

‘Abbād. When Ṭāhir asserted his independence in 207/822, al-Ma’mūn ordered his secretary to proceed at once to Khurāsān and to bring back the governor whose loyalty he had guaranteed. Aḥmad with much difficulty secured a respite of 24 hours, and, before his departure, the news of the death of Ṭāhir is said to have reached the city. Everything points to the fact that, as some chroniclers aver, Aḥmad was privy to this sudden death. He secured the appointment of Ṭāhir’s son Ṭalḥa as governor, but al-Ma’mūn sent Aḥmad himself to Khurāsān to assist, or rather to keep watch on Ṭalḥa. The secretary, furnished with military powers, penetrated on this occasion as far as Transoxania, and conquered Ushrūsāna. Aḥmad also used his influence to obtain a pardon for al-Ma’mūn’s uncle, Ibrāhīm b. al-Mahdī, who had laid claim to the throne and who had for several years succeeded in eluding the caliph’s police.

*Bibliography:* Balādhuri, *Futūḥ*, 430-1; Ibn Ṭayfūr, *Ya’qūbī*, ii, Ṭabarī, iii, indexes; *Djah-shiyārī*, index and *RAAD*, xviii, 330; Mas’ūdī, *Tanbih*, 351-2; *Aghānī*, *Tables*; *Shābushtī*, *Diwān* (‘Awwād), 94-5 (cf. G. Rothstein, in *Festschrift Th. Nöldeke*, i, 155-70); Tanūkhī, *Nishwār*, i, 211-5; *Farajī*, Cairo 1938, i, 74-5, ii, 30 (cf. D. Sourdel in *Mélanges Massignon*); Ibn al-Athīr, vi, index; Ibn Khallikān, Cairo 1948, ii, 205. (D. SOURDEL)

**AḤMAD B. ABĪ ṬĀHIR ṬAYFŪR** [see IBN ABĪ ṬĀHIR].

**AḤMAD B. ḤĀBĪṬ** (rather than Ḥā’it, if the position in the alphabetical order given to him by al-‘Askalānī is taken into consideration), a theologian ranked among the Mu’tazilites; he was the pupil of al-Nazzām [q.v.], and the teacher, in particular, of al-Faḍl al-Ḥadāthī. Nothing is known about his life, and only his “innovations” are partly known to us. His doctrine, evolved before 232/846-7, seems to differ from Mu’tazilite teaching on the following two fundamental dogmas, which are borrowed from systems alien to Islam but which, in the eyes of Ibn Ḥābiṭ, found justification in the Qur’ān. (1) On the basis of Qur’ān lxxix, 22 (23); ii, 210 (206); and v, 110, he affirms the divinity of Jesus, from which heresiographers infer that, for him, the world has two creators, God and the Messiah. (2) He professes the doctrine of *kurūr*, or the reincarnation of souls, sprung from the Universal Spirit, in forms which will be more beautiful or more ugly according to the merits they have acquired in their previous incarnation. This theory involves the existence of five stages: a place of damnation (Hell); a place of testing (this world); two places of relative reward; and, finally, Paradise, where the souls were created. According to Qur’ān vii, 34 (32); x, 49 (50); xvi, 61 (63), souls which have “filled to the brim the cup” of good or evil go eventually to Paradise or Hell. Ibn Ḥābiṭ, who accepts incarnation in animals, is obliged to concede its corollary, the doctrine of the *taḥlīf* of animals, of their individual responsibility, which can be justified only if they have had prophets to teach them; verses vi, 38; xvi, 68 (70) and xxxv, 24 (22), enable him to put forward this opinion. The heresiographers, of course, have passed a severe judgement on this theologian, to whom they deny the name of Muslim.

*Bibliography:* *Diḥāzīz*, *Hayawān*<sup>2</sup>, iv, 288, 293 ff., v, 424; *Shahrastānī*, *Milāl* (Cureton) 42 ff., trans. Haarbrücker, i, 61 ff.; Ibn Ḥazm, *Fīṣal*, iv, 197 ff.; Baghdādī, *Farḥ*, 260; *Idjī*, *Statio*, 340; Makrīzī, *Khīṭaṭ*, ed. 1270, ii, 347; S. de Sacy, *Druzes*, xlii ff.; ‘Askalānī, *Lisān al-Mizān*, i, 148. (CH. PELLAT)

**AḤMAD B. ḤANBAL**, “the imām of Baghdād”, celebrated theologian, jurist and traditionist (164-241/780-855), and one of the most vigorous personalities of Islam, which he has profoundly influenced both in its historical development and its modern revival. Founder of one of the four major Sunni schools, the Ḥanbalī, he was, through his disciple Ibn Taymiyya [q.v.], the distant progenitor of Wahhābism, and has inspired also in a certain degree the conservative reform movement of the Salafiyya.

1. Life. Aḥmad b. Ḥanbal was an Arab, belonging to the Banū Shaybān, of Rabi’a, who had played an active role in the conquest of al-‘Irāk and Khurāsān. His family, first resident in Baṣra, moved to Marw with Aḥmad’s grandfather, Ḥanbal b. Hilāl, governor of Sarakhs under the Umayyads and one of the early ‘Abbāsīd propagandists. Aḥmad was born in Rabi’ ii 164/Dec. 780, a few months after his father Muḥammad b. Ḥanbal, who was serving in the army of Khurāsān, had removed to Baghdād, where he died three years later. Aḥmad inherited, however, a small family estate which allowed him a modest but independent livelihood. After studying in Baghdād lexicography, jurisprudence and tradition, he devoted himself from 179/795 to the study of tradition, in pursuit of which he made a series of journeys in al-‘Irāk, Ḥijāz, Yaman, and Syria. His visits to Irān, Khurāsān, and even to the distant Maghrib must be dismissed as legendary. Already in 183 he had visited Kūfa. He stayed more frequently in Baṣra; after a first visit in 186, he returned there in 190, 194 and 200. He was more often still at Mecca, where he made the Pilgrimage on five occasions: in 187, 191, 196, 197 (followed by a pious retreat (*muḍjāwara*) at Medina), and 198, followed by a second *muḍjāwara* into the year 199, after which he visited the traditionist ‘Abd al-Razzāk at Ṣan’a’ (*Manāḥib*, 22-3; *Tardjama*, 13-24).

