

Frank Griffel, *Apostasie und Toleranz im Islam; die Entwicklung zu al-Gazālī's Urteil gegen die Philosophie und die Reaktionen der Philosophen*. Leiden, Boston, Köln, Brill, 2000 (Islamic Philosophy, Theology and Science, 40). xi+521 pp; bibliography. ISBN 90 04 11566 8.

In latter-day Greek Antiquity, Neoplatonic philosophers wrote paraphrases of most of Aristotle's works. Therein they interpreted Aristotle in the light of their Neoplatonic views. Manuscripts of these paraphrases survived among the Syrian Christians. In the eighth century the Muslim Caliphs ordered the Christians to render those "Neoplatonic-Aristotelian" works into Arabic. Somewhat later Muslim and other Arabic-speaking individuals philosophized on the basis of these translations, which they thought to be purely Aristotelian works. This is how Islamic philosophy came to be.<sup>1</sup> The philosophers asserted that religion is a symbolic representation of the philosophic truths, intended for the masses. The theologians on their part initially ignored the philosophers. Later on they declared them to be unbelievers. In the eleventh century the well-known theologian and mystic al-Ghazālī composed a refutation of Islamic philosophy. According to him, the philosophers are unbelievers and deserve to be put to death on account of three of their tenets, namely a) that the world is eternal and uncreated, b) that God knows only the universals of the objects in our world, but not the particulars, c) that there will be no resurrection of human bodies after death.

The purpose of the work under review is to show first that al-Ghazālī's denunciation of Islamic philosophy was one of the main causes of its decline in the Islamic East from the second half of the eleventh century onwards, and also that by restricting his denunciation of Islamic philosophy to the above-mentioned three tenets and by openly discussing other aspects of this philosophy, al-Ghazālī paved the way for the absorption, from that period onwards, of philosophical terms, concepts and methods into Ash'arī *kalām*; which was, and still is, the mainstream school of Sunnī Muslim theology.

To achieve this goal, the author traces the attitudes toward unbelief and unbelievers from the Qur'ān and the *ḥadīth* and early Islamic law through the various schools of theology of Sunnī Islam during the tenth century to the denunciation of the philosophers in the eleventh century. The last chapters deal with the reaction of the philosophers in twelfth century Muslim Spain to al-Ghazālī. The author also amply describes the events of political history as the background of theological developments. Thus the book may serve as a detailed history of Muslim

<sup>1</sup> On pp. 6-7 the author correctly calls the Islamic philosophers "neuplatonisch-aristotelisch." Why then does he throughout the book call them "peripatetisch"? Most strangely on p. 1 he includes Abū Bakr al-Rāzī among the "peripatetics"!

theology from its very beginnings up to the end of the eleventh century and of Muslim philosophy in Spain during the twelfth century.

Griffel examines the attitudes towards unbelievers. There were two pairs of opposites. On the one hand Islam and exclusion from Islam; on the other hand belief and unbelief. As long as a distinction was made between these two pairs of opposites, that is, as long as an unbeliever was not considered to cease being a Muslim, the Muslim unbelievers were tolerated within the Muslim community. Once they were considered to coincide, Muslim law ruled that unbelievers deserved the penalty of death.

The position of the Qur'ān on this question is not altogether unequivocal. At any rate the so-called *munāfiqūn* continued to be members of the Muslim community although they were held to be unbelievers. The Qur'ān rules that only those who actively rebelled against Muḥammad and his community are to be killed.<sup>2</sup>

By dint of its very nature, the *ḥadīth* literature reflects different, sometimes conflicting, opinions. Griffel was able to point out two differences between the Qur'ān and some *ḥadīths*. Unlike the Qur'ān, some *ḥadīths* declare that if a Muslim reverts to unbelief and afterwards repents, God will not accept his repentance. Others say that such a person should be killed. Indeed, Griffel assumes on the basis of *ḥadīths* that in the first centuries of Islam it was common opinion that a Muslim who reverts to unbelief was to be put to death. But in some of the traditions Griffel quotes, the Prophet is said to have forbidden to kill people who affirm that they believe in one God. Other traditions say that such people should be killed if they refuse to perform the prescribed prayer (*ṣalāt*) and to pay the so-called "alms tax" (*zakāt*).<sup>3</sup>

According to early Muslim jurisprudence a Muslim who reverts to another religion is to be put to death unless he repents. But a few lawyers denied him the right of repentance (*tauba*). Initially the jurists ruled that no right of repentance was to be granted to a *zindīq*.<sup>4</sup> But

<sup>2</sup> The verses referred to on p. 24, note 2, except the last one, speak of God leading men astray. But in none of them does the root *r-d-d* appear. — On pp. 24–25 the Qur'ānic phrase *man yartadda minikum 'an dīnihi* is quoted. Since the eighth form of the verb is a "Reflexivum," and not a "Passivum" as Griffel claims, the phrase should be rendered "wer von euch sich von seiner Religion abwendet" (*pace* Paret).

