

A Thesis for the Ph.D. degree.

Studies on the Writings of al-Jāhiz

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ABSTRACT

al-Jāhiz is known to every student of Islamic literature, history or society, of the classical period. His encyclopaedic writing embraces all aspects of life of Islamic society. The interest which al-Jāhiz shows in the growing urban society and its manifestations is one of the first instances of its kind in Islamic literature, that has come down to us. al-Jāhiz is one of the first Muslim writers who noticed the growth and development of a middle class as a result of the economic and social activities of the Islamic town. His interest in professional groups and classes, as well as his ambitions for the educated middle class in the society to take the lead, are points which are worth recording. To study him, and especially his most interesting work al-Bukhālā', (Misers), in the light of society in which he lived and which he pictured, is important.

In the first chapter of this thesis, a critical study of al-Jāhiz's social works, a general survey and a discussion of the textual material and authenticity, is made.

The second chapter is a study of al-Jāḥiẓ's views and attitudes, against the backcloth of his society. Other works of al-Jāḥiẓ, as well as those of his contemporaries, are taken here into consideration.

While studying al-Jāḥiẓ's views on society, the question is asked whether al-Jāḥiẓ had any social philosophy. This point is dealt with in the third chapter of this thesis. A special reference is made to the Mu'tazilites.

The study of society would help us to understand the book of Misers, which is not only the most important work on this aspect, but also is most interesting of al-Jāḥiẓ's writing, where the author shows his talent in social and psychological analysis of the miser.

In al-Bukhalā', the question of language comes in, in connection with social classes and groups. al-Jāḥiẓ's intention in recording the language of daily life as it was spoken, is discussed in the appendix, after the fourth chapter.

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INTRODUCTION

An understanding of al-Jāḥiẓ and an appreciation of his works can be reached, if he be studied in the light of the society in which he lived and which he portrayed in his works. In his works, all the social and mental trends and tensions of his time, whether bad or good, are mirrored. "If one wants to diagnose the life of the 3rd century A. H.", says Ṭāḥā Ḥusain, "one should not look for it in al-Buḥturī or 'Abū Tammām or any of the other poets, but one will find it in al-Jāḥiẓ."⁽¹⁾

al-Jāḥiẓ can be considered as one of the first Muslim writers who expressed a great interest in social problems. With his keen sense of observation, he recognized the changes that were occurring in the social fabric - changes which were the direct outcome of the active growth of an urban system of life. He was the first to notice the formation and development of a middle class as a result of the

(1) see Ḥadīth al-'Arbi'ā', vol. II., p. 130.

(1)
economic activities of the Islamic town. This being so, his comments on society deserve the closest attention. I have undertaken, in the following pages, a study of al-Jāḥiẓ's views on the social life of his time. It is obvious that within these terms of reference, those works of his which deal specifically with society must receive particular attention, especially that most interesting book al-Bukḥalā', which should not be taken simply as an independent work written merely for amusement; it should be studied in the light of the social trends of the time, on the one hand, and related to al-Jāḥiẓ's other works, on the other.

The impact of al-Jāḥiẓ's works on society on following generations is apparent in great writers of the 4th and 5th centuries A. H. Apart from his literary effect on writers like al-Tauḥīdī and Ibn al-ʿAmīd, his social works had a remarkable effect on the writings of al-Thaʿālibī, al-Tanūkhī and, perhaps, al-Ḥarīrī and other Maqāmāt writers. The realistic analysis of society is one of the

(1) see al-Dūrī, Taʾrīkh al-ʿIrāq al-ʿIqtisādī, p. 108.

(2) see A. Mez, Renaissance., (English translation), p. 39; Gibb, Arabic Literature, p. 65; Ṭāḥā Ḥusain, min Ḥadīth al-shiʿr., p. 80.

main characteristics of these writers; their interest in the life of the illiterate common people is exemplified in the way they scrutinised this life and portrayed it, closely and intentionally.

The first step, in this study, is to group together al-Jāhiz's works on society. It is to be regretted that the difficulties in the way of an easy and simple grouping are many. These difficulties are dealt with in the first chapter of this thesis. The first chapter is, in fact, a general survey of the social works of al-Jāhiz, a discussion of the textual material and its authenticity.

In the second chapter of this study, al-Jāhiz's views and attitudes are studied in comparison with the actual life of his time, as deduced from other works of al-Jāhiz's contemporaries. Other works of al-Jāhiz, besides his social works, are taken into consideration here. A sociological interpretation of his views and attitudes is a most important part of my approach. The changes and, perhaps, contradictions in al-Jāhiz's views are understood as being part of the changes and developments which were taking place in the

time and, ultimately, in his own life and writings.

In studying the social works of al-Jāḥiẓ, the question occurs as to whether al-Jāḥiẓ possesses any social philosophy. In studying this question, the Mu'tazilite doctrine has to be taken into consideration. Once again, it is clear that al-Jāḥiẓ concerns himself a great deal about the position of the educated middle class of his time, in relation with the ruling power, on one hand, and the common people, on the other.

The study of social trends among different classes will be a great help in reaching an understanding of the most important social work of al-Jāḥiẓ, the book of al-Bukḥalā' and the problem of avarice, which became a subject for literary works, could not be estimated apart from the social life of the time. Moreover, in al-Bukḥalā', one comes across one of the interesting phenomena which was the result of social changes and differences of cultures - the problem of language. al-Jāḥiẓ, often, stresses the point that a distinction should be made between the language of the common people and that of the élite. The attempt is

made here to see how far this was true and how far social life affected this aspect. This point is studied with a special reference to al-Bukhalā', in which al-Jāhiz relates stories of various people in their own mouths. In the book, al-Jāhiz himself states that he related the language of the common people as it was spoken, without trying to make it sound better, or correct its wrong grammar. If al-Jāhiz was successful in fulfilling his stated intention of relating the language of the common people as it was spoken, we should be able to see clearly the difference which he took it upon himself to show.

Chapter One

AL-JĀHIZ'S WORKS ON SOCIETY

In order to reach a good understanding of al-Jāhiz's social views and attitudes, a study of his works, where the social aspect is the main theme of writing, is essential. The study of al-Jāhiz's works is, unfortunately, confronted by various difficulties. The problems do not arise only from confusion made by narrators and copyists of al-Jāhiz's works, but also from al-Jāhiz's own methods of writing, which made this confusion an easy task.

1. Methods of al-Jāhiz's writing:

The confusion in al-Jāhiz's works was, to a great extent, helped by al-Jāhiz himself. The methods of al-Jāhiz's writing are responsible for making interference with his works easy. One of the peculiarities of al-Jāhiz in his writing, which he himself admits is the fact that he wrote some of his works and attributed

them to some early writers, in order that people would read them without prejudice against him, he said:

" ... I may write a perfect excellent book on religion, jurisprudence or literature ... and attribute it to myself, a group of scholars then agree on calumniating it for the envy which is made in them, although they know its creativeness and cleverness ... But I may write a book which is not as good as that, in meaning and words, and publish it under another name, attributing it to a writer earlier than me, like 'Ibn al-Muqaffā' or al-Khalīl ... then the same people come to me ... to copy the book and study it under me.⁽¹⁾" It is not clear how far al-Jāhiz went in this way, but it is interesting to see that he tends to conceal his identity, in some of his works, and mislead the reader about the authorship of the work. This characteristic is illustrated in one of al-Jāhiz's treatises which has come down to us, under the title of al-Qyān.⁽²⁾ The question of the authorship of this work is

(1) al-Jāhiz, Faṣl mā bayn al-ʿAdāwa., Majmūʿ (Sacy) p. 108.

(2) Yāqūt cites a book under the list of al-Jāhiz's works, which he calls Kitāb al-Muqayinīn wa'l-Ghinā' wa'l-Ṣanʿa, apart from Kitāb Akhlāq al-Mughannīn, (Irshād., VI., p. 77). It seems that Kitāb al-Muqayinīn is the same work as al-Qyān, which deals with female slave-singers (see the treatise of al-Qyān Thalāth Rasā'il, Finkel, pp. 53-75, about the meaning of Muqayin; see also Ibn Manẓūr, Lisān., art. (Qayn)).

very interesting in revealing sides of al-Jāhiz's ways
(1)
of writing. The two statements which the author makes
in the opening and in the end of the treatise are most
misleading and confusing to the reader. The work appears
as if it were addressed by a group of narrators who
encouraged the life of pleasure and indulged in it, it
opens as follows: "From 'Abū Mūsā b. Ishāq b. Mūsā,
Muhammed b. Khālīd Khudhār Khudhā, 'Abdu^{llāh} b. 'Ayūb b. 'Abū
(2)
Samīr ... and their brethren who are enjoying happiness
and preferring pleasure, pleasing themselves with female
slave singers and close friends, who are ready to assist
with food and kinds of drinks and who turned away from
accepting anything from people... to the people of
(3)
ignorance, harshness, rough nature and bad senses."
Most of the persons whom al-Jāhiz mentions above seem to
have been narrators who were greatly interested in the
(4)
art of singing and were attached to the singers. al-Jāhiz,
however, does not leave the question of the authorship
of the treatise at this point but makes another

(1) About this point, see also al-Ḥājirī, introd. al-Bukhālā', pp. 27-8.