His studies of *fiqh* and *ḥadīth* were made under a great many teachers, whose names have been preserved (*Manāḥib*, 33-6; *Tardjama*, 13-24). At Baghdād he attended the courses of the kāfī Abū Yūsuf [q.v.] d. 182/798, by whom he was not profoundly influenced, and studied regularly under Huṣayn b. Baṣhr, a disciple of Ibrāhīm al-Nakha’ī, from 179 to 183 (*Manāḥib*, 52; *Bidāya*, x, 183-4). His principal teacher thereafter was Sufyān b. ‘Uyayna (d. 198/813-4), the greatest authority of the school of the Ḥijāz. Others of his more important teachers were ‘Abd al-Rahmān b. Mahdī of Baṣra (d. 198/813-4) and Wākī’ b. al-Djarrāḥ (d. 197/812-3) of Kūfa. But, as Ibn Taymiyya noted (*Minḥāḍi al-Sunna*, iv, 143), his juristic formation is due, above all, to the school of *ḥadīth* and of the Ḥijāz. He cannot therefore be regarded, as is sometimes done, simply as a disciple of al-Shāfi‘ī, whose juridical work he knew, at least partially, but whom he seems to have met only once, at Baghdād in 195 (*Bidāya*, x, 251-5, 326-7).

The policy adopted by the caliph al-Ma’mūn, towards the end of his reign, under the influence of Bishr al-Marisi, of giving official support to the doctrine of the Mu’tazila [q.v.], inaugurated for Ibn Ḥanbal a period of persecution, which was to gain for him a resounding reputation [see AL-MA’MŪN, AL-MIḤNA]. Ibn Ḥanbal vigorously refused to accept the dogma of the creation of the Qur’ān, contrary to orthodoxy. Al-Ma’mūn, then at Ṭarsūs, on hearing of this, ordered that Ibn Ḥanbal should be sent to him, together with another objector, Muḥammad b. Nūḥ. They were put in chains and sent off, but shortly after leaving Rakka they

received the news of the caliph's death. They were then sent back to Baghdād; Ibn Nūh died on the journey, and Ibn Ḥanbal, on arrival in the capital, was imprisoned first at the Yāsiriyya, then in a house of the Dār 'Umāra, and finally in the common prison of the Darb al-Mawṣilī (*Manāḥib*, 308-317; *Tarǧama*, 40-56; *Bidāya*, x, 272-280).

The new caliph, al-Mu'taṣim, though inclined to abandon the inquisition, was, it is said, persuaded by the Mu'tazilite kādī Aḥmad b. Abī Du'ād of the danger to the authority of the State of surrendering a position now officially taken up. Ibn Ḥanbal was therefore summoned to appear before the caliph in Ramaḍān 219. Still stoutly refusing to acknowledge the creation of the Qur'ān, he was severely beaten but permitted to return to his home after an imprisonment of some two years in all. During the whole of al-Mu'taṣim's reign he lived in retirement and desisted from giving lectures on Tradition. On the accession of al-Wāthiq (227/842), he attempted to resume his courses of lectures, but almost at once preferred to discontinue them, though not officially forbidden to give them, lest he should be exposed by further reprisals by the Mu'tazilite kādī. He continued therefore to remain in retirement, sometimes even (it is said) in hiding, in order to escape from his enemies (*Manāḥib*, 348-9).

With the reinstatement of Sunnism by al-Mutawakkil on his accession in 232/847, Ibn Ḥanbal was able to resume his teaching activity. He does not, however, appear among the traditionists appointed by the caliph in 234 to oppose the Ḍjahmiyya and the Mu'tazila (*Manāḥib*, 356). The disappearance of the leading figures of the era of persecution opened the way to an association between the caliph and the independent-minded theologian. Aḥmad b. Abī Du'ād was removed from office in 237/852, and his successor Ibn Akṭham is even said, in certain traditions, to have been recommended to the caliph by Ibn Ḥanbal (*Bidāya*, x, 315-6, 319-29). After a first unsuccessful approach to the court, the date and circumstances of which remain obscure (*Manāḥib*, 359-62), Ibn Ḥanbal was invited in 237 to Sāmarrā by al-Mutawakkil. It appears that the caliph wished him to give lessons in ḥadīth to the young prince al-Mu'tazz, and it may also be supposed that he had some idea of utilizing the famous theologian for his policy of restoration of the sunna. This journey to Sāmarrā gave Ibn Ḥanbal the occasion for making contact with the personalities of the court, without danger of compromise. The extant narratives show him welcomed on his arrival by the ḥājjib Waṣīf, installed in the luxurious palace of Itākḥ, loaded with gifts, presented to al-Mu'tazz, but eventually exempted, on his own request, from any special charge on account of his age and health. After a short stay, he returned to Baghdād without seeing the caliph (*Manāḥib*, 372-8; *Tarǧama*, 58-75; *Bidāya*, x, 314, 316, 337-40).

