

human freedom of decision with more conviction than they are usually said to have done.<sup>24</sup>

Of course the ambiguity of the term also played a part. Ḥākim al-Tirmidhī thought, entirely predestinarian, that humans ‘acquire’ an action from a selection of actions that God offers to them.<sup>25</sup> Ṭabarī said that *kasb* is mere ‘attribution’, ‘linking’ something (to a human; *idāfa, istidāfa*), but he mentions it in passing, without making it a dominant definition.<sup>26</sup> This point had not been reached at the time. However, two generations later we read in the works of Ibn Khafīf, the influential Sufi shaykh from Shiraz, that *iktisāb* was created by God and not by humans.<sup>27</sup> In the end the Mu‘tazilites had no more arguments against this, not least because in Ḍirār they had expelled the man who had developed these idea in accordance with the Mu‘tazilite spirit.

We should also consider the deliberations of Aḥmad b. al-Ḥusayn al-Bayhaqī (d. 458/1066), half a century before Ghazzālī, in his *K. shu‘ab al-īmān* (I 210, –8ff.). On the Christian side it was once again Yaḥyā b. ‘Adī who expressed an opinion on the issue, in his *K. naqḍ ḥujaj al-qā’ilīn bi-anna l-af‘āl khalq Allāh wa-ktisāb lil-‘abd* (discussed by Pines in: Israel Acad. of Sciences and Humanities v 4, 1973, p. 119ff.; cf. Endreß, *Works of Yaḥyā b. ‘Adī* 78ff. no. 5.36 with a more detailed title).

#### 2.1.1.5 Theodicy

The Ash‘arites did not make life easier for themselves when they redefined the term *kasb*. However, when they became entangled in *aporiai* in due course, we see a repetition of what had previously befallen the Qadarites and Mu‘tazilites and their approach, *mutatis mutandis*, when it came to theodicy. Zoroastrianism had been the original influence in this issue. Wolves, wasps, snakes and scorpions were part of the world of evil in Iranian eyes, while Muslims regarded them to have been created by one and the same God who also created lambs and bees. There are hadiths demonstrating that there were also early trends within Islam – and in particular in Iraq, where there was close contact with dualists – that regarded harmful animals as evil;<sup>28</sup> consequently, early Mu‘tazilite theologians for a time deliberated the question of whether

24 At least according to R. Frank’s interpretation (cf. his article *The Structure of Created Causality according to al-Ash‘arī* in: SI 25/1966/13ff.). Criticised by Abrahamov in: JRAS 1989, p. 210ff.

25 Cf. Gobillot in: SI 73/1991/37.

26 Schwarz 371 and 373.

27 In his *‘aqida*; cf. the supplement to the *Sīra* 292, 80f. SCHIMMEL-TARI.

28 See vol. II 59f. above.