

## ‘The polemicist from the West’

DATE OF BIRTH	Unknown
PLACE OF BIRTH	Unknown; the Maghrib
DATE OF DEATH	Unknown; possibly 12 <sup>th</sup> century
PLACE OF DEATH	Unknown; probably the Maghrib

### BIOGRAPHY

Nothing is known about the author of the work that is referred to by Ḥajjī Khalifa simply as *Kitāb li-ba‘d al-Maghāriba*, ‘the book of one of the people from the West’. It is included in a list of refutations of Christianity under the heading *Radd al-Naṣārā (Kashf al-zunūn*, col. 838). The fact that it is listed among refutations by such luminaries as al-Jāḥiẓ, al-Bāqillānī, ‘Abd al-Jabbār and al-Juwaynī indicates that it, and presumably its author, were well-known to Ḥajjī Khalifa and his audience.

Steinschneider, *Polemische und apologetische Literatur*, p. 161, places this unidentified author in the 12<sup>th</sup> century, on the assumption that the list of polemicists given by Ḥajjī Khalifa in which his name appears is chronological. This must, however, remain an unresolved issue in view of the fact that in the Istanbul edition of the *Kashf* two of these names appear as al-Ṭurṭūsī and Ibn ‘Awf, while in the Leipzig edition (*Kashf al-zunūn*, iii, p. 353) they are given as al-Ṭarsūsī and Ibn ‘Ūdh/‘Awdh, making it risky to identify them with precision.

### MAIN SOURCES OF INFORMATION

#### *Primary*

Ḥajjī Khalifa, *Kashf al-zunūn ‘an asāmī l-kutub wa-l-funūn*, 2 vols, Istanbul, 1941-43

Ḥajjī Khalifa, *Kashf al-zunūn ‘an asāmī l-kutub wa-l-funūn*, ed.G. Flügel, 7 vols, 1835-58

#### *Secondary*

M. Steinschneider, *Polemische und apologetische Literatur in arabischer Sprache*, Leipzig, 1877

## WORKS ON CHRISTIAN-MUSLIM RELATIONS

*[Radd al-Naṣārā]*, Refutation of the ChristiansDATE Unknown, possibly 12<sup>th</sup> century

ORIGINAL LANGUAGE Arabic

## DESCRIPTION

Nothing is known about the work, except the title (or maybe only the genre) as given by Ḥajjī Khalīfa. It can be assumed that it included arguments of a relatively traditional kind, against Christian doctrines and scriptural falsification, and also possibly defenses of the prophethood of Muḥammad.

## SIGNIFICANCE

The work attests to the continuing interest in Christian beliefs, if only to strengthen the teachings of Islam by showing that alternatives to them were in error. If originating in al-Andalus (though there is no reason to link it specifically with this part of the Maghrib), it may well have been written in the context of successive encroachments into Muslim territory from the north and the need to remind both Muslims and client Christians of the deficiencies in Christian teachings.

MANUSCRIPTS —

EDITIONS &amp; TRANSLATIONS —

STUDIES —

**David Thomas**