

scholars were greatly impressed by the epistles and regarded them as a kind of encyclopaedia of the sciences of the day (as known in Basra in the tenth or eleventh century); but further study has shown that the learning is superficial, that there are many contradictions and that the disparate materials have not been shaped into a unified system. Though one or two later writers quote from the epistles, they cannot be said to have been an important formative influence in Islamic thought.⁵

NOTES

1. Al-Fārābī: *GAL*, i.232-6; *GALS*, i.375-7, 957f.; *EP*², art. (al-)Fārābī by R. Walzer; his book 'On the Principles of the Views of the People of the Excellent State', often called for short *Al-Madīna al-fāḍila*, has been translated into German by F. Dieterici as *Der Musterstaat* (Leiden 1900) and into English by R. Walzer as *Al-Farabi on the Perfect State*, Oxford 1982; a short work on politics is *Fuṣūl al-madani: Aphorisms of the Statesman*, edited and translated by D. M. Dunlop, Cambridge 1961.
2. *EP*², arts. Abū Sulaymān al-Mantiqī, Abū Ḥayyān al-Tawḥīdī (both by S. M. Stern); I. Keilani, *Abū Ḥayyān al-Tawḥīdī: introduction à son oeuvre*, Beirut 1950; Marc Bergé, *Pour un humanisme vécu: Abū Ḥayyān al-Tawḥīdī*, Damascus 1979.
3. Miskawayh: C. K. Zurayk, *The Refinement of Character*, Beirut 1968 (translation of *Tahdhīb al-akhlāq*); M. Arkoun, *Contribution à l'étude de l'humanisme arabe au IVe/Xe siècle: Miskawayh . . . philosophe et historien*, Paris 1970; *Al-Fawz al-aṣghar* is translated in J. W. Sweetman, *Islam and Christian Theology*, London 1945, i/1.93-185; *The Eclipse of the 'Abbāsīd Caliphate*, translated by H. F. Amedroz and D. S. Margoliouth, Oxford 1920, etc. (the passage referred to is vi.76-8).
4. Avicenna: A.-M. Goichon, art. Ibn Sīnā in *EP*² with extensive bibliography; also *La Philosophie d'Avicenne et son influence en Europe médiévale*, Paris 1944, and *La Distinction de l'essence et de l'existence d'après Ibn Sīnā*, Paris 1937; G. M. Wickens (ed.), *Avicenna: Scientist and Philosopher*, London 1952, six lectures delivered at Cambridge to celebrate the millenary, including one by A. J. Arberry on his life: Louis Gardet, *La Pensée religieuse d'Avicenne*, Paris 1951, studies his relation to Sunni theology and his mysticism; Henry Corbin, *Avicenna and the Visionary Recital*, London 1961, explores his mystical and theosophical thought and the relation to him of later Imāmite Shī'ism; Faḍlur-Rahman, *Avicenna's Psychology*, London 1952, translation of a section of *K. an-Najāt* with notes; also *Prophecy in Islam*, London 1958, on the philosophical conception of prophethood; Soheil M. Afman, *Avicenna, his Life and Works*, London 1958, with an important section (pp.233-57) on his influence in the east. The closing quotation is from Richard Walzer, *Greek into Arabic* (B/D), 26.
5. Ikhwān aṣ-Ṣafā': Yves Marquet, art. Ikhwān al-Ṣafā' in *EP*²; also *La Philosophie des Ihwān al-Ṣafā'*, Algiers 1975; Ian R. Netton, *Muslim Neoplatonists: an Introduction to the Thought of the Brethren of Purity*, London 1982; Geo. Widengren, 'The Pure Brethren and the Philosophical Structure of their System', in Alford T. Welch and Pierre Cachia (eds), *Islam: Past Influence and Present Challenge*, Edinburgh 1979, 57-69.

