Chapter Four: Muslim Literature of Religious Polemics

Introduction

The preceding discussion has given us grounds to establish a Mudejar origin for some treatises of religious polemics and to place the production of the Arabic originals of such works in the fourteenth century. This is consistent with the periodization of the polemical literature in Arabic in the Iberian Peninsula provided by Van Koningsveld and Wiegers.\(^1\) According to these authors, the first polemics written in Arabic in al-Andalus date from the Ṭaifa period and are represented by the work of Ibn Ḥazm (994–1064 CE). The attacks against Christians and Jews by Ibn Hazm were followed by a second stage which ran parallel to the Christian conquests of the Muslim territory. These polemics placed a strong focus on military confrontation. The third and last stage began with the Arabic polemics by the thirteenth-century authors al-Asir and al-Qaysi, and were followed by the translations of these and other works into Romance by the Mudejars and later by the Moriscos. To this period characterized by the Christian missionary efforts to convert the Muslims belong both the Arabic originals and some Aljamiado adaptations of the Mudejar treatises of religious polemics discussed so far.

The Muslim literature of religious polemics against the Christians and the Jews produced in particular in al-Andalus and the Maghreb, but also in Christian Iberia, is the natural basis for the study of the Mudejar literature on this subject. This chapter offers a selection of Muslim authors and works of polemics in these regions which are important to the analysis of the texts below. In many cases, they coincide with those mentioned in the publication by Van Koningsveld and Wiegers. However, because other religious genres cultivated by the Mudejars and the Moriscos show Eastern influences, I shall also discuss some works produced in this region which could have been of importance to the Mudejar treatises of religious polemics. The sections which follow are not divided into chronological

\(^1\) Here, I summarize the views by Van Koningsveld and Wiegers in Van Koningsveld and Wiegers, 1994, 194-196. As far as I am aware, these two scholars are the only ones so far to have embarked on such an attempt and to have included the Mudejar production.
periods but into geographical areas: al-Andalus (1); Christian Iberia (2); the Maghreb (3) and the Mashriq (4).

4.1. al-Andalus

a) Ibn Ḥazm

The Cordovan Ibn Ḥazm (994–1064 CE) is famed for his engagement in the discussion of the Christian and Jewish Scriptures and for his virulent polemical attacks on them. Ibn Ḥazm's polemics against the Jews occupy only a part of his extensive work in which he attacks all his enemies, including those Muslims who did not adhere to the Zāhirī doctrine which he followed. His purpose is to demonstrate the falsity of the Torah and the sacred books of the Jews. He argues that, after the death of Moses and the destruction of the Temple of Jerusalem by the Babylonian king, Nebuchadnezzar, the Torah was destroyed. In order to counter the Jewish claim that the Torah and the sacred books of the Jews have a divine origin and to show that they are an invention of the rabbis, Ibn Ḥazm quotes and systematically refutes long fragments from the Pentateuch, the Talmud, the books of the Prophets and the Psalms. In his view, the only passages which have remained uncorrupted are those protected by God in which the prophecy of Muhammad is announced and which therefore God protected from falsification. 3

Given the importance which Ibn Ḥazm attaches to the doctrine of the falsification of the revealed text (taḥrīf), it is a little bit surprising that in his most important work of polemics, the al-Fīṣal fī-l-Milal wa-l-Ahwā’ wa-n-Niḥal ['Book of Decisive Solutions concerning Religions, Sects and Schools'] he does not always provide literal quotations of the Bible but paraphrases them instead. 4 In his work, Ibn Ḥazm inserts personal biographical information and details of his disputes with the Jews which indicate that the polemics between the two communities in al-Andalus were frequent and probably of a public character. So, Ibn Ḥazm claims: "I repeatedly threw this passage at some Jews with

---

3 Ibn Ḥazm's work has received much scholarly attention; see Asín Palacios, 1927–1932; the various publications by Adang, such as Adang, 1994a and 1996; Pulcini 1998; Ljamai, 2003; Adang et al., 2013. See also the recent study of the al-Fīṣal by Samir Kaddouri, 2013 and 2015. I thank Prof. P.S. van Koningsveld for having given me a copy of Kaddouri’s dissertation.


According to Lazarus-Yafeh, Ibn Ḥazm would have been the first author to provide a paraphrase of the biblical text of such length and to provide a literal translations of entire chapters, Lazarus-Yafeh, 1992, 136. Sometimes, however, Ibn Ḥazm's sources do not seem to correspond either to the Torah or to the oral Torah (Talmud). Adang 1994a, 66–67. The mixture of supposedly biblical and almost verbatim quotations of passages from these texts is characteristic of medieval Muslim polemical literature. Lazarus-Yafeh, 1992, 78.
whom I engaged in polemics in public. Sometimes he addresses the reader with direct questions, for instance, when he criticizes the number of the male sons of Levi given in the Book of Numbers and says: “For, could you believe, oh reader, that the shameless author who wrote this book for the Jews allowed his arithmetical ignorance to come to this extreme?” Overall, the focus of Ibn Hazm is directed towards proving the falsity of the Torah. This is well illustrated in the following example from the al-Fīṣal:

The second [enormity in the Torah, MCA] is that the forger of this nonsense (God damn him!) has dared to attribute such a spicy story to God, or to attribute to his prophet and envoy, Lot, the enormous immorality of having cohabitated with his two daughters, one after another. [...] These are truly the most shameless things that have ever been told, and could not have been forged but by atheists, who in their wickedness reached the limit of contempt for God and His prophets.7

The harsh words of Ibn Hazm were probably aggravated by his exasperation with the prosperity of the Jewish communities in al-Andalus during the first half of the eleventh century. The welfare of the Jewish communities in comparison to the Visigoth period had

---

1 Sidney H. Griffith notes that the sources for his biblical quotations are unknown and do not correspond with the Arabic Bibles known to scholars. Griffith, 2013, 199. This is partly true, since Kaddouri has been able to identify some of these sources as Oriental Arabic Bible versions. See, Kaddouri, 2013, passim.