(2) al-Jāhiz mentions about eleven names altogether, see al-Qiyān, Thalāth, Finkel, p. 53.

(3) Ibid.

(4) About these, see Isfahānī, Aghānī, vol. VII., p. 31; vol. X., p. 122; and vol. XVIII., pp. 73, 85.

statement which makes it more confusing. He says at the end of it, "This treatise which we have written from the narrators is attributed to those whom we named in its opening. If it were authentic, we have fulfilled in it the narration and those who have written it are more responsible for the argument made in it. But if it were forged, it was then (put) by the intruders, because they have upheld the argument of discarding decency, and (by) the immoral ones, in order to facilitate for the Muḡayinūn - the possessors of slave singers - what the (1) Muḡrifūn - those born from slave father - had done. If anyone would say that it (i.e. the treatise) has a portion of each of these three categories, and a connection (2) (with them), he is right..." The treatise, therefore, appears as if it were copied by al-Jāḥiẓ from the narrators whom he mentioned in the beginning. The argument in the treatise is made against all those ignorant people who knew nothing about the life of pleasure and (3) who objected to possessing concubines and slave singers.

(1) al-Hājirī reads it al-Mutraḡūn, i.e. the luxurious or delicate ones. (see Bukḡalā' (1948) introd. p. 28).

(2) al-Qyān, Thalāth, Finkel, p. 75.

(3) Ibid. p. 54.

The reason of this method, as explained by al-Ḥājirī, has two aspects: One is that it was one of the typical artistic methods of al-Jāhiz to write pieces and attribute them to other persons as if they were written by them, as was done by him in al-Bukhalā'⁽¹⁾. The other, according to al-Ḥājirī, is that al-Jāhiz himself stated⁽²⁾ that he had attributed many of his works to other writers. It should be pointed out, however, that, in attributing some of his works to other writers, al-Jāhiz meant to show that people were prejudiced against his writing and, in order to make them read his works, he attributed them to earlier writers whom the public respected. In the treatise of al-Qyān, on the other hand, the attribution is made to narrators who, according to al-Jāhiz himself, supported the immoral life of pleasure, which was condemned by the traditional circles. On the other hand, if al-Jāhiz wanted to appeal to these people, he need not have written the treatise in this manner. It seems more probable that al-Jāhiz wanted to clear himself from the responsibility of the arguments made in it, as he himself stated.

(1) see pp. 178 of this thesis.

(2) al-Ḥājirī, introd. al-Bukhalā', pp. 27-8.

One of the characteristics of al-Jāhiz's writing which makes the study of his views a difficult task, is the fact that he, very often, does not express a personal opinion on the subject he deals with, but tends to discuss the contradictory views of various people and parties. In his reference to al-Jāhiz's style, al-Baqillānī describes it as follows, "...Whenever he mentions one line of his own words, he would follow it by pages of other people's speech, and whenever he writes one page, he would construct a whole book of other people's sayings..."⁽¹⁾ In this way, al-Jāhiz was able to rid himself from a great responsibility. al-Jāhiz defends himself against the criticism of his contemporaries, who accused him of being colourless and that, on the question of the Caliphate, he contradicted himself and adopted various views, saying that his intention was to discuss the different views of the Islamic sects, and not his own views.⁽²⁾ The justification al-Jāhiz gives for his method, in quoting various references, is that he intended to leave the judgement to the reader, therefore, "... the

(1) al-Baqillānī, 'I'jāz al-Qur'ān, 1954, p. 377.

(2) al-Jāhiz, al-Ḥayawān, vol. I., pp. 11-12. This point itself would make an interesting topic of study, concerning al-Jahiz's political views.

dispute would be only between him and the evidence...⁽¹⁾
In al-Ḥayawān, al-Jāḥiẓ criticises Aristotle for bearing
responsibility of things without being certain about
their reference.⁽²⁾ al-Jāḥiẓ, however, does not seem to
have been trusted by the authorities of tradition; they
accused him of forging tradition, for some purpose,
although he does not admit that. al-Tha'ālibī says that
al-Jāḥiẓ was not trustful in tradition and al-Dhahabī⁽³⁾
agrees that he was one of the innovators. al-Baghdādī,
on the other hand, says that tradition was related on the
authority of al-Jāḥiẓ.⁽⁴⁾ 'Abu'l-'Aynā' states that he and
al-Jāḥiẓ, together, forged the tradition of Fadak.⁽⁵⁾
al-Mas'ūdī criticises al-Jāḥiẓ for writing a book on
the 'Imamate of the children of al-'Abbās, which was,
according to al-Mas'ūdī, nothing but an expression of the
arguments of al-Rāwandīya, the partisans of the 'Abbāsids.⁽⁶⁾

(1) al-Jāḥiẓ, al-Ḥayawān, vol. VI., p. 14.

(2) Ibid., vol. V., p. 356.

(3) al-Dhahabī, Mizān., vol. II., p. 282.

(4) Tārīkh, II., p. 213.

(5) 'Asqafāni, Lisān, vol. IV., p. 356. 'Ibn 'Asākir, Tārīkh
RAAD, vol. IX., p. 214.

(6) Mas'ūdī, Murūj, VI., p. 55.

In the book, al-Mas'ūdi says, al-Jāhiz relates the tradition of Fadak and the conversation of Fāṭima with 'Abū Bakr and her claims of the land of Fadak which was a private property of the Prophet. In the Rasā'il published by al-Sandūbī, a portion of this book has survived where the tradition is related and supported with arguments. The tradition, however, on the other hand, can be found in al-Ṭabarī on the authority of other narrators, such as al-Zuhri, 'Urwa and 'Ā'isha herself, etc.

It is interesting, on the other hand, to see that al-Jāhiz in his turn attacks the traditionists and accuses them of being literal and bound by the obvious meaning of the text. Nevertheless, al-Jāhiz expresses in some occasions, his awareness of the criticism he was going to face. In the book of singers, which will be discussed in some details later, al-Jāhiz says: "... and we may know that many of them will exaggerate in criticism and insolence and hold an opinion different from ours,

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- (1) see about Fadak and how it became a property of Muḥammed, al-Ṭabarī, Tārīkh., vol. I., p. 1556 (year 6) and p. 1589 (year 7).
- (2) Rasā'il., min Kitābihī fī'l-'Abāsiya, pp. 300-3.
- (3) Tārīkh., vol. I., p. 1825 (year 11); also see al-Ya'qūbī, vol. II., p. 573.
- (4) al-Jāhiz al-Ḥayawān, vol. I., p. 166.

but what an easy thing that is for the due rights of
(1)
al-Fityān..." In spite of the fact that al-Jāhiz made
more than one copy of this work, it failed to come down
(2)
to us.

The reason of this attitude of al-Jāhiz is thought
to have been because al-Jāhiz's works were written mainly
after a wish of an authority and that al-Jāhiz was
(3)
actually living on his writing. It is interesting,
however, that al-Jāhiz enjoyed a remarkable quality of
producing one idea and its reverse and being, at the same
time, able to defend both sides with equal interest and
ability. His books on praising and condemning various
groups of people stand as an example of his double-sided
(4)
mind. In a quotation from al-Jāhiz which al-Tha'ālibī
has made, we find long paragraphs on praising and

(1) al-Jāhiz, Ṭabaqāt al-Mughannīn, Majmū', Sacy, pp. 187-8.
It would be pointed out that al-Jāhiz uses the terms
(al-Futuwwa), (al-Fityān) and ('Alāt al-Futuwwa)- i.e.
the instruments of al-Futuwwa! - in the treatise.
see about this movement pp. of this thesis.

(2) Ibid., also pp. 107-9 of this thesis.

