

he cannot be said to be knowing because of his essence (*li-dhātihī*) or because of himself (*li-nafsihī*).²³ *Allāh* is simply a name among others.²⁴

There was thus no room for *ṣifāt al-dhāt* in ‘Abbād’s system, although he did distinguish between different kinds of ‘names’. The category on which he based his distinction was action,²⁵ but he did not use the term *ṣifāt al-fi‘l*, referring to names that denote God ‘because of his own actions’ instead. He devoted much attention to these; there is one among them which applied exclusively to God: *al-bāri‘*, the ‘creator’.²⁶ There are others besides which denote God with regard to ‘the actions of someone else’, i.e. human action: passive participles such as *ma‘lūm* ‘that which is recognised’ or *mad‘ūw* ‘the objective of human prayer’. They are entirely non-Quranic, but also entirely incontrovertible; Ash‘arī and Baghdādī would later list them among the *asmā‘* as well.²⁷ And finally there is the group of those that are neither in one nor in the other category such as ‘Allāh’ or ‘eternal’ or ‘living’, but also ‘knowing’ and ‘powerful’, and even ‘hearing’ and ‘seeing’.²⁸ They describe God’s individual essence most closely, but as a group they are the most heterogeneous.

4.1.2.1.1.2.1 Names ‘because of God’s Own Actions’

We hear nothing more of the middle group. Names such as *ma‘lūm* or *ma‘būd* were artificial theological constructs. In the case of those belonging to the first group, however, ‘Abbād appears to have made a point of ‘God’s own action’ being expressed unmistakably in the grammatical form, and accepted only agent nouns: *muḥsin*, *murīd*, *‘ādil* etc.¹ He rejected forms such as *latīf* ‘kind’, *kafīl* ‘surety’, *wakīl* ‘guardian’; they were suitable only when the action expressed in them was defined in relation to an object, such as e.g. *latīf bil-‘ibād* ‘kind to humans’.² Instead of *mutakallim* ‘talking’ he said *mukallim* ‘addressing’;

23 Text 27, c; 29, b; 49, b. *Nafs* is purely a reflexive pronoun (cf. the exegesis in 29, d). Regarding *dhāt* cf. vol. v 398; with reference to ‘Abbād also Abrahamov in: *Der Islam* 71/1994/111.

24 Text 26, b.

25 Thus also Gimaret, *Noms divins* 107.

26 Text 88; cf. Gimaret, *ibid.* 284ff. It is certainly no coincidence that the doxographical accounts compiled by Ash‘arī often replace *Allāh* with *al-bāri‘*. The Rabbinic sages also used *bōrē* as a name of God (Marmorstein, *Rabbinic Doctrine of God* 74ff.).

27 Gimaret 44 and 108. If *Maq.* 509, 6f. says that the ‘Mu‘tazilites’ in general had already done this, it is probably referring to the time from ‘Abbād onwards. The Ash‘ariyya would use the term *wasf* rather than *ism* in the long run, such as e.g. Ghazzālī (cf. Gimaret 48).

28 Text 26.

1 Cf. the comprehensive list in Text 40, c–d.

2 Text 42–43. NB that the rejection of *wakīl*, if our interpretation is correct, has a different explanation than that given by Hishām al-Fuwaṭī.