2 My translation of Asín Palacios, 1927-1932, Vol. II, 265: “Porque ¿crees tú, lector, que el autor desvergonzado que escribió a los judíos este libro pudiera llegar en su ignorancia de la aritmética a este colmo?”. My translation of Asín Palacios, 1927-1932, Vol. II, 327: “¿Porque ¿crees tú, lector, que el autor desvergonzado que escribió a los judíos este libro pudiera llegar en su ignorancia de la aritmética a este colmo?”. These are truly the most shameless things that have every been told, and could not have been forged but by atheists, who in their wickedness reached the limit of contempt for God and His prophets.7

3 My translation of Asín Palacios, 1927-1932, Vol. II, 327: “La segunda [enormidad que hay en la Torah, MCA] es atreverse el falso que forjó esta chochez [maldivo Dios!] a colgarle a Dios tan picante historieta, o sea el atribuir a su profeta y enviado Lot la enorme inmoralidad de cohabitar con sus dos hijas, una tras otra. [...] Estas son en verdad las cosas más impudicas que jamás se habrán dicho, y no han podido ser forjadas sino por ateo, que en su impiedad llegaron al colmo del desprecio de Dios y sus profetas.” It should be borne in mind, however, that as Camilla Adang notes, Ibn Hazm’s attacks are directed primarily towards Judaism as a religion and not towards the ethnic origins of Jews, as he regarded them as potential converts. Adang, 1994a, 105. The same attitude towards the Jews is clear in the polemical treatise the Izhār Tahdīl al-Yahūd [‘Exposure of the Alterations Introduced by the Jews’], preserved in the al-Fīṣal. The Izhār Tahdīl al-Yahūd wa-n-Nasārā’ li-l-Tawrāt wa-l-Iṣnīl wa-Bayyān Tawrāqūl mā bi-Aydhīhī mīn Dhiqākā Minhā lā Yaṭāmaṭa u-Taʷwil [‘Exposure of the Alterations Introduced into the Torah and the Gospel by Jews and Christians, and an Elucidation of the Contradictions Contained in the Versions thereof They Possess, Which Cannot Be Explained Away by Metaphorical Interpretation’]. Camilla Adang notes that most scholars follow the ideas of Goldziher, who argues that Ibn Hazm incorporated the treatise of the Izhār into his history of the religions, the al-Fīṣal (in Ibn Hazm, Abū Muhammad ‘Ali ibn Ahmad ibn Sa‘īd. Al-Fīṣal fi-l-Mīlāl wa-l-Ahwā’ wa-n-Nihāl [‘Book of Decisive Solutions concerning Religions, Sects and Schools’], 5 parts in 3 vols. Reprint: Där al-Ma‘řa‘ li-l-Tihāb wa-l-Nashr, 1927/1927 CE, Vol. I 116-224 and Vol. II, 1-91). However, this hypothesis does not explain why in the al-Fīṣal Izhār is entitled Fāṣ fī Munāqṣādāt Zāhirā wa-Takâdīb Wāḏība fi-l-Kiṭāb alladhihī tusammāni al-Yahūd at-Tawrāt wa-fī Sā‘īr Katabīhīn, wa-fī-l-Anājīl al-ṣawā’ir, yutayaqqana bi-dhālika tabrijuḥū ha wa-tahdīļū ha wa-annahah ghayr alladhihī ansalāt-l-lā‘ azzā wa-yallā [‘On the Obvious Contradictions and Blatant Lies Contained in the Book Which the Jews Call the Torah and in the Rest of Their Books, as Well as in the Four Gospels, Demonstrating the Fact That These Have Been Corrupted and Are Different to the Books Which God, Almighty and Exalted, Has Revealed’]. Adang, 1996, 66 and n. 295. Samir Kaddouri has recently argued that it is an apocryphal work attributed to this author. Kaddouri, 2013.
increased to such a point that, in some cases, the Jews had come to occupy highly responsible positions.\textsuperscript{9} The unrest stirred in Muslims by the rise of the Jews is reflected in the qaṣīda of Abū ʾIṯšāq al-Ilbīrī (d. 1067-1068 CE), born in Elvira (Granada), in which this author severely criticizes the King of Granada, Bādis ibn Ḥabūs, for granting positions of great responsibility at court to the Jews, and urges the North African Berber tribes to rise against the Jews of al-Andalus.\textsuperscript{13} In this connection, Camilla Adang notes two principal reasons which seem to have prompted Ibn Ḥazm to write his polemics against the Jews: the violation of the covenant of the dhimma, and what he saw as reprehensible trends in the Islam of his time; that is, reasons of both a religious and a political nature. Indeed, the assignation of responsible positions to the Jews did contravene the pact of the dhimma which gave non-Muslim communities in an Islamic state protection in exchange for the payment of tribute (jīzya), but prevented them from attaining positions above the Muslims. However, after the collapse of the Caliphate of Córdoba (1231 CE), the struggles for power between the various Ṭāʾifas kingdoms transformed Jews into the perfect allies of some Muslim rulers who could not trust either their co-religionists or the Christians, with whom they were waging war for territory.\textsuperscript{12} This dilemma facilitated a situation in which, in some Ṭāʾifas, for instance, in that of Granada, the Jews had been put in charge of collecting taxes from the Muslims or of leading an army.\textsuperscript{14} A well-known example is that of Ismāʿīl ibn al-Naghrīla, vizier of the Zirid court of Granada, with whom Ibn Ḥazm disputed some of his best-known controversies.\textsuperscript{15} The animosity among Muslims towards Jews might also have been reinforced by the great respect shown the Torah and the observation of some Jewish precepts by some Andalusī Muslim, practices which were considered as ḥudayṣī.\textsuperscript{16}

Although there are no indications of any direct influence of the work of Ibn Ḥazm on the polemic against the Jews in the Taʾyīḍ al-Mīlāʾ, it is possible to argue that the content of this Mudejar polemic shows a link to Ibn Ḥazm’s thought in two respects: the first is the

\textsuperscript{9} Roth, 1994, Chapter One.