(3) see al-Jāhiz, al-Bayān., vol. III., p. 221; 'Asqalānī,
Lisān., vol. IV., p. 355. see also Ch. Pellat, R.S.O.
(1952), p. 57; 'Asqalānī, op. cit., vol. III., p. 107.

(4) al-Jāhiz wrote books on praising and condemning the
Secretaries, copyists, drinks, etc. (Yāqūt, Irshād., VI.,
pp. 76 and 78.)

condemning all branches of knowledge with equal skill and interest, showing their qualities as well as their defects. This quality is one of the manifestations of the mental life of his time, the time of doubt and reason. In spite of the fact that al-Jāhiz lived on his writing and received the rewards of the 'Abbasid court, which would have put him in a position that he had to please those in power, but his great ambitions and hopes in the middle class, especially the Scholars and men of letters, were equally satisfied.

al-Jāhiz's use of dialectical methods is suggested to have been influenced by the methods used by the Sophists. Most often, al-Jāhiz argues in a

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- (1) see Muqaddasī, *Latā'if*., (Cairo, 1900), pp. 18-21.
(2) see Tāhā Husain, *Ḥadith al-'Arbi'ā*., vol. II., p. 136.
(3) see pp. 131-8 of this thesis. Ch. Pellat thinks that although al-Jāhiz flattered the men in power, but that was only as far as the Mu'tazilite doctrine was not involved. (see R.S.O., 1952, p. 57).
(4) al-Ḥājirī, introd. *al-Bukhalā'*, pp. 13-4.

rhetorical manner for the sake of argument or to display his great skill and confidence in his ability in the language. More than once, al-Jāhiz claims that there was another person who involved him in the argument, in order to create another side to stand for the opposite point of view. One of his interesting works where this characteristic is clear is the treatise which he called (Fī tafḍīl al-baṭn 'ala l-ẓahr) - in preference of the belly to the back, and which still remains in a MS. In this treatise, al-Jāhiz claims that he received a letter from a man who preferred the back to the belly, therefore, al-Jāhiz wrote this book to refute the arguments of that man. Apart from the fact that al-Jāhiz touches on some delicate social problems of his time, it is evident that he plays on the words and meanings in order to support

(1) al-Fuṣūl al-Mukhtāra, Br. Mus. MS. 1129, fol. 220b-227b.

(2) Ibid., fol. 220b, 222a.

(3) The suggestion may be made, here, that the reason that prompted al-Jāhiz to write on a curious topic like this seems to have been connected to more a serious problem than what appears from the title or the way of dealing. It may have been a reaction against a tendency strong in the 'Abbasid society, the question of Sodomy which al-Jāhiz deals with effectively (see on the same meaning, al-Muqaddasī, Laṭā'if., 1900, p. 74).

what he calls an argument. I shall quote the following paragraph as an example, where al-Jāhiz uses the word (al-baṭn) in many different senses:

"قَالَ اللَّهُ عَزَّ وَجَلَّ فِيهَا رُحُوبٌ بِهَ الْبُحْلِ "يُخْرِجُ مِنْ بَطُونِ شَرَابٍ مُتَلَفٍ الْوَانَةِ فِيهِ
بُغَاءٌ لِلنَّاسِ". وَبَعَثَ اللَّهُ رَسُولَهُ (هَبِي) فِي خَيْرِ بَطُونٍ قَرِيبِينَ دَوْجِدًا الْأَفْلَبِيَّ فِي
صِفَةِ الرَّجُلِ أَنْ يَقَالَ أَنَّهُ يَعْرِفُونَ بَكْدًا وَكَذَا... مِنْ هَبِي مِنْ بَطْنٍ أَقْبَى وَلَدِيْقَالَ مِنْ
خَيْرِ أَبِيهِ، وَيَقَالَ فِي صِفَةِ الْبَاءِ وَتَبَّ الْبَطُونِ نَوَاحِمٍ، وَيَقَالَ فِي صِفَةِ الْبَطْنِ...
وَلَدِيْقَالَ فِي صِفَةِ الْبَطْنِ وَيَقَالَ فَرُونَ بَطْنٍ فِي الْأُمُورِ وَلَدِيْقَالَ خَيْرٌ وَيَقَالَ بَطَانَةُ
الرَّجُلِ وَخَيْرٌ رَتَهُ فَيَقُولُ بِالْبَطَانَةِ وَبَطْنِ الْقَرْطَاسِ خَيْرٌ مِنْ خَيْرِهِ وَبَطْنِ الصَّيْفِ
يُؤْمِنُ النَّبِيَّ مِنْهُ لِيُظْهِرَهَا وَبَطْنِ الْقِيَمِ يَكْتَبُ لِيُظْهِرَهُ... (1)

The contemporaries of al-Jāhiz blamed him and criticised him for his useless arguments, but few of them (2) thought of refuting them. al-Jāhiz was, in fact, able to say what he intended through these methods. In al-Hayawān, al-Jāhiz makes long arguments in preference of the dog and (3) the cock, which he attributes to two Mu'tazilite theologians, (4)

(1) al-Fuṣūl., fol. 223a.

(2) The exception may be made of the book of al-'Uthmāniya, which was refuted by al-'Iskāfi, but which al-Jāhiz clears himself from its responsibility (see al-Hayawān, I., p. 51). al-Mas'ūdī mentions 'Abu'Isa al-Warrāq and al-Ḥasan b. Mūsā al-Nakha'ī who refuted the same book of al-'Uthmāniya (Murūj, VI., p. 55).

(3) see about this argument pp. 112-3 of this thesis.

(4) al-Jāhiz, al-Hayawān, vol. I., p. 216.

and which al-Baghdādī thinks to have been useless.⁽¹⁾
al-Jāhiz, however, had admirers in this art, among the
later generations of writers.⁽²⁾ al-Tauhīdī, who was a
great admirer of al-Jahiz, seems to have taken further
steps in this art. In his book al-Muqābasāt, which goes
in a form of a dialogue between him and his master
al-Sijistānī, one is reminded of Plato's dialogues.⁽³⁾

Besides these facts, which seem to have helped
a great deal in the confusion we meet with in al-Jahiz's
works, another characteristic of al-Jahiz's writing seems
to have made it easy for copyists and selectors of his
books to confuse them. al-Jāhiz's countless digressions
from the main theme of the work seem to have helped to
make selections of his works easy. The biggest collection
of selected chapters from al-Jahiz's works seems to be
the one made by 'Ubaydullāh b. Ḥassān, of which some⁽⁴⁾

(1) al-Baghdādī, al-Farq., p. 163; see also I. Friedlaender, J.A.O.S., vol. XXIX., p. 56.

(2) see Mez, Renaissance (English trans.), p. 239-40; Nicholson, A Lit. Hist. of the Arabs, p. 267.

(3) for more about this point see p. 210 of this thesis (appreciation).

(4) Br. Mus. MS. 1129.

chapters were published under the heading of Rasā'il.⁽¹⁾
Unfortunately, this collection of extracts from al-Jāhiz's
works is in most unsatisfactory condition. It contains
about thirty-two chapters on different subjects, each
chapter begins with the heading (بن جندب... کتابه) i.e.
from the opening of his (al-Jāhiz's) book, followed by the
title of the book.⁽²⁾

In the following pages, a detailed study is
made of the problems concerning al-Jāhiz's works, with
a special reference to the text and a close examination
of the style and methods that distinguish al-Jāhiz's
writing.

(1) see Majmū', Sacy; and Rasā'il al-Jāhiz, al-Sandūbi.
The latter, does not state the original MS. There
are variations and differences between the published
Rasā'il and the MS. of al-Fuṣūl., by 'Ubaydullāh.
(see for instance, al-Sandūbi, pp. 241-60, Br. Mus.
MS., fol. 245, 291).

(2) On the description of this MS., see Hirschfeld,
A Volume of Orient. Stud., pp. 200-9.

2. Problems in Connection with the Works:

(a) The Question of Authenticity:

i. Kitāb al-Ḥijāb

Many of the works which have come down to us under al-Jāhiz's name, are still under considerable doubt. The style and method of some of these works are elements of confusion. The work known as Kitāb al-Ḥijāb has been quoted by al-Khafājī, among other excerpts from the works of al-Jāhiz.⁽¹⁾ It was published, with other Rasā'il of al-Jāhiz, for the first time, by al-Sandūbī, under the title (min Kitāb al-Ḥijāb).⁽²⁾ al-Sandūbī, however, remarked that he was not very happy about the work and its authenticity and that he copied it from al-Khafājī.⁽³⁾ The work, however, exists as a separate entity in a MS.⁽⁴⁾ In the list of al-Jāhiz's works, cited by Yāqūt, there is no mention of a work under this title.⁽⁵⁾ On the other hand,

(1) Ṭirāz al-Majālis, pp. 72-97.