Aḥmad b. Ḥanbal died in Rabī' i 241/July 855, at the age of 75, after a short illness, and was buried in the Martyrs' cemetery (*Maḥābir al-Shuhadā'*) near the Ḥarb gate. The traditions which surround the account of his funeral, although partly legendary in character, convey the impression of a genuine popular emotion, and his tomb was the scene of demonstrations of such ardent devotion that the cemetery had to be guarded by the civil authorities (*Manāḥib*, 409-18; *Tarǧama*, 75-82; *Bidāya*, x, 340-3). His tomb became one of the most frequented places of pilgrimage in Baghdād. In 574/1178-9 the caliph al-Mustaḍlī furnished it with an inscription

glorifying the celebrated traditionist as the most faithful defender of the Sunna (*Bidāya*, xii, 300). It was washed away by a flood on the Tigris in the 8th/14th century (Le Strange, *Baghdād*, 166).

By each of his two legitimate wives Ibn Ḥanbal had one son, Ṣāliḥ and 'Abd Allāh, besides six children by a concubine, who are not otherwise known (*Manāḥib*, 298-306). Ṣāliḥ (born in Baghdād 203/818-9, died as kādī of Iṣfahān 266/879-80) is said to have transmitted a large part of Aḥmad's *fiḥḥ* (*Ṭabaḳāt*, i, 173-6). 'Abd Allāh (b. 213/828) was chiefly interested in ḥadīth, and through him the major part of Aḥmad's literary work was transmitted. He died in Baghdād in 290/903 and was buried in the Quraysh cemetery, and to his tomb was transferred the veneration enjoyed by that of his father when the latter was swept away (*Ṭabaḳāt*, i, 180-8). Both sons, who were closely associated with the intellectual life of their father, were amongst the chief architects of that collective structure which constitutes the Ḥanbalī *madhhab*.

2. Works. The most celebrated of Ibn Ḥanbal's works is his collection of traditions, the *Musnad* (1st ed., Cairo 1311; new edition by Aḥmad Ṣhākīr in publ. since 1368/1948). Although Aḥmad himself gave an exceptional importance to this work, it was his son 'Abd Allāh who collected and classified the enormous accumulation of material, and himself made some additions. His Baghdād disciple Abū Bakr al-Kaṭī'ī (d. 368/978-9) transmitted this recension with some further additions. In this vast collection the traditions are classified not according to subjects, as in the *Ṣaḥīḥs* of al-Bukhārī and Muslim, but under the names of the first guarantor; it thus consists of a number of particular *musnads* juxtaposed, and includes those of Abū Bakr, 'Umar, 'Uthmān, 'Alī and the principal Companions, and ends with the *musnads* of the Anṣār, the Meccans, the Medinians, the people of Kūfa and Baṣra, and the Syrians.

This order, though evidence of an effort of intellectual probity, made it difficult to use by those who did not know it by heart. It was therefore sometimes reshaped. In his *K. fi Ḍjam al-Masānid al-'Ashra* the traditionist Ibn Kathīr classified, in alphabetical order of the Companions, the traditions contained in Ibn Ḥanbal's *Musnad*, in the "Six Books", al-Ṭabarānī's *Muḍjam* and the *Musnads* of al-Bazzār and Abū Ya'la al-Mawṣilī (*Shadharāt*, vi, 231). Ibn Zuknūn (d. 837/1433-4; *Shadharāt*, vii, 222-3) follows, in his *K. al-Darārī*, the order of the chapters of al-Bukhārī, and has the great merit of having inserted among the ḥadīths which he quotes extracts from numerous Ḥanbalī works, especially of Ibn Kudāma, Ibn Taymiyya, and Ibn al-Qayyim. This voluminous compilation, preserved in the Ḍāhiriyya in Damascus, has served as a mine for numerous editions of Ḥanbalī texts in the last fifty years.

Within the framework of Tradition, Aḥmad b. Ḥanbal is to be regarded as an "independent *muǧtahid*" (*mustakill*), who as Ibn Taymiyya has remarked (*Minhāǧi*, iv, 143), was able, from amongst the mass of traditions and opinions received from many teachers, to form his own doctrine (*ikhtlāṣ li-naṣih*). In no sense can he be regarded, in the manner of al-Ṭabarī, as merely a traditionist, and nothing of a jurisconsult (*faqih*) concerned with normative rules. As already pointed out by Ibn 'Aḳl, "certain positions adopted (*ikhtiyārāt*) by Ibn Ḥanbal are supported by him on traditions with such consummate skill as few have equalled, and certain of his decisions bear witness to a juridical subtlety without parallel" (*Manāḥib*, 64-6). "Fol-

lowers of tradition" (*aṣḥāb al-ḥadīth*) must not be too systematically contrasted with "followers of opinion" (*aṣḥāb al-ra'y*), since it is hardly possible to acquire an understanding of ḥadīths and to resolve their contradictions and divergences, or to deduce from them the consequences which may derive from them, without using a minimum of personal judgment.

The two fundamental treatises for the study of Ibn Ḥanbal's dogmatic position are the short *Radd 'ala'l-Djahmiyya wa'l-Zanādika* and the *K. al-Sunna* (both printed together, Cairo n.d., a longer version of the *K. al-Sunna* in Mekka 1349). In the former of these, he expounds and refutes the doctrines of *Djahm b. Ṣafwān* [q.v.], whose ideas, widely circulated in *Khurāsān*, were adopted by certain disciples of *Abū Ḥanīfa* and of 'Amr b. 'Ubayd. In the *K. al-Sunna* he re-examines some of the theological questions already raised in the *Radd* and unequivocally defines his own position on all the principal points of his creed (cf. also *Ṭabaḥāt*, i, 24-36). Of his other surviving doctrinal works, the *K. al-Ṣalāt* (Cairo 1323 and 1347), on the importance of the communal prayer and rules for its correct observance, was transmitted by *Muḥannā b. Yahyā al-Shāmī*, one of his early disciples, and extracted from the bio-bibliographical repertory of the *qāḍī* *Abu 'l-Ḥusayn* (*Ṭabaḥāt*, i, 345-80). Two unpublished MSS should be noted: the *Musnad min Masā'il Ahmad b. Ḥanbal* (B.M.; cf. Brock., S I, 311), transmitted by *Abū Bakr al-Khallāl*, which may possibly be a fragment of the *K. al-Djāmi'* (see below) and is important for the study of Ibn Ḥanbal's politico-religious ideas; and the *K. al-Amr*, transmitted by *Ghulām al-Khallāl* (MS *Ẓāhiriyya*).