\textsuperscript{10} Adang, 1994a, Chapter One (15-23) and passim.

\textsuperscript{11} On this poet, see García Gómez, Emilio. Un alfaquí español: Abū ʾIṯšāq de Elvira, Madrid: Consejo Superior de Investigaciones Científicas, 1944, and, by the same author, Cinco poetas musulmanes: biografías y estudios, Madrid: Espasa Calpe, 1944, 95-98. Also, El2 s.v. “Abū ʾIṯšāq al-Ilbīrī” (García Gómez) and El3 s.v. “Abū ʾIṯšāq al-Ilbīrī” (Garulo).

\textsuperscript{12} As Adang notes, “los judíos, que no participaban en el conflicto, tenían la confianza de los gobernantes,” [Jews, who were not involved in the conflict [namely: between Muslims], had the confidence of the rulers]. Adang, 1994b, 16.

\textsuperscript{13} Roth notes that, although the covenant of the dhimma was not respected in other Islamic countries, only in al-Andalus did Jews attain such high positions in the social hierarchy. Roth, 1994, 79.

\textsuperscript{14} “Ar-Radd ʿalā Ibn al-Naghrīla-Jāḥiḍū.” See for this work Adang, 1996, 67-69, and particularly 67 n. 299 for the editions of and studies about it. This polemic against the Jews is more succinct and less widespread than the al-Fīqāl, so I shall not deal with it here. For a detailed discussion, see Fierro, 2003 and Brann, 2002, Chaper Two.

\textsuperscript{15} Adang, 1994a, 52. For the views of Ibn Ḥazm on the ‘ḥudayṣī’ practices among Mālikites, see Adang, 1995.
central place of the Torah and prophetic books in the refutation of Judaism, which is in line with Ibn Ḥazm’s dialectic stress on the importance of the sources of religious opponents as a polemical weapon; the second reason is the motives which inspired the author of the Ta’ṣīd argue with the Jews. These are similar to those of Ibn Ḥazm: political (namely: the competition for the favour of the Christian lords) and religious (namely: the competition to achieve excellence). This similarity notwithstanding, the Taʿṣīd and the polemics by Ibn Ḥazm pursue different goals: whereas the point of departure of the author of the Taʾṣīd is the misinterpretation of Scripture, but he still accepts its truth, Ibn Ḥazm wants to demonstrate the falsity of the canonical texts of the Jews in their entirety. Consequently, the Mudejar author of the Taʾṣīd does use the Torah but criticizes it differently to the way adopted by Ibn Ḥazm.

As Theodore Pulcini notes, Ibn Ḥazm’s critique of the Gospels follows logically from his critique of the Torah. Indeed, Ibn Ḥazm had to demonstrate that the coming of Jesus did not restore the Revelation to the Jews, and that the Gospels had also been corrupted. Unlike most Muslim scholars of his time, Ibn Ḥazm’s approach to the Gospels assigns a central place to falsification (taḥrīf): the text had not been misinterpreted (taḥrīf al-maʿnā) but falsified (taḥrīf an-nāṣṣ). Hence, when Ibn Ḥazm deals with the Trinity, the divinity of Jesus, the crucifixion and the meaning of the Paraclete, he always pays full attention to the contradictions in the Gospels and the Gospel narratives. He claims that the falsity of the Gospels can be proven in two ways: either by historical scrutiny of the emergence and development of Christianity or by human reason or natural laws. This is in line with his understanding of “[t]he Islamic religion as the original and only genuine one (religio naturalis), whose contents are in absolute harmony with the real world and natural processes”, and he considers “only the Aristotelian as the valid criterion for a differentiation between truth and falsehood”. Below we shall see that the notion of religio naturalis, known in Islam as ad-dīn al-fīṭra, is also important to the Mudejar treatise of religious polemics of the Kitāb al-Mujādala.

Adang 1994a, 101 and 111.
12 Behloul, 2013, 457-483, particularly 459-463. Ibn Ḥazm holds the same views about the Torah. See also the article by Urvoy in this same volume: Urvoy, 2013, 485-496.
14 Behloul, 2013, 461.
15 Behloul, 2013, 459.
16 Behloul, 2013, 464.
Also relevant to the analysis of how the author of the *Kitāb al-Mujādala* polemizes with the Christians is the approach taken by Ibn Ḥazm to Aristotelian logic in one of his first works, the *at-Taqrīb*. Behloul summarizes Ibn Ḥazm’s approach as follows:

Ibn Ḥazm sees the fundamental evil in the previous modes of reception of Aristotelian logic in Islam in its polarising effect on the Islamic umma. To completely resolve this problem, Ibn Ḥazm attempts in his *Taqrīb* to abrogate for once and for all the autonomy or the singularity of the philosophy underlying the recent Muslim forms of reception of Aristotelianism. Namely, philosophy and theology may not remain differing approaches to reality, each autonomous and following systemic rules of their own. Two different paths to the one and the same truth cannot exist, in Ibn Ḥazm’s system of thought. For if one path is true, then the other path, though it may share many similarities with the first, must necessarily be wrong. In Ibn Ḥazm’s embracing of Aristotle, therefore, one finds not an attempt at harmonizing the two competing and self-sufficient world views, but rather a strategic engagement of an independent system of thought for apologetic and polemical purposes.

Here, the stance taken by Ibn Ḥazm seems to approach that of the author of the *Kitāb al-Mujādala*, who, as will be shown in detail in Chapter Six, places logic not as subsidiary to religious sciences but as an integral part of God’s creation. However, Ibn Ḥazm refutes the views of the non-Muslim philosophers and is opposed to the use of allegory and metaphor. Holding an almost diametrically opposed view to this stance, the author of the *Kitāb al-Mujādala* relies on the authority of Aristotle to support a worldview which regards philosophy, logic and the natural sciences as inseparable from and indispensable to an understanding of the Divine, and claims, moreover, that allegory and metaphor are necessary to understanding the Qur’ān properly. As does Ibn Ḥazm, this Mudejar author argues that man is unable to know the hidden (*ghāb*) and only has access to what is visible (*zāhir*). There are two final points of attention: one is the fact that in his rendering of passages from the Gospels, Ibn Ḥazm attaches great importance to the original text and his approach to the visible universe as a proof the existence of God in Behloul, 2013, especially 467-470.