(2) Rasā'il, (al-Sandūbī), pp. 155-86.

(3) Ibid., p. 186.

(4) al-Mūṣil, no. 265; Dāmād, no. 949; see also Ch. Pellat, Arabica, May, 1956, no. III, p. 158, no. 59.

(5) 'Irshād., vol. VI., pp. 76-8.

there is no confirmation as to whether the book belonged to al-Jāhiz or not.

The purpose of the author was to put an edifying book before the ruler in connection with the post of al-Hijāba. He said that he was going to criticise the former chamberlains in order that the later ones would learn a lesson. This was a typically Persian device - that is to write on subjects concerning the ruler and giving him advice. There were many such works written in - or translated into - Arabic. A work attributed to al-Jāhiz himself under the title of *Risāla fī al-Ma'ād wa'l-ma'āsh* was entirely devoted to the advice of an authority, accompanied by various examples of good morals. On the other hand, the book known as *Kitāb*

(1) *Rasā'il*, (al-Sandūbī), p. 155.

(2) Works translated or written by Ibn al-Muqaffa' (see 'Aḥmad Amīn, *Ḍuḥā*., vol. I., pp. 204-39).

(3) The name of the *Risāla* is also given as *fī l-Akhlāq al-Mahmūda*, and is said to have been addressed to either Muḥammed b. 'Aḥmad b. 'Abī Du'ād al-'Ayādī or to Muḥammed b. 'Abdul-Malik al-Zayyāt, (see *Majmū'*, Kraus-Hājirī, pp. 1-39; Ch. Pellat, *Arabica*, p. 165, no. 96).

(4) About the great similarity between the style of this work and that of Ibn al-Muqaffa' in his ethical works, see al-Maghribī, *RAAD*, vol. XXI., no. XI-XII, 1946, p. 532.

al-Tāj fī 'Akhlāq al-Mulūk, which is supposed to have been written by al-Jāhiz, is still under very considerable (1) doubt.

An examination of the text of Kitāb al-Ḥijāb may assist in throwing some light on the authenticity of the work. The author discusses the class of al-Ḥujjāb (chamberlains) and the post of al-Ḥijāba which became a necessity to the rulers and governors, especially in later times. The Prophet, according to the author, did not approve of it and he advised his governors not to hide themselves from their people. The four Caliphs after him followed his example. Under the 'Umayyads the Ḥijāb was practised. The author attributes a saying to a Persian Dihqān (a local chief), who advises a governor at the time of al-Ḥajjāj, on how to deal with the common (2) people in the question of al-Ḥijāba. The recognition of Persian advice and sayings about rulership seem more likely to have crystalised at the time when the 'Abbasids came to power.

(1) It was published and introduced by 'Aḥmad Zakī Pāsha, 1914; see also Ch. Pellat, Arabica, p. 176, no. 161.

(2) Rasā'il, (al-Sandūbī), p. 156.

As any of these works which deal with this form of institution, this work follows a familiar pattern. The author tries to show that there were certain qualifications for the Ḥājib. The desirable qualifications are a combination of various attributes mainly concerned with appearance, personality and wit. His position, however, may give him extreme power. He is described as one side of the king's face. Therefore, it is necessary to appoint a good Ḥājib in order to give a good impression. It is not for the well-being of the people or the public benefit, it is simply for the sake of appearance - a typical Persian conception. In the advice of Sahl b. Ḥarūn to al-Faḍl b. Sahl he says to him that as the Ḥājib is one of the persons important to the king, he should be smart, good looking, neat and considerate. The conception of rigidly classified society is clear - the king should order his Ḥājib "to put people according to their various degrees of importance", although, of course, he is supposed to show interest in every one of them. The author, then, quotes Persian works for certain sets of instructions concerning this institution.

(1) Rasā'il, (al-Sandūbī), p. 160.

(2) Ibid.

When criticising this class of people, the author is careful not to express a personal opinion. This method is one typical of al-Jāhiz's technique. The author cites examples from various authorities, on the basis of which one may understand that this class of officers were corrupted with bribes and personal interests ever since the time of the Umayyads⁽¹⁾. The complaints of people appear in the number of poems written about this class, which criticised them bitterly.

Although the work had been divided into many chapters under various headings, the author followed the same method of quoting examples and short poems without passing any personal judgement, leaving the way open to the reader to do so. One cannot fail to notice, in this connection, that the technique is one typical of al-Jāhiz. Besides, the author cites a number of examples in which the Hijāba is justified, although not for the sake of the Hājib himself, but out of fear of the ruler, or affection⁽²⁾ for him. Examples were taken from various places and times, but none of them contains anything that can be

(1) Rasā'il, (al-Sandūbī), pp. 163-85.

(2) Ibid., pp. 185-6.

expressedly said to be inapplicable to al-Jāhiz's time.

However, the evidence in favour of al-Jāhiz's authorship of the work is far from conclusive.

ii. Kitāb al-Tabaṣṣur bi'l-Tijāra

The significance of al-Jāhiz's interest in all aspects of the town life is evident in the writing of later authors who made a good use of al-Jāhiz's works. One of the interesting works which has been often quoted by writers like al-Tha'ālibī and al-Muqaddasī, is the (1) book of (al-Tabaṣṣur bi'l-Tijāra). (2) There is no work, however, under this title in any of al-Jāhiz's lists of (3) works. It is believed that al-Jāhiz was the first Islamic

(1) al-Tha'ālibī, *Thimār.*, p. 433; al-Muqaddasī, *Aḥsan al-Taḳāsim*, (1906), p. 241.

(2) Published in RAAD, vol. XII., 1932, pp. 326-55, also in Cairo - 1935. Translation of it into French was made by Ch. Pellat, *Arabica*, May-1954, pp. 153-66.

(3) Yāqūt, *Irshād.*, vol. VI., p. 76 sq.; al-Jāhiz, *al-Ḥayawān*, vol. I., p. 5 sq.

writer who paid attention to the activities of the Islamic town and wrote about ~~the~~ trade, as well as other (1) aspects. This is not the only work, supposed to have been written by al-Jāhiz on this aspect of town life. The book known as Kitāb Ghishsh al-Ṣināʿāt has not come down to us but was criticised and described by al-Baghdādī as having spoiled the goods of the merchants by the way the author reveals to the public the deceits of these (2) goods. al-Jāhiz mentions two works which seem to have some connection with the subject mentioned by al-Baghdādī. One is the work which he describes as "The Book of Plants, palm-trees, olive and grapes and the kinds of crafts and (3) classes of trades." The other book is, according to al-Jāhiz, a description of the dealing of professional merchants, the tricks of trusts and the deceits of crafts (4) and trades.

(1) This is given as an evidence to the authenticity of the work, see RAAD, Vol. XII., p. 321. In another article, RAAD, vol. XIII., pp. 287-95, Anstāse al-Karamalī agrees on the authenticity of the work.

(2) al-Baghdādī, al-Farq., p. 163; also al-'Isfrā'inī, al-Tabṣīr., p. 51; and also I. Friedlaender, J.A.O.S., vol. XXIX., (1909), p. 56.

(3) al-Hayawān, vol. I., p. 5.

(4) Ibid.

The work which has come down to us under the title of al-Tabassur bi'l-Tijāra deals with the same problem of goods and trade. The author starts his book by relating general principles of trade, such as the law of supply and demand, competition, etc., by citing examples from various sources and different nations. His main concern, in the book, is to discuss the value of goods and how they are appreciated. Apparently, the author is not a good or experienced tradesman, and his knowledge cannot compete with the knowledge of any ordinary tradesman concerning the value of goods. The quality of goods is judged only by their appearance, and the laws of supply and demand which he puts in the opening chapter of the book are hardly taken into consideration. The unprofessional character of the work is apparent in the way the author mixes up facts concerning the value of goods with the moral values of man, he says: "... and all valuable pearls and stones, if clearer and brighter, are more valuable; all animals, whether wild or tame, if bigger and easier, are more preferable and precious; and all men, whether

(1) RAAD., vol. XII., p. 326.

noble or low, if more sensible and easier, are better..."⁽¹⁾

The author, however, states that his book was meant to be a reference for all those who were interested in this means of earning.⁽²⁾ Moreover, it seems to have been written for an authority.⁽³⁾

There is almost nothing in the book, whether its methods or style, that contradicts al-Jāhiz's way of writing.