<sup>3</sup> On pp. 58–59 a *ḥadīth* is quoted according to which adultery, homicide and apostasy are to be punished by stoning. Griffel says that the historical context in which this was transmitted is suspect. One may add that the triad of capital sins is suspect of belonging to the *isrā'īliyyāt*. Cf. Babylonian Talmud, Sanhedrin 74a: Three sins one is not permitted to commit even if one was going to be killed for avoiding them: bloodshed, idolatry and adultery (also: incest).

<sup>4</sup> At that early stage *zindīq* signified a Manichaean or a believer in a similar dualistic religion, or a person suspected of holding such views. Griffel cites Josef van Ess who showed that even then the term sometimes referred to holders of other beliefs considered by the establishment to be dangerous. In later centuries the word became

soon al-Shāfi'ī (died 820) granted the right of repentance to *zanādiqa* as well.

During the first decades of the eleventh century there were in Baghdad intense feuds between Shī'īs and Sunnīs. After the moderately Shī'ī Buwayhī rulers had eased their hold on the city, the caliph al-Qādir proclaimed a Sunnī traditionalist credo (*al-i'tiqād al-qādirī*). It states *inter alia* that whoever claims that the Qur'ān is created is an unbeliever whose blood may be spilled after he has been called upon to repent.<sup>5</sup> This was aimed of course at the Mu'tazila. Griffel points out that this is the earliest case of a caliph condemning a whole group of theologians as apostates.<sup>6</sup> He argues that this condemnation of staunch Muslim believers (*scil.* the Mu'tazila) as unbelievers whose blood may be shed did not agree with earlier Muslim legal opinion and must reflect a change of opinion of the jurists. A few pages later Griffel describes what al-Qādir's contemporary, the famous Ḥanafī jurist al-Qudūrī laid down in his *Mukhtaṣar*. The "apostate" is to be imprisoned for three days to make him repent. If he repents he ought to be released. If not, he is to be put to death. Women should not be executed, but kept in prison. This agrees, says Griffel, with the opinion of earlier lawyers, except that al-Qudūrī no longer accepted the mere recitation of the *shahāda* as evidence of repentance. According to Griffel the reason was that whereas the early jurists had to deal with new converts to Islam holding on to their old beliefs, al-Qudūrī and his contemporary lawyers dealt with Muslims who expressed doubts about some of the principles of the official "orthodox" creed.

In his heresiography entitled *al-Tanbīh*, written in 962, the traditionalist al-Malaṭī classifies a group called *al-mu'atṭila*.<sup>7</sup> Griffel identifies them with the Islamic philosophers, and considers this to be the earliest condemnation of these philosophers.<sup>8</sup>

a general term of abuse for all kinds of heretics, especially intellectualist ones. Griffel for some reason claims that at the early period the word meant "clandestine apostate." Indeed under Muslim rule people who held dualistic beliefs, especially poets in the 'Abbāsīd period, usually tried to hide these beliefs. But does this justify one in defining *zandaqa* as "clandestine apostasy"? The passage quoted on page 88 from al-Jahshiyārī shows that secrecy was not considered a necessary element of *zandaqa*.  
<sup>5</sup> I am not sure whether the phrase "whose blood may be spilled" means that anybody who kills him goes unpunished, or, as Griffel understands, that this is a command to inflict capital punishment on the "unbeliever."

<sup>6</sup> The author uses the terms *Apostat* and *Apostasie* in the title of his book as well as throughout. An apostate is a person who chooses to dissociate oneself from his community. Griffel applies the term to such persons as well as to persons who considered themselves to be good Muslims, but were judged by others to have left the fold of Islam. A distinction between these two cases would have been helpful.

<sup>7</sup> I. e., "those who render [the notion of God] vacant" [by denying His attributes].  
Not "die jemandem etwas wegnehmen."