CHAPTER TWELVE

THE PROGRESS OF ASH'ARITE THEOLOGY

Before giving an account of some of the leading figures in the Ash'arite school it will be helpful to say something about the difficulty of seeing the Ash'arites in an adequate perspective. For long Western scholars tended to identify Ash'arism with theological orthodoxy. It was only with the growth of interest in Ḥanbalism stimulated by Henri Laoust that this identification was seen to be inadequate. Under the inspiration of Laoust, George Makdisi published an article in 1962 entitled 'Ash'arī and the Ash'arites in Islamic Religious History'. In this he called attention to the fact that Western Islamists had relied almost exclusively on Ash'arite sources. This began with the publication in London in two volumes (1842, 1846) of ash-Shahrastānī's work on sects and religions, *Kitāb al-milal wa-n-nihal*, followed by its translation into German in 1850/1. This was a balanced scholarly work and rightly had an immense influence on Western thinking about Islam, but it was not without some bias in favour of Ash'arism. Towards the end of the century two other works, both Ash'arite, came to be used for the later history of the school. These were the biographies of Ash'arite theologians by Ibn-'Asākir (d.1175) and the biographies of Shāfi'ite jurists by as-Subkī (d.1370). Makdisi pointed out that both of these, despite an appearance of objectivity, are skilled apologetic works whose aim was to get Ash'arism acknowledged as having a right to exist within the Shāfi'ite legal school. In all the legal schools there were 'traditionalist' majorities bitterly opposed to Kalām or rational theology. The article concluded that the importance of the Ash'arites had been exaggerated and the contribution of the 'traditionalists' overlooked.

This conclusion is in the main to be accepted, and an attempt will be made here to preserve a balance between the various groups of theologians, though there is little material on which to base an assessment of the relative strengths. It must also be pointed out that within the Ash'arite school undue importance has been attached to al-Ghazālī. This may have been because many Western scholars have

been attracted by his intellectual autobiography; but they have also been followed by contemporary Muslim scholars. The articles about him, at least up to about 1960, easily outnumbered the articles about all other Islamic theologians taken together. It is as a theologian and mystic, too, that these were concerned with him. Yet this was not his importance for his contemporaries and successors. The majority of the references to his works by Muslim writers in the two centuries after his death were to books on jurisprudence. This brings in another Western misconception—to suppose that the place of theology in Islam is identical with its place in Christianity. The central discipline in Islamic higher education, however, was not theology but jurisprudence. The *madrasa*, college, was essentially a place for teaching jurisprudence, and its head was the professor of jurisprudence. This is why it was important to get the legal schools to acknowledge Kalām as a permissible study.¹

(a) *al-Bāqillānī*

The first important figure in the Ash'arite school after al-Ash'arī himself is al-Bāqillānī.² According to Ibn-Khaldūn it was he who perfected the methodology of the school; and, though the atomism attributed to him by Ibn-Khaldūn is now known to be earlier, it is probable that it was in his time and through his work that the school took definite shape. His contemporary Ibn-Fūrak was possibly responsible for getting al-Ash'arī accepted as eponym of the school.

Little is recorded of the life of al-Bāqillānī. His name is given as Abū-Bakr Muḥammad ibn-aṭ-Ṭayyib ibn-al-Bāqillānī. No date is given for his birth, but it was probably about 940. He was born in Basra, spent his earlier years there, and is said to have studied under two of the immediate pupils of al-Ash'arī. From Basra he was summoned to take part in theological discussions at the court of the Buwayhid emir 'Aḍud-ad-dawla, then at Shiraz. That was probably about 970. He then seems to have gone with the emir to Baghdad, since he was sent on an official embassy to Constantinople in 982. His dealings with the court seem to have come to an end with the death of 'Aḍud-ad-dawla in 983, but it is also possible that his conduct of the embassy had not been satisfactory. The rest of his life, until his death in June 1013, was spent in Baghdad, except that for a time he was *qāḍī* (judge) in some place other than Baghdad. In jurisprudence he was a Mālikite and so contributed to the spread of Ash'arism in Mālikite circles in North Africa. Most of the other well-known Ash'arites belonged to the Shāfi'ite school, but there were also some Ḥanafites among them.

