorsque Usāma, rentrant au château de Šayzar assiégé par les Ismaéliens, aperçoit sa mère assise à côté de sa soeur qui a revêtu la cotte de maille et le casque d'Usāma; au bord d'une fenêtre du château, elle sont prêtes à sauver leurs vies et leur honneur en se précipitant dans le vide plutôt que de tomber prisonnières aux mains des Ismaéliens "en compagnie des paysans et des cardeurs de laine"¹¹. Mais si cette dernière notation, par ailleurs très en situation, est bien marquée d'une sorte de préjugé de caste qui reconnaît les paysans et les artisans comme plus redoutables encore que les terribles Ismaéliens¹², d'autres passages nous révèlent des aspects plus prosaïques et quotidiens de la vie de la femme de ce temps-là.

⁹ Il y aurait toute une relecture à faire de l'*Ftibār* centrée sur la vision qu'il a de la femme.

¹⁰ Usāma a à ce moment là vers les 90 ans comme il nous le dit lui-même dans un passage où il compare cet âge avancé avec sa jeunesse. Cf. *Id.* p. 207.

¹¹ *Id.* 160. *al-ḥallāḡīn* qui, avec les paysans représentent un autre monde pour Usāma. Le même terme reviendra une autre fois, dans le même contexte dépréciatif, p. 159, à la page précédente.

¹² Les Ismaéliens apparaissent comme l'ennemi le plus redoutable des Banū Munqid; à la différence des chevaliers francs, ils ont un comportement et des techniques de combat, l'utilisation du couteau (*sikē in*) en particulier qui les mettent en quelque sorte hors de la loi de la chevalerie commune, sous bien des regards, entre chevaliers francs et musulmans.

C'est le cas de cette servante (*ġāriya*), qui par une ruse astucieuse arrive à sauver son maître¹³. C'est celui de la nourrice d'Usāma, sorte de "nounou" qui a nourri et soigné trois générations des Banū Munqid̄ et qui fait partie de la famille¹⁴; celui également d'une vieille entremetteuse qui trompe l'oncle d'Usāma, Sulṭān sur sa "marchandise", la femme qu'il lui propose se révélant, en fait, être muette¹⁵! Autre notation: cette vieille femme, pleureuse attirée de Šayzar qui se trouve avoir des montées de lait quand elle pleure son fils tué, mais qui cessent une fois sa douleur passée¹⁶. Ou encore, la fille d'un kurde ami d'Usāma qui, prisonnière des Francs se jette dans le cours de l'Oronte (*al-ʿĀṣī*) pour leur échapper et s'y noie; "on retrouve ses habits plus tard accrochés à un saule de la rivière"¹⁷.

Un dernier exemple, et il y en a d'autres, l'histoire de cette sorcière, *šayṭāna*, qu'Usāma traite aussi, mais sans méchanceté excessive, de 'chienne' (*kalba*)¹⁸; elle se nomme en réalité Burayka et se trouve être l'esclave (*mamlūka*) d'un kurde ami de l'auteur; sorte de cantinière elle boit avec les cavaliers au bord de l'Oronte sans avoir peur des Francs. Usāma nous la représente "tête nue, cheveux défaits, déambulant au milieu du cimetière sur une mule hennissante"¹⁹.

¹³ *Id.* p. 92.

¹⁴ *Id.* p. 241 e 242. Atteinte de coliques, elle est guérie durent un songe. Usāma nous raconte plaisamment qu'il la vit un jour où, vieille et sa vue ayant baissé, elle lavait le linge et se plaignait de la mauvaise odeur du linge. En effet, croyant utiliser du savon, elle avait à la main un vieux morceau de fromage.

¹⁵ *Id.* p. 92.

¹⁶ *Id.* p. 148.

¹⁷ *Id.* 192.

¹⁸ *Id.* pp. 157-158. On sait que le terme de *šayṭān* est spécialement réservé aux francs dans l'autobiographie d'Usāma, non sans une pointe de sympathie, un peu jalouse de leur courage.

¹⁹ *Id.* p. 158. La description qu'il en donne, au clair de lune parmi les tombes est particulièrement suggestive: "*maksūfat ar-ra's qad nafašat ša'rahā wa-biya rākibat qašba tashal bayn al-maqābir wa-taḡūl*".

Mais comme on pouvait s'y attendre, c'est dans le camp de l'"autre", ici des Francs, que les notations féminines d'Usāma se révèlent les plus réalistes, d'une verdeur qui frise parfois la grossièreté. Sans revenir sur la scène étrange, et souvent citée, où un chevalier franc nouvellement arrivé d'Europe demande au garçon de bain musulman interloqué de raser les parties intimes de sa *dāma*²⁰, il faudrait s'arrêter à la brève description qu'il nous brosse de cette espèce de course au cochon dont il a été le témoin près de Tibériade; cet affrontement burlesque de deux vieilles mégères franques, au grand esbaudissement des chevaliers francs provoque du dégoût et un aristocratique mépris chez Usāma qui nous rapporte l'histoire²¹.

Ces quelques remarques suffisent, pensons-nous, pour nous faire saisir l'intérêt de l'autobiographie de l'émir de Šayzar sur le sujet qui nous occupe. C'est le plus souvent du reste à son insu qu'il nous ouvre ces quelques perspectives sur la vie de la société féminine de l'époque. Mais il le fait parfois consciemment s'excusant, par exemple, après avoir relaté l'étrange histoire de Burayka la cantinière-sorcière, d'une telle digression: "Je rapporte ici quelque chose de l'histoire de cette Burayka bien que celle-ci soit hors de mon sujet"²², et ajoutant, comme pour se justifier: "Mais les bonnes histoires touchent toujours"²³.

Avec Abū Šāma nous quittons la catégorie du "chevalier" pour rejoindre celle du savant religieux²⁴. Historien et spécialiste de *ḥadīṭ* connu, Abū Šāma a occupé un poste important dans l'administration religieuse de la ville de Damas, celui de Recteur du *Dār al-ḥadīṭ al-Ašrafīyya*

²⁰ Cf. *Id.* pp. 174-175. C'est à la suite de ce passage qu'Usāma nous dit que les Francs n'ont pas de *naḥwa* (honneur) même s'ils ont du courage (*šagā'a*).

²¹ *Id.* p. 177. L'enjeu de cette sorte de jeu était un porc; on comprend mieux le dégoût que cela inspire à ce musulman sérieux qu'était Usāma.

²² "*wa-in lam yakun mawḍi'uhu*", p. 157.

²³ "*wa-lākinna al-ḥadīṭ šuḡūn*". (*Id.*) Plusieurs fois Usāma a conscience de ces digressions et prend soin de le signaler, cf. par exemple, pp. 69 et 209.

²⁴ Pour reprendre la classification de Duby signalée plus haut.

récemment fondé par le neveu de Ṣalāḥ ad-Dīn, al-Malik al-Ašraf. Mais bien que la partie de son oeuvre où il nous rapporte les événements dont il a été personnellement le témoin, *Ḍayl ar-Rawdatayn* consiste en une chronique classique suivant les années (*ḥawliyyāt*) et les obituaires (*wafayāt*), Abū Ṣāma, un demi-siècle après Usāma, partage avec ce dernier quelques préoccupations autobiographiques²⁵. C'est dans le cadre de ces dernières, mais pas exclusivement, que ses notations dispersées mais pertinentes sur la vie féminine apparaissent dans le *Ḍayl*.

Il note avec humour par exemple, mais dans le cadre encore étroit de la classe dirigeante de Damas, le cas de ces "belles de nuits", filles des meilleures familles de la ville, arrêtées en pleine nuit par le *šihna* de la cité, al-Mubārīz, et rendues discrètement à leurs familles après les avoir fait sortir de l'hôtel de police par une "porte spécialement conçue à cet effet"²⁶. Ce fonctionnaire consciencieux mais compréhensif n'a pas manqué cependant de les exhorter auparavant à un peu plus de retenue sinon de moralité.

Dans un contexte moins aristocratique Abū Ṣāma nous rapporte le cas de cette femme chrétienne de Mnayṭra, dans le Liban Nord actuel, grande dévote de la Vierge Marie et en excellente relation avec le célèbre ascète de la Békaa libanaise, le cheikh ʿAbdallāh al-Yūnīnī, mort en 616. Selon une des deux recensions d'Abū Ṣāma cette femme, sentant venir sa fin prochaine, ne demande rien moins au cheikh que d'aller lui chercher un prêtre pour l'aider dans son dernier passage²⁷.

Mais c'est sur un sujet qui touche davantage à la vie personnelle de l'auteur que nous nous arrêterons pour terminer. Il s'agit d'un poème

²⁵ Nous avons traité de ce sujet, en arabe, dans un article intitulé: "*Mazāhir as-sīra ad-dātiyya fī kitāb tarāḡim riḡāl al-qarnayn as-sādis wa-s-sābiʿ*", in: *Annales du Département des Lettres Arabes* (I.L.O.), de l'Université Saint Joseph, Beyrouth, vol.I (1981), pp. 25-35.

²⁶ Cf. Abū Ṣāma, *Tarāḡim* pp. 150-151 qui a pour source Sibṭ Ibn al-Ġawzī. Le nom complet du *šihna* de l'époque, sorte de Préfet de police, est al-Mubārīz Ibrāhīm dit al-Muʿtamid, mort en 623.

²⁷ Selon une autre version, rapportée également par Abū Ṣāma, la vieille femme se convertit à l'islam. Cf. *Tarāḡim*, p. 127.

(*qaṣīda*) d'une cinquantaine de vers qu'il composa en 655, une dizaine d'années avant sa mort, en l'honneur, pourrait-on dire, – mais le mot est trop emphatique dans ce contexte tout de simplicité et de bonhomie, – de sa jeune femme, la mère de son fils Aḥmad issue d'une très vieille famille de Murcie en Andalousie et de surcroît koraichite. Après un tel pedigree on pourrait s'attendre à quelque ode si fréquente dans ce genre littéraire. Il s'agit en réalité d'une description en mauvais vers qui ne sont rien moins que de la poésie, de cette jeune femme dont il ne nous donne même pas le nom mais qu'il appelle Sitt al-'Arab²⁸. Celle-ci, il fallait s'en douter, possède toutes les qualités requise de la femme d'un *muhaddiṭ* de renom, "pleine de sagesse, accomplie en toutes qualités"²⁹. Mais elle a quelque chose de plus, une sorte de "must" à la fois plus prosaïque et plus intéressant pour notre propos. C'est d'abord que tous ces dons qui sont le fruit de la naissance et de l'éducation et que nous dirions classiques sont exprimés ici avec une bonhomie, une absence d'emphase très rares dans la littérature de l'époque. Femme d'"intérieur" s'il en fût, et bonne musulmane, Abū Ṣāma nous le dit de la façon suivante: "Si les autres femmes lui disent parfois qu'elle pourrait aller se promener, elle refuse préférant à cela la douceur de son foyer"³⁰. "Si on la réprimande elle se soumet aux siens, mais, en amour, elle ne connaît aucune entrave"³¹. Bien plus, cette musulmane exemplaire, malgré son jeune âge (*ṣaġīrat as-sinn*) est non seulement une femme d'intérieur au sens un peu étroit que nous venons de voir, mais c'est également une ménagère exemplaire. Abū Ṣāma nous le dit sur un ton que nous croions très rare dans le contexte littéraire de l'époque: "elle brode, elle coud, elle coupe ses robes sur des modèles par elle conçus; elle travaille

²⁸ Abū Ṣāma n'est pas poète et n'en a pas la prétention. Ses relations avec le milieu andalou émigré à Damas est connue. Cf. sur ce sujet notre article: "Maghrébins à Damas au VII^e/XIII^e siècle", in: *BEO* XXVIII (1975), pp. 167-199.