In the *K. al-Wara'* (Cairo 1340; partial trans. by G.-H. Bousquet and P. Charles-Dominique in *Hesperis*, 1952, 97-112), there are to be found, in the form of roughly-classified notes, the opinions of Ibn Ḥanbal on certain cases where scrupulosity (*wara'*) seems necessary in his view. Their reporter, *Abū Bakr al-Marwazī*, has added the opinions of other doctors on the same or related subjects, with the apologetic object, it seems, of showing that Ibn Ḥanbal's teaching in the matter of pious scruples, the ascetic life and devotion, can be compared with advantage to that of his contemporaries *Ibrāhīm b. Adham*, *Fuḍayl b. 'Iyād*, or *Dhū'l-Nūn al-Miṣrī*. This work, it has been noted (cf. *Abd al-Jalil, Aspects intérieurs de l'Islam*, 228, n. 193), is extensively quoted by *Abū Ṭālib al-Makkī* in *Kūt al-Kulūb*, and taken up again by *al-Ghazālī* in *Iḥyā' 'Ulūm al-Dīn*.

The *Masā'il*. *Aḥmad b. Ḥanbal* was constantly consulted on questions (*masā'il*) of all sorts relating to dogmatics, ethics or law. Although he may not have prohibited the writing down of his opinions as formally as certain traditions assert, it is certain that he warned his questioners against the danger of a codifying of his thought (*tadwīn al-ra'y*) which might then replace the principles of conduct traced by the *Kur'ān* and the *Sunna*; he himself, in contrast to *al-Shāfi'i*, never sought to present it systematically as a body of doctrine. The fundamental purpose of his teaching is to be seen as a reaction against the codification of the *fiqh*. Since primitive Muslim law was a doctrine of essentially oral transmission, which on a common substructure left a wide latitude to individual variations, any systematic codification, such as to impose it in the terms of thought of any particular representative or to congeal it by fixation, was to change its inner character.

The written redaction of his *responsa* and their classification under the general headings of the *fiqh* was the work of *Ṣāliḥ* and 'Abd Allāh and of the following other disciples of Ibn Ḥanbal: 1) *Iṣḥāk b. Maṣṣūr al-Kawsajj* (d. 251/865-6; *Ṭab.*, i, 113-5); 2) *Abū Bakr al-Aḥram* (d. 260/873-4 or 273/886-7; i, 66-74); 3) *Ḥanbal b. Iṣḥāk* (d. 273; i, 143-5); 4) 'Abd al-Malik al-Maymūnī (d. 274/887-8; i, 212-6); 5) *Abū Bakr al-Marwazī* (d. 275/888-9; i, 56-63); 6) *Abū Dā'ūd al-Sijistānī* (d. 275; i, 156-63; printed in Cairo, 1353/1934); 7) *Ḥarb al-Kirmānī* (d. 280/873-4; i, 145-6); 8) *Ibrāhīm b. Iṣḥāk al-Harbi* (d. 285/898-9; i, 86-93). There are also other collections, and in addition the *Ṭabaḥāt* of Ibn Abī Ya'lā contains the replies given by Ibn Ḥanbal to numerous visitors.

These dispersed materials were assembled in the *K. al-Djāmi'* li-'*Ulūm al-Imām Aḥmad*, by a disciple of *Abū Bakr al-Marwazī*, the traditionist *Abū Bakr al-Khallāl* (d. 311/923-4), who taught at *Baghdād* in the mosque of *al-Mahdī* (*Ṭab.*, ii, 12-15; *Ta'rikh Baghdād*, v, 112-3). *Al-Khallāl's* role has been well appreciated by Ibn Taymiyya, who says (*K. al-Imām*, 158) that his *K. al-Sunna* is the fullest possible source for a knowledge of Ibn Ḥanbal's dogmatic views (*uṣūl dīniyya*), and his *K. fi'l-'Ilm* the most valuable repository for the study of law (*uṣūl fiḥhiyya*); these are no doubt subdivisions, or a rehandling, of *K. al-Djāmi'*. According to Ibn Kayyim al-Djauziyya (*I'ḷām al-Muwaḥḥi'in*, Cairo, i, 31), the *K. al-Djāmi'* consisted of twenty volumes. To our present knowledge, the work is lost, except for the fragment referred to above; but as it has entered deeply into the output of Ibn Taymiyya and Ibn Kayyim, the study of these two writers may partially compensate for its loss in assisting an evaluation of Ibn Ḥanbal's thought.

*Al-Khallāl's* work was completed by his disciple 'Abd al-'Azīz b. *Djā'far* (d. 363/973-4), better known as *Ghulām al-Khallāl*, who did not always accept his master's interpretations of Ibn Ḥanbal's thought, and whose *Zād al-Musāfir*, though less important than the *Djāmi'*, presents a body of supplementary materials often consulted. The divergences which this *Corpus* has allowed to remain in the exposition of Ibn Ḥanbal's thought explain why the *Hanbalis* distinguish between the text (*naṣṣ*) of the founder of the school, the teachings ascribed to him (*riwāyāt*), the indications (*tanbihāt*) suggested by him, and what are simply points of view (*awḍiāḥ*) of his disciples.