A general account of the theological views of al-Bāqillānī is to be found in his *Kitāb at-tamhīd*, 'The Book of the Introduction', which belongs to the class of *summae theologicae*, of which several will be

mentioned subsequently.³ The plan of the book is instructive and may be set out as follows:

1. Prolegomena dealing with the nature of knowledge and its objects, and with the existence and names of God (6–34 in McCarthy's edition).
2. Refutation of other religions, including Zoroastrians, Christians, 'Barāhima' and Jews (34–190).
3. Refutation of certain deviant Muslim groups: Mujassima (Corporealists) (191–6); Mu'tazilites (197–377); Shi'ites (160–239 of Egyptian edition).

The first point to be noticed about this is that the choice of topics is not irrelevant to the current situation in Baghdad. The rulers there since 945 had been the Buwayhid dynasty of emirs, and, though in most respects they aimed at being neutral between the various sects and schools, they sympathized with the Imāmite Shi'ites and gave them a measure of support. In consequence some of the Sunnite groups, such as the Ash'arites and the Ḥanbalites, were brought closer to one another through the common threat. Thus in the *Tamhīd* there is no attack on the 'traditionalist' Sunnite position as held by many Ḥanbalites, and only five pages directed against the Mujassima (possibly meaning the Karrāmites) who insisted on applying the term *jism*, 'body', to God, though possibly meaning rather 'substance'. The length of the section against the Mu'tazilites is possibly due to the fact they and the Imāmites had many doctrines in common and shared in the favours of the Buwayhids. The section on other religions reflects the presence in Baghdad of Zoroastrians, Christians and Jews; the Barāhima (cf. Brahmin), probably of Indian origin, were known as a group who acknowledged no prophets.

Much of what al-Bāqillānī says follows along the lines of the teaching of al-Ash'arī as it is known from his *Luma'* and *Ibāna*. Michel Allard, who studied his views on the attributes of God, found that his chief originality lay in his insistence on the reality of the attributes and in his development of a theory of language. This last seems to have been forced upon him by the assertion of Mu'tazilite opponents that the 'name' (*ism*) is different from 'the named' (*al-musammā*) and also from 'naming' (*tasmiya*), whereas some of his own party, doubtless influenced by old Semitic ideas, wanted to identify the name and the named. The matter was complicated by the fact that the word translated 'attribute' is *ṣifa* from the root *waṣafa*, 'describe', which gives us the verbal noun *waṣf*, 'describing', and *al-mawṣūf*, 'the described'. Al-Bāqillānī insisted above all that a *ṣifa* like 'knowledge' or 'power' is different from the *ism*, 'knowing', 'powerful', but at the same time belongs to God. (The adjectival 'names' are prominent in the Qur'ān and in popular piety.)

Two other works of al-Bāqillānī deal with topics which attracted

the attention of theologians only after the time of al-Ash'arī himself. One is *I'jāz al-Qur'ān*, 'The miraculous character of the Qur'ān', that is, its inimitability, especially in respect of literary style. The other was given the English title of 'Miracle and Magic: a Treatise on the Nature of the apologetic Miracle and its differentiation from Charisms, Trickery, Divination, Magic and Spells'. The two works are closely connected in subject-matter. The term *mu'jiza*, 'translated apologetic or evidentiary miracle', is the active participle of *a'jaza*, 'render incapable', and is not used of any miraculous happening but only of one granted by God to a prophet to prove the truth of his claim to prophethood and silence his opponents. The word *i'jāz*, literally 'rendering incapable' or 'silencing', is the verbal noun from the same verb.

The Muslims had been facing the underlying problem since the time of Muḥammad himself, and it was not surprising that it now thrust itself upon the rational theologians. The Jews of Medina had in effect argued that Muḥammad's claim to be prophet in the Biblical tradition must be false, since some of his revelations contradicted the Bible. So the question was raised how one could be certain that Muḥammad was a prophet. When the Muslims conquered Syria, Iraq and Egypt they were constantly mixing with Christians and others who denied the prophethood of Muḥammad. For popular consumption the preachers discovered or invented miracles for Muḥammad, but the serious theologians took the line that the miracle proving that Muḥammad was a prophet was the Qur'ān itself. In the Qur'ān (2.23; 10.38; 11.13) his opponents had been challenged to produce comparable suras, and they had failed to do so. The miraculous character of the revelations was enhanced by interpreting the word *ummī* to mean that Muḥammad could not read (though its original meaning was probably 'Gentile').

