

Abū Ḥafş Ūmar b. Jamī

Abū Ḥafş Ūmar b. Jamī b. Wāsīn al-Yahrāsni (second half of the 7th/13th-beginning of the 8th/14th century) was an Ibādī theologian and scholar. A native of the Yahrāsni Berber tribe, Abū Ḥafş was born in the village of Wālagh at the northern end of the island of Jarba. According to Ibn Ta'ārīt (d. 1289/1872) he was taught by Abū al-'Abbās al-Darjīnī (d. c. 670/1271), the author of the *Kitāb al-ṭabaqāt*, in Bilād al-Jarīd in southern Tunisia. After completing his education, Abū Ḥafş returned to teach at the congregational mosque of Tafarrūjīn near Wālagh and was buried there after his death.

Despite the fact that little is known about his life, Abū Ḥafş Ūmar b. Jamī is well known for his *Muqaddimat al-tawḥīd*, an Ibādī creed (*'aqīda*) which is the Arabic translation of an original Berber text by an unknown author. Ennamī believes that this Berber text was written during the 5th/11th century by members of the *'azzāba ḥalqa* (a religious "council" of twelve "recluses" or "clerks") who had already produced a well known work of Ibādī jurisprudence known as the *Dīwān al-'azzāba*; hence this *'aqīda* was known as *'Aqīdat al-'azzāba* or *Tawḥīd al-'azzāba*. The earliest of the Ibādī *'aqīdas* date to the period following the collapse of the Rustamid imāmate (161–296/778–909) and consisted of simple enunciations of the Ibādī creed designed for ordinary Ibādīs. The best known is al-Jannāwunī's *'Aqīdat naḥṣa*, which is a century and a half older than that of Abū Ḥafş. This has led some scholars to believe that it was in fact al-Jannāwunī who wrote the original—in Arabic—but that it remained unknown in southern Tunisia, Jarba, or the Maghrib; it was subsequently translated into Berber without any attribution of provenance, and

so it happened that Abū Ḥafş retranslated it into Arabic, unaware of its origins. According to Cuperly, who has compared the Abū Ḥafş and al-Jannāwunī texts, the essential differences are in style and presentation rather than in content. However, because Abū Ḥafş quotes a supposed letter of Ibn Ibād to the Caliph 'Abd al-Malik b. Marwān in which the former adopts dogmatic positions concerning the issue of God's attributes and the vision of God that were not clarified in Ibādī theology until after the 3rd/9th century, Cuperly has concluded that this is, in fact, a composite work that evolved between the end of the 3/9th and the 5/11th century.

The *Muqaddimat al-tawḥīd* was widely used in Ibādī schools and formed a basic text of the syllabus. It has been subject to many commentaries, notably by Aḥmad al-Shammākhī (d. 928/1521–2) with an additional marginal gloss by Abū Sitta al-Qaṣṣībī (d. 1088/1679); Abū Sulaymān Dāwūd b. Ibrāhīm al-Thalāṭī (d. 967/1559–60); Ūmar b. Ramaḍān al-Thalāṭī (d. 1183/1773); and Muḥammad Aṭṭāyish (d. 1332/1914). The text, originally titled *al-Nukta* by Abū Ḥafş, is sometimes referred to by other names; al-Shammākhī calls it *al-Muqaddima*, while al-Thalāṭī uses *al-'Aqīda*. A comparison of these commentaries indicates the evolving character of theological refutation between Islamic schools, which can also be noted in other Muslim traditions.

BIBLIOGRAPHY

SOURCES

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