*Ibn al-Djawzī* (*Manāḥib*, 191) cites a *Tafsīr* based upon 120,000 ḥadīths, and other works now lost. See also Brockelmann, I, 193; S I, 309-10.

3. Doctrine. *Hanbalism* has sometimes suffered from a slightly fanaticized turbulence among certain of its followers, or an extravagant literalism adopted by others through ignorance or as a challenge. It has been exposed throughout its history to numerous and powerful opponents in the various schools whose principles it opposed, who, when they did not deliberately disregard it, have united to attack it or to muffle it with insidious suspicions. Western orientalism has taken little interest in it, and has been no less severe. It has become the received opinion to see in Ibn Ḥanbal's doctrine a ferociously anthropomorphist theodicy, a traditionalism so sectarian as to be no longer viable, a spirit of frenzied intolerance, a fundamental lack of social adjustment, and a kind of permanent inability to accept the established order. A direct study of his works shows that it is not in these summary judg-

ments that the governing objectives of his teaching are to be sought.

*The Attributes of God.* For Ibn Ḥanbal, God is the God of the Qurʾān: to believe in God is to believe in the description which God has given of Himself in His Book. Not only, therefore, must the attributes of God, such as hearing, sight, speech, omnipotence, will, wisdom, etc., be affirmed as realities (*ḥaqīq*), but also all the terms called "ambiguous" (*mulashābih*) which speak of God's hand, throne, omnipresence, and vision by the Believers on the day of resurrection. In conformity with tradition, also, it must be affirmed that God descends to the lowest heaven in the last third of every night to hearken to the prayers of his worshippers, and at the same time, with the literal text of the Qurʾān (cf. *sūra* cxii), that God, the Unique, the Absolute, is not comparable to anything in the world of His creatures (*K. al-Sunna*, 37; *Manāḥib*, 155). Ibn Ḥanbal therefore vigorously rejects the negative theology (*taʿtīl*) of the Ḍjahmiyya and their allegorizing exegesis (*taʾwīl*) of the Qurʾān and of tradition, and no less emphatically rejects the anthropomorphism (*taṣbīḥ*) of the Mushabbihā, amongst whom he includes, in the scope of his polemics, the Ḍjahmiyya as unconscious anthropomorphists. In the fideism of Ibn Ḥanbal, one must believe in God without seeking to know the "mode" of the theologoumena (*bilā kayf*), and leave to God the understanding of his own mystery, renouncing the vain and dangerous subtleties of dogmatic theology (*kalām*) (*K. al-Sunna*, 37; *Manāḥib*, 155-6). So simple, and at the same time so strong, was this position from the Qurʾānic angle, that al-Ashʿarī, on abandoning Muʿtazilism, seeks, either for tactical reasons or in sincere acceptance, to place himself under the patronage of Ibn Ḥanbal before making certain concessions to his former *credo*, concessions successively enlarged by his disciples, on the problem of the attributes, the Qurʾān, and the legitimacy of dogmatic theology.

*The Qurʾān.* The Qurʾān is the uncreated Word of God (*kalām Allāh ḡayr makhḥūḥ*). To affirm simply that the Qurʾān is the Word of God, without further specification, is to refuse to take up a position, and to fall into the heresy of the *wākifiyya*, the "Abstentionists", which, because of the doubt which it inspires, is a graver sin than the more open heresy of the Ḍjahmiyya (*K. al-Sunna*, 37-8). By Qurʾān is to be understood, not just an abstract idea, but the Qurʾān with its letters, words, expressions, ideas—the Qurʾān in all its living reality, whose nature in itself eludes our understanding.

*The Pronunciation of the Qurʾān.* It is difficult to define Ibn Ḥanbal's position on this question. Some traditions assert that he regarded its pronunciation as uncreated (*lafẓi bi'l-Qurʾān ḡayr makhḥūḥ*). In *K. al-Sunna* (38) he goes no further than to say: "Whoso asserts that our words, when we recite the Qurʾān, and that our reading of the Qurʾān are created, seeing that the Qurʾān is the Word of God, is a Ḍjahmī". While formally condemning the *laṣfiyya*, who held the pronunciation of the Qurʾān to be created, he gives no more positive formulation of his own doctrine, to the embarrassment of the later Ḥanbalis. Ibn Taymiyya regards this question as the first on which a real division existed among the Ancients (cf. H. Laoust, *Essai sur . . . Ibn Taymiyya*, 172) and states that Ibn Ḥanbal avoided taking up a position. He himself gives, in *al-Wāsiṭiyya*, the cautious formula which appears to him to be in conformity with the spirit of Ḥanbalism: "When men recite the Qurʾān or write it on

leaves, the Qurʾān remains always and in reality the Word of God. A word cannot in fact be really attributed except to the one who first formulated it, and not to anyone who transmits or carries it."

*Methodology.* Ibn Ḥanbal, unlike al-Shāfiʿī, wrote no treatise on ethico-juristic methodology (*uṣūl al-fikh*), and the well-known later works of his school, composed with elaborate technique and in an atmosphere of discussion with other schools, cannot be accepted as rigorously expressing his thought. His own doctrine, as it may be elucidated from the *Masāʾil*, is more rudimentary than the later elaborations, but has the merit of setting out the first principles of the methodology of the school.