(b) Confusion in the titles of the Works:

al-Jāhiz's works cannot be judged by their titles for the simple reason that these titles were countless and most confusing. The confusion does not come only from the fact that the titles are themselves misleading, but also that most of al-Jāhiz's works bear more than one title. This is one of the problems resulting from the fact that al-Jāhiz deals with more than one topic in his work and that the titles were often deduced from

(1) RAAD., vol. XII., p. 350.

(2) Ibid., p. 326.

(3) Ibid.

the text of the work itself. Copyists of al-Jāhiz's works seem to have suggested different titles according to their different approach and understanding of the text. In the selected chapters of 'Ubaydullah b. Ḥassān, this confusion appears more than once. The chapter called "Istibḥāq al-'Imāma", for instance, is repeated again in the same MS. under the title of "Maqālat'ul-Zaydiya wa'l-Rāfiḍa."⁽¹⁾ In editing this chapter, al-Sandūbī published with it the chapter of "Jawābāt fi'l-'Imāma".⁽²⁾ The latter comes in the MS. in a separate chapter.⁽³⁾ The same chapter has been edited by Kraus-Ḥājirī, under the title Risāla fī Bayān madhāhib al-Shī'a.⁽⁴⁾ One treatise, therefore, is known by four different headings. The following works, relevant to the social study of al-Jāhiz, will be discussed as examples for this type of confusion.

(1) al-Fuṣūl al-Mukhtāra, Br. Mus. MS. fol. 245 sq., 291 sq.

(2) Rasā'il, (al-Sandūbī), pp. 241-60.

(3) al-Fuṣūl., fol. 278-291.

(4) Majmū', (Kraus-Ḥājirī), p. 178; see also Hirschfeld, A Volume of Oriental Studies, pp. 200-9 for a description of the MS.

i. Kitāb al-ʿArab wa'l-Mawālī

This book has been referred to by al-Jāhiz himself as being different from the book of al-ʿArab wa'l-ʿAjam (the Arabs and non-Arabs); al-Jāhiz says: "... You have blamed me for the book of al-ʿArab wa'l-ʿAjam and thought that writing about differences between the Arabs and the non-Arabs is the same thing as writing about differences between the Mawālī and the Arabs. You criticised me, (therefore), for repetitions, additions and ignorance, besides what the thing repeated has of uselessness and burdening the reader.⁽¹⁾" None of these two books has come down to us. Yāqūt mentions one of them under the name of Kitāb al-Taswiya bayn al-ʿArab wa'l-ʿAjam (the book of equality between the Arabs and non-Arabs).⁽²⁾ As for the other work, Yāqūt does not make any reference to it.

One may presume from the reference of al-Jāhiz to the two works and his defence of the idea, that there

(1) al-Hayawān, vol. I., p. 5; also Ch. Pellat, Arabica, May, 1956, p. 152, nos. 22 and 23.

(2) Irshād., vol. VI., p. 77.

were two books on this topic. al-Jāhiz seems to have had in mind two different ways of dealing with the question of Arabs and non-Arabs; the first concerns them as being two different nations, and the second dealing with them in their relations with one another, being clients and masters. al-Jāhiz made another reference to the book of the Arabs and the Mawālī when he said: "... and you criticised me concerning the book of al-'Arab wa'l-Mawālī and thought that I have been unjust to the Mawālī and given the Arabs what does not belong to them." (1) And another place also; "... I have written books about placing the Mawālī in the proper position, good or bad, which they deserve and (placed them) in the great honour which God has bestowed upon them through the Arabs. I hope it will do justice among them and a means to their well-being." (2) Therefore, one of the works is definitely concerned with the Arabs and al-Mawālī per se. (3)

(1) al-Hayawān, vol. I., p. 5.

(2) al-Jāhiz, Risāla fī'l-Nābita, Rasa'il (al-Sandūbī), pp. 292-9; also Van Vloten, Actes du XIe Congrès Internationale des Orientalistes, 1899, pp. 115-23; also Dā'ūd al-Chelebī, RAAD., 1930, vol. VIII., pp. 32-9.

(3) see further discussion on this point pp. 157 of this thesis.

A book under the title of al-Mawālī was quoted
(1)
by 'Ibn 'Abd Rabbih, as being one of al-Jāhiz's works.

'Ibn 'Abd Rabbih was illustrating a point concerning the excellent taste of al-Jāhiz in selecting and judging poetry. The judgment of al-Jāhiz is passed on a poem by 'Abū Nuwās, the Mawla poet, al-Jāhiz describes him as "th most able of
(2)
all poets and the most natural in his poetry." Apparently, the work is identical with the one al-Jāhiz mentions on the Arabs and the Mawālī.

The same book of al-Mawālī comes under another heading in the criticism of al-Baghdādī of al-Jāhiz's works, he calls it the book of Fadl al-Mawālī 'ala'l-'Arab (Super-
(3)
iority of the Mawālī over the Arabs). It appears that al-Baghdādī chose a title for the same work, in order to justify his own criticism of al-Jāhiz's intentions and works.

(1) al-'Iqd., vol. IV., p. 77.

(2) Ibid.,

(3) al-Baghdādī, al-Farq., p. 162.

ii. Risāla fī Waṣf al-ʿAwāmm

There is no work under the title of "fī Waṣf al-
(1)
ʿAwāmm", in Yāqūt's list of al-Jāhiz's works. The first
author who mentions a treatise by al-Jāhiz under this name
(2)
is al-Khafājī. He also quoted from the work. The most in-
teresting point about this work is that the whole paragraph
which al-Khafājī quoted and which he said was from the Risāla
fī Waṣf al-ʿAwāmm, is identical with the opening chapter of
the treatise "fī Nafy al-Tashbīh", which al-Jāhiz addressed
(3)
to 'Abū'l-Walīd Muḥammad b. 'Aḥmad b. 'Abī Du'ād al-'Ayādī.
This treatise has been edited by Professor Charles Pellat,
with the belief that it is the treatise of "fī Nafy al-
(4)
Tashbīh". In the list which Professor Ch. Pellat made of
al-Jāhiz's works, recently, the two titles were cited as
(5)
for two different works. The interesting point about al-
Khafājī's quotation is that he copied exactly the same text
of the Risāla fī Nafy al-Tashbīh, with the change of

(1) Irshād., vol. VI., pp. 76-8.

(2) ʿIṣṣāz., vol. II., p. 175.

(3) MS. Damad, 949; also Fu'ād Sayid, Fihris al-Makḥṭūṭāt.,
vol. I., p. 473.

(4) al-Mashriq, vol. III., p. 281, (1953).

(5) Arabica, p. 153, no. 28 and p. 176, no. 165, May-1956.

the word (al-Tashbīh) into the word (al-ʿAwāmm), and made other slight changes which may fit in better with the subject of al-ʿAwāmm. In the following passage, I give the text of the original treatise and indicate the changes etc. in al-Khafājī's quotation between rectangular brackets:

" قد عرفت [أمر ملك الله⁽¹⁾] ما كان النابى فيه من التبول [بالتشبه⁽²⁾] ...
[والتعاون] عليه بالمعاداة فيه وما كان في ذلك من الهمم الكبير والغربة
الناشئة⁽³⁾ [وما كان له⁽⁴⁾] من الجماعات الكثيرة والتقوى الظاهرة
[والسلطان المكين مع تقليد العوام وبيع البغلة والطعام⁽⁵⁾]... وليست
لخاصته [توة⁽⁶⁾] بالعبادة... ولا للعلية فتوة علي [الذي بذله⁽⁷⁾]....
وقد جالت.. إلخ.. فيهم.. وفي الاستبعا ذة.. بالله منبهم قوله
علي [ابن أبي طالب برحمة الله عليه⁽⁸⁾]... يغوز بالله من قوم إذا
اجتمعوا لم يملكوا وإذا تفرقوا لم يعرفوا ». وقال واهل بن عطاء...
يا اجمعوا لرضيوا وليتفرقوا ليدنفوا » فقبل له : قد عرفنا مضرة...

(1) Omitted.

(2) العامة

(3) Omitted.

(4) وما لهم

(5) Omitted.