---

22 According to Ljamai, written between 1024-1030 CE. Ljamai, 2003, 45. Behloul notes that Ibn Ḥazm refutes Christianity in the *at-Taqrīb* and he uses the principles developed in it in his other works, the *al-Fiṣal* and the *al-Iḥkām fī Uqūl al-ahkām*. Behloul refers the reader to his own discussion on the dating of the *at-Taqrīb* in one of his previous publications. Behloul, 2013, 465 and n. 31, 473 and 478.

23 Behloul, 2013, 472.

24 "For Ibn Ḥazm, logic does not constitute an alien body of ideas that would harmonise only with the Islamic revelation, but a tool that the Creator, by an act of grace, has placed at the disposal of all peoples." Behloul, 2013, 470.

25 On only one occasion does the author refute the views of Aristotle, namely: his saying that, “after this world there is not an afterlife” because, he claims, this is contrary to the revealed text. MS AF 58, f. 44r.

26 MS AF 58, f. 43v. See Ibn Ḥazm’s approach to the visible universe as a proof the existence of God in Behloul, 2013, especially 467-470.
also refers to Jesus as Yasūʾ and not by the Islamic name of ʿĪsā. As it has been noted above, the Kitāb al-Mujādala also uses Yasūʾ in some of quotations attributed to the Christians. The other is the sympathies of Ibn Ḥazm for the Jews, and for his enemies in general, change depending on the subject he addresses, as Adang notes. We come across the same polemical ‘move’ in the Kitāb al-Mujādala.

Despite the importance of the al-Fiṣal in its influence on later literature of controversy, no overall study of it has made so far. In his monograph about Ibn Ḥazm, Abdelilah Ljamai devotes one chapter to the work of three peninsular figures who could have taken the al-Fiṣal as a model for their polemics with the Christians: Abū Jaʿfar Ahmad Ibn al-Ṣamad al-Khazraji al-Anṣāri al-Qurṭubī (1125-1186 CE), Ahmad Ibn ʿUmar ibn Ibrāhīm al-Anṣāri al-Qurṭubī (1182-1258 CE) and ʿAbd Allāh al-Tarjumaṭ al-Mayūrī (1353-1430 CE). Camilla Adang gives the names of those Muslim authors, two of them Orientals, who might have followed the method of criticism of the Torah developed by Ibn Ḥazm in his polemics against the Jews but does not discuss them at length: Ibn Zafar (d. 1169 CE), al-Qaṣīfī (d. 1285 CE) and Ibn Qayyim al-Jawziyya (1292-1350 CE). To this group also belongs Samawʿal al-Maghribī (1130-1180 CE), who lived in Syria, Iraq and Iran, and will be discussed below.

---

32 Urvoy, 2013, 492.
33 Adang, 1996, 253-254.
34 Ljamai focuses his analysis on the work of al-Khazraji’s Kitāb Maqāmī aṣ-Ṣalbūn fī-r-Radd ‘alā ʿAbudat al-Awhānīn (‘Book of the Weapons to Repress the Crosses in the Refutation of the Idolaters’), (Ljamai, 2003, 145-152) but it seems that al-Khazraji also wrote a refutation of Judaism, the Munāẓara l-Ṭahīād (‘Debate with the Jews’) to be discussed below.
35 Kaddouri has identified this person with the author of the al-Tiʿām which will be discussed in a moment. Kaddouri, 2003.
36 Ljamai, 2003, Chapter Five. Al-Tarjumaṭ refers to previous polemicists like Ibn Ḥazm but argues that the similarities with the al-Fiṣal are few. Ljamai 2003, 168-173, particularly 171.
38 Adang, 1994a, 99-100.
39 According to Lazarus-Yafeh, Ibn Ḥazm of Córdoba (994-1064 CE) and the convert from Judaism Samawʿal al-Maghribī (1130-1180 CE) are “the two basic sources for medieval polemics Against Judaism and the Bible”. Adang refers to him as ‘judío convertido de origen andalusí’ [Jewish convert of Andalusian origin], Adang, 1994a, 100, because the family of his father might have migrated to Baghdād from al-Andalus to escape the persecution of the Almoravids. See for Samawʿal’s most important polemic against the Jews, Perlmann, 1964.
b) al-Khazrajī

The Cordovan al-Khazrajī (1125-1186 CE), author of the Kitāb Maqāmī ʿaṣ-Ṣulbān ['The Book of the Triumph over the Cross']\(^5\) seems to have quoted passages from the al-Fiṣal without acknowledging his sources.\(^6\) Al-Khazrajī was born in Córdoba but was a captive of war in Christian Toledo between 1145 and 1147 CE. In the Kitāb Maqāmī ʿaṣ-Ṣulbān, al-Khazrajī refutes the arguments of a Christian priest in Toledo nicknamed al-Qūṭī, or the Goth.\(^7\) Ljamai notes that in Toledo al-Khazrajī held the legal status of mudajjan, that is to say, of Mudejar.\(^8\) However, it is important to note that the “Mudejar status” of al-Khazrajī was exceptional in so far as it was merely circumstantial. Born a free Muslim in Córdoba, this author was educated in an entirely different cultural and social environment to that of the Toledan Mudejars who had found themselves under Christian rule for roughly half a century. In either case, the captivity of al-Khazrajī in the capital of knowledge of the Christian territories of the Iberian Peninsula at the time seems to have made him reluctant to accede to the demands by the Mudejar communities of Toledo to write a treatise of polemics against al-Qūṭī. Nevertheless, once released, al-Khazrajī did acquiesce in the desire of his co-religionists and sent them the Maqāmī ʿaṣ-Ṣulbān.\(^9\)