²⁹ *Id.* p. 195, "aḡila mukammalat al-awṣāf".

³⁰ *Id.*: "wa-qa'r al-bayt fī 'aynihā aḡlā".

³¹ *Id.* cf. vers 11.

très bien au fuseau"³². Et ce vers où la mauvaise qualité de la composition poétique renforce en quelque sorte le côté réaliste, concret et familier de la description:

“Dans toutes sortes de travaux de ménage, elle trotte de ci de là
Affairée même dans le balayage, la cuisine et le lavage”³³.

Enfin, suprême référence chez cette jeune femme, c'est, aux yeux d'Abū Šāma, que toutes ces qualités aussi bien morales que prosaïquement domestiques sont vécues par elle dans le plus grand naturel, ce “parfait naturel” (*ṭab'*) qui ne “donne pas l'impression de porter artificiellement une charge” (*lam tukallif la-bā ḥamlan*) et qui “meilleur que tout le reste” (*aḥsan min dā kullihī*) rend la vertu aimable³⁴.

Pour conclure disons que les quelques notations qui précèdent nous permettent d'affirmer qu'en dépit du caractère généralement élitiste, savant et religieux des sources de l'époque, il n'est pas impossible d'atteindre, en quelque sorte au deuxième degré, quelque chose de la vision populaire de la femme au Moyen-Age, en Syrie.

Nous l'avons vu également, c'est paradoxalement à travers deux auteurs qui représentent l'un l'aristocratie militaire du VI^e/XII^e siècle, Usāma Ibn Munqid, l'autre l'establishment religieux damascain dans la première moitié du siècle suivant, que nous avons pu effectuer le précédent sondage.

D'autres sources, dites plus populaires, et nous pensons entre autres à la *Sīrat Baybars* et qui seraient censées concerner directement notre sujet traitent en réalité d'une époque bien postérieure. Nous l'avons vu également, les deux auteurs choisis sont parmi les rares personnages de cette époque à avoir écrit ce qu'il est convenu d'appeler une autobiographie, – le fait est clair pour Usāma, – ou qui du moins, et c'est le cas

³² *Id.* v. 15: “*Mutarriza ḥayyāta dahabiyya mufasssila ḥattāta tukkimu al-ḡazla*”.

³³ *Id.* vers 16.

³⁴ *Id.* p. 197, vers 38. Sur l'attitude des contemporains vis à vis de la femme à ce même siècle, à Damas, nous renvoyons à notre ouvrage: *Damas au VI^e/XIII^e siècle. Vie et structures religieuses dans une métropole islamique*, Beyrouth, Collection “Recherches”, 1988, pp. 396-403.

d'Abū Šāma, relatent un certain nombre de faits touchant à leur vie personnelle.

Peut-être ce type de recherche pourrait-il s'appliquer à d'autres auteurs ou genres littéraires de l'époque, historiens ou chroniqueurs, nous pensons en particulier au *Dayl Mir'āt az-zamān* d'al-Yūnīnī, encore peu exploité. On pourrait atteindre alors à ce niveau sinon populaire, mais au moins plus concret, familier voire intimiste, et se rapprocher de l'idée que se faisait de la femme la société arabo-islamique de ce temps.

‘UNAYTARA, LA FILLE DE ‘ANTAR

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Les deux dernières parties du roman de ‘Antar, c’est-à-dire les parties XXXI et XXXII racontent la vie de ‘Unaytara bint ‘Antar¹. Celle-ci n’apparaît qu’après la mort de son père, ‘Antar b. Šaddād al-‘Absī, le héros du roman. Celui-ci n’a donc jamais connu sa fille unique ni d’ailleurs ses deux autres enfants, des fils, qui interviendront dans le même récit et qui appartiennent chacun à un peuple différent et à une culture qui n’est pas arabe.

Al-Hayfā’, surnommée Qanāsat ar-Riḡāl, était la mère de ‘Unaytara. ‘Antar l’avait épousée avant de partir pour la deuxième fois vers le pays des Byzantins (*bilād ar-Rūm*) où Qayṣar allait lui demander de mettre fin au siège de Rome par le Franc Bohémond². Al-Hayfā’ était la soeur de ‘Amr dū l-Kalb, le chef des Banū Qudā’a. Ces derniers avaient rejoint les Banū ‘Abs quelque temps avant la mort de ‘Antar, leur protecteur.

Ce fut ce ‘Amr dū l-Kalb qui avait décidé de donner à la petite fille qui ressemblait tant à son père le nom de ‘Unaytara dans l’espoir qu’elle aurait la force et le courage de celui-ci. Lorsque l’on décida du nom à donner à l’enfant, al-Hayfā’, sa mère, disait à son frère ‘Amr que c’était à cause de sa fille qu’ils devaient continuellement se mouvoir et se déplacer. On ne comprend pas clairement à quoi cela se rapporte mais on

¹ L’impression utilisée est celle en 32 parties du Caire de 1343 A.H. Pour le roman de ‘Antar voir la bibliographie dans U. Vermeulen, ‘Antar en al-Andalus, in: *Actas del XII Congreso de la U.E.A.I. (Malaga, 1984)* Madrid, 1986, p. 755, n.2 et P. Heath, “A Critical Review of Modern Scholarship on *Sīrat ‘Antar ibn Šhaddād* and the Popular *Sīra*”, in: *Journal of Arabic Literature*, XV, 1984, pp. 19-43.

² La campagne de ‘Antar pour débloquent le siège de Rome par Bohémond se trouve dans la partie XXXI, les pages 11-27. Une étude de cette épisode est en préparation. Pour la première campagne de ‘Antar en al-Andalus et l’Afrique de Nord, voir U. Vermeulen, *op. et loc. cit.*, pp. 741-755.

peut penser qu'il s'agit d'une allusion aux événements qui suivirent la mort de 'Antar.

On espérait aussi de 'Unaytara qu'elle ferait vivre la mémoire de son père et que tous lui obéiraient. Sa mère et son oncle l'élevèrent avec beaucoup d'amour. 'Unaytara, quant à elle, ignorait son origine car on ne lui avait pas dit qui était son vrai père. On lui laissait croire que 'Amr était son père. Ceci est très étrange car elle devait quand même savoir que 'Amr était le frère de sa mère et ne pouvait, par conséquent, pas être son père. Il semble que 'Unaytara ne se soit jamais posé de questions quant à la relation entre sa mère et 'Amr. Plus tard, elle sera même très étonnée d'apprendre la vérité.

On ne parle pas beaucoup de sa tendre enfance. A peine née, on la compare à la nuit ténébreuse, avec les coins de la bouche tombants, des pupilles rouges, des avant-bras et des membres forts. A cinq ans, elle lutte avec des chiens et des loups et se bat avec des esclaves qu'elle attaque avec des flèches. A dix ans, elle voyage avec sa mère et 'Amr, traverse les déserts aussi bien la nuit que le jour. On lui apprend à lutter et on l'instruit sur l'art de la guerre. Elle devint très expérimentée, acquit un grand courage et devint illustre par sa force et sa supériorité. Le narrateur estime intéressant le fait que lorsque 'Unaytara avait cinq ans, seuls ses cousins savaient qu'elle était une fille. Les autres pensaient qu'il s'agissait de quelqu'un de très important mais du sexe masculin.

Le premier grand événement dans lequel 'Unaytara joue un rôle important et dans lequel elle est la figure centrale est la campagne du Yemen. Elle est alors âgée de quinze ans. La campagne, qui est en fait une razzia, commence par une lutte contre un lion que 'Unaytara a attaqué. Elle a le coeur plus fort qu'un roc et des avant-bras plus forts que des poutres. Elle tient dans sa main le sabre forgé dans un éclair qu'un géant avait donné à 'Antar. Celui-ci l'avait donné à 'Amr qui l'a cédé à 'Unaytara. En voyant que 'Unaytara a tué le lion et qu'elle essuie son sabre sur la peau de l'animal, tout le monde est content et 'Amr se dit que Dieu a dédommagé les Banū Qudā'a de la perte de 'Antar. D'ailleurs, à chaque exploit de 'Unaytara, on se rappelle de 'Antar.

Poursuivant leur chemin, les Banū Qudā'a, avec 'Amr et al-Hayfā' en tête et 'Unaytara devant tous, arrivent aux alentours de Ṣan'ā' et de 'Adan, près des demeures appartenant à az-Zurqā', chef des Banū Ḥimyar et tante de Dū l-Ḥimār. Après avoir tué Asad al-Fulāt al-Ḥimyarī, le petit-fils d'az-Zurqā', et vingt-cinq autres cavaliers au coeur plus solide que de l'acier, 'Unaytara se retrouve devant az-Zurqā'. Celle-ci avait été avertie de l'arrivée d'un cavalier noir (*fāris aswad*) qui disait de lui-même: "Je suis 'Unaytara b. 'Amr dī l-Kalb, je suis la lionne des lions, je suis la fille de Qanāṣat ar-Riḡāl. 'Unaytara défait az-Zurqā' en combat singulier et la fait prisonnière. Les Banū Ḥimyar s'enfuient et, afin de provoquer sa vengeance, font savoir à Dū l-Ḥimār que sa tante est prisonnière. Il apprend que az-Zurqā' est aux mains de 'Unaytara b. 'Amr dī l-Kalb, la Qudā'ite dont chacun sur terre reconnaît qu'elle a un comportement à la fois chevaleresque et héroïque. Il jure de venger sa tante et les Banū Ḥimyar décident de partir à la rencontre de 'Unaytara et des Banū Qudā'a.

A ce stade, le cours normal du récit est interrompu afin d'introduire les Banū 'Abs dans l'épisode et de préparer les lecteurs ou les auditeurs au nouveau tournant du récit.