(6) طاقه

(7) الفلة

(8) رضي الله عنه

الاجتماع ، فما بينة الافتراق » قال يرجع الطيآن الى تبيينه والى الخاك الى
 حياتته [والميراث الى ملائحته]⁽¹⁾ [والمصانع الى مباحثها]⁽²⁾ وكل انبان
 الى مباحثه وكل ذلك [مرفق]⁽³⁾ للمسلمين ومعوقة للمحتاجين . وكان عمر
 بن عبد العزيز [رضي الله عنه]⁽⁴⁾ اذا نظر الى الطعام والحشة قال : قبح
 الله هذه الوهوه التي لا تعرف إلا عند الشر . وقال الخزيمي [عنه ذكره] آه
 في شجرة بالبادية مع المخلوع []⁽⁵⁾
 من البوارى ترايس ومن ال ... نخوص اذا استأمرت ، مغايرها
 لا الرزق تبغي ولا العطاء ولا ... كشرها [بالعناء]⁽⁶⁾ كشرها
 وقال شبيب بن شيبه : قاربوا هذه البيلة وابعدوها وكونوا معاً وفارقوها واعلموا
 ان الغلبة لمن كانت معه وان المفقور من هانت عليه . وقد وصفهم بعض
 العلماء فقال : [مجتمعون من حيث يفترقون ويفترقون من حيث مجتمعون]⁽⁷⁾
 [لا يفرقون غريبهم اذا صالوا]⁽⁸⁾ ولا تجع فيهم الحيلة اذا باهاها ...
 والعراة [ابقاك الله]⁽⁹⁾ ، ذا كانت [نسيها]⁽¹⁰⁾ فأمرها أيسر
 برمة هيجد اقصر ، فلوذا كان له رئيس هاذق ومطاع مديتر وإمام

(1) والفلاح الى فلاحته

(2) Omitted.

(3) رفق

(4) Omitted.

(5) instead. فيهم

(6) بالفناء

(7) يفترقون من حيث مجتمعون ويفترقون من حيث مجتمعون

(8) Instead : ولا يفرقك لغرتهم اذا صالوا

(9) Omitted.

(10) كشرها

نقله... فعند ذلك ينتطح الطمع ويموت الحق ويقتل المحقق، فلولا أن لهم
 بتلكين وقصا ميثا متفقيين وقبوراً قد باينهم في المعرفة بعض المباينة لم يكتفوا
 بالخامسة و[لا] بالأسفل المعرفة التامة، ولكن كما تخافهم زهولهم وكما...
 يشفق منهم بطبع فيهم ... " (2)

As for the rest of the two texts, while in the original text of the treatise al-Jāhiz deals with the subject of Nafi al-Tashbih (refuting Anthropomorphism), al-Khafājī adds the following:

" ولما باينوا الخاتم اهل الكوا على نبي الادب وهجره وعلى الاستغناء به...
 وبأهل ذلك يقول بعض الأدياء : ...
 قد منيع الله بالجمعة بن أدب
 لا يبعون إلى شيء أهي به
 أقول بالسكران إن لم يلقوا...
 بين المحير وبين الشيء والبقر
 وكيف تتبع الانعام للبشر
 قلبت الضمادع بين الماد والشبر (3)

It is obvious from the comparison of the two texts that al-Khafājī deliberately made all possible changes in order to make the text fit in with the title he had suggested for it. The significance of this action

(1) Omitted.

(2) al-Khafājī, Tīrāz., vol. II., pp. 175 sq.

(3) The poem is by the Shī'a poet, al-Sayid al-Himyarī, (see Aghānī, vol. VII., p. 13).

of al-Khafāji's lies in the importance attached to al-Jāhiz's works on subjects pertaining to the life of the common people. One may point out, in this connection, that the text of the *Risāla fī Nafy al-Tashbīh* itself was easily adopted to the form found in the attributed work. The whole introduction, in fact, was on the character of the common people, how to deal with them and how to gain control over them. The rest of the original *Risāla*, which al-Khafājī did not mention, or quote, is on the subject of anthropomorphism.⁽¹⁾ As for the occasion which prompted al-Jāhiz to discuss the common people and their behaviour at the beginning, one finds that al-Jāhiz discusses them in connection with the traditionists against whom al-Mihna (the Inquisition) was brought, concerning the Creation of the Qur'⁽²⁾ān. The common people supported the traditionists in the interpretation of the Qur'⁽³⁾ān. The interest of al-Jāhiz in the common people and his attitude towards the question itself is important in this work. This may have been one of the reasons that caused the interference

(1) see al-Mashriq, 1953, vol. III., p. 281.

(2) about this point, see pp.217-80f of this thesis.

(3) al-Mashriq, ibid.

The
with the text. /Risāla, however, is one of the most interesting works of al-Jāhiz and is worthy of the most careful analysis. As for its connection to the subject of the common people, it is one of the most helpful in revealing a side of al-Jāhiz's interests in the social and mental life of his time.

iii. Kitāb Ṣinā'āt al-Quwwād

This is another example of al-Jāhiz's works, whose title is confusing and misleading. The treatise of Ṣinā'āt al-Quwwād (the arts of master craftsmen⁽¹⁾) comes down with the other treatises of al-Jāhiz.⁽²⁾ Judging from the title and description annexed to it, the reader may think that the work was on the work and art of these leaders. The work is described in its sub-titles as follows: "A treatise by 'Abū 'Uthmān 'Amr b. Baḥr al-Jāhiz on condemning the leaders and on the book of their crafts

(1) On the meaning of al-Quwwād, see Lughat'ul-'Arab, vol. I., p. 26. (1931).

(2) Rasā'il, (al-Sandūbī), pp. 260-6. The MS. is in the collection of Dāmād no. 949, fol. 113, under the heading of (Dhamm al-Quwwād); (see Majmū'., Kraus-Hājirī, introd.), as well as other headings (see Ch. Pellat, Arabica, p. 172, no. 145).

character and what they composed according to their
natural tendencies and according to their crafts...."⁽¹⁾

It is much possible that this sub-title which describes the work, might have been added later by an interested person who found it necessary to describe it, for this description appears only in some copies of the work.⁽²⁾

The text, however, does nothing to confirm the impression one gets from the original title of the work. al-Jāhiz, in fact, is dealing with the question of specialisation in one craft or knowledge, which may lead to a complete ignorance in other fields of knowledge. It may affect, according to this, the language of the person. al-Jāhiz cites in the mouths of various professional persons a description of one incident which was supposed to have been witnessed by them, each one in his own way, showing the effect of their craft or profession on their way of thinking and expression. His main purpose is to show the disadvantage of special discipline. At the end

(1) This sub-title is found in one edition only, see Lughat'ul-^ṣArab, vol. IX., pp. ~~XXX~~ 26-38, (1931), edited by Dāwood Chelebī.

(2) see Lughat'ul-^ṣArab, 1931, vol. IX., p. 26.

of the treatise, he advises the Caliph to educate his sons so that they have a general knowledge of every thing and would not be limited within a narrow field.⁽¹⁾

3. Problems in Connection with the Text:

In connection with the text, many problems are involved. Besides the fact that many of al-Jāhiz's works have failed to come down to us, the confusion of the surviving works constitutes one of the major problems. Some of al-Jāhiz's works survived only in part, although they still appear under the title of the whole original work. Other works were lost altogether and only quotations from them in other references could be found. Besides, the confusion in the text of some of the surviving works seems to arise from the fact that these works were mixed up with one another. In the following pages, a discussion of these problems, in connection with al-Jāhiz's social works will be made.

(1) Rasā'il (al-Sandūbī), p. 266.

(a) The surviving work being only part of the origin:

i. Risāla fī'l-Mughannīn

There are two books mentioned by Yāqūt; one under the title of "Akhlāq al-mughannīn" and the other "al-Mughannīn wa'l-ghinā' wa'l-ṣan'ā"⁽¹⁾. al-Sandūbī cites two works; one Kitāb al-mughannīn wa'l-ghinā' wa'l-ṣan'ā and the other Kitāb Ṭabaqāt al-mughannīn.⁽²⁾ Professor Ch. Pellat prefers to think that Yāqūt was right and that they were two different works and one of them is on the Muḡayinīn,⁽³⁾ "the possessors of singing slaves." The book on al-Mughannīn is described by al-Jāḥiẓ in the piece which has come down to us under the title of Risāla fī Ṭabaqāt al-mughannīn and this I intend to discuss, in some detail,⁽⁴⁾ here. Another Risāla under the title of al-Qyān which deals only with female-singers is another separate work which Yāqūt did not mention under the list of al-Jāḥiẓ's

(1) Yāqūt, Irshād., vol. VI., p. 77.