The problem became more urgent after the mystic al-Ḥallāj (d.922) asserted that certain miraculous happenings showed that his account of his spiritual experiences was true. Opponents alleged that the happenings in question were due to trickery or sorcery. Al-Bāqillānī insisted that the apologetic miracle must be something which only God can bring about and which he does in fact bring about after a prophet has predicted that God will do this to substantiate his prophethood. The prophet's claim and prediction ruled out mere conjuring. To rule out deliberate trickery and deception al-Bāqillānī argued that the happening must be one contrary to the normal course of events and such that only God had power to bring it about. There was a basis for this in the Qur'ānic accounts (7.103-36; etc.) of how, when Pharaoh asked Moses for a sign to show that his claim to bring a message from God was true, Moses flung down a staff which turned into a serpent and swallowed the serpents produced by the staffs

which Pharaoh's sorcerers had also flung down. The arguments about the nature of the *mu'jiza* are in terms which apply to all prophets, but they are complemented by the assertion that the miraculous character of the Qur'ān is in its eloquence or sublime literary quality. Elsewhere al-Bāqillānī makes clear his view that the essential speech of God is not the Arabic text of the Qur'ān but its 'meaning' (*ma'nā*); and in accordance with Islamic tradition he holds that it was the same 'meaning' that was revealed to Moses in the Torah in the Hebrew language and to Jesus in the Evangel in Syriac.

(b) *the Ash'arites of Nishapur*

While there continued to be exponents of Ash'arite theology in Baghdad and other centres, it so happens that during the eleventh century the best known Ash'arites are associated with Nishapur (in the east of modern Iran). In the tenth century this was an extensive and populous city, sometimes the seat of the local ruler. For most of the tenth century the leading power in eastern Iran and further east was the Sāmānid dynasty—autonomous princes giving nominal allegiance to the 'Abbāsīd caliph in Baghdad. They were patrons both of traditional Arabic and Islamic learning and of the new Persian literature which was coming into existence. Nishapur thus became a great intellectual centre, in prestige falling not much short of Baghdad which lay two months' journey to the west.

Prominent in the intellectual life of Nishapur was the Karrāmites sect (p.59 above), who were noted for their ascetic and pietistic practices. Their leaders in the later tenth century, the family of Banū Maḥmashādh, had for a time the support of the Sāmānid governor Sebūktigin and then of his son Maḥmūd, who had become autonomous sultan of Ghazna; but they lost this support about 1011. Later, in 1095 and 1096, they are recorded as involved in fighting against both the Ḥanafites and the Shāfi'ites in both Nishapur and Bayhaq. It is not clear why the legal and theological schools were so bitterly opposed to them. The point most often mentioned is their use of the term *jism*, 'body' (or 'substance?'), in respect of God; but they also appear to have been opponents of the Mu'tazilites. Apart from the Karrāmites the people of Nishapur seem to have been about equally divided between Ḥanafites and Shāfi'ites.

Ibn-Fūrak (Abū-Bakr Muḥammad ibn-al-Ḥasan ibn-Fūrak al-Iṣbahānī) was born about 941, possibly in Ispahan, but studied in both Basra and Baghdad.⁴ In 982 or 983 admirers in Nishapur persuaded the Sāmānid emir Ibn-Sīmjūr to invite him there as a teacher. A *madrassa* or college was built for him, and his presence in Nishapur is said to have led to a great flowering of various studies there. He died in 1015 by poisoning on his way back from Ghazna, whither he had been summoned by Sultan Maḥmūd. It was probably the Karrāmites who

poisoned him after he had defeated them in argument; but Ibn-Ḥazm, who criticized him bitterly, alleged that the poisoning was by order of Maḥmūd because of a view he had expressed about Muḥammad's prophethood.