<sup>8</sup> He anachronistically describes in this context the philosophy of Ibn Sīnā, born 18

During the ninth century traditionalist-Ḥanbalī theologians such as Aḥmad b. Ḥanbal and Abū Saʿīd al-Dārimī identified "belief" with "Islam," thus considering the unbeliever to have ceased being a Muslim and to deserve capital punishment unless he repents. Al-Dārimī only grudgingly allowed the unbeliever the right of repentance. But in the tenth century the Ḥanbalī theologians distinguished between "Islam" and "belief" and between those who are unbelievers but still belong to the community and those who are not considered to be Muslims and thus are to be put to death. The new attitude, recorded already in al-Ashʿarī's *maqālāt*, is explained in Ibn Battṭa's creed. According to him, only one who associates partners to God or one who denies the necessity to perform one of the religious duties is to be considered to have left the fold. This new opinion is also expressed in the above-mentioned creed of the caliph al-Qādir.

The Muʿtazilī theologians al-Nāshī' al-Akbar (9th century), al-Qādir 'Abd al-Jabbār (10-11th century) and the latter's commentator, Mānak-dīm, displayed a very tolerant attitude. Whoever prays facing Mecca and seeks to know God is considered a believer. Even the perpetrator of a cardinal sin, whom Muʿtazilī theory relegates to a status between believer and unbeliever, is to be treated in this world as if he were a believer.

'Abd al-Jabbār's contemporary, and prominent exponent of the Ashʿarī school, Abū Bakr al-Bāqillānī, ruled that an unbeliever was one who claimed that God's word is untrue, but even then he was to be considered a Muslim as long as he declared himself to be one and fulfilled the commandments. Griffel adds that since al-Bāqillānī has formulated a clear-cut criterion for exclusion from Islam, his lost refutation of the Ismāʿīlīs is likely to have included the argument that the Islamic philosophers are not to be considered Muslims.<sup>9</sup>

At the end of the tenth century the Buwayhī and the Sāmānī rulers encouraged the spread of philosophy. But at the instigation of the caliph al-Qādir, Maḥmūd of Ghazna conquered Rayy, the capital of Iran, in the year 1018, murdered Ismāʿīlīs, Imāmī Shīʿīs, and Muʿtazilīs, and burned their books and those of the philosophers.

The Ashʿarī 'Abd al-Qādir al-Baghdādī in his heresiography, written in 1030 in Nīshāpūr, distinguishes clearly between unbelief and exclusion from Islam. Only *ahl al-sunna wa'l-jamā'a* are described by him as believers. The other groups, all of whom he considers to be unbelievers, are catalogued under two headings: 1) *ahl al-ahwā'*,<sup>10</sup> sectarians such as

the Khawārij and the Muʿtazila, 2) "those who wrongly consider themselves to be Muslims" such as the Ismāʿīlīs and other extreme groups. 'Abd al-Qādir al-Baghdādī seems to have been the first who set up a doctrinal criterion for membership in Islam. According to him, one who believes in the following eight articles is a Muslim: 1) the world has been created; 2) the Creator is One and has non-anthropomorphic attributes; 3) Muḥammad is God's prophet to all mankind; 4) the *sharī'a* is forever valid; 5) all of Muḥammad's messages are true; 6) the Qurʾān is the source of the Law; 7) the Ka'ba in Mecca is the *qibla*; 8) Muslims are obliged to pay the "alms tax," to fast during Ramaḍān and perform the pilgrimage to Mecca. Whoever denies one of these points is to be put to death unless he repents.

During the first half of the eleventh century masses of Turkomān tribesmen invaded the Eastern Islamic world, ravaged it, and soon dominated it. In 1040 they established the Saljūq sultanate with Tughrilbeg as sultan. They embraced Islam in accordance with the traditionalist Ḥanafī school. When the caliph al-Qā'im officially invested Tughrilbeg, he ordered him to fight the dissenters. Not only the last surviving Buwayhī princes and the well-to-do merchants who used to encourage philosophic learning were victims of the ensuing persecution in Iran. Along with the Shīʿīs and the Muʿtazila, the Ashʿarīs were rounded up as well. Four hundred Ashʿarī theologians fled Iran. Griffel argues that the people co-operated with the authorities in persecuting the Ashʿarīs, because the latter taught that one who does not adduce proofs for the doctrines is not a real believer, and thus did not consider the simple people to be real believers.