(2) (al-Sandūbī), 'Adab., pp. 134 and 141.

(3) 'Arabica, p. 167, no. 115.

(4) see Br. Mus. MS. 1129, al-Kāmil (1323), vol. I., pp. 120-30; Majmū', (Sacy), pp. 186-90; see also Ch. Pellat, Arabica, p. 167, no. 109.

(1) works. It is possible that Yāqūt had this work in mind
(2) when he mentioned the book al al-Muqayyin.

The book of Ṭabaqāt al-Mughannīn seems to have been one of the books of al-Jāhiz which throws an
(3) interesting light on professional groupings. A selected portion of this work was published under the title of
(4) Risāla. It seems to me that this piece was designed as a preface to the original work. In this preface, al-Jāhiz delineates a complete scheme for the book itself. He does not embark upon a discussion of the subject of singers and their classes as is to be expected from the title of the book, but gives a general idea of the scope of the book, its aim, method and style. A study of this Risāla gives a useful indication of the character of Kitāb Ṭabaqāt al-mughannīn for which it was presumably designed as an

(1) Three Essays (Finkel, 1926), pp. 53-75.

(2) see on the meaning of al-Muqayyin, 'Ibn Manẓūr; Lisān. art. Qayn.

(3) It seems that singers were classified into classes, according to their skill and ability. The classification of singers is attributed to the time of al-Rashīd, the Abbasid Caliph who is supposed to have classified them after a Persian pattern. (see al-Jāhiz, al-Tāj,, p. 37).

(4) see ref. no. 4 of the previous page.

introduction. This work has not survived as a separate entity although it was mentioned by Yāqūt.⁽¹⁾

In the opening chapter of the work, al-Jāhiz talks about branches of knowledge. The old philosophers, according to him, said that the origin of arts from which all sciences had derived, are four. One of these four origins is the art of melodies, its parts, syllables, divisions and themes which form a harmony. al-Jāhiz stated that he was going to give only the names of these four origins without going into the details.⁽²⁾ He proceeds, however, to discuss the history of music beginning with Islamic times. One understands that his respect and admiration for the class of singers made al-Jāhiz, as he says, devote a whole work to them.⁽³⁾ The subject of the work was, therefore, classes of singers. To avoid alteration and interference with the text, al-Jāhiz made more than one copy and these he gave to certain persons who had all of them been at some time professional singers.⁽⁴⁾

(1) Irshād., vol. VI., p. 78.

(2) see Majmū'., (al-Sacy), p. 186.

(3) Ibid., p. 187.

(4) Ibid., p. 189.

al-Jāhiz was aware of the value of the book as much as he was aware of the fact that many people were going to attack him and disagree with him in the interest he showed in (1) singers.

The scheme of the book then, according to this introduction, was as follows:

(i) To classify singers according to their (a) instruments, (b) school or method of singing, (c) peculiarities, and (d) reputation.

(ii) To give each class its name accordingly.

(iii) To be concerned only with contemporary singers and particularly those who lived in Baghdād itself.

(iv) To leave a space after each chapter for new singers who might appear and had not been included or to drop those who might lose their reputation as singers, by changing their place to the class that befits them. It might be relevant to quote al-Jāhiz on this point:

(1) Majmūʿ, (al-Sācy), p. 188.

"... we have left after each chapter of classification in our book a space for any addition that may occur, or supplement to be added for those who may improve their art and become higher in class or those who may lag behind to a lower class, they are to be moved to their classes accordingly. We may add those whom we have not mentioned or not known. Nobody is allowed to add or drop a name of these classes without our permission and our close examination.⁽¹⁾"

(v) Not to be partial in judgement and prefer one to the other without reason.

According to al-Jāhiz, the style of the book was designed so as to mix seriousness with jest, particularising with hinting. Its guiding principle was to be that of true knowledge.⁽²⁾ This work was written in the year 215 A.H. but it is, of course, possible that he wrote the introduction after completing the main work.

Here, the synopsis contained in the Risāla ends, presumably leaving the way open for the book to deal with

(1) Majmū'., (al-Sācy), p. 188.

(2) Ibid.

the subject of classes of singers.

ii. Risāla fī'l-Wukalā'

Of this work of al-Jāhiz, no more than a few pages seem to have survived as a selection. Yāqūt mentions (1) it under the list of al-Jāhiz's works. It would have been of value to this study if it had come down to us in toto. The confusion comes in the edition of al-Jāhiz's Rasā'il made by al-Sācy. In publishing this work, al-Sācy selected (2) less than three pages of it. In the MS. of selected essays made by 'Ubaydullah b. Ḥassān, the work contains (3) more chapters than those published by Sācy. As for the subject and scope of the work, we can get an idea of it from the extracts which have survived.

The work, like many other works of al-Jāhiz, seems to have been a refutation of another work which was written against the agents. The writer of that work, according to al-Jāhiz, had not given much consideration

(1) Irshād., vol. VI., p. 76.

(2) Majmū', pp. 170-2.

(3) Br. Mus. MS., fol. 196b-199a.

to the consequences of such a work. al-Jāhiz believes that in everything there are bad as well as good qualities. One should always doubt one's own knowledge and listen (1) to other arguments in order to avoid the danger of enemies. After considering this point, al-Jāhiz blames the author, because he was unnecessarily severe in his attack, and took no pains to mask its virulence. al-Jāhiz seems to have been judging the man according to the principles which he himself was very careful to follow in his own works. Besides this work, al-Jāhiz blames him for other works in which he criticised other professions, such as copyists and teachers. al-Jāhiz himself, however, is supposed to have written books about these professions, criticising, as well as praising them. (2) al-Jāhiz then proceeds to cite an example which shows how biased the author was:- a man who was ill was asked by his son what he fancied and he replied: "A liver of an agent." The same man gave up trade because of the bad treatment and tricks of agents. (3) This example, according to al-Jāhiz, formed the beginning of the work of the writer. However,

(1) Majmū'., (al-Sācy), p. 171; Br. Mus. MS., fol. 195b-196a.

(2) Yāqūt, Irshād., vol. VI., p. 78.

(3) Majmū'., (al-Sācy), p. 172; Br. Mus. MS., fol. 196b.

al-Jāḥiẓ thinks that the author did not write for the sake of knowledge. The *Risāla*, as published by Sācy, ends at this point, without dealing with the subject of agents.

In the selected chapters of 'Ubaydullah, the refutation of al-Jāḥiẓ begins in a new chapter after this point. The point which al-Jāḥiẓ makes in his defence of this class of people is the fact that one cannot generalise his judgement on all agents, for without them, al-Jāḥiẓ⁽¹⁾ says, no commercial activities can be carried out.

The end of this *Risāla*, however, does not seem⁽²⁾ to be complete, for it ends in the middle of an argument.

iii. Risāla fī Fakhr al-Sūdān

al-Jāḥiẓ mentions a book under the following description: "... the book of al-Ṣurahā' (the pure) and al-Hujanā' (the mixed), and the boasting of the Black and the Red, and the comparison between maternal and paternal relations."⁽³⁾ al-Jāḥiẓ, apparently, had written it before

(1) Br. Mus. MS., fol. 197a.

(2) Br. Mus. MS., fol. 199A.

(3) al-Jāḥiẓ, al-Ḥayawān, vol. I., p. 5.

the book of al-Ḥayawān. The question is that whether the book mentioned by al-Jāhiz had anything to do with the work which has come down to us under the title of Kitāb Fakhr al-Sūdān 'ala'l-Bīdān.

It has been suggested by Professor Ch. Pellat that the book of Fakhr al-Sūdān is part of the whole work of al-Suraha wa'l-Hujana. The following remark of al-Jāhiz himself confirmed this suggestion, "As for the criticism, praising⁽¹⁾ and boasting of the Black and the Red,⁽²⁾ it is all collected in⁽³⁾ the book of al-Hujanā' wa'l-Ṣurahā." In the book which was published under the title of Fakhr al-Sūdān, we understand, however, that al-Jāhiz had already written the book of al-Ṣurahā' wa'l-Hujanā', he said: "You have mentioned, may God save you from deceit, that you have read my book about the judgement of al-Ṣurahā' wa'l-Hujanā', and the answer of the latter ones and the answer of their uncles, and that I have not mentioned in it anything about the boasting of the Black.⁽⁴⁾ So, I have written what I remember of their boasting". This note

(1) see Arabica, p. 95, no. 160, May-1956.