En effet, on mentionne qu'un jour, les Banū 'Abs apprennent qu'il y a, dans la tribu des Banū Qudā'a, un cavalier (ou chevalier) du nom de 'Unaytara. Ce cavalier est un proche de 'Amr dū l-Kalb, pour qui toute difficulté est légère et qui n'a d'égal ni en Orient ni en Occident. N'oublions pas que tous croient que 'Unaytara est un homme. Ceci fait dire à Zuhayr, le chef des Banū 'Abs, que 'Amr dū l-Kalb, qui fut un compagnon de 'Antar, a peut-être voulu donner le nom de 'Unaytara à son fils par amour de 'Antar. Il estime qu'il est nécessaire de rencontrer cet enfant et de s'assurer de la situation. L'apparition passagère des Banū 'Abs prend fin ici.

Ensuite se poursuit le récit de Dū l-Ḥimār et des Banū Ḥimyar. Ceux-ci se rendent chez les Banū Qudā'a et arrivent à la tente de 'Unaytara (appelée ici *fāris an-nadab*, le cavalier de la mort qui fait périr les ennemis). Lorsque Dū l-Ḥimār se retrouve face à 'Unaytara, il prend une attitude de défi et lui jette de graves insultes au visage. Ainsi, il l'appelle

“fille de putain” et le “restant de l’éducation des enfants de la *zinā*”. (Soulignons en passant que *Dū l-Himār* quant à lui, semble savoir que ‘Unaytara est une fille.) ‘Unaytara lui répond qu’il est malade ou fou. Un combat s’engage entre les deux adversaires. Naturellement ‘Unaytara remporte la victoire et *Dū l-Himār* est fait prisonnier. En voyant l’attitude chevaleresque ainsi que la force et la capacité de ‘Unaytara “qui devenait formidable aux yeux des gens”, les coeurs des Banū Qudā’a devenaient solides. Les Banū Hīmyar s’enfuirent chez al-Mundir b. an-Nuḥmān qui séjournait à Hīra en Iraq. Après qu’ils lui eurent appris ce que les Banū Qudā’a et leur protectrice (*hāmiya*) avaient fait, il partit à la rencontre de ‘Unaytara qui venait vers lui et qui le fait prisonnier.

C’est le début de la réapparition des Banū ‘Abs. A la cour de Hīra résidaient Zuhayr b. Qays, un cousin d’al-Mundir ainsi que le roi des Banū ‘Abs accompagné de ‘Utayba b. Ḥiṣn. Ils occupaient une position très élevée. C’est à Hīra qu’ils apprennent ce qui est arrivé à al-Mundir et ils se concertent pour savoir ce qu’il faut faire. Zuhayr décide d’aller avec ses Banū ‘Abs chez les Banū Qudā’a car il se souvient de l’amitié de ‘Amr *dū l-Kalb* pour ‘Antar. Les deux groupes se rencontrent et c’est le début d’une série d’événements au cours desquels la vraie origine de ‘Unaytara est révélée. Elle apprend qu’elle est la fille de ‘Antar et qu’elle fait partie des Banū ‘Abs dont elle devient à son tour la protectrice.

Durant la rencontre entre ‘Amr et Zuhayr, al-Hayfā’ commence à pleurer. ‘Unaytara qui en est très étonnée demande à sa mère pourquoi elle pleure. Alors, ‘Amr dit à ‘Unaytara, qu’il appelle “mère et lionne des combats”, que la vérité a vu le jour, qu’elle, ‘Unaytara, est la fille ‘Antar b. Šaddād, le chef des cavaliers et que lui-même est son oncle. ‘Unaytara, très étonnée, montre sa joie, sourit, descend de son cheval, salue poliment et timidement Zuhayr et lui embrasse le pied dans l’étrier. Conséquence directe de cet événement: ‘Unaytara et ‘Amr ordonnent la libération des prisonniers az-Zurqā’, *Dū l-Himār* et al-Mundir auxquels on donne des vêtements d’honneur et qui s’en retournent dans leurs territoires. ‘Unaytara, ‘Amr, Zuhayr et ses Banū ‘Abs font de même. Ainsi s’achève la première partie de la vie de ‘Unaytara et commence la partie qui se terminera par la réconciliation des enfants de

Antar encore vivants. A partir de maintenant, on voit intervenir dans le récit des personnages qui ont joué un certain rôle durant la vie de Antar et qui rejoignent à présent Unaytara et les Banū Abs tandis qu'apparaissent également deux nouveaux personnages dont les origines doivent être retrouvées dans la dernière période de la vie de Antar. Tous les personnages se réunissent autour du tombeau de Antar pour le pleurer et se dispersent ensuite³.

Le début de cette deuxième partie est constitué par la décision que Unaytara prend un jour, alors qu'elle est en compagnie de Zuhayr et qu'ils conversent et se consultent. Elle veut aller combattre les tribus arabes pour se venger de ce qu'elles ont fait après la mort de Antar et elle veut commencer avec la tribu des Banū Amir parce qu'elle a appris que c'était son chef Amir qui avait tué Abla⁴ et sa famille et qui avait pris tous ses biens et ceux de Antar.

Zuhayr approuve la décision de Unaytara et écrit aux Banū Dubyān et aux Banū Marra ainsi qu'à leurs confédérés. Leurs chefs Amr b. Ma'dī, Hānī b. Mas'ūd et Durayd b. aṣ-Ṣimma arrivent chez Unaytara. Arrivent également Uṭayba b. Ḥiṣn avec les Banū Fazāra et Zayd b. Urwa al-Ward. Au cours de leur expédition, ils rencontrent, sur leur domaine, deux cavaliers de race noble, qui semblent être Ġarīr, un frère de Antar et al-Ḥadrūf b. Ṣaybūb, un neveu de celui-ci. Après la mort de Antar, ils s'étaient enfuis, morts de peur. A présent, ils racontent leur aventure. Ils se joignent aux autres et participent à la razzia contre les Banū Amir qui sont vaincus et doivent rendre les biens de Antar. A partir de cet instant, le récit s'accélère et l'on retrouve aux côtés de Unaytara deux personnages tout à fait nouveaux, à savoir: le Byzantin Ġaḍanfar et le Franc Ġufrān. Ces deux personnages sont à replacer dans le contexte de deux épisodes antérieurs: la campagne de Antar contre l'Occident et al-Andalus et celle contre Bohémond qui assiégeait la Rome du roi Balqam b. Marqūm.

³ B. Heller, *Die Bedeutung des arabischen Antar-Romans für die vergleichende Literaturkunde*. Leipzig, 1931, pp. 133-134.

⁴ *Id.*, *ibid.*, pp. 116-119.

Ğađanfar et Ğufrān semblent avoir tous deux ʿAntar comme père et donc être les demi-frères de ʿUnaytara. La mère de Ğađanfar s'appelait Myriam et était la fille du frère de Qayşar et donc du roi de Rome. Celle de Ğufrān s'appelait aussi Myriam, était aussi une nièce de Qayşar mais elle avait vécu à la cour de Constantinople. On peut parler à juste titre d'une réconciliation des enfants de ʿAntar, réconciliation à dater de laquelle on remarque un changement dans le personnage de ʿUnaytara. Elle qui était le chef des arabes et du monde arabe perd son rôle de premier plan.

Lors de leur première rencontre, on mentionne comme caractéristique spécifique la couleur de leur peau qui est brun foncé. Compte tenu du fait que l'on avait déjà dit cela de ʿUnaytara, il se crée une certaine tension et on suggère qu'il va arriver quelque chose de sensationnel. Un coup de théâtre. On ne dissertera pas longuement sur les personnages de Ğađanfar et de Ğufrān, mais on doit toutefois remarquer que ʿUnaytara ne subit pas le même sort avec Ğufrān ou avec Ğađanfar. Elle lutte avec chacun d'eux en combat singulier mais l'issue de ce combat est différente. Elle sait vaincre Ğađanfar, pour lequel, sans savoir pourquoi, elle éprouvait de la sympathie pendant le combat, elle le fait prisonnier mais il lui est impossible de le tuer car sa main tremble et son corps frémit, si bien qu'elle jette son épée.

Le Franc Ğufrān est manifestement plus fort car il vainc ʿUnaytara et la fait prisonnière. Ceci est tout à fait inattendu car jusqu'à présent, ʿUnaytara n'avait été vaincue par personne, elle était toujours victorieuse. On peut supposer que ce Ğufrān est Geoffroi de Bouillon qui, lui aussi, était invincible car il était le vainqueur de Jérusalem.

ʿUnaytara ne prend plus d'initiatives, elle n'est plus à la tête des Banū ʿAbs et des confédérés. Elle est manifestement en situation d'infériorité. Ce n'est pas elle, mais Ğufrān qui décide d'aller venger ʿAntar et de punir les tribus arabes pour ce qu'elles ont fait après sa mort.

Lorsque Qayşar apprend que les enfants de ʿAntar se sont réconciliés, ce n'est pas à ʿUnaytara qu'il envoie son fils Hiraql, mais à Ğufrān.

Toutefois, il faut mentionner, et c'est là l'exploit le plus important que l'on attribue à ʿUnaytara à cette époque, que c'est elle qui tue Ğābir

b. Wizz, le fils de l'assassin de °Antar. A cet égard, il faut remarquer que ce Ġābir prétendait devant le *muhalkil* ou chef des Banū Nabhān qu'il allait tuer °Unaytara, Ġaḍanfar, Ġarīr et al-Ḥadrūf, mais il ne prononçait pas le nom de Ġufrān. Est-ce là une preuve du prestige dont jouissaient les Francs et particulièrement Geoffroi à ce moment et dont ils jouissaient encore lorsque ce passage a été écrit et inséré dans l'épisode?

Ce n'est que lorsque Ġufrān et Ġaḍanfar sont rentrés dans leur pays respectif que °Unaytara reprend sa place de protectrice des Banū °Abs.

Entretemps, le prophète Muḥammad⁵ est apparu et Ġarīr et °Amr les fils d'al-Ḥadrūf se sont convertis à l'Islam. Ce sont eux qui font savoir au prophète que °Unaytara est la protectrice des Banū °Abs.

Remarquons que les grands des Banū °Abs demandaient conseil à °Unaytara pour savoir ce qu'ils devaient faire à propos des conversions à l'Islam. °Unaytara décide de rencontrer le prophète arabe. Elle se forge alors une opinion positive de l'Islam. Arrivée à la Mecque, elle se convertit ainsi que sa mère et son oncle °Amr dū l-Kalb. Le prophète, très impressionné par sa présence, par le grand respect qu'elle inspire, par sa force et son courage, sourit et, parlant de Dieu, lui promet le paradis si elle combat pour l'Islam comme elle a combattu aux temps de la *ġāhiliyya*. °Unaytara promet de le faire.