While he seems to have been the chief source for the early history of Ash'arism, his main work in the eyes of later generations was one about the application to God in Ḥadīth of anthropomorphic terms. Against the Karrāmites he argued that these must be interpreted allegorically; and he asserted as a general principle that it is better to interpret these texts in accordance with the conception of God as transcendent, for which there is a clear basis in revelation, than to do the opposite and, by interpreting literally texts which have not been fully understood, to endanger the conception of God's transcendence. In this Ibn-Fūrak may have gone beyond the views of al-Ash'arī himself.

Al-Baghdādī (Abū-Manṣūr 'Abd-al-Qāhir ibn-Ṭāhir) was probably born in Iraq.⁵ Some time before 975 he came to Nishapur with his father, a wealthy man and a scholar, and studied under the teachers there. He was said to have mastered seventeen different disciplines, and a book of his on arithmetic was highly praised. He was apparently the outstanding teacher in Nishapur in his later years, and argued personally with the Karrāmites, on one occasion (in 980) in the presence of the emir. Shortly before his death in 1037 a Turkmen invasion caused him to leave Nishapur for Isfarāyīn, where he died almost immediately and was buried beside another Ash'arite, al-Isfarāyīnī.⁶

His book *Al-Farq bayn al-firaq*, 'The Differences between the Sects', is an important heresiographical source (p.164 below), both descriptive and polemical. In the last section of some forty pages he presents the fifteen basic principles of Islam, as the Ash'arites understand them. In another book, *Uṣūl ad-dīn*, 'The Principles of Religion', he has a chapter for each of the basic principles, and each chapter is divided into fifteen sections. This has been characterized by Allard as an extended creed rather than a work of theology, since there is little detailed argument. The main heretical views are briefly mentioned. Many of the positions he himself adopts are similar to those of al-Bāqillānī, though he is closer to Ibn-Fūrak on the question of anthropomorphic terms.

Al-Bayhaqī (Abū-Bakr Aḥmad ibn-al-Ḥusayn) was born in 994 in the district of Bayhaq, about 100 km west of Nishapur.⁷ Apart from travelling to other centres for study he spent most of his life in Bayhaq until 1049 when he was requested to go to Nishapur. This request arose out of the persecution of the Ash'arites by al-Kundurī, vizier of the Seljūq sultan Ṭughril Beg, who had been ruling from Nishapur since 1040. The reason for this attack by al-Kundurī was probably his

rivalry for the position of vizier with Abū-Sahl ibn-al-Muwaffaq, the head of the municipality of Nishapur; the latter was a Shāfi'ite in law, whereas al-Kundurī was a Ḥanafite. It would have been difficult to attack the Shāfi'ite law-school as such, but many Shāfi'ites were Ash'arites in theology, and Ash'arism had many critics. About 1049 two distinguished Ash'arites, al-Qushayrī and al-Juwaynī, were excluded from the mosques, and an order came from the sultan for their imprisonment, along with that of Abū-Sahl ibn-al-Muwaffaq and others. Eventually the two theologians left Nishapur and went to the Hijaz. Meanwhile al-Bayhaqī had written to al-Kundurī a long letter, which has been preserved, in which he showed the Ash'arites were above suspicion of heresy and asked for the end of the persecution. It was about a year later that al-Bayhaqī went to Nishapur, and he may have spent some years there before he too went to the Hijaz. The return of the exiles to Nishapur took place after the imprisonment and death of al-Kundurī about 1063 and 1064. Al-Bayhaqī died in 1066.