*Qurʾān and Sunna.* This doctrine claims to rest above all on the Qurʾān, literally understood, without any allegorical exegesis, and on the Sunna, i.e. the total of traditions which can be regarded as deriving from the Prophet. From his own statement (*Musnad*, i, 56-7), Ibn Ḥanbal aimed to collect in his *Musnad* the *ḥadīths* generally received (*mashhūr*) in his time. In this work, therefore, there are found, to use his own terminology, *ḥadīths* whose authenticity is properly established and which may be regarded as perfectly sound (*ṣaḥīḥ*), and *ḥadīths* which benefit only from a presumption of authenticity and for whose rejection (as *daʿīf*) there is no positive reason, or, to use the classification established by al-Tirmidhī, sound *ḥadīths* and "good" (*ḥasan*) *ḥadīths*. It was only much later, when the criticism of Tradition had reached, with Ibn al-Djāwzī, the climax of formalist rigour, that Ibn Ḥanbal was reproached with admitting apocryphal (*mawḏūʿ*) *ḥadīths*—an accusation contested by many traditionists, as, for example, Ibn Taymiyya and Ibn Ḥajar al-ʿAskalānī. The opinion which has come to prevail is that in the *Musnad* there are found, along with "sound" traditions, "good" or "rare" (*gharīb*) traditions, none of which, however, are strictly speaking unacceptable.

*The Fatāwā of the Companions and Idimāʿ.* Qurʾān and Sunna find their continuation in a third source, derived and complementary: the *consulta* (*fatāwā*) of the Companions. The reasons which, for Ibn Ḥanbal, sustain the legitimacy of this new source of doctrine, are clear: the Companions knew, understood, and put into practice the Qurʾān and the Sunna much better than later generations, and all of them are worthy of respect. The Prophet also, in his *waṣīyya*, had recommended the Muslims to follow, together with his own Sunna, that of the "rightly-guided" (*rāshidūn*) caliphs who should succeed him, and to avoid all innovation (*bidʿa*). Where the Companions disagree, it is easy to determine the juster view by reference to the Qurʾān and the Sunna, or by taking into account their order of pre-eminence (*Manāḥib*, 161).

In hierarchical order (*tafḍīl*), Ibn Ḥanbal puts Abū Bakr first, then ʿUmar, then the six *ashāb al-shūrā* appointed by ʿUmar "all of whom were worthy of the caliphate and merit the title of *imām*": ʿUthmān, ʿAlī, Zubayr, Talḥa, ʿAbd al-Rahmān b. ʿAwf, and Saʿd b. Abī Waqqās; then the fighters at Badr, the Muhājirīs and the Anṣār (*K. al-Sunna*, 38; *Manāḥib*, 159-61). This doctrine of Sunnī reconciliation acknowledges the eminent position of ʿAlī and the legitimacy of his caliphate, but also rehabilitates his enemies, and in the first place Muʿāwiya, whose historical role in the consolidation of Islam has always been indulgently evaluated in the Ḥanball school, and whose decisions are not necessarily to be discarded.

The decisions of the most authorized representatives of the later generations (*ṭābiʿūn*) also deserve to be taken into consideration as evidence of plausible interpretations. The consensus of the Community, in such a doctrine, expresses a general concentration around a truth founded on *Kurʿān* and *Sunna*; it does not constitute in itself, properly speaking, an independent source of law. A community may well fall into error collectively, if not guided by the light of revelation transmitted by the Tradition (cf. *Essai*, 239-42).

*Function of the mufti.* The first duty laid upon the jurisconsult is to follow faithfully the spiritual legacy transmitted by the Elders, by avoiding any spirit of creation or innovation. Ibn Ḥanbal therefore condemns *raʾy*, the gratuitous expression of personal opinion (Abū Dāʾūd, *Masāʾil*, 275-7), but without requiring as a rule of conduct an absolute and impossible passivity in face of the texts. He does not reject analogical reasoning (*ḥiyās*), but does not fully appreciate its value as an instrument of juridical systematization and discovery, as Ibn Taymiyya and Ibn Qayyim were to do later, under intellectualizing influences.

Ibn Ḥanbal made an extensive use of *istiṣḥāb*, a method of reasoning which consists in maintaining a given juridical status so long as no new circumstance arises to authorize its modification, and of *ḥarāʾiʿ*, another method of reasoning to the effect that, when a command or prohibition has been decreed by God, everything that is indispensable to the execution of that order or leads to infringement of that prohibition must also, as a consequence, be commanded or prohibited.—The notion of *maṣlaḥa*, or recognized common interest, which allows the limitation or extension of a juridical status, is also in conformity with his doctrine, although he did not himself extend and regulate its use as Ibn Taymiyya and his disciple al-Ṭūfī were to do.

To repeat a comparison of Ibn Qayyim's, which seems to us to characterize very successfully the double care for tradition and for realism shown by Ibn Ḥanbal: the *mufti*, like the physician who must adapt his treatment to the state of his patient, must make a constant personal effort (*idjtiḥād*) to draw from the sources of the law the moral prescriptions which should be applied to a given case. Thus, if the great Ḥanbals have never called for the reopening of *idjtiḥād*, it is because they have held that its continual use was indispensable to the understanding and application of legal doctrine.

*The Caliphate and the Arabs.* Ibn Ḥanbal's political views, directed essentially against the *Khāridjites* and the *Shiʿites* (*rawāfiḍ*) affirm first and foremost the legitimacy of the *Kurayshite* caliphate: "No person has any claim to contest this right with them, or to rebel against them, or to recognize any others until the Day of Resurrection" (*K. al-Sunna*, 35). In the quarrel of races (*shuʿūbiyya*) which was raging in his time, he defended the Arabs, but without proclaiming their superiority: "We must give the Arabs credit for their rights, their merits, and their former services. We must love them, by reason of the very love which we bear for the Apostle of God. To insult the Arabs is hypocrisy; to hate them is hypocrisy" (ibid., 38)—hypocrisy because, behind the insults or the hatred, there was concealed a more secret aim, to destroy Islam by reviving the ancient empires or reinstating other forms of culture.