Suit alors le récit rapportant les circonstances qui ont conduit au mariage de °Unaytara avec son cousin al-Ḥadrūf b. Šaybūb. Ce dernier, tombé amoureux de °Unaytara, avait demandé à Zuhayr b. Qays, le roi des Banū °Abs, de la demander en mariage en son nom. Cependant, °Unaytara refusa, jurant de ne jamais se marier même si elle devait boire la coupe de la perte. Ne sachant pas où donner de la tête, al-Ḥadrūf explique son problème au prophète. Par l'intermédiaire de Bilāl ce dernier fait convoquer °Unaytara à la mosquée et lui donne l'ordre de se marier

⁵ Voir pour ce fragment U. Vermeulen, "L'apparition du Prophète dans la *Sīrat °Antar*", *Quaderni di Studi Arabi* VII, 1989, pp. 153-161 et aussi U. Vermeulen, "Une apparition 'prématurée' du Prophète dans la *Sīrat °Antar*", *Orientalia Lovaniensia Periodica* XXI, 1990, pp. 177-185.

avec son cousin. De ce mariage naîtront cinq fils qui militeront pour l'Islam avec leur mère et le prophète.

°Amr dū l-Kalb revient à la Mecque après quatre ans, mais il est tué, lui aussi, pendant une razzia. On estime important de faire observer que les cinq fils d'al-Hadrūf et de °Unaytara étaient les grands de la tribu des Banū °Abs et que le chef de la tribu était °Amr le fils d'al-Hadrūf et de sa première femme Umayya. Celle-ci mourra d'ailleurs de chagrin quelque temps après le second mariage de son mari, à savoir son mariage avec °Unaytara.

°Amr b. al-Hadrūf était très respecté par le prophète. En ce qui concerne la fin de °Unaytara, il est dit qu'elle a été tuée au cours de la razzia des Ahzāb étant déjà veuve. Il est également précisé que sa mère ne lui survivra que trois jours.

POPULAR AND OFFICIAL ISLAM:
CONTEMPORARY DEVELOPMENTS
WITH SPECIAL REFERENCE TO IRAN

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In a small booklet entitled "A difficult choice: the religion of ordinary people"¹ Professor Jacques Kamstra, a specialist in Japanese religions at the University of Amsterdam, distinguishes between two sorts, or rather two levels of religion. On the one hand there is the religion of certain intellectuals, including theologians and some philosophers. This kind of religion is expressed in abstract terms which allow, for instance, Christianity and Islam to be spoken of as two global normative systems claiming universal validity. On the other hand there is the religion of ordinary people who have received much less education. This kind of religion is expressed palpably in lively images and concrete forms which make it possible, for instance, to speak of an immense variety of locally lived ordinary religion within Christianity and Islam.

Professor Kamstra observes that, first of all, current scholarship – by definition a product of intellectual minds – has addressed itself mainly to the first or intellectual kind of religion, neglecting what may be called the concrete religion of ordinary people. And secondly he observes that such scholarship, when dealing with such non-intellectual religion, tends very much to impose its own general ideas and schemes of religion on the available materials instead of describing accurately the experiential realities of that concrete religion of various groups of ordinary people. As a consequence he contends, popular religion, as the living religion of ordinary people, has been neglected by scholarship on

¹ J. H. Kamstra, *Een moeilijke keuze: de godsdienst van gewone mensen*. Bolsward: Het witte boekhuis, 1986 (64 p.). The text was published earlier under the title of "Een moeilijke keuze: de godsdienst van de gewone man" (*Theologisch Tijdschrift*, 1980).

two counts: first because most scholars themselves have been more interested in intellectuals' religion, and second because they have intellectualized ordinary people's religion by enclosing it too soon in a theory instead of describing it first accurately as it presents itself in particular contexts. At the end of his discourse the author calls for renewed efforts to acquire knowledge of this kind of religion of ordinary people.

It is true that the history of religions as it developed during the last hundred years or so, has concentrated especially on the study of texts and the history of religious ideas and practices of a normative and more or less "official" nature. Nevertheless we have a great number of scholarly publications on tales and folklore, on popular religious practices and ideas. It has been, however, less the historians of religions who have worked on these materials than ethnographers and folklorists, local historians and other researchers often not attached to universities who have carried out fieldwork. Much of the recent interest in and research on popular religion has come from the social sciences and one can even speak of a rediscovery of this field of research². One can also object to a certain simplification in the scheme of "ordinary people's" versus "intellectuals'" religion and choose a broader framework for one's analysis, distinguishing for instance "lived" religion (*religion vécue*) from "normative" religion³.

² P. H. Vrijhof and J. Waardenburg (Eds.), *Official and Popular Religion: Analysis of a Theme for Religious Studies*. The Hague: Mouton, 1979. Important from a systematic point of view is Vittorio Lanternari, "La religion populaire. Prospective historique et anthropologique", *Archives des Sciences Sociales des Religions* No 53/1 (1982) 121-143. Several colloquia were devoted to the study of popular religion in Québec: *Les religions populaires. Colloque international 1970*. Textes édités par Benoît Lacroix et Pietro Boglioni. Québec: Les presses de l'Université Laval, 1972. *Le merveilleux. Deuxième colloque sur les religions populaires 1971*. Textes présentés par Fernand Dumont, Jean-Paul Montminy et Michel Stein. Québec: Les presses de l'Université Laval, 1973. *Recherche et religions populaires. Colloque international 1973*. Textes édités par André Désilets et Guy Laperrière. Montréal: Les Editions Bellarmin, 1976. For a Catholic theological reflection, see for instance *Foi populaire, foi savante*. Actes du Ve Colloque du Centre d'histoire des religions populaires tenu au Collège dominicain de théologie (Ottawa). Paris: Cerf, 1976.

³ "Popular" stands here for actually living and experienced religion of local groups

But Professor Kamstra's appeal to pay more attention to popular religion than has been done by historians of religions in the past is clear, and I would like to take up his challenge in this paper, concentrating on contemporary developments in popular Islam, both popular religion and popular culture in Islam. It is true that Islamicists, whether Muslim or non-Muslim, are intellectuals by their very profession and have tended, inevitably, to pay most attention to the development of ideas in Islam or, when dealing with Muslim societies, to focus on problems already known to them from Western societies. Most studies on present-day Islam have concentrated on trends which are to be found among Muslim intellectuals, including social and political leaders, and in studies of Muslim societies processes of modernization and of rationalization generally have attracted much attention. As a consequence, however, popular Islam has tended to be seen and studied as a kind of folklore surviving on the fringe either of a traditional *šarī'a* Islam or of a modernized, enlightened Islam, and also on the fringe of more or less secular ideologies and more or less secularized societies. It is worth asking what are the real dimensions of popular Islam at the present time⁴.

or larger masses of people, and is opposed to intellectual elaboration of the normative tradition by the *‘ulamā’*, the religious scholars. Differences between official and popular forms of religion have to do but are not identical with differences between elite and popular culture. Between these two forms of culture a separation seems to have occurred in Muslim countries only in the nineteenth century, when western influences and modernization made for a "westernized" elite. Until that time, communication between different classes seems to have remained intact, partly through the influence of the *ṭuruq*, partly through other social channels.

⁴ The present paper is a continuation of J. Waardenburg, "Official and popular religion in Islam", *Social Compass*, Vol. 25, Nr. 3/4 (1978), pp. 315-341, reprinted in the book *Official and Popular Religion*, mentioned in fn. 2.

1. *Popular and Official Islam*

The definition of popular Islam

Our primary interest is the way in which different groups and persons describe and "define" their Islam, what they themselves consider to be "Islamic" and in which situations they express themselves on the subject. In other words, our leading question is what it means when particular Muslims in particular situations appeal to Islam, express their loyalty to Islam, defend Islam or take Islam as a self-evident truth on which life and society should be based.

This is a basically descriptive approach to culture, religion and social reality as a whole, with all kinds of variations according to particular ethnic groups and classes, ways of life and political regimes, with their prevailing traditions from the past, both in the men's and the women's world. The 'ulamā', of course, have one particular way of defining Islam, so to speak professionally, but there are other ways as well.

We may call the lived Islam (*Islam vécu*) of ordinary people, as they define and experience it, "popular" Islam. It has many variations, encompassing both what is called "religion" according to the definition of the 'ulamā' and what we call "culture" in the broader sense of the word. Popular Islam, then, is part of popular culture and can be studied as such for instance by cultural anthropologists, and at the same time it is part of the religion which prevails in Muslim societies and can be studied as such for instance by students of religion. Consequently, research into popular Islam should be carried out in close cooperation between Islamicists trained in cultural anthropology, and Islamicists trained in science of religion. Contrary to official, normative Islam, popular Islam is experiential by its very nature. It has its own norms and values, and forms specific to particular groups and persons, and these religious forms are always interwoven with other elements of social and individual life⁵.

⁵ This explains why most research on popular religion has been carried out by

Some forms of popular Islam

Many accounts of Muslim societies, especially from the colonial period, make it appear as if there were hardly any relationships between the ordinary, mostly non-literate people and the 'ulamā', between popular and normative Islam. The tendency was to describe them as two different worlds; tensions between them would occur where popular traditions were in clear conflict with the prescriptions of official or normative Islam, for instance in the case of so-called "black" magic which is forbidden by the Qur'ān (S. 113).

The following forms of popular Islam, considered in isolation and rather statically, were mostly described in such accounts:

- 1) celebrations of feasts including rites of passage;
- 2) ideas and practices aimed at healing, promoting fertility and sustaining life in other ways in different kinds of misfortunes;
- 3) veneration of particular charismatic people endowed with a religious quality, in their lifetime or afterwards;
- 4) customs and rites pertaining to the special place and role of women and their purity which represents the honour of the family, as well as specific forms of women's religiosity;
- 5) particular educational practices based on religious traditions, including religious education;

cultural anthropologists describing and interpreting it within its cultural context, and by sociologists studying it in view of the particular societies and groups involved. What they study is exactly "l'islam vécu". Compare two recent collective studies on the subject in Dutch: Willy Jansen (ed.), *Lokale Islam: Geloof en ritueel in Noord-Afrika en Iran* (Local Islam: Belief and ritual in North Africa and Iran). Muiderberg: Dick Coutinho, 1985, and L. B. Venema (ed.) *Islam en macht: Een historisch-antropologisch perspectief* (Islam and power: an historical-anthropological perspective). Assen-Maastricht: Van Gorcum, 1987. Important is the contribution of (social) psychology in the following studies about popular religion in Lebanon and Algeria: Mounir Chamoun, *Les superstitions au Liban. Aspects psycho-sociologiques*. (Beyrouth: Dar el-Machreq, 1973); Aïssa Ouitis, *Possession, magie et prophétie en Algérie. Essai ethnographique*. (Paris: Ed. de l'Arcanère, 1984) and Noureddine Toulbi, *Le sacré ambigu ou des avatars psychologiques du changement social* (Alger: Entreprise Nationale du Livre, 1984).