In the folds of the Maqāmī ʿaṣ-Ṣulbān there is a polemic against the Jews, the Munāzarat al-Yahūd ['Debate with the Jews']. Here, al-Khazrajī disputes with one of the Jewish sages, and claims that the prophecy of the coming of Muḥammad is foretold in the Torah. To sustain his claim, al-Khazrajī cites Deuteronomy 18:18: “I will raise among them a prophet like you [Moses]”. The arguments adduced by al-Khazrajī to show that the prophet announced in these verses is none other than Muḥammad are so convincing that his Jewish interlocutor asks a co-religionist who is at his side how to get rid of “that Arab”.\(^{10}\)

The most important connection between the Maqāmī ʿaṣ-Ṣulbān and the polemics against the Christians in the Kitāb al-Mujādala is that these two treatises include references to a Christian called Aghushtīn. In the Maqāmī ʿaṣ-Ṣulbān, Aghushtīn is called a

---

\(^{5}\) A work of secondary importance in the intervening period is the refutation of a French monk by al-Bājī, dated before 1081 CE. See Zomeño, 2003, 172-175.

\(^{6}\) Ljamai claims that the editor of the Kitāb Maqāmī ʿaṣ-Ṣulbān, Abdelmajid ʿAḥmad Sharfī, was the first to place the texts quoted in these two treatises side by side. Ljamai, 2003, 147.


\(^{8}\) “mudajjanan bayna azhur al-qawm wa fī qubbati diyānatīlim”, al-Khazrajī edited by Sharfī, 1975, 39.

\(^{9}\) Granja, 1968, 327-328. Van Koningsveld discusses whether al-Khazrajī could have written this work in Toledo, with the help of other Mudejars, or only did so after his return to Córdoba, perhaps with the help of a European slave, and argues that it is more plausible that the second option was the case. Van Koningsveld, 1994b, 18-19 n. 40. Al-Khazrajī ended his days teaching ḥadīth in the mosque of al-Qarawīyīn in Fez.

\(^{10}\) For this answer, in Arabic, see Kaddouri, 2012, Num. 12.
commentator on biblical texts but we shall see below that he is also mentioned in the next polemical work, in which he is referred to as bishop.

c) al-Qurṭubi

Al-Qurṭubi (1182-1258 CE) repeatedly refers to Aghushṭīn and calls him a bishop in his al-Ilām bi-mā fi ḍīn an-Naṣṣara min al-Fāsād wa-l-Awḥām wa-l-Iṣḥār Muḥāsin Din al-Islām wa-lthalbāt Nubuwawat Nābīnā Muḥammad ‘alayhi āṣ-ṣalāt wa-s-salām ['Demonstration of the Corruptions and Delusions of the Religion of the Christians and an Exposition of the Merits of the Religion of Islam and an Affirmation of the Prophethood of our Prophet Muḥammad, Peace Be upon Him']. In al-Ilām Al-Qurṭubi seems to have used the work of al-Khazrajī and, moreover, he quotes parts of two Christian works: the Tathlīth al-Wahdāniyya ['Trinitizing the Unity'] sent to al-Khazrajī by a Toledan priest, and the Maṣḥaf al-ʿĀlam al-Kāʾīn ['The Book of the Existing World'] attributed to Aghushṭīn. Burman notes that, according to al-Qurṭubi, the Tathlīth al-Wahdāniyya was sent to Córdoba from Toledo and, therefore, it had circulated in both the Christian and Muslim territories.

The work of al-Qurṭubi is interesting to the analysis of the Kitāb al-Mujādala for various reasons. One of the most salient is the fact that these two authors use the attributes of God – al-qudra (power), al-ʿilm (knowledge) and al-irāda (will) – in their defence against the arguments for the Trinity adduced by Aghushṭīn and by the author of the Tathlīth al-Wahdāniyya in al-Ilām. As demonstrated these attributes also appear in the Kitāb al-Mujādala in conjunction with several references to Aghushṭīn. Another reason is that al-Qurṭubi, as noted in Chapter One, at some point in his polemic refers to the views of

—


Ljamai, 2003, 152-168. According to Kaddouri, the Tathlīth and the Maṣḥaf are both preserved in this work. Kaddouri, 2003, passim. The same fact has been noted by Monferrer Sala, 2012, 392.

According to Ljamai, Shafīʿ is the first to have drawn attention to this influence in his edition of Maqāmī. Ljamai, 2003, 157 n. 74. Ljamai notes that Van Koningsveld has proven that he knew this work and borrowed passages from it without acknowledging his sources. Ljamai, 2003, 157-158 and n. 75.

An overview of the contents in these treatises and a discussion about the identity of Aghushṭīn and of the priest of Toledo who sent the Tathlīth al-Wahdāniyya can be found in Burman, 1994, 71-84. Burman translates the arguments against the Trinity, in the Tathlīth al-Wahdāniyya, in Burman, 1997, 148-151. See also for his treatise, Burman, 2012. Al-Ilām mentions a lost epistle sent by the "obispos de los cristianos" ['bishops of the Christians'] to Abū Marwān Abūd al-Malik Ibn Masarra al-Yaḥṣūbī (d. 1157 CE). Van Koningsveld, 1989, 122-124, particularly 124.

Burman, 1994, 76.