Alp Arslān, Tughrilbeg's nephew and successor as sultan, nominated Nīzām al-Mulk to be his wazīr. The latter rehabilitated and encouraged the Ashʿarīs. On the other hand, the Caliph supported the Ḥanbalīs. In 1077 fights broke out between these two schools. Each side declared its adversaries to be unbelievers. For the Ashʿarīs "unbelief" did not mean exclusion from Islam. According to them, an unbeliever was to be punished in Hell, not in this world. But the Ḥanbalites took "unbelief" to mean exclusion from Islam and that the unbeliever should be deprived of his civil rights or put to death; this is what they thought the Ashʿarīs meant when they called them "unbelievers."

The Ḥanbalī heresiographer Abū Yaʿlā al-Farrā' (died 1066)<sup>11</sup> — who was *qāḍī 'l-quḍāt* at the Caliph's palace from 1055 — ruled that all unbelievers have to be called upon three times to repent. If they do not repent they are to be put to death. He equated unbelief with exclusion from Islam. Basing himself on *ijmā'* (consensus), he included the Islamic philosophers among the unbelievers.

years after *al-Tanbīh* had been written.

<sup>9</sup> Is this not mere guesswork? Moreover, the Islamic philosophers did consider themselves Muslims.

<sup>10</sup> Literally: "those who have [evil] inclinations," not "Verirrten" as Griffel translates.

<sup>11</sup> On p. 227, note 3, read: "EI<sup>2</sup>, iii, 765f." (not: 76f.).

His contemporary, Abū 'l-Ḥasan al-Māwardī (died 1058), a Shāfi'ī, held that it was not necessary to ask the unbelievers to repent; one could execute them immediately.<sup>12</sup>

Al-Fārābī, as well as Ibn Sīnā and his disciples, taught that religions are systems of symbols, similitudes of the philosophical truths, intended for those who are not able to understand these truths. Nevertheless Ibn Sīnā and his disciples considered themselves to be Muslims.<sup>13</sup>

Nizām al-Mulk, the *wazīr* of the Saljūq sultan Alp Arslān, ruled that only the Ḥanafī and the Shāfi'ī schools of law should be tolerated. Whoever deviated from them should be flogged and it is permitted to shed his blood. In his *Siyāsat nāmeḥ*, written about 1091, he laid down that all Shī'īs, even the Imāmīya, are unbelievers who should be put to death. This intolerant attitude was triggered off by the danger of the successful Ismā'īlī *da'wa* (mission), which catered for all classes of society and was very attractive to intellectuals. Even at the court of Mālikshāh, Alp Arslān's successor, its influence was felt. Initially the Ismā'īlī mission was directed by the Fātimī caliph in Cairo. Later it became independent under Ḥassān-i Ṣabbāḥ.

In 1091, a year before Nizām al-Mulk was killed by an Ismā'īlī assassin, he invited al-Ghazālī (died 1111) to teach at the Madrasa Nizāmiya in Baghdad. Somewhat later the Caliph ordered him to write refutations of the Ismā'īliya. Al-Ghazālī wrote several such refutations, the most famous among them being *Faḍā'iḥ al-Bāṭiniya*. One of the methods of the Ismā'īlī missionaries was to arouse doubts about the veracity of the senses. The truth can be known, they claimed, only by way of *ta'līm*, the authoritative teaching of the *imām*, *scil.* the Fātimī caliph. Al-Ghazālī refuted this kind of scepticism and discussed the quiddity of knowledge. He argued that *ta'līm*, the authoritative teaching of the *imām*, was unnecessary if one was to apply a strict methodology in theology. Nevertheless, as a result of his involvement in this argumentation, al-Ghazālī's own thought became deeply affected by scepticism.<sup>14</sup>

<sup>12</sup> On p. 241 the author assumes that al-Māwardī considered the philosophers to be *zanādiqa* who deserve to be put to death. But two pages earlier he states that al-Māwardī does not mention the philosophers at all. Al-Māwardī describes the groups to be tolerated as few people dispersed here and there who do not disobey the ruler of the community (quotation on p. 239). Does this description not fit the philosophers perfectly? Al-Māwardī's interest was law and order and the security of the realm. The philosophers did not endanger these.