6) local pilgrimages, in particular to shrines of men and women considered to bestow *baraka* (blessing) on their visitors;

7) various religious practices in the *turuq* (religious brotherhoods of a *sūfī* or derwish nature);

8) so-called "superstitions" bordering on magical beliefs and behaviour with respect to particular objects, for instance Qur'ān leaves used as protection against evil or certain people. In practice this covered anything which testified to the people's credulity, the exotic nature of their culture and the basic irrationality of their religion, at least according to current western views.

Some movement of popular Islam

Besides describing these various forms of popular Islam, accounts of Muslim societies also mention popular movements. As mass movements appealing to Islam and able to mobilize ordinary people, they can be considered as movements of popular Islam, more dynamic than the forms of popular Islam just mentioned.

The following movements of popular Islam, considered in isolation, can be mentioned:

1) mahdist movements of an eschatological orientation, characterized by the fact that a particular leader gathers a following through his claim to be the expected *mahdī* or "Guided One" and to establish a realm of justice as prophesied at the end of time. Other movements of the same kind claim to present a figure preceding the *mahdī*, for instance a Bāb (as the Babi's did) or a Bahā'ullāh (as the Bahai's do);

2) movements of religiously motivated protest against political authorities, reproaching them for failing to apply Islam, in particular in the realm of justice or social order;

3) movements using Islam as a common symbol in order to unite people in situations of tension or conflict with adherents of other religions and ideologies, or to call for defensive or offensive *ḡihād* against peoples perceived as enemies of Islam;

4) movements of a pan-Islamic nature, striving to unite all Muslims under the banner of Islam, even on a popular level, notwithstanding their political, ethnic and other differences;

5) movements of *da'wa* or appeal to increase the religious practice and fervour among Muslims, and to expand Islam among non-Muslims with a view to their conversion to Islam.

Some characteristics of older descriptions of popular Islam⁶

In the older descriptions, in particular in the colonial period, popular Islam was mostly viewed as very different from official Islam, and as a rather static phenomenon, or sum of static phenomena.

Sometimes these descriptions laid much stress on the permanent features of popular Islam. Scholars held that popular Islam would continue because it gave a social cohesion to the people. Similarly, the continuity of official Islam and the official institutions of Islam was stressed. Normative Islam would not be abandoned although it would be less and less observed and consequently would obtain an ever more utopian or ideal character in the course of time.

Other scholars, on the contrary, stressed that, as in Europe, popular forms of religion in Muslim countries would lose their relevance and be relegated to folklore. Proper education would give the people a modern worldview which would replace superstitious views of religion by scientific ones. Economic development would force people to act rationally according to their best interests and use their economic resources to reach maximum productivity. Proper political development would put an end to feudalism and tribalism and it would dissociate religion from political authority. The prevailing idea here was that normative Islam as well as popular Islam would become marginal to the forces of society. The Muslim intelligentsia was expected to emancipate itself both

⁶ Comp. "A note on earlier research on official and popular Islam" in the article mentioned in fn. 4, pp. 334-338. A bibliography of the most important publications on popular Islam is given at the end of that article, pp. 339-341.

from popular ideas and practices and from the traditional religious system, or at least reinterpret this all in a modernist way.

Some corrections of such older descriptions

To the extent that Muslim societies have been able to develop more actively and freely since the achievement of political independence and to the extent that they have become better known thanks to more appropriate and adequate scholarly methods developed in the social sciences, we have been able to obtain more insight into the relationships between popular and official or normative Islam, which turn out to be more complicated than scholars some fifty years ago could imagine.

The domains of the '*ulamā*' and of other religious authorities like *Ṣūfī* shaykhs and holy men have not been as separate from each other as it has seemed. Besides complementarity there have been tensions and even fierce struggles between religious leaders for control over the people. This has in a way always been the case with the '*ulamā*' and the shaykhs, with political authorities keeping tensions under control. But I think that in the twentieth century and sometimes even earlier, with the rise of the modern nation-state and the industrialization of society, the situation has changed fundamentally. On the one hand, industrialization and the rise of new middle classes have made the old forms of popular religion rather obsolete. On the other hand, the modern state with its national ideology has its own interest in demanding the people's loyalty and it wants to control them more tightly than the '*ulamā*' and even the shaykhs were ever able to do. This is becoming clear now that the state has acquired modern forms of power and control and asserted its authority, offering new ideologies which have to be accepted nationwide and which compete with older traditions of both popular and official Islam.

The modern nation-state has in fact changed both popular and official Islam considerably, as well as the relationship between them.

Indeed, the scene of popular and official religion has changed drastically with the rise of republican Turkey and Pahlavi Iran, later transformed into the Islamic Republic of Iran, the creation of Pakistan and

the wave of Islamization there during the Ziya ul-Haqq period, the "fundamentalization" of Islam in a number of Muslim countries and the various government responses to it (as in Egypt and Algeria), and last but not least with the establishment of pantjasila Indonesia instead of an Islamic Indonesian state, not to speak of crucial developments in various socialist countries. Besides the process of technological development which undermines popular religion everywhere, there were two particular forces of opposition to popular Islam to which we must give proper attention.

Opposition to popular Islam

In the colonial period popular Islam did not usually come under direct attack by the colonial powers, since it hardly presented a danger to them if they could win the acquiescence of its leaders by various means. The main attacks on popular religion in Islam came from at least two other quarters, both Muslim and both new: on the one hand the "religious" reformers and revivalists, and on the other hand the "political" nationalists and development experts. For them popular Islam, with its isolation, its static forms and dynamic movements as described above, represented a danger indeed. Let us look somewhat closer at this.

By their very nature the Salafiyya, Wahhābiyya, Iḥwān al-Muslimīn and other movements seeking to revitalize Islam were opposed to popular Islam in its contemporary forms. The Wahhābiyya considered all religious forms which were not explicitly mentioned as permitted in the Qur'ān (such as the belief in *ġinn*) as forms of *širk*. Teachers and enlightened thinkers like Muḥammad 'Abduh and Sayyid Aḥmad Ḥān jettisoned the belief in miracles which was the basis of most forms of popular Islam. Muḥammad Rašīd Riḍā, faithful to an Islam based on Qur'ān and *Sunna* and thoroughly sympathetic to what the Wahhābiyya did in Arabia regarded much in popular Islam as simple idolatry. Ḥasan al-Bannā and his followers up to the present day have recognized clearly that much of popular Islam in its traditional forms is not only in conflict with some basic prescriptions of Qur'ān and *Sunna* but also inappropriate to the modern world in which Muslims

live; it hampers the dynamism which the Muslim community needs. And the *turuq*, under whose wing popular Islam had found shelter earlier, were now themselves equally harrassed. In a word, in religious quarters the sword of scripturalism, puritanism and "fundamentalization" tried to demolish all those forms of religion which were not based on Scripture and whose adherents, often barely literate, in fact rejected modern conditions of life.

The other attack on popular Islam came from the leaders of the new nation-states, with or without a colonial past. Leaving aside the socialist countries, Atatürk's republican Turkey would seem to be the most eloquent example of a state which unilaterally decides that religious authority should be hamstrung, religion should disappear from the public sphere, derwish orders should be disbanded, and a new kind of education should inculcate national loyalty and a form of enlightenment instead of religious loyalty and traditional piety. But paradoxally it is precisely in Turkey that "popular" folk religion has proved to be most complex and powerful and not at all static. Probably precisely because the official religious leadership was reduced to silence and the secularist policies of the state were unacceptable to the religious-minded peasants with their own traditions, popular forms of Islam grew stronger than ever before, unchecked by the corrective action of the '*ulamā*'. Popular forms and movements offered an alternative Islam to those who, for religious reasons, resisted the official secularist policies.

Outside Turkey, the nationalist leaders of former mandated or colonial Muslim countries showed almost as little sympathy as Atatürk did for archaic forms of religious life which obviously opposed the centralization of power, a western type of economic development, and an educational system founded on the principle of national loyalty. In most new nation-states popular forms of religion were laughed at by the authorities; in the public sphere popular Islam was put under certain curbs. Obsolete beliefs and practices were combatted, and not only in words, through the often single permitted official parties.

There have also been considerable changes in the official Islam of the '*ulamā*', in a number of Muslim countries, such as Egypt. Here

again the state was the main agent of change, first by making the *'ulamā'* dependent on it, financially and otherwise, and then by promoting particular versions of Islam which served its own interest. The state gave these versions an official status – in Egypt through the Azhar authorities and the *muftī* – and encouraged the spread of them through the state-controlled media and in other ways. The Islam now brought to the nation, for instance Egypt, was no longer the classical Islam but a modernized “officialized” version which had passed through the reformers’ hands and received the stamp of approval of the state authorities.

*Revitalization of Islam*⁷

A new situation arose when the nationalist and rather secular outlook of the state and its economic and socio-political aims and purposes were challenged by popular and even populist calls for the *ṣarīʿa* to be implemented and by the spread among young men and women, in particular in towns and cities, of a series of ideas and practices which may be characterized roughly as a revitalization of Islam. Once the Islamic tide began to rise, whether in the late sixties or in the seventies, governments had to take notice of it and react.

Partly in response to demands for society and the state to be Islamized, political authorities in a number of Muslim states have been promoting or at least supporting the kind of “officialized” Islam mentioned above, an adaptation of official Islam to the day-to-day needs of society.

⁷ We understand by “revitalization” of a cultural or religious tradition or system a new and meaningful use which is made of certain key elements of such a tradition or system, so that people are again inspired by it. Revitalization processes take regularly place in religions and ideologies and they can take different forms varying from “fundamentalization” (going back to the basic principles or texts) to “universalization” (opening up to a more universal perspective). In present-day Islam, for instance, we can speak of a revitalization with a more political “activist” and a more reflective “fundamentalist” wing. See for instance J. Waardenburg, “Fundamentalismus und Aktivismus in der islamisch-arabischen Welt der Gegenwart”, *Orient* 30 (1989), 39-51. A most interesting question, of course, is to what extent the present-day revitalization of Islam is basically of a religious nature. Comp. J. Waardenburg, *L'Islam: une religion* (Genève: Labor et Fides, 1989).

This entails the abandonment of the extremeley nationalist and secular trend which dominated most of the states in the fifties and sixties, and in the case of Iran, Pakistan and Sudan the state itself has gone Islamic.

This encouragement by the state of an "officialized" version of Islam not only reduces the influence of the "ideal" official Islam of the 'ulamā' but also affects the situation of popular Islam. It is too early yet for a clear picture of what is happening to have emerged, but reports from countries like Tunisia, Algeria, Egypt and Turkey suggest that local forms of popular Islam are developing as an implicit protest against policies towards Islam promulgated in the capital. Popular Islam then seems to stand for local identities over against central authority. Such local, ethnic forms and movements of popular Islam may be able to express themselves more freely when governments cannot afford to pursue secularist policies any longer.