Although reckoned an Ash'arite, al-Bayhaqī was primarily a student of Ḥadīth and not a speculative theologian. This made his defence of Ash'arism specially valuable, since he was universally accepted as an authority in the field of Ḥadīth. His 'Book of Names and Attributes' consists to a great extent of the citation from Qur'ān and Ḥadīth of the sources which justify the ascribing to God of the various names and attributes. Underlying his treatment, however, are certain rational principles, as Michel Allard has shown in his careful study, and this makes the book a work of theology. In the Ash'arite tradition he accepted the distinction between the essential and active attributes, but above all he steered a middle course between the *ta'tīl* (denial of distinct attributes) of the Mu'tazilites and the *tashbīh* (anthropomorphism) of the Karrāmites. In other words, names of God properly vouched for in the sources represent real attributes, such as the name '*ālim*', 'Knowing', and the attribute '*ilm*', 'knowledge'; but they are not to be understood either in a literal, material sense or in a purely metaphorical sense. All this applies even to such terms as 'hand', 'face' and 'eye' when used of God. Al-Bayhaqī is the most noteworthy representative among the Ash'arites of this non-speculative line.

Al-Qushayrī (Abū-l-Qāsim 'Abd-al-Karīm ibn-Hawāzin) was born in a village near Nishapur in 986 and died in the town itself on the last day of 1072.⁸ As a young student in Nishapur he was attracted to ṣūfism by the teaching of the leading master of the time, ad-Daqqāq, whose daughter he married. He excelled in all the religious disciplines, especially in theology, the exegesis of the Qur'ān and the study of Ḥadīth. In jurisprudence he was a Shāfi'ite. For Ash'arite theology his teachers were Ibn-Fūrak and al-Isfarāyīnī. On one

occasion the latter is said to have scolded him for not taking notes of the lectures, but, when the student showed that he had remembered the lectures perfectly the teacher took a fancy to him and said that in his case it would be enough to read his books and discuss them with him privately. He suffered with other Ash'arites under the persecution of al-Kundurī, and for a time taught Ḥadīth in Baghdad. His most famous work is his *Risāla* or 'Epistle', which is a full account of early ṣūfism and has been much read and studied. The theological aspect of the work of al-Qushayrī has not been adequately examined, but Louis Massignon has indicated how he used Ash'arite principles to defend ṣūfism from charges of heresy.

Al-Juwaynī (Abū-l-Ma'ālī 'Abd-al-Malik ibn-'Abd-Allāh), known as Imām al-Ḥaramayn, was the son of a distinguished jurist and was born on the outskirts of Nishapur in 1028.⁹ He was a very industrious student and, when his father died in 1046, succeeded to his chair of jurisprudence. The year 1048, however, saw the beginning of the persecution of the Ash'arites by the vizier al-Kundurī (described above). Al-Juwaynī is said to have fled from Nishapur just as the sultan's police were publishing a document condemning him. Some sources suggest that he went immediately to the Hijaz, but it is more likely that he went first to Ṭughril Beg's camp, which was also his court, and was also for a time in Baghdad before spending four years in Mecca and Medina. From this period of teaching in the two holy cities he received the honorific title of 'the imam of the two sanctuaries' (Ḥaramayn). After al-Kundurī's fall from power in 1063 and his replacement as vizier by Nizām-al-mulk the latter reversed the policy of persecuting Ash'arism and gave it some governmental support by establishing a series of colleges, each known as a *madrasa Nizām-iyya*. One of the first was at Nishapur, where al-Juwaynī was appointed professor, continuing until his death in 1085.

Despite the careful study by Michel Allard of al-Juwaynī's views on the attributes of God, further work must be done on other aspects before we have a clear picture of the development of al-Juwaynī's thought. Allard's study was based on four books, now easily available. The chief of these is the *Irshād*, a general work covering the main theological doctrines. At the end of this al-Juwaynī promises to write a fuller account of the subject in another book called *ash-Shāmil*, 'the comprehensive (book)'; and at least part of this appears to be extant, though there are some problems about identification. A third work with the brief title of *al-Luma'* appears to be a simplified summary of the *Irshād*, while a fourth, *Al-'Aqīda an-Nizāmīyya*, 'the Nizāmian creed', though thought to be genuine, expresses views which differ in some respects from those of the *Irshād*.