<sup>13</sup> It is strange that Griffel writes on p. 252 that in the twelfth century the Ash'arīs did not mention the philosophical tradition in Islam. Al-Shahrastānī (died 1153) devotes several pages in the last part of his *al-Milal wa 'l-nihal* to Ibn Sīnā and "the later philosophers." — On the same page the author claims that the fact that certain heresiographers omitted to mention the philosophers means that they did not consider them to be Muslims. This is not convincing.

<sup>14</sup> On p. 271, line 13 *'alā ḡayr dīn al-islām* does not mean "in einer unislamischen Umgebung" but "nicht der Religion des Islam gemäss." It might be an allusion to

The connections between the Ismā'īliya and Islamic philosophy encouraged al-Ghazālī to study the latter. In his *Tahāfut al-falāsifa* al-Ghazālī ruled that the Islamic philosophers are unbelievers and deserve to be put to death because of the three tenets mentioned above. (This statement recurs in *al-Iqtisād fi 'l-i'tiqād* and in *al-Munqidh min al-dalāl*). He blames them for not keeping the commandments of the religion of Islam, deeming their own reason (or intelligence, *'aql*) to be superior to revelation. On the other hand he accuses them of *taqlīd*, i. e., relying on the tradition of their school instead of applying their own reason-forming their tenets. He blames them for declaring that religion is intended for the masses only. Yet he does not reject their distinction between *elite* and "the masses," because he himself adopts the Ash'arī teaching, shared by the Mu'tazila, that the believer is obliged to provide logical proofs for the tenets of Islam, but "the masses," who are incapable of abstract thinking, are allowed to practice *taqlīd*.

In face of the Ismā'īlī danger, jurists of the Mālikī, Ḥanbalī and Shāfi'ī schools tended to deny the unbelievers the right of repentance and to demand capital punishment for them. The distinction between unbelief and exclusion from Islam became blurred. Al-Ghazālī followed this trend. He allowed the right of repentance to be extended only to uneducated people, not to the leaders and missionaries of the Ismā'īliya. According to Griffel, this endangered the philosophers as well.

Al-Ghazālī considered the philosophers as well as the Ismā'īliya to be unbelievers, because both groups taught that the eschatology of the Qur'an and of the Prophet Muḥammad was not to be taken literally. According to Griffel, al-Ghazālī accuses them of "calling the Prophet a liar," which amounts to unbelief.<sup>15</sup>

In his works *al-Iqtisād fi 'l-i'tiqād* and *Faysal al-tafriqa bayn al-Islām wa 'l-zandaqa* al-Ghazālī warns against the unwarranted judging of other Muslims to be unbelievers. In the second part of the latter work he sets forth the criteria determining which opinions may be tolerated and which may not. Griffel calls it "al-Ghazālī's theory of tolerance." Al-Ghazālī says that all statements of the Qur'an and the *ḥadīth* are to be understood literally, unless a decisive proof shows this to be impossible. No such proof is possible with regard to a) the existence of God, b) Muḥammad's prophecy, c) resurrection and the Day of Judgement, d) traditions warranted by *tawātur* (unbroken transmission by a great number of transmitters), e) religious principles such as 1) that the word "al-ka'ba" in the Qur'an refers to the cubic building in Mecca; 2) that

Qur'an 109: 6.

<sup>15</sup> At the bottom of page 306 Griffel claims that al-Ghazālī accuses the philosophers of *takdhīb al-nabī* referring to *al-Iqtisād fi 'l-i'tiqād*. But there (ed. I. A. Çubukçu and H. Atay, Ankara 1962, p. 249, line 6) al-Ghazālī says of the philosophers: *yuşaddiqūna 'l-nabī*. Griffel translates this sentence correctly on p. 301, line 11.

‘Ā’isha, the Prophet’s wife, did not commit adultery; 3) the obligation to pray five times a day. But if someone produces a really decisive proof that any other verse in the Qur’ān or some other *ḥadīth* cannot be understood literally and must be interpreted metaphorically — he should not be considered an unbeliever.

In the second half of *Fayṣal al-tafrīqa bayn al-Islām wa’l-zandaqa*, as well as in *al-Iqtisād fī ’l-i’tiqād*, al-Ghazālī’s criterion for unbelief involving capital punishment is *takdhīb al-nabī*, i. e., “considering the Prophet to be a liar,” that is, disbelieving him. Griffel points out that al-Ghazālī’s use of the terms *taṣdīq* and *takdhīb* differs from that of his Ash‘arī predecessors in two ways. First, while they speak of believing God to be truthful or holding that He lies, al-Ghazālī speaks of considering the Prophet to be truthful or untruthful. Secondly, al-Ghazālī’s use of *taṣdīq* is influenced by Ibn Sīnā’s philosophical terminology in which *taḍīq* denotes “judgement” as against *taṣawwur*, “concept.”