2. *A special case: Iran*

We shall apply the foregoing considerations to Iran, a country where both official and popular Islam are rich in form and content⁸. First we shall give some examples of different kinds of popular religious behaviour, divided into forms and movements. Whereas forms of behaviour imply the search for direct contact with divine or at least religious realities to obtain blessings of different kinds through experiences where the emotional component is quite strong, movements imply a social mobilization of people for the attainment of earthly goals which, together with their social effects, have a religious meaning for those involved. We shall then discuss some basic aspects of official (Šī'a) Islam in Iran insofar as they are relevant for our understanding of the relationship with popular religion. Then we shall enumerate some forms current in Irani-

⁸ Iran is singled out here among the many Muslim countries, since the pluriformity of Islam as it exists in Iran both in its official and its popular varieties is singularly neglected in present-day publications. There is a tendency to equate Islam in Iran with the neo-Šī'ī doctrines elaborated by Khomeiny and his circle, but this is not correct.

an Islam which can be considered neither as official nor as popular Islam but which enjoy a kind of semi-official recognition. Finally, we shall consider two determining factors for the relationship between official and popular Islam in Iran: specifically Šī'a religion, and the continuity of cultural traditions in Iranian societies dating from the period before Iran was islamized.

Popular forms in Iranian Islam

A first category of popular forms in Iranian Islam are those customs, beliefs and practices which are connected with seasonal feasts and communal rites of passage in the life of the individual. Those forms of religious behavior which respond to unforeseen events and crisis situations in the life of the individual and the community also belong to this group.

A second category of such forms is more particularly related to tenets of the Šī'a⁹: the veneration of the Imāms, including pilgrimages to the holy places of twelver Šī'a, the practices performed during the pilgrimages and at the shrines, popular invocations of the Imāms and traditions about their life and death or disappearance. This category also includes the mourning celebrations (*'azādārī*) in memory of the events at Kerbela, during the first ten days of Muḥarram, when a passion play (*ta'ziyya*) re-enacting the martyrdom of Imām Ḥusayn is performed. On these days the *dasta*, a procession of men flagelating themselves through the streets, and a *naql* representing the funeral of Imām Ḥusayn can, or at least could formerly be observed. At this time, but also on other occasions, preachers at a certain place (*takiya, hoseiniye*) recite certain texts

⁹ Peter J. Chelkowski (Ed.), *Ta'ziyeh: Ritual and Drama in Iran* (New York: New York University Press, 1979); Davoud Monchi-Zadeh, *Ta'ziya: Das persische Passionsspiel mit teilweiser Übersetzung der von Litten gesammelten Stücke* (Stockholm: Almqvist & Wiksell, 1967); Shaykh Muḥammad Mahdi Shams al-Dīn, *The Rising of al-Ḥusayn: Its Impact on the Consciousness of Muslim Society* (London: The Muḥammadi Trust, 1985); Gustav Edward Taiss, *Religious Symbolism and Social Change: The Drama of Husain* (Unpublished PhD Dissertation, Washington University, 1973); Claude Virolleaud, *Le théâtre persan ou le drama de Kerbela* (Paris: Adrien-Maisonneuve, 1950).

(*rawza*) about the Karbela catastrophe which may incite listeners not only to compassion but also to preparation for action against prevailing injustice. These Muharram celebrations are much more than a mere historical commemoration; those who are present participate inwardly in Ḥusayn's struggle against injustice and his sufferings, possibly also expiating the communal responsibility for Ḥusayn's death and the suffering of the innocent generally. All this involves the purification of the participants and their interiorization of these experiences; in any case it encourages a particular sensitivity to suffering. A third category consists of those forms of popular religion in which a typical dualism of good and evil prevails. Such a dualistic symbolism is especially prominent in Iranian Islam. Certain forms of the first and second category also show dualistic features, but in this case we have to do with a fundamental dualism in which true spirituality by its nature is aligned on the side of the good. Other categories comprise features of the *turuq*, customs of particular tribal and ethnic groups and other forms of popular Islam which we also find in Sunnī Muslim societies.

Popular movements in Iranian Islam

We have already mentioned Mahdist movements of an eschatological character in which either the Mahdi himself, or a forerunner of his (Bāb, Bahā'ullāh) is expected or claimed to be present.

A second category is formed by those Šī'ā movements which are religiously motivated and owe their allegiance to one particular Šī'ī religious leader to the exclusion of others. The focus is here on the right leadership, religious and otherwise, and the defense of the correct form of twelver Šī'ā Islam.

A third category comprises those movements which oppose the current political leadership because it fails to act according to the injunctions of Šī'ā Islam. Here the government is quickly identified with Evil as was the case with the Shah's régime in the 1978/79 revolution.

A fourth category is represented by movements which combat foreign and especially non-Muslim enemies, appealing explicitly to Islam, and perhaps calling for *ǧihād* as a defensive or even aggressive war effort.

Islam may also be used as a "popular" symbol for preserving the Muslims' purity and unity in situations of conflict with adherents of other religions and ideologies. The sense of purity is strongly developed in Iranian Islam, and it is not unconnected with the typical Iranian symbolism of good and evil as two absolute antagonists which has been mentioned above.

These movements of a popular nature and appeal have their own features in Iranian Šī'ā Islam.

Official religion in Iranian Islam

Twelver Šī'ā doctrine has five articles of faith, three of which it shares with Sunnī doctrine: *tawhīd* (unity of God), *nubuwwiyya* (a series of God-sent prophets with the final prophethood of Muḥammad), and *qiyāma* (resurrection followed by the last Judgment). The Sunnī articles related to the belief in angels and God's *qadar* (decision on man's eternal destiny) are replaced by two other articles, that of belief in the *imāma* (*imāms* from among the descendants of Muḥammad including faith in the continuing guidance of the hidden *imām*) and the 'adl (Justice) of God. Besides these five articles of faith, Twelver Šī'ī's also believe in *gayba* ("hidden reality") which is interpreted in various ways, in the *nūr* (divine light) from which the prophets and *imāms* were created, and in the sinlessness and perfect knowledge of the family of Muḥammad (the *bayt an-nabī*: the "five pure souls" alluded to in Sūra 33:33).

Besides these articles of doctrine, the Twelver Šī'ī's also acknowledge ten religious duties instead of the Sunnī's five: *ṣalāt*, *ṣawm*, *zakāt* (as well as *ḥums* as obligatory taxes), *ḥaḡḡ*, *ḡihād*, *al-amr bi-l-ma'rūf wa-n-nahy 'an al-munkar* (command to do what is good and to prohibit what is evil), the defense of those who support the message of God (through the prophet) and of the *Imāms*, hatred of the enemies of the *Imāms*, and of course the *ṣahāda*.

The official Šī'ī religion is represented by the 'ulamā', the religious leadership, who know and must defend the *šarī'a* and the doctrine of the Šī'ā. They also elaborate Šī'ā political theory and their social thought starts out from the conviction that Islam provides the basis of

a just society. As is well-known, the 'ulamā' managed to enforce their authority and power after a long process of rivalry with the state authority and they succeeded in taking over power after the fall of the Pahlevi dynasty in January 1979.

In contrast to Sunnī Islam, Šī'ā Islam has given the more learned 'ulamā' the right to exercise *iğtibād*, since the victory of the Uşūlī's over the Ahbārīs some two centuries ago. The *muğtabids* thus have a certain freedom of interpretation, that is a certain freedom of thought and action with regard to tradition. Only the *marāğī-i taqlīd*, that is to say exceptionally learned *muğtabids*, have the right to formulate "new" tradition and impose it on their followers; they exercise their authority not only on doctrinal but also on social and political issues.

The greater freedom of the higher Šī'ī 'ulamā' compared to their Sunnī counterparts may be said to correspond in fact to a greater dependency on the part of the ordinary Šī'ī believers compared to those in Sunnī Islam. The present power of the 'ulamā' in Iran presents a structural parallel with the power of the clergy in earlier Sassanid state and may have something to do with Iranian patterns of authority. In the Šī'ā, religious scholarship itself implies some kind of superior knowledge (*irfān*), possibly thanks to the working of the hidden Imām, whereas in Sunnī Islam religious scholarship is based on sound reason (*aql*) applied to the sources of religious knowledge, in particular the Qur'ān and the *Sunna*. Qum and Najaf are therefore surrounded by an aura of blessings due to the presence not only of holy shrines but also of scholars of superior religious insight.

Whereas since the end of the 19th century different new currents of reformism and modernism have gained ground among at least some Sunnī 'ulamā', partly under political pressures, and have brought about changes in the interpretation of Islam on a rational basis, such developments have occurred less among Šī'ī 'ulamā'. Modern interpretations of Islam in Iran have arisen mainly among "laymen" (non-'ulamā') who like their counterparts in for instance Egypt, Turkey and India before partition, can more easily reinterpret Islam in the light of the demands of the present time than the majority of the 'ulamā',

though their interpretations are of course of an unofficial nature. Šī'a mollahs have been reputed to receive a deficient education and be incapable of independent thinking, which is perhaps due to their allegiance to a higher hierarchy of Šī'ī clergy. The greater freedom of the higher clergy, then, would not seem to be followed by a greater freedom on the lower levels. It remains difficult, however, to draw any definite conclusions from this state of affairs for the relation between official and popular Islam among the Šī'a as compared with the same relation in Sunnī Islam¹⁰.

Semi-official religion in Iranian Islam

Besides official Iranian Islam there are some spiritual trends which certainly express themselves in too subtle or intellectual a nature to attract a large popular following, and yet which have been very much alive in Iran alongside the religion of the 'ulamā'. They may be called *semi-official* insofar as they are not "popular" and their existence has to be admitted by the 'ulamā'.

The first of these trends is a typical Šī'ī spirituality which offers a kind of esoteric knowledge, founded on a *silsila* (genealogy) going back to one of the Šī'ī Imāms. The adept is concerned with the understanding of deeper hidden realities which can be reached by a special gnosis ('irfān). This gnosis is also applied in the interpretation of Qur'ān and Tradition, and is held to be the basis of a spiritual hierarchy of believers. It has been developed in Iran in a particular kind of "theosophy" on

¹⁰ The relationships between official and popular religion are complex everywhere; often we cannot speak of one "official" religion and mostly there are various "popular religions" at the same time. Each case should be studied within its specific context. We must leave aside here important questions: specific items where official and popular interpretations are in conflict, the desire of religious leaders to get a hold over the masses and the rivalry between them and other authorities to control the masses. In Iran, for instance, there has been a struggle between the 'ulamā' and the state, between the 'ulamā' and the modern intellectuals of the 19th and 20th centuries, between the 'ulamā' and religious leaders who derive prestige and power from existing forms of popular religion. In practice there has been much symbiosis between official and popular forms of religious expression.

the basis of *ḥikma* (wisdom). In its more popular forms it has admitted the possibility of immediate insight and allowed the search for it.