The general position adopted in the *Irshād* is similar to that of al-Bāqillānī, but the arguments are more elaborate and take account

of the numerous discussions with opponents in the intervening period. There is a great interest in the philosophical preliminaries to theology, and this interest is even more marked in the Cairo partial manuscript of the *Shāmil*. It seems likely that it was al-Juwaynī who encouraged al-Ghazālī to study philosophy, but he himself shows little awareness of the details of the thought of al-Fārābī and Avicenna. Apart from this matter there are some indications in the *Irshād* of a slight shift from the position of al-Ash'arī himself. Whereas al-Bāqillānī, probably following a work by al-Ash'arī, had refuted Abū-Hāshim's theory of *aḥwāl*, 'modes', al-Juwaynī is prepared to adopt the term and to identify the 'modes' with the 'attributes' as understood by the Ash'arites. At the same time he abandoned the distinction between essential and active attributes, and distinguished instead between 'essential' (*nafsiyya*) and 'entitative' (*ma'nawiyya*) attributes. The former were those which belonged to the *nafs*, the 'essence' or 'self', and were inseparable from it, while the latter were those derived from a 'cause', *'illa*, subsisting in God; for example, the attribute 'knowing' is derived from 'knowledge', a *ma'nā* or 'quasi-substantive entity' which subsists in God. Similarly, when he comes to speak of 'modes', he distinguishes between those which are 'caused' and those which are 'not caused' in this special sense. Thus, despite his use of the term 'modes', he avoids anything like the Mu'tazilite *ta'tīl* or denial of God's attributes, and remains within the Ash'arite tradition.

He also moves away from al-Ash'arī, as some of his predecessors in Nishapur had done, by admitting the *ta'wīl*, 'metaphorical interpretation', of certain of the anthropomorphic terms applied to God in Qur'ān and Ḥadīth. Where al-Ash'arī, following the Hanbalites, had held that a term like 'hand' as applied to God was to be understood neither literally nor metaphorically but *bi-lā-kayf*, 'without (asking) how', al-Juwaynī argued that, since the literal or corporeal meaning of the term is impossible in the case of God, it must be understood as 'power'.

At the end of his life, after having sought truth even in philosophical books of which strict theologians disapproved, he came back to something like a child-like faith, and summed up the results of his whole experience of life in the advice, 'Hold to the religion of the old women'.

In a sense the Ash'arite school of Nishapur reached its culmination in al-Juwaynī's great pupil al-Ghazālī, and it was the labours of the men just mentioned that made possible the achievement of al-Ghazālī. He also went beyond them, however, so that in important ways his work marks a new beginning.