Griffel points out that in several of al-Ghazālī’s works — as well as in the writings of some Ash‘arī theologians in his days — notions and terms derived from Ibn Sīnā are to be found. He adds that the fact that al-Ghazālī ruled that the philosophers’ unbelief is restricted to three tenets only made possible the absorption of philosophical notions and terms in Ash‘arite *kalām* from the twelfth century onwards.

The rest of the book deals with the question how the later Islamic philosophers, mainly in Spain, reacted to al-Ghazālī’s teachings. Griffel says that the fact that the Saljūqs supported traditionist Islam and that the merchants could no longer afford to support philosophic learning, led to the decline of Islamic philosophy in the East during the second half of the eleventh century. But, he argues, what caused this decline to be so rapid is al-Ghazālī’s condemnation of three tenets of the philosophers (p. 340). On the other hand he tells us that al-Ghazālī’s contemporary, the Persian philosopher Abū ’l-‘Abbās al-Lawkarī, a follower of Ibn Sīnā, had many disciples in Iran (p. 342 and pp. 351–352).<sup>16</sup>

The next chapter deals with the two religious movements, both of which started among the Berbers of the Maghrib and eventually conquered al-Andalus as well as the Maghrib, one in the second half of the eleventh century, the other in the first half of the twelfth century. The Murābiṭūn (Almoravids) adopted the teaching of the Mālikī school of jurisprudence, which based its decisions on legal precedents and on the legal opinion of the jurists, rather than on the tradition of the Prophet. Their jurists concentrated on practical law (*furū’*) and did not deal with the principles underlying it (*uṣūl al-fiqh*). At first they contacted al-Ghazālī, who helped them to get the Caliph’s recognition. This led to the spread of al-Ghazālī’s books in al-Andalus. But when they found

<sup>16</sup> Is this a sign of decline?

al-Ghazālī’s use of philosophical terms and notions, as well as a condemnation of the exclusive pursuit of practical law (*furū’*) without studying the principles underlying it (*uṣūl al-fiqh*) in these books, they publicly burned them.

The Muwaḥḥidūn (Almohads) on the other hand stressed God’s unity, transcendence and ubiquity in terms derived from Ibn Sīnā’s philosophy.

Under the Murābiṭūn the Mālikī jurists allowed no distinction between “belief” and “Islam” and excluded from the Muslim community any person whom they called an unbeliever. They demanded the death penalty for such persons, and tended not to grant them the chance to repent. They interpreted al-Ghazālī’s works as agreeing with this intolerant attitude.

The Murābiṭ rulers favoured the philosophers, but their courtiers as well as the theologians persecuted them. The philosopher Ibn Bājja (Avenpace, died 1139) served at their court. He came to the conclusion that the ideal state, ruled by a philosopher, described by al-Fārābī, is impracticable. Therefore the philosopher living in one of the existing corrupt states should live in solitude, avoiding the society of men, unless they are “men of wisdom,” and strive alone to achieve conjunction with the Active Intellect. Disagreeing with al-Fārābī, Ibn Bājja has no use for religion. He rejects al-Ghazālī’s mysticism. He avoids mentioning the three tenets on account of which al-Ghazālī considered the philosophers to be unbelievers. Griffel finds an affinity between Ibn Bājja and the philosopher in the prologue of Juda ha-Lēvī’s “Cuzarī.”

The philosopher Ibn Tufayl (1116–1185) started his career as court physician of the Murābiṭ ruler of Granada and ended up as court physician and political counsellor of the Muwaḥḥid caliph Abū Ya‘qūb Yūsuf. Griffel believes that Ibn Tufayl’s allegory *Ḥayy ibn Yaqzān* not only signifies the harmony of philosophy and religion, and the philosopher’s capacity to achieve conjunction with the Active Intellect by himself, but — following W. Montgomery Watt’s interpretation — that it also mirrors the philosopher’s role in Muslim society and the Muwaḥḥidūn’s religious policy. The philosophical message of the work is Ibn Sīnā’s philosophy as “corrected” by al-Ghazālī.<sup>17</sup>

Abū Ya‘qūb Yūsuf commissioned Ibn Rushd (1126–1198) to write commentaries on the works of Aristotle. In his commentaries Ibn Rushd sought to “purify” Aristotle’s works by omitting not only the interpretations and additions of the commentators, but Aristotle’s own non-apodictic statements as well.