Secondly, Sūfī spirituality throughout the history of Islam has constituted a sort of alternative religious tradition besides the official one of the 'ulamā'. The Safawids themselves arose from Sūfī circles which held some Šī'ī doctrines, and although the *ṭuruq* were practically eliminated in the 17th century A.D., they have undergone a renaissance since the end of the 18th century, perhaps because the shahs realized their stabilizing function and saw them as a counter-weight to the influence of the 'ulamā'. Within the *ṭuruq*, in Iran and elsewhere, there has been a great variety not only of kinds of spiritual education (from the *perinde ac cadaver* onwards) but also of attitudes toward society. These have varied from indifference to social order and justice to positive commitments to the immediate social group and even the negation of any religious legitimation of the state power.

The third kind of semi-official religion in Iran is much more recent. Certain intellectuals – most of them outside the 'ulamā' hierarchy, the *ṭuruq* or the circles of *irfān* – have made up their minds about the meaning of Islam in the modern world and interpreted it anew with regard to the needs of society. Examples from the sixties and seventies include *Guftār-i Māh*, a periodical which started in 1959, and the printed courses of instruction about Islam which were started by the madrasa *Dār Rab-i Haqq* in Qum in 1966. Certain new religious centers which were founded by private organizations after 1960, like the *Husayniyya-i Iršād* in Teheran, the *Maktab-i Islām* and the *Dār-i Tablīg* in Qum, and the *Kānūn-i Bahṭ va-Intiqād-i Dīnī* in Mashhad also come to mind. A renewal of interest in Islam on an intellectual level has taken place in these groups and private institutions and thinkers such as 'Alī Šarī'atī (1933-1977) have made a continuous effort to combine an Islamic Šī'ī faith with a democratic and socialist ideology. These groups have been distrusted by the orthodox 'ulamā', and of course by the state which was, and is, suspicious of subversive ideology.

In this context it is also important to note the emergence of a new, "officialized" Islam in the Pahlevi period. The government, especially

that of the last Shah, encouraged another modernist version of Islam through the media and through the appointment of 'ulamā' who supported the state policy as for instance imāms of major mosques in the country and teachers at Teheran University's Faculty of Theology¹¹. The stress here was on Islam as a rational religion aligned to development and modernization, without the differences between Islam and the other major religions being unduly emphasized.

Structure of the relationship between popular and official religion in Iran

The question arises whether certain permanent factors have at least in part determined the relationship between popular and official religion in Iran. There is reason to believe that numerous forms of popular religion and piety, sometimes of a loosely structured and unorganized nature, have continued to exist throughout the whole period of Muslim rule in Iran, both before and after Shah Ismā'il's proclamation of Šī'a Islam as the official state religion at the beginning of the 16th century¹². The existence of semi-official kinds of religious interpretation

¹¹ It should be noted, however, that in Iran, besides the "official" government appointed and supported 'ulamā', there always have been a number of "free" 'ulamā' devoting themselves to study and teaching, living from *wagf* income and without links with the state. In nearly all other Muslim countries, 'ulamā' are financially dependent on the state.

¹² Some classical descriptions of popular religion in Islam are: Henri Massé, *Croyances et coutumes persanes, suivies de Contes et chansons populaires* (Paris: Maisonneuve, 1938 in two volumes); English translation *Persian Beliefs and Customs* (New Haven: Human Relations Area Files, 1954). Much information on "superstitious" beliefs and practices as current among women in Ḥorasān is contained in Bess A. Donaldson, *The Wild Rue: A study of Muhammadan Magic and Folklore in Iran* (London: Luzac, 1938). Most famous is Edward Granville Browne, *A year among the Persians: Impressions as to the life, character, and thought of the people of Persia, received during twelve months' residence in that country in the years 1887-1888* (London: Adam and Charles Black, 1893; with numerous reeditions). Compare S. G. Wilson, *Persian Life and Customs: With scenes and incidents of residence and travel in the land of the Lion and the Sun* (New York etc.: Fleming H. Revell, 1900). Highly instructive are also Mangol Bayat, *Mysticism and Dissent: Socioreligious Thought in Qajar Iran* (Syracuse: Syracuse Univ. Press, 1982), and Roy Mottahedeh, *The Mantle of the Prophet: Learning and Power in Modern Iran* (London: Chatto & Windus, 1985). In the late thirties an initiative was taken to make an inventory

of Islam mentioned above – in terms of gnosis, mysticism and wisdom – bears additional witness to this. The religious scene in Muslim Iran appears to have been very varied indeed. In the following we shall focus on two factors in particular which have largely determined the relations between popular and official religion in Iran: on the one hand the Twelver Šī‘a form of Islam and on the other hand Iranian cultural traditions.

a) Šī‘a religion

There are certain traits of the Šī‘a which are relevant for the particular relation between official and popular religion in Islam. They can be enumerated as follows:

1) As a minority in the Islamic world as a whole, Twelver Šī‘ī’s have a particular consciousness of solidarity and belonging together, also beyond the political borders of Iran. Even if there are differences in life style, political orientation and degree of “popular” religious expression, they in no way hamper relations between Twelver Šī‘ī believers¹³. This is also valid for the Iranian context; whatever the differences between Šī‘ī ethnic groups, relations between them are not affected by the use of different forms of religious expression. Westernized intellectuals have tended to disdain “superstitions” rather than combat them, and although a number of ‘*ulamā*’ may have wanted to “purify” the Šī‘a of its popular excesses, until February 1979 their ideas of pure Islam did

of forms of popular culture and to have them on record in Teheran. To what extent the project has been continued until today is not known to me. See *Iransbahr*, Vol. I (1945). Increasingly attention has been given to the continuity of popular religious motifs in present-day Iranian literature. See for instance Girdhari Tikku “Some socio-religious themes in modern Persian fiction”, in: *Islam and its Cultural Divergence: Studies in Honor of Gustav E. von Grunebaum*, ed. by Girdhari L. Tikku (Urbana etc.: Univ. of Illinois Press, 1971), pp. 165-179. There are numerous studies on oral literature, for instance Jan W. Weryho, “Sistānī-Persian folklore”, *Indo-Iranian Journal* V (1962), pp. 276-307.

¹³ Many ancient religious elements survived in sectarian (often Šī‘ī) groups at less accessible places in the Middle East. See Klaus E. Müller, *Kulturhistorische Studien zur Genese pseudo-islamischer Sektengebilde in Vorderasien*. Wiesbaden: Franz Steiner, 1967.

not receive much support from the state. The state also wanted to eradicate excesses and took measures, for instance, with regard to the Muḥarram celebrations, but it sought to replace them not with the official rigid religion of the 'ulamā' but rather with an "enlightened" rational frame of mind to be furthered by education and an officialized modernist version of Islam. With the 'ulamā's seizure of power in February 1979 and afterwards, the possibility has arisen for the first time that forms of religion which do not correspond with the present religious leaders' conceptions may be swept aside in the name of religion.

2) The doctrine of the hidden Imām's guidance of the world and his return as Mahdi at the end of time allows for the existence of different kinds of spirituality on different levels, side by side, free of the control of one spiritual authority. The doctrine not only overcomes certain contrasts between official and popular religious expression, but also opens up possibilities for individual and communal inspiration and overall eschatological expectations. It also provides a potential for criticism of the current state of affairs, political and otherwise. If *muḡtahids* claim that the Imām speaks to them, they cannot deny that he may also speak to other, less literate people through more popular forms.

3) The development of the doctrine of *iḡtibād* into that of the great authority of a *marḡā'ī-taqlīd* seems at first sight to subordinate popular religion to the rules of official religion. But in fact popular Šī'ī religion can go on just as popular Catholic religion went on after the proclamation of the dogma of Papal infallibility¹⁴. Precisely in a situation where *'irfan* is needed to acquire superior religious knowledge, there may very well be a lenient, if contemptuous attitude towards popular religion as necessary for the uninitiated, rather than a hostile one.

4) The emotionally loaded Muḥarram celebrations may be frowned upon by some 'ulamā' as popular excesses but it is difficult to forbid them in a Šī'ī context. By comparison, for instance, with Yom Kippur

¹⁴ Compare James A. Bill and John Alden Williams, "Šī'ī Islam and Roman Catholicism: An Ecclesial and Political Analysis", in *The Vatican, Islam and the Middle East*. Ed. by Kail C. Ellis, O.S.A. Syracuse, NY: Syracuse Univ. Press, 1987, pp. 69-105.

and Good Friday they have a far more powerful appeal to the masses, and the political scenario of bringing down the Shah in November 1978 was effectively modelled on the religious scenario of Ḥusayn's martyrdom by Yazīd. Popular religion and culture are nourished by these celebrations, thereby acquiring their own autonomous course, and it is far from inconceivable that, if the 'ulamā' seriously abused their authority, they could in turn be denounced on the occasion of the same Muḥarram celebrations which brought them to power with their protest against appalling injustice.

5) The authority of *muḡtabids* and *marāḡī-i-taqlīd* make it possible for the masses to be relatively easily mobilized not only for religious but also for political causes, in particular when foreign powers, heretics and certain groups of non-Muslims are perceived as sources of evil. This authority works powerfully in times of crisis, as is clear from the way Ḥomeinī was able to manipulate the Iranian masses against the regime in 1978 and from a French village at that.

If it is true that Šī'a religion assures a certain bridge between official and popular forms and movements in Iranian Islam, new questions arise. How strong is the loyalty to the official tenets of the Šī'a, "official religion", not only among the mollahs and 'ulamā', but also among the *bāzārī*'s (commercial people), civil servants and the various educated classes, not to speak of the army? And conversely, what has been and is the "popular" religion of the ordinary people nowadays: nomads, semi-nomads and peasants of different regions, workers in industry, and refineries, the millions living in Teheran and other cities? And how much loyalty not only to the official religion but also to the official religious leadership exists among these groups, in particular since the Islamic revolution and the war against Iraq?

b) *Iranian society and cultural traditions*

There are also certain features of Iranian society and cultural traditions which are relevant for the relation between official and popular religion in Iranian Islam. A number of elements of the latter go back themselves to pre-Islamic customs or are linked to ancient social struc-

tures, which are still characteristic of Iranian society up to the present day. Some of them are the following:

- 1) Both the Šīcī and the pre-Islamic Iranian worldviews consider history as the arena in which the struggle for a just society and cosmic order is waged, and they share the expectation of a saviour at the end of time and a state based on a divinely-designated leadership.
- 2) The hierarchical structure of Iranian society has for long given it a certain immobility. For ordinary people in Iran the right Islamic way of life must have seemed unattainable because of the negligence of the "official" religious leaders and state authorities. This has led to occasional outbursts of emotions and unrest in times of crisis. Popular religion, much more than official religion, has been connected with the economic and social situation of more or less underprivileged groups. It may be called an "opium", but it can also be considered as an attempt to transcend a certain extremely difficult situation, and not to succumb to despair.
- 3) The strong, and almost absolute opposition between pure and impure, good and evil, light and dark, God and Satanic forces may be inspired by particular Qur'ānic texts which are referred to. But there is reason to suppose that there are other causes too: since distant times Iranian culture and society have been very sensitive to dualistic schemes, as can be seen in the pre-Islamic Iranian religions.
- 4) In present-day Iranian folk-literature we can find numerous elements and symbols of popular religion and culture dating back to pre-Islamic times, and they even have been finding their way into "official" literature. Perhaps more than other Muslim cultures, the Iranian one sharply distinguishes between elite and popular culture, although there are gradations in between; this is important for the situation of popular religion in Iran¹⁵. There is an urgent need for studies of the connections

¹⁵ In Iran as well as in some other Muslim countries with a long literary tradition, a difference developed a long time ago between recognized "high" literature mostly in written form on the one hand and folk literature which was orally transmitted on the other hand. The latter included folktales, folkpoetry including songs, folkplays, and in

between popular religion in Iran and the infrastructure of society, the Iranian cultural traditions on different levels, and the social history of the various tribal and occupational groups living in the country. The relations of popular religion with official religion and the state authorities should be studied against this background. What do we know about the forms and movements of popular religion in the Qāğār period, apart from the Bābī movement? What changes did the policies of the Pahlevi bring about in popular religion and how did it respond to them over a period of more than fifty years? What attitudes do present-day 'ulamā' take toward popular religion in Iran, and, perhaps most interesting of all, how does Iranian popular religion react to the present-day official religion which is so forcefully asserted?