NOTES

1. George Makdisi, 'Ash'arī and the Ash'arites in Islamic Religious History', *Studia Islamica*, xvii (1962), 37-80 and xviii (1963), 19-39; also *The Rise of Colleges: Institutions of Learning in Islam and the West*, Edinburgh 1981; Ibn-'Asākir, *Tabyin kadhīb al-muftari* . . . , GAL, i.404; as-Subkī, *Ṭabaqāt ash-Shāfi'iyya*, GAL, ii.110.
2. Al-Bāqillāni: *EI*², art. (al-)Bāqillāni, (R. J. McCarthy); Allard, *Attributes* (n.10/1), 290-312; Rudi Paret, 'Der Standpunkt al-Bāqillānis in der Lehre vom Koran', in Paret (ed.), *Der Koran* (Wege der Forschung), Darmstadt 1975, 417-25 (from *Studi Orientalistici* in onore di Giorgio Levi della Vida, Rome 1956, ii.294-303).
3. Works of al-Bāqillāni: *GAS*, i.608-10; *K. at-Tamhid*, ed. M. al-Khuḍayrī, M. Abū-Rīda, Cairo 1947 (from incomplete ms.); also ed. R. J. McCarthy, Beirut 1957 (from complete mss. but does not repeat pp.160-239 of Cairo edition, on imamate); *F'jāz al-Qur'ān*, various editions, and partly translated by G. von Grunebaum as *A Tenth-Century Document of Arab Literary Theory and Criticism*, Chicago 1950; *K. al-Bayān 'an al-farq bayn al-mu'jizāt wa-l-karāmāt* . . . , ed. R. J. McCarthy, Beirut 1958 ('Miracle and Magic . . .').
4. Ibn-Fūrak: *GAS*, i.610f.; *GAL*, i.175f.; Allard, *Attributes*, 314f., 326-9; *EI*², art. Ibn Fūrak (Watt).
5. Al-Baghdādī: *GALS*, i.666; Allard, *Attributes*, 316f., 329-42; *EI*², art. (al-)Baghdādī (A. S. Tritton).
6. Al-Isfarāyīnī: *GALS*, i.667; *EI*², art. (al-)Isfarāyīnī (W. Madelung).
7. Al-Bayhaqī; *GAL*, i.446f.; *EI*², art. (al-)Bayhaqī (J. Robson); Allard, *Attributes*, 342-72.
8. Al-Qushayrī: *GAL*, i.556f. and *GALS*, i.770-2; *EI*², art. (al-)Qushayrī, Abū l-Ḳāsim (H. Halm); R. Hartmann, *Al-Kuschairis Darstellung des Šūfitums*, Berlin 1914; Massignon, *Passion*², ii.110f. (E.T., ii.104f.); Schimmel, *Mystical Dimensions* (n.9/10), 88.
9. Al-Juwaynī: *GAL*, i.486-8 and *GALS*, i.671-3; *EI*², art. (al-)Djuwaynī (C. Brockelmann/L. Gardet); Allard, *Attributes*, 372-404; *Al-Irshād*, ed. J. D. Luciani with French translation, Paris 1938 (cf. review by G. Vajda, *Journal Asiatique*, 230 (1938), 149-53), and ed. M. Y. Musa and A. M. 'Abdalhamid, Cairo 1950; *al-'Aqīda an-Nizāmiyya*, ed. M. Z. al-Kawthari, Cairo 1948, and translated into German as *Das Dogma des Imām al-Ḥaramain al-Djuwainī u. sein Werk al-'Aqīdat an-Nizāmiya*, Cairo and Wiesbaden 1958.

CHAPTER THIRTEEN

AL-GHAZĀLĪ AND LATER ASH'ARITES

Al-Ghazālī has been acclaimed by both Western and Muslim scholars as the greatest Islamic theologian and indeed as the greatest Muslim after Muḥammad. It is now realized that this is not so, and that there were other theologians of comparable importance though in different ways. Something has already been said about the difficulty of arriving at a due appreciation of the achievements of al-Ghazālī owing to the fact that Western scholars found him congenial and approachable, and studied his works to the exclusion of those of most other theologians. Another difficulty consists in the great volume of his writings. Thus his greatest work, *Ihyā' 'ulūm ad-dīn*, 'The Revival of the Religious Sciences', consists of forty books or chapters, of which each, when translated into a European language, forms a sizable book.

A further difficulty is that of the seventy or so works attributed to him, which are still extant, a number are agreed by scholars to be falsely so attributed; but there is only partial agreement about which works belong to this group. Since many of the works of dubious authenticity are heterodox or heretical works of Šūfistic teaching, the acceptance of these as genuine alters the general picture of al-Ghazālī. Those who accept some of the dubious writings as genuine suggest as an explanation either that, besides the exoteric teaching which he gave to all, he had esoteric teaching which he communicated only to a select few, or else that towards the end of his life he completely changed his views and abandoned Ash'arism. This second suggestion is shown to be impossible by the discovery of an early manuscript of a short work of Ash'arite-Shāfi'ite tendency, in which it is stated that this was completed by al-Ghazālī less than a fortnight before his death. It is also highly improbable that a lucid and upright thinker like al-Ghazālī could hold and teach esoterically views which contradicted those which he publicly professed. In the present state of scholarship the wisest course is to base any account of al-Ghazālī solely on the works universally accepted as genuine; and that will be done here. Naturally the other works, even if not by al-Ghazālī, are