On the precedents furnished by Abū Bakr and ʿUmar, Ibn Ḥanbal founded the legality of a caliph's

designation of his successor, but any such designation, to become effective, should be followed by a contract (*mubāyaʿa*) in which the imām and the authorized representatives of public opinion swear to mutual fidelity in respect for the Word of God (cf. *Essai*, 287). His view of the functions of the imām follows the general lines of the legal expositions, but leaves to the imām, within the framework of the prescriptions of the *Kurʿān* and the *Sunna*, a wide freedom of action to take, for the common good (*maṣlaḥa*), all the measures which he considers necessary to improve the material and moral conditions of the community. In this lies the germ of that important concept of "juridical policy" (*siyāsa sharʿiyya*), which was methodically taken up by Ibn ʿAqīl, Ibn Taymiyya and Ibn Qayyim al-Djāwziyya.

The members of the community owe obedience to the imām and may not refuse it to him by disputing his moral quality. "The *djihad* should be pursued alongside all imāms, whether good men or evildoers; the injustice of the tyrant or the justice of the just matters little. The Friday prayer, the Pilgrimage, the two Feasts should be made with those who possess authority, even if they are not good, just or pious. The legal alms, the tithe, the land taxes, the *jayʿ*, are due to the amirs, whether they put them to right use or not" (*K. al-Sunna*, 35). If the ruler seeks to impose a disobedience to God (*maʿṣiya*), he must be met on this point with a refusal to obey, but without calling for an armed revolt, which cannot be justified so long as the imām has the prayer regularly observed. But every member of the community has also the duty, according to his knowledge and his means, of commanding to the good and prohibiting the evil. By their apostolate, therefore, the doctors of the law, while remaining within the limits of loyalty, may revive the *Sunna*, keep public opinion vigilant, and impose on the prince respect for the prescriptions of religion.

*The Spirit of Community.* Ibn Ḥanbal's policy is one of communal concentration and confessional solidarity; to the *fitna*, disunity, which weakens the community, he opposes the concept of *djamaʿa*, of group unity and cohesion. He goes so far as to adopt, on the problem of excommunication (*takfir*), an attitude of tolerance which links up with the laxism of the *Murjīʿa*. One may not exclude from the community, he states, any Muslim guilty of a grave sin except on the authority of a *ḥadīth* which must be interpreted with a restrictive literalism (*K. al-Sunna*, 35-6). He cites only three sins which involve excommunication: non-observance of prayer, consumption of fermented liquors, and spreading of heresies contrary to the dogmas of Islam, among which he mentions none but the *Djahmiyya* and the *Kadariyya*. As to excommunication properly speaking, he replaces it by a systematic refusal to associate with the heretical within the bosom of the community. "I do not like (he wrote) that prayer should be made behind innovators, nor that the prayer for the dead should be said over them" (*K. al-Sunna*, 35-6).

*Ethics.* Ibn Ḥanbal's doctrine is entirely dominated by ethical preoccupations. The end of action is to serve God (*ʿibāda*). In opposition to the *Djahmiyya* and the *Murjīʿa*, he asserted that faith (*al-imān*) "is word, act, intention, and attachment to the *Sunna*" (*K. al-Sunna*, 34). It may therefore vary in intensity, "increase or diminish", and it implies so total an engagement of the being that no man may possibly call himself a Believer without making his affirmation in a conditional form (*istiḥnāʾ*), by

adding "if God wills". Faith is, therefore, not a simple body of rites, but implies a whole system of strong moral convictions: an absolute sincerity brought to the service of God (*ikhlas*); renunciation of the world, with refinement of feeling and a spirit of poverty (*zuhd*, *fiḥr*); a moral courage which lies in "relinquishing what one desires for what one fears" (*futuwwa*); fear of God; a scrupulous mind, which leads one to avoid dubious things (*shubuhāt*) between the two well-marked limits of the licit and the illicit (cf. *Manāḥib*, 194-269). Ibn Ḥanbal's belief has, therefore, nothing of a pedantic juristic literalism.

*Religious practices and Customs.* This is not the place in which to analyse in detail the juridico-moral prescriptions which constitute the applied doctrine of Ibn Ḥanbal (*furū'*) in the two domains which come within this discipline: that of religious practices (*'ibādāt*) and that of usages and customs (*'ādāt*, *mu'āmalāt*). The methodical exposition of them contained in *al-Mukhtaṣar* of al-Khiraḳī does no more than reproduce single opinions of Ibn Ḥanbal and presents a restrictive codification of his thought. The same is to be said of the *'Umda* of Ibn Qudāma, precious as it may be for a knowledge of Ḥanbalism in the 7th/13th century. (See Laoust, *Précis de droit d'Ibn Qudāma*, Damascus 1950.)

But there is one very important rule which Ibn Taymiyya has brought out and which seems to us characteristic of primitive Ḥanbalism: nothing is to be regarded as imposing social obligations but the religious practices which God has explicitly prescribed; inversely, nothing can be lawfully forbidden but the practices which have been prohibited by God in the Qur'ān and the Sunna. This is the dual principle which Ibn Taymiyya resumes in the formula: *lawḥif fi 'l-'ibādāt wa-'afw fi 'l-mu'āmalāt*, i.e. the most rigorous strictness in regard to religious obligations and a wide tolerance in all matters of usage (cf. *Essai*, 444). A wide liberty should therefore be left to both parties in drawing up the conditions of a contract, especially in regard to transactions, in which no stipulations can be nullified except those contrary to the formal interdiction in the Qur'ān and the Sunna of speculation (*maysir*) and usury (*ribā*). In the *Kitāb al-Sunna* (38), Ibn Ḥanbal, reacting against al-Muḥāsibī, regards the free pursuit of an honest profit as an obligation of religion.