The impact of recent Iranian history on the relationship between popular and official Islam

The renewed attention given to religion in Iran since the sixties cannot be explained only, and perhaps not at all, in terms of a basic structure of Iranian society and cultural traditions. It is rather to be explained in a precise historical context: as a reaction to the secularizing state policies which moreover resulted from the uncontrolled power of one man, the Shah. It was also a reaction to economic problems which faced the urban masses in particular, especially after rapid inflation had set in after 1973. The renewed attention given to religion, the new interpretations of Ši'a doctrine in terms of social tenets and the ritualization

Iran of course versions of the *tā'zieh*. Like folk religion folk literature expresses current themes of life. It often provides an outlet in the harshness of life, and sometimes is clearly an indirect protest against various forms of oppression; it also may address itself against pretending figures of religious authority, mocking at mollahs etc. It is noteworthy that in "high" culture a certain anticlericalism can be felt, and that not only anti-Arab but also anti-Islam feelings may be ventilated in literary forms, and more recently anti-western feelings. There sometimes is a nostalgia for a truly Iranian way of life as it was before the arrival of the Arab, Turkish and later western invaders. I am indebted here to Prof. Nikki Keddie's paper "Intellectual and Literary Trends to 1960", distributed at the Workshop on History and Politics of Religious Movements in Iran held in Berlin, 5-7 September 1980.

of resistance to the Shah's regime largely explain how, after the departure of the Shah following a republican revolution, a second, "Islamic" revolution could take place, involving the Šī'ī clergy, that is to say the bearers of official religion. During the revolution, however, they were strongly supported by "popular" approval and in the following years, during the war against Iraq, numerous elements of "popular" religion were used by the leaders to induce the people to go in the direction they wanted, which included voluntary martyrdom¹⁶. Precisely during these critical years the Iranian Šī'a showed a singular convergence of popular and official religion, the details of which should still be investigated¹⁷.

¹⁶ It should be remembered that there always has been a great number of uses made of popular religion according to different interests. In some cases one can speak of a straight exploitation of people's naive popular beliefs and practices. In Iran and elsewhere there is the more general problem that leaders, whether motivated religiously or not, are able to arouse the masses by using a religious guise and religious language.

¹⁷ Our analysis of the relationship between official and popular religion in specific cases needs a refinement of concepts. For Islam, for instance, alternative concepts have been suggested. Since "official" suggests both state-supported or state-controlled and also something held to be normative for all Muslims, I suggested in the article mentioned in fn. 4 to speak of *normative* instead of "official" Islam. W. van Binsbergen uses the term *formal* Islam rather than "official". At the Workshop mentioned in fn. 14, W. M. Floor suggested another set of concepts, speaking of *living* religion as opposed to "official" religion, such living religion being subdivided into *literate* and *non-literate*. The latter distinction is important indeed, and it is clearly recognizable like the difference between literate and non-literate peoples and cultures. Over against non-literate religion (commonly called *folk religion*) there is literate religion, either "official" in the sense of normative and ideal, or "living" in the sense of actually experienced and practiced. Terminology serves as a device to arrive at a better knowledge, understanding or explanation, preferably to come to insights which are not reached otherwise. Whatever the technical term chosen, we want to stress that more attention should be given to popular culture and popular religion, as a cultural life substratum of the masses in particular in the Third World, but also elsewhere up to the present time. Official culture and official religion too constitute a general category, which should be filled in concretely when a particular case is studied.

3. Conclusion

Problems

There are many difficulties involved in any serious study of popular religion in present-day Muslim societies, if we understand by this the religion of the ordinary people in the Islamic world. First of all there is a problem of sources: written and printed materials in this domain are scarce, fieldwork in the countries concerned has become more difficult, fieldwork among Muslim immigrants in Europe has only just started¹⁸ and the first generation of migrants who were most familiar with living popular religion in the regions they came from is already passing away.

Second, there is a real problem of particular presuppositions among researchers themselves as to the meaning and function of popular religion in general, and consequently in Muslim societies too.

Third, the term "popular religion" itself, after having been identified for some time with folk religion and devoid of political implications, has recently acquired a political colouring and is then sometimes used in an ideological sense.

Fourth, research in this sensitive area is not facilitated by the various taboos surrounding it, many popular beliefs and customs being ridiculed not only by westerners but also by the indigenous intellectual elite and active islamists.

And fifth, perhaps most important: scholars these days lack direct contact with the ordinary people in the field even more than in the past. Often real obstacles, imposed from above by far from democratic regimes, work against establishing natural personal contacts apart from on ceremonial occasions. The people, for their part, have only a limited

¹⁸ The religion of Muslim immigrants in western Europe is often of a popular nature. Some publications indeed pay attention to this aspect of the Islam of the immigrants, for instance Abdulkadir W. Haas, *Türkische Volksfrömmigkeit* (Frankfurt a. Main: Otto Lembeck, 1986) and Monique Renaerts, *La mort, rites et valeurs dans l'Islam Maghrébin* (Bruxelles: Univ. Libre de Bruxelles, Centre de Sociologie de l'Islam, 1986). Through the guidance by competent imams and education this more "popular" Islam of the first generation of immigrants can move towards a more "official" kind of Islam.

capacity to look detachedly at things which are so much part of life for them and are meaningful in situations which are by definition loaded with emotions and tensions, some of them not even conscious. Precisely because the subject matter is so complex and communication with the people demands considerable efforts, scholars may all too soon be tempted to build up their own constructions of popular culture and religion. They make then an esthetic creation, instead of observing the ordinary people and the popular culture and religion which they call "Islam" and we prefer to describe as "popular Islam".

Current changes

In the course of the twentieth century a wave of devastation appears to have swept over traditional societies and popular religion in Muslim countries as elsewhere. But if numerous forms have disappeared, this does not mean that popular religion as such has. While losing its accepted forms of expression, it may itself have simply been driven underground to manifest itself again later as a collective force in unforeseen ways.

What we have seen of changes in popular Islam during the last decades seems to indicate a recession as far as its more static "superstitious" and miraculous forms are concerned. There is, by contrast, an evident increase in its more dynamic populist movements and here and there local Islamic popular practices around a shrine are even being revived.

With industrialization and urbanization new communal solidarities have arisen and they seem to produce their own popular culture, with not only the continuation of older popular forms of religion but also new kinds of appeals being made to Islam. Development has brought with it both a process of individualization and atomization and a spread of religious symbols among the masses. This has obvious consequences for what may be popular culture and popular religion in the future. We should add that some recent applications of popular religious forms have clearly political implications. Thus, the 'Āšūrā celebrations in Iran in 1978 and in South Lebanon in the early 1980's gave a powerful symbolic expression to the participants' dedication to martyrdom.

In no case can it be proved that popular religion in Muslim societies is about to disappear, that the ordinary people in Muslim societies would no longer have their own kinds of religious expression. It has rather adapted itself to new circumstances and new problems of life, it has to some extent been pruned of excessively irrational elements, and it seems to be withdrawing to sectors of communal life which are not susceptible to control either by cool reason or by the state. The changes occurring in popular expressions of a religious nature can largely be explained in the light of the religious and political forces at work in Muslim societies over the last century and a half.

Renewed vitality of popular religion in Islam

At least four reasons may be put forward for present-day signs of a renewed vitality of popular expressions of Islam:

- 1) popular Islam can be used as a symbolic protest against the state experienced as a self-imposing power, and it is largely through popular religious symbols and symbolic action that people can be mobilized on a large scale;
- 2) in societies where people are living under severe stress, including the pressure of religious or secular ideologies, popular culture and religion provide a kind of protected domain¹⁹. They limit the grasp of the state to some extent: since they originate at the grass roots they offer a basic alternative to all power imposed from above;
- 3) the poor who are deprived of security and who are dependent and consequently oppressed create in their popular religion a universe of their own. If we may believe Professor Gilseman²⁰, it enables them to wrest some meaning from what is material nothingness and allows them

¹⁹ The "refuge" function of popular religion, and of religion in general, as a separate domain, deserves more attention than has been given to it until now.

²⁰ Michael Gilseman, "Vroomheid, mystiek en volksgeloof" (Piety, mysticism and popular beliefs) in Jacques Waardenburg (ed.), *Islam: Norm, ideaal and werkelijkheid* (Islam: Norm, Ideal and Reality). Houten: Wereldvenster Publishers, 1984, 1987², 1994³ (Chapter 18).

some scope for communal symbolic action though it appears nonsensical if judged according to the norms of the "official" or "officialized" cultural universe;

4) popular religion can always justify itself as resisting what is foreign or oppressive in Muslim countries, and claim to represent a "home base" of what is felt to be authentic life. In this light popular religion is authentic culture and should be studied as such.

The expressions of popular religion keep alive – so to speak in reserve – a whole set of communal norms and values, hopes and ideals. They may remain beneath the surface in everyday life but they can manifest themselves in festive celebrations and specific religious devotions, in particular in situations of stress and suffering, and in expressing particular common religious, social and political loyalties, often simultaneously. Such norms, values, hopes and ideals are transmitted in the ordinary course of life and give a kind of profound communal dimension to life, conveying what may be called religious meanings to the people.

Popular forms of religion may have a basically conservative character in traditional societies. They can lead, however, to movements which are anything but conservative, as we have been able to see in Iran. In order to explore this further, we shall have to change most current ideas about what popular culture and religion are or should be like, so that we will be able to grasp better than before the human motivations and intentions of "ordinary people" in Muslim societies.

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