Apart from philosophy Ibn Rushd studied Islamic law and *kalām*, and eventually became *qāḍī ’l-quḍāt* at Cordoba. In his *Bidāyat al-mujtahid* he urges those jurists who have attained the highest level of

<sup>17</sup> It seems that Griffel has disregarded the mystical overtones in *Ḥayy ibn Yaqzān*.

learning to avoid *taqlīd* (reliance on earlier decisions of the school) and base their decisions on the Qur'ān, the *ḥadīth* and the consensus of the jurists. The other jurists will have to rely on *taqlīd* just like the common people. In another book Ibn Rushd paraphrased al-Ghazālī's law book *al-Mustasfā*. But whereas al-Ghazālī prefaced his book with an introduction to logic in guise of a non-philosophic terminology, Ibn Rushd restored the philosophical terms.

Both al-Ghazālī and Ibn Rushd hold that Muḥammad's prophecy is necessarily known to be true. Both agree that if nevertheless a Muslim does not accept it, he is to be killed.

Ibn Rushd mistakenly attributed to al-Ghazālī the view that not acknowledging the consensus of the jurists is not to be regarded as unbelief, and he ruled accordingly.

For Ibn Rushd revelation had, apart from its religious aspect, a moral and social utilitarian purpose.

Griffel believes that Ibn Rushd played a major role in shaping the religio-philosophical ideology of the Muwahḥid movement. In his later works Ibn Rushd sought to refute al-Ghazālī's condemnation of philosophy and the philosophers. This became necessary because knowledge of al-Ghazālī's writings had become widespread in al-Andalus, and because of the important role of Aristotle's philosophy in the ideology of the Muwahḥid movement. In *Tahāfut al-tahāfut*, *Kashf manāḥij al-adilla*, *Faṣl al-maqāl* and a few shorter works Ibn Rushd argued that revelation and philosophy are in harmony with one another. Whereas al-Ghazālī ruled that the proofs of the philosophers are not apodictic, Ibn Rushd taught that they are apodictic. Ibn Rushd took over al-Ghazālī's "rule of interpretation" (*qanūn al-ta'wīl*) with a difference: According to al-Ghazālī, only a strictly decisive proof justifies the decision that a certain verse is to be understood as a metaphor. Ibn Rushd, on the other hand, permitted the philosopher to interpret any verse of the Qur'ān metaphorically on the basis of a simple logical argument.

The work here reviewed is a major contribution to the history of Islamic thought. The argument is presented in a clear way and is easy to follow. The politico-historical background is amply provided. Most welcome is the systematic tracing of the development of the relation between the judgement that a person is an unbeliever and his exclusion from Islam.<sup>18</sup> The work is very well documented by reference to a

<sup>18</sup> Among the factors leading to the decline of Islamic philosophy in the East, Griffel counts the fall of the Buwayhī dynasty, the invasion and rule of the Saljūqs who embraced traditionalist Islam and the need to fight the dangerous Ismā'īlī mission which used philosophy in its propaganda. Yet he seems to make al-Ghazālī's attack no less responsible for this decline. But has not he himself shown that in the West under the Almohad regime which fostered philosophy, al-Ghazālī's works helped to disseminate Islamic philosophy? Is not the policy of the rulers the more effective

plethora of sources and secondary literature. It should be on the desk of every student of Islam.

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factor? On page 240, lines 9-5 from the bottom of the author claims that the change of meaning of the word *zandaqa* made it possible to put philosophers to death. But how many philosophers were actually put to death? On page 358 he mentions two philosophers who were executed. Both of them had mystical leanings. Perhaps it was on account of their mysticism that they were killed? Furthermore, one of the two is usually called *al-Suhrawardī al-maqtūl*. Does not his epithet "the killed one" show that his execution was an exception? The philosophers were no rebels. They were no *murtaddūn*. They were few and their writings were not understood by the masses. It seems that they constituted no danger. Yet they had to be declared to be unbelievers because their writings served the Ismā'īliyya who sought to undermine religion and state.