According to Burman, Aghushṭīn and the author of the Tathlīth al-Wahdāniyya used the equivalent of the triad of Peter Abelard and "adapted that triad to the Arabic intellectual tradition". Burman, 1994, 181 and 184. See for the whole discussion about the place of the triad in Christian theology or kalām in Burman, 1994, 157-189.
the “priests of Aragon” and condemns them.\footnote{The al-Iład by al-Qurṭubi, edited by al-Saqā. Al-Qurṭubi, 1983, 407. Lazarus-Yafeh, 1996, 72. See my earlier note for the rendering into Arabic of this passage.} Even though al-Qurṭubi does not specify in which specific place he met these priests, his words do provide palpable evidence of the climate of polemics between Christians and Muslims at the time, and open up the possibility that the priests took the knowledge of al-Qurṭubi’s work or of his person back to Aragon. Finally, al-Qurṭubi might have included a polemic against his co-religionists in the al-Iład. Devillard postulates the hypothesis that the “Refutation of Porphyry” included in the al-Iład by al-Qurṭubi is an interreligious Muslim polemic against philosophers.\footnote{Devillard claims that the ‘Refutation of Porphyry’ could refer to the author of the Christian treatise the Maṣḥaf; “à moins que ce nom ne veuille stigmatiser l’aristotélisme des auteurs musulmans, il serait ainsi une réfutation déguisée de l’islam. Hypothèse même plus vraisemblable, car il ne devait pas y avoir beaucoup de païens à cette époque”. Devillard, 1969, 18. Burman claims that the “Refutation of Porphyre” is not a treatise in the sense of the word but is most probably part of Aghushtin’s Maṣḥaf. Burman, 1994, 81.} Should Devillard be correct in his hypothesis, this would open the possibility that the Kitāb al-Mujādala was written as an answer to such views as those found in the “Refutation of Porphyry”, that is, an intra-religious polemic. This idea would tally with the combative attitude towards the understandings of philosophy among Muslims that, as we shall see, is found in this treatise.

d) Ibn Sab’īn

The ṣūfī Ibn Sab’īn of Murcia (1217–1270 CE)\footnote{Akasoy, 2008, 134-35. Akasoy argues that the encounter between the Emperor and Ibn Sab’īn might never occurred but was purely the product of a literary fiction. For the opposite opinion on this question see the article by Mandalà, 2007.} composed the al-Masā’il as-Ṣiqillīyya [‘Sicilian Questions’] as a polemical answer to the questions supposedly posed by the Emperor Frederick II. The Almohad character which Akasoy argues for the Sicilian Questions is relevant to this premise, since the work does have similarities with the Kitāb al-Mujādala. One of the most important is its continuous explicit references to Ibn Rushd, a mention which “is rare in medieval Arabic literature and corresponds to the lack of transmission of his philosophical texts.”\footnote{Akasoy, 2008, 135. This notwithstanding, the legal views held by Ibn Rushd seem to have been used by Muslims in the Christian territories. Miller, 2008, 63, 93 and 112.} Likewise relevant is the fact that, as are the Sicilian Questions, the polemic in the Kitāb al-Mujādala is presented in the form of masā’il, or questions. In both treatises we also observe contradictions between the philosophical arguments attributed to a same author, references to older sources which do not correspond with these sources (as is the case of the many references to Aristotle) and quotations from Ibn al-Sīd al-Baṭalyawṣī. It is as if the author of the Kitāb al-Mujādala was working, as Ibn Sab’īn
probably did, with summaries of the works of Ibn Rushd, which might explain the impression of disorder transmitted in both treatises. The evidence so far only allows me to note these similarities but not to establish a direct link between these two polemics.

e) Qam' al-Yahūd

In his Ihāta [MS Escorial 1673, f. 147], the historian Ibn al-Khaṭīb (1333-1375 CE) mentions an anonymous treatise of polemics with the Jews written in al-Andalus, the Qam' al-Yahūd ‘an taʿaddī l-Hudūd [‘The Repression of the Jews in the Offence of the Divine Ordinances’]. The Qam' al-Yahūd was written in Granada by the court physician Muḥammad ibn ‘Abd Allāh al-Lakhmi al-Shaqūrī (1326-1374 CE) to refute the ideas of his professional colleague and rival, the Jewish Ibrāhīm ibn Zazzār. We do not know the details of the contents of this work. Al-Shaqūrī was the doctor of the famous Andalusī qādi Abū al-Qāsim al-Sharīf al-Gharṃāti (1297-1359 CE) and, after treating a long illness suffered by al-Gharṃāti, al-Shaqūrī wrote a book on the dietary habits in al-Andalus entitled the Tuḥfat-al-Mutawāṣṣīl wa-Rāḥat al-Muṭa’ammīl [‘Gift to one who seeks, and comfort to the one who meditates’].

4.2. Christian Iberia

a) Muḥammad al-Qaysī

The main subjects against Christianity in the al-Qaysī’s Kitāb Miṭṭāḥ ad-Dīn (and to a large extent in its Aljamiado adaptation Disputa con los cristianos) are the announcement of the

---

53 This paragraph has been taken over almost without modification from Colominas Aparicio, ‘Predestination and Free Will in Mudejar Polemics. Kitāb al-Majīdala ma a al-Yahūd wa-n-Naṣārā’ [‘The Book called Disputation with the Jews and the Christians’] and its Historical and Intellectual Background’, 2016, p. 20 (forthcoming).


revelation of Islam in the Christian Scriptures, the origin of the various Christian denominations and the contradictions between the Gospels; the Muslim and Christian military campaigns; and his own experiences as a captive of war in the Christian territories. On the basis of the preliminary survey of the Kitāb al-Mujādala above, there do not seem to be any relevant correspondences between this Mudejar polemic and the Kitāb Miftāḥ ad-Dīn. Although the author of the Kitāb al-Mujādala does appear to have been well acquainted with Christianity, he never uses the internal dissensions among Christians as a polemical argument, nor do we find any personal account of the experiences of the author or of his reasons for writing such a polemic. Nevertheless, there is some common ground in its incorporation of narratives of Muslim military successes in the Christian territories of the Iberian Peninsula, successes which are set aside in the Aljamiado adaptation of the Kitāb Miftāḥ ad-Dīn as are both a commemorative poem about these successes and al-Qaysī’s feelings on the matter. Pertinently, the fact that the two Arabic polemics – the Kitāb Miftāḥ ad-Dīn and the Kitāb al-Mujādala – refer to military sources which are omitted from the Aljamiado versions of one of them, could reflect the shift in the political balance between Muslims and Christians in favour the latter. Hence, these narratives could have lost strength as polemical weapons in the eyes of the Moriscos in the sense of any striving for the achievement of a real political victory, and authors of polemics might have been more inclined to rely on an ethic-religious discourse which allowed them to govern their communities effectively.

