

## 2.4.1.2 Ḥarrān and Islamic Theology

After this separation of the sources we know even less of what the Muslims thought of the Ḥarrānians' pagan religion during the first two centuries of Islam. While the phenomenon certainly excited their curiosity within the city itself, Ḥarrān was, in fact, very far away from those places where history was made, and the time during which it did make history was far too short for detailed information. Consequently we have to rely on hypotheses, and it may in fact be a good idea to start with one already expressed in the Middle Ages: Ibn Taymiyya, who came from a Ḥarrānian family himself, claimed that

al-Ja'd b. Dirham

was influenced by the Ṣābiāns.<sup>1</sup> While we do not have to assume that he was basing this claim on a local tradition – after all, half a millennium had passed – the case is still interesting, as al-Ja'd was the second theologian besides Ghaylān al-Dimashqī to be executed under Hishām, albeit in Iraq rather than in Damascus. Hishām's governor Khālīd al-Qasrī appropriately planned the execution for the feast of the sacrifice, remarking in his sermon that he would slaughter the delinquent instead of the more customary sacrificial animal. This may not have been as impossible as it sounds, as a governor's *khutba* was not necessarily devoid of political cynicism. However, it goes back to one single source, a certain al-Qāsim b. Muḥammad b. Ḥumayd al-Ma'marī (d. 228/843), who called on an eyewitness via a multi-strand and isolated *isnād*. The event would have taken place between 105/724 and 120/738; this was the time when Khālīd held the office in Iraq.

Cf. EI<sup>2</sup> IV s. v. *Khālīd b. 'Abd Allāh al-Qasrī*. The dates 124/742 and 125/743 Vajda gives in EI<sup>2</sup> III 747f. s. v. *Ibn Dirham* are consequently certainly wrong; Sibṭ b. al-Jawzī, too, is mistaken when he presumes a date of 102 or 103 (Gabrieli, *Califfato di Hishām* 17). Regarding Qāsim al-Ma'marī cf. *Mizān* no. 6836; concerning the other links of the *isnād* chain cf. *ibid.* no. 4950, no. 7350 and no. 1695. The tradition is reported in Bukhārī, *Khalq al-af'āl* 118, 2ff.; Khallāl, *Musnad* 423, 1ff.; Dārimī, *Radd 'alā l-Jahmiyya* 4, 11ff. and *passim*; TB XII 425 no. 6872; Bayhaqī, *Al-asmā' wal-ṣifāt* 325, 11ff.; Dhahabī, *Al-ṣulūh lil-'Alī al-Ghaffār* 167, 1ff.; without the *isnād* in Ibn al-Nadīm 401, 13. Even Balādhurī already cited it (*Ansāb* III 100, ult. ff.), referring directly to Ma'marī's authority. Ājurī, *Sharī'a* 97, –8ff. has the *khutba* only. Dhahabī suggested that apart from this one story Ma'marī had nothing of relevance to offer; his reputation was not above criticism

1 *Al-fatāwā al-Ḥamawīyya* 15, –4f. = ZDMG 53/1899/72.