On the other hand, in the domain of religious practices those alone are lawful which are prescribed by the Qur'ān and the Sunna, and only in the manner in which they are prescribed. The rigorism of the Ḥanbalī school is to be explained less by the spirit of devotion and of attention to detail which it seeks to bring to the performance of religious duties, than by its refusal to recognize any legal value to forms of worship introduced by the *idā'ihād* of ascetics or mystics, or even by the arbitrary decision of the administrative authorities. This attitude of hostility to innovations (*bid'at*)—vestiges of paganism, inventions of later generations, or infiltrations from foreign civilizations—showed itself with especial violence in al-Barbahārī and the early Wāḥabīyya.

*Bibliography:* (a) Biography: a chapter in Abū Bakr al-Khallāl's (d. 311/923-4) history of Ḥanbalism, of which a few pages are preserved in the *Zāhiriyya* in Damascus; the monograph of Abū Bakr al-Bayhaḳī (d. 458/1065-6), of which large extracts are quoted in Ibn Kathīr, *Bidāya*, x, 234-43. (A biography is also attributed to al-Harawī, d. 481/1087-8.) Two extensive biographies:

Ibn al-Dīawzī, *Manāḥib al-Imām Aḥmad b. Ḥanbal*, Cairo 1349/1931; Dhahabī, excerpt from his great history, ed. separately by A. M. Shākir, *Tardjamat al-Imām Aḥmad*, Cairo 1365/1946 (reprinted in vol. i of the *Musnad*); they contain abundant documentation going back to Ibn Ḥanbal's sons and first disciples, but are in the first instance laudatory biographies and often lack precision in chronology. (b) Works: mentioned in the article. (c) Studies: W. M. Patton, *Aḥmad ibn Ḥanbal and the Miḥna*, Leiden 1897; I. Goldziher, *Zur Geschichte der hanbalitischen Bewegungen*, ZDMG, 1908, 1-28; idem, in EI<sup>1</sup>; Muḥammad Abū Zuhra, *Ibn Ḥanbal*, Cairo 1949.

(H. LAOUST)

AḤMAD B. IDRIS, Moroccan shārif and mystic, a disciple of 'Abd al-'Azīz al-Dabbāgh, the founder of the *Khāḍiriyya* order, himself founded a religious congregation, the Idrisiyya, in 'Asīr, where in 1823, he initiated the founder of the Sanūsiyya [q.v.]. He died in Ṣabyā ('Asīr) in 1253/1837, after founding a kind of semi-religious and semi-military state, the two last heads of which were his great-grandson Sayyid Muḥammad b. 'Alī b. Muḥ. b. Aḥmad (1892-1923), and the latter's son 'Alī (from 1923), who was forced to submit to Sa'ūdī Arabia by a protectorate agreement, negotiated by the Sanūsī leader Aḥmad Shārif [see IDRISIS].

The Idrisiyya order is at present strongly represented in former Italian Somaliland (Merca), in Dījibūti, among the Banū 'Āmir (*Khāṭmiyya*) in Eritrea, and among the Gallas (where their missionary, Nūr Ḥusayn, enjoys great veneration). The Idrisiyya order maintains fraternal relations with the other congregations derived from the *Khāḍiriyya*, particularly the *Mirghāniyya* of the Sudan.

*Bibliography:* *Awṛād, Aḥzāb, wa-Rasā'il*, lith. Cairo 1318; Nallino, *Scritti*, ii, 387 f., 397 f., and especially 403-7; *Annuaire du Monde Musulman*<sup>4</sup>, 1954, 27, 380, 385, 387, 392-3; 'Abd al-Wāsi' b. Yahyā al-Wāsi'ī al-Yamānī, *Ta'rikh al-Yaman*, Cairo 1346, 338-43. (L. MASSIGNON)

AḤMAD B. 'ISĀ B. MUḤ. B. 'ALĪ B. AL-'ARĪP B. DĪA'FAR AL-ṢADIQ (the great-grand-son of 'Alī), called al-Muḥāḍḍir "the Emigrant", saint and legendary ancestor of the Ḥaḍramī *sayyids*. He left Baṣra in 317/929 accompanied by Muḥammad b. Sulaymān (alleged ancestor of the Banū Aḥdal [q.v.]) and Ṣalīm b. 'Abdallāh (ancestor of Banū Qudaym), was prevented from visiting Mecca until next year by Abū Ṭāhir al-Ḳarmaṭī's occupation and settled with his companions in Western Yaman (region of Surdud and Saḥām). In 340/951 he left with his son 'Ubayd Allāh for Ḥaḍramawt, and lived at first near Tarīm in al-Ḥaḍjarēn, then in Ḳārat Banī Dījushayr and finally in Ḥusayyisa, where he bought the territory of Ṣawf above the town of Bawr and where, after vigorously supporting the cause of the *Sunna* against the heresies of the *Khawāridj* and *Ibāḍiyya* he died in 345/956 (according to al-Shillī). His grave and that of Aḥmad b. Muḥammad al-Ḥabshī in Shī'b Mukhaddam (Shī'b Aḥmad) outside Ḥusayyisa are visited by pilgrims. His grandsons Baṣrī, Dīadīd, and 'Alawī settled in Sumal, six miles from Tarīm. Since 521/1127 this town is the centre of the (Bā) 'Alawī [q.v.] family in its wider sense, i.e. the offspring of the 'Alawī mentioned above.

For another Aḥmad b. 'Isā, 'Amūd al-Dīn, ancestor of the Ḥaḍramī family al-'Amūdī, see v. d. Berg, *Ḥaḍramout*, 41, 85.