4.3. The Maghreb

a) ʿAbd al-Ḥaqq al-Islāmī

The as-Sayf al-Mamdūd fī-r-Radd ʿalā Aḥbār al-Yahūd [‘The Extended Sword to Refute the Jewish Sages’] was composed by ʿAbd al-Ḥaqq al-Islāmī, a convert from Judaism from Ceuta between 1393 – 1396 CE. The As-Sayf al-Mamdūd was commissioned from ʿAbd al-Ḥaqq al-Islāmī by Abū Zayd ʿAbd al-Raḥmān, ḥājb (chamberlain) of the emirs of Ceuta between 1387-1393 CE and 1396-1400 CE. It seems that the reasons which induced Abū Zayd to ask ʿAbd al-Ḥaqq to write this refutation of Judaism were similar to those which prompted Ibn Ḥazm: the political power and the concomitant economic and social prosperity of the

54 Van Koningsveld and Wiegers, 1996, 166.
56 ʿAbd al-Ḥaqq al-Islāmī, edited by Alfonso; al-Islāmī, 1998, 15 and passim. Alfonso also provides an overview of the conditions of the Jews in this city under the rule of the Marinid dynasty, op. cit. 23ff, especially 32-33.
Muslim Literature of Religious Polemics

133

Jews, in this case within the Muslim society of Ceuta. As is the Ta’īd, the book is divided into five chapters. In the first chapter, 'Abd al-Ḥaqq argues that Muhammad is announced as a prophet in the Jewish Scriptures; the second chapter shows that Islam has abrogated the previous religions; the third and fourth chapters denounce the insults of Jews and the distortion of the Torah. In the last chapter, 'Abd al-Ḥaqq gives an eulogy of Muhammad. 'Abd al-Ḥaqq follows Ibn Hazm and considers authentic only those passages of the Torah which announce Muhammad as a prophet, and dismisses the rest of the Torah as a forgery. The work by 'Abd al-Ḥaqq is a few years away from the oldest known copy of the Ta’īd (MS RAH XXXI) known to us, but the latter does not follow the order established by the al-Sayf al-Mamdūd nor does it dwell on the same issues.

4.4. The Mashriq

a) Samaw’al al-Maghribī

The convert to Islam Samaw’al al-Maghribī (1130-1174 CE) is the author of the important work the Ifḥām al-Yahūd ['Silencing the Jews']. The Ifḥām, in the manuscript of Cairo (d. 1332 CE) studied by Perlmann, is entitled "Ifḥām al-Yahūd wa-Naṣārā" ['Silencing the Jews and the Christians'], but in fact, it deals only with Jews and Judaism. The Ifḥām was considered by later Jewish scholars such as Sā’d ibn Maṣūr ibn Kammūna to be "the most representative and typical summary of Muslim polemics against the Jews". Indeed, the work deals with the well-known Muslim claims of abrogation, the signs of Muḥammad’s prophethood in the Torah and the necessity for Jews to accept Jesus as a prophet. It also addresses the falsification of the Jewish Scriptures, which Samaw’al claims, had been forged

---

57 Al-Islāmī, 1998, 32-33 and 35. In their attacks on the Jews, 'Abd al-Ḥaqq goes a step further than Ibn Ḥazm and claims that, because they have violated the stipulations of the covenant of the dhimma, the payment of jizya should be abolished: "Ésta es [una de esas cosas] por las que no se les debería imponer (\(^{\wedge}\)) la jizya"; "[Realmente] la jizya no les fue impuesta por algo semejante, y no conviene que les siga impuesta", "[This is one of those reasons] why the jizya should not be imposed on them", "[Really] the jizya was not imposed on them because of something similar [to this], and should still not be imposed upon them", Al-Islāmī, 1998, 76 and 81.

58 Samaw’al al-Maghribi’s father was a Jew who had emigrated from the West. After having lived his youth as a Jew in Baghdād, he converted to Islam in Marāgha (Iran) in 1163 CE. For a study, translation and Arabic edition of his polemic, the Ifḥām al-Yahūd, see Perlmann, 1964.


60 The same occurs (and it will be discussed in detail below) in the polemical treatise of the Kitāb al-Mujādala. The polemical arguments of the author of the Kitāb al-Mujādala are addressed principally to Christians and Christianity, although in its title we read that is a treatise "against the Jews and the Christians".

by 'Ézra the Scribe. Many of the topics in this work also appear in the anti-Jewish polemic of the Ta'ŷid, but these two works adopt a different approach to the reliability of the Torah. The author of the Ta'ŷid claims that Nebuchadnezzar destroyed the Torah and that the Torah was later recomposed by Jewish sages under the aegis of Zeruhbabel, but we shall see that he does not cast any doubts on the divine origin of the extant text as Samaw'āl and other Muslim polemicists do: the problem, in his view, is that most of its contents are lost and that what remains has been incorrectly interpreted by the Jews.

b) Abū Bakr al-Fīhri al-Ṭūrtushi

There is another Muslim work against the Jews produced in the Mashriq which is important to this discussion, the as-Suʿāʾād al-Ṭūrūsī ‘alā-ř-Radd al-Ṭūrūsī ‘alā-ř-Yahūd ['Good Fortune in the Refutation of the Jews'] by Abū Bakr al-Fīhri al-Ṭūrtushi (1059-1126 CE). As the name suggests, al-Ṭūrtushi was born in Tortosa (Catalonia), a city which would come under Christian dominion in 1148 CE. Although by birth al-Ṭūrtushi was an Andalusi author, he spent most of his career outside the Peninsula. In Alexandria he taught fiqh and hadith, and among his disciples were many who came from al-Andalus and the Maghreb. We know, for example, that the Zāhiri and šīfī jurist Abū Bakr Muḥammad ibn al-Ḥusayn al-Mayūrī of Granada and the imām of the mosque of Valencia, 'Ali ibn Aḥmad ibn 'Abd Allāh ibn Muḥammad ibn Ḥairā, studied with al-Ṭūrtushi. Consequently, it is possible that the as-Suʿāʾād circulated in the Iberian Peninsula and this is the reason this work is included here.

---

64 'Ézra is often identified by Muslim commentators as the Qur'ānic figure of Ṭūrūsī in Q. 9:30, where it is said that Jews worship him as the Son of God. See Ela s.v. "Ṭūrūsī" (Lazarus-Yafeh). Roth notes that Samaw'āl had taken Ibn Ḥazm, who claimed that the Sadducees believed that 'Azrā was the Son of God, at this point. Roth, 1994, 224.
65 Kassin, 1969, I, 203.
66 Al-Ṭūrtushi lived in Iraq, Syria, Egypt and Jerusalem and died in Alexandria. A detailed summary of his life has been given by Maximiliano Alarcón and more recently by Maribel Fierro. See for Alarcón, al-Ṭūrtushi, 2010. Fierro has translated and studied al-Ṭūrtushi's work, the Kitāb al-Ḥawādis Ṭūsī-Ṭūrūsī 'alā-ř-Bida' by Fierro, al-Ṭūrtushi, 1993. Note that in the introduction to this work, Marín gives the approximate dates of the time al-Ṭūrtushi spent outside the Peninsula, as 1083-1097 CE, but his arithmetic is wrong, obviously he was not fourteen years old at that date but twenty-four. al-Ṭūrtushi, 2010, 96.
67 As are the cases of Abū Bakr Ibn al-'Arabī (1075-1149 CE) or of Ibn Tūnart (d. 1130 CE). Ela s.v. "al-Ṭūrtushi" (Abdesselem).
c) Najm al-Dīn al-Ṭūfī

Two other works which should be taken into consideration are the *ar-Radd al-Jamīl ‘alā Ṣarīḥ al-Injīl* and the *al-Intiṣārāt al-Islāmiyya fī Kashf ash-Shubab an-Nasrāniyya* by Najm al-Dīn al-Ṭūfī (d. 716 H/1316 CE). Some scholars argue that the author of the *ar-Radd al-Jamīl* does not see the Gospels as having been falsified (which, as was demonstrated, was the position of Ibn Hazm) but say that he claims that they just needed to be interpreted differently. Griffith notes that “[t]his is a view that finds some support even in the formidable *al-Jawāb as-Saḥiḥ* [...] of [...] Ibn Ṭaymiyya”, too, and seems to be followed by other authors such as al-Ṭūfī or the fifteenth-century scholar al-Biqā’ī. The recent publication of Leila Demiri on the exegesis of the Qur’an based on the Bible by Najm al-Dīn al-Ṭūfī (1259?–1316 CE) in Cairo does indeed show that the holy books of the Christians and Jews were used by this contemporary of Ibn Ṭaymiyya. More will be said below about al-Ṭūfī and al-Biqā’ī in connection with the acceptance of the Jewish and the Christian Scriptures by the Mudejars which, as we shall see, appears to have been a principal characteristic of their treatises of religious polemics. The possibility that the Mudejars did draw on Oriental sources, as discussed earlier, has been noted by Samir Khaddouri with regard to some versions of the Pentateuch in the *Ta’yīd*, and I shall come back to this point later. Among the most interesting of these works which shed light on this issue is the anti-Muslim polemic included in al-Ṭūfī’s *al-Intiṣārāt* entitled *as-Sayf al-Muḥṣaf fī ar-Radd ‘alā al-Muṣḥaf* [The Whetted Sword in Refutation of the Scripture]. Al-Ṭūfī attributes this polemic to an unknown Christian, but it is possible that this Christian was the thirteenth-century Dominican friar Raymundus Martí (Raymond Martí, fl. mid. 13th c.). Van Koningsveld has been able to establish a strong relationship between the Arabic text of al-Ṭūfī and the refutation of Islam by Raymundus Martí, *De Seta Machometi*. The *Ta’yīd* and the *al-Intiṣārāt* share a similar approach towards the Bible. One very interesting question is whether or not the *Kitāb al-Muṣḍala* could have borrowed some of its Christian quotations from a Muslim treatise, such as that by al-Ṭūfī, or from an environment close to the production of such treatise. For now this has to remain a only an hypothesis and the

---

70 Griffith 2013, 200 and ff.
71 Demiri, 2013.
72 Demiri, 2012b, 662-665.
73 For this information, I am indebted to the articles in progress by Prof. P.S. Van Koningsveld which he has kindly sent to me.
present author hopes that future scholarship by Van Koningsveld will help to determine the importance of al-Ṭūfī’s ‘Christian connection’ to the Kitāb al-Mujādala.

Conclusions

The discussion of some medieval treatises of religious polemics from the Iberian Peninsula, al-Maghreb and the Oriental regions of the Muslim world shows a variety of approaches to polemics against the Christians and the Jews, ranging, for example, from the encouragement of the use of logic and the rejection of the Scriptures to considering them authoritative and essential sources to explain Islam. Such a variety is also found in the treatises of religious polemics composed and copied by the Mudejars. Mudejar authors sometimes refer to arguments known in the Muslim territories of the Iberian Peninsula (and probably in the Christian territories, as well), such as the Trinity of Aghushtīn found in the polemical work by al-Qurṭūbī. In this respect, the literature of polemics of the Mudejars has a place in the tradition of works of the same kind in the nearby Muslim territories. On the other hand, there is no evidence that Mudejar authors of religious polemics ever took literal quotations from any of the Muslim works against the Christians and the Jews discussed in this chapter. Furthermore, Mudejar treatises seem to depart from this tradition in some respects. The treatise against the Jews, the Ta’yīd al-MILLA, stands out as an exceptional composition within the Muslim production of religious polemics in the Iberian Peninsula and the Maghreb as far as length, dissemination and use of sources are concerned. The same can be said about the extensive use of philosophy by the author of the Kitāb al-Mujādala. These considerations give rise to the impression that the Mudejars might indeed have been acquainted with the tradition of Muslim polemics, but that their treatises were shaped according to their own approaches to the subject. The analysis of the Ta’yīd al-MILLA and the Kitāb al-Mujādala in the chapters to come seems to confirm this assumption.