(2) The Red, according to al-Jāhiz, seem to be the white people, such as the Romans, etc.

(3) al-Jāhiz, al-Ḥayawān, vol. III., p. 510.

(4) Fakhr al-Sūdān, Majmūʿ, (al-Sācy), p. 54.

seems contradictory to what al-Jāhiz said about this book in al-Ḥayawān. It may suggest, however, that al-Jāhiz wrote the general book on al-Ṣurahā'wa'l-Hujanā' and then, after he was asked to write in detail about the Black, he wrote another work on the same theme; this was the treatise of Fakhr al-Sūdān., which has come down to us. One may presume, therefore, that the book of Fakhr al-Sūdān is only part of the whole question of al-Ṣurahā'wa'l-Hujanā', although it may not have been written together with the original work. Having written the two parts of the work in different times may have caused the loss of one of them.

The whole work seems to have been written according to a wish of an authority. Although al-Jāhiz attributes the argument in the treatise to the Black themselves, it is evident that al-Jāhiz wrote the book in
(1)
their mouth.

(1) The methods of argument are typical of al-Jāhiz himself, (see Majmūc., al-Sācy, pp. 78 sq.)

iv. Kitāb al-Nisā'

Another work which had suffered from this confusion is the book about women. al-Jāhiz refers in many occasions to this book. In the list of al-Jāhiz's works cited by Yāqūt, there is a mention of two books, one on al-Nisā' and the other on al-'Ishq. None of the two books, however, seems to have come down to us in full. Selections from Kitāb al-Nisā' come among the chapters collected by 'Ubaydullah b. Ḥassan. A treatise under the title of Fī'l-'Ishq wa'l-Nisā' has been published with the Rasā'il of al-Jāhiz, by al-Sācy. al-Sandūbī published it under the name of min Kitāb al-Nisā'. In the list of al-Jāhiz's works, made by Professor Ch. Pellat, two works are cited under the titles of (fī'l-'Ishq) and (Faṣl mā bayn al-Rijāl wa'l-Nisā'). Professor Pellat thinks that these titles are, originally, two independent works, but

(1) see al-Jāhiz, al-Hayawān, vol. I., p. 5; al-Bayān., (edit. al-Sandūbī), vol. I., p. 161.

(2) Yāqūt, 'Irshād., vol. VI., pp. 76 and 77.

(3) al-Fuṣūl., Br. Mus. MS., fol. 52-62; also al-Kāmil, (1323), vol. I., pp. 130-66.

(4) Majmū'., (al-Sācy), pp. 161-9.

(5) Rasā'il, (al-Sandūbī), pp. 266-75.

(6) Arabica, May, 1956, p. 162, no. 84.

(7) Ibid., p. 174, no. 146.

later were mixed up together. Yet, according to him too, "It is probable that the passages published with the *Risāla fī'l-Ishq*, under the title of *al-Ishq wa'l-Nisā'*, appertain to the present work (i.e. *Faṣl mā bayn al-rijāl wa'l-nisā'*)⁽¹⁾."

The comparison between all the surviving chapters which were published under slightly different headings, shows that they are identical, except for few differences. The difference appears in the *Risāla fī'l-Ishq wa'l-Nisā'*, published by al-Sācy, where some of the chapters which appear in the other editions are missing here. Besides, there are some differences in the order of the chapters between al-Sandūbī and al-Kāmil, which is taken from the chapters of 'Ubaydullah b. Ḥassān. It should be pointed out that in al-Sandūbī, as well as al-Sācy and al-Kāmil, the chapter on al-Ishq is published as part of the treatise of al-Nisā'. Besides, al-Jāhiz himself states that he had dealt with the question of love in details, in the book, saying: "As we have mentioned in this book the love which

(1) *Arabica*, May, 1956, p. 174, no. 146.

is the root of passionate love, and the passionate love of which extreme love is derived and the extreme love for which the person sets out aimlessly or dies of grief in his bed."⁽¹⁾

The confusion, however, comes from another fact. In the edition of al-Sandūbī, the whole Risāla ends with a chapter where a general description of the book is given by the author, and where he complains of his illness.⁽²⁾ According to this chapter, al-Jāhiz intended to write a book on the differences between the males and females of all animals, but found that it was better to limit it within the subject of men and women, which, according to him, was made short, in order to win the interest of the reader. In al-Kāmil, this chapter comes within the treatise, just before the chapter of al-⁽³⁾Ishq, leaving the latter apart from the discussion on women. This may indicate that the selected chapters were made from two different works of al-Jāhiz; one the book of women, and

(1) Rasā'il, (al-Sandūbī), p. 266; Majmū'., (al-Sācy), p. 161; al-Kāmil., vol. I., p. 130.

(2) Rasā'il, (al-Sandūbī), p. 275.

(3) al-Kāmil, vol. I., p. 153.

the other the book of love. This, however, is contradictory to the statement which al-Jāhiz made in the opening of the book of al-Nisā', that he dealt in it with the question of love. (1) It may be presumed that the book of al-Nisā' is identical with the book of Farq mā bayn al-rijāl wa'l-nisā', of which only selected extracts, in the form of chapters, have come down to us. The question, however, still remains whether the book of al-Ishq is part of the work or not.

In the edition of al-Sandūbī, as well as that of al-Kāmil, one comes across chapters which have no close relevance to the subject of women. In these chapters, a discussion is made about the question of rulership and the necessity of an 'Imām. (2) The occasion which prompted al-Jāhiz to deal with this topic may be presumed to have been the topic of the previous chapter, where al-Jāhiz talks about blood relation and its significance in the life of men, especially in the tribes. (3) These chapters do not come in the treatise published by al-Sācy. (4) One may

(1) see above p. 48; also Rasā'il, (al-Sandūbī), p. 266.

(2) Rasā'il, (al-Sandūbī), pp. 271-2; al-Kāmil, vol. I., pp. 148-51.

(3) Rasā'il, (al-Sandūbī), pp. 271-2; al-Kāmil, vol. I., p. 147.

(4) Majmū', (al-Sācy), p. 169.

suggest that the fact that the work was made into selected chapters made them seem out of place.

(b) The text being in disorder:

i. Risāla fi'l-Mu'allimīn

This treatise has not been edited properly. The only published copy of it is to be found on the margin of Kitāb al-Kāmil by al-Mubarrad.⁽¹⁾ al-'Abshīhī says that al-Jāhiz wrote a book on teachers, in which he quoted their jokes and anecdotes and criticised them, but that al-Jāhiz, who happened to come across a sensible teacher, decided not to publish the book. When he discovered that the man was, after all, one of the typical teachers, whome he had criticised before, he decided to publish the book⁽²⁾ and he did so. This story may indicate that al-Jāhiz had finally made up his mind about his attitude towards teachers

(1) al-Kāmil., vol. I., pp. 17-31; Hirschfeld translated extracts from it in his article in A Volume of Oriental Studies, pp. 200-9.

(2) see al-Mustaṭraf., 1933, vol. II., p. 242.

and that his book on them was simply a criticism of them. In Yāqūt's list of al-Jāhiz's works, however, there is no (1) mention of a treatise criticising teachers, and in the treatise which has come down to us, al-Jāhiz is more (2) inclined to praise them and defend their profession. Perhaps al-Jāhiz wrote two works on teachers; one criticising them and the other praising them, showing an ambivalence, (3) which is not unusual with him.

The Risāla appears in the guise of a refutation directed against a person who attacked teachers as a (4) class and used abusive language against them. Therefore, al-Jāhiz is trying to give them their due rights and to do them justice. The Risāla is by no means the whole work.

(1) Yāqūt, 'Irshād., vol. VI., p. 77.

(2) al-Kāmil, vol. I., pp. 17-31.

(3) al-Jāhiz wrote treatises on copyists, secretaries and wine, praising them as well as condemning. Most of these works have failed to come down to us. (see 'Irshād., vol. VI., pp. 76-8; also pp. 42-43, 44-45, 46-47, 48-49, 50-51, 52-53, 54-55, 56-57, 58-59, 60-61, 62-63, 64-65, 66-67, 68-69, 70-71, 72-73, 74-75, 76-77, 78-79, 80-81, 82-83, 84-85, 86-87, 88-89, 90-91, 92-93, 94-95, 96-97, 98-99, 100-101, 102-103, 104-105, 106-107, 108-109, 110-111, 112-113, 114-115, 116-117, 118-119, 120-121, 122-123, 124-125, 126-127, 128-129, 130-131, 132-133, 134-135, 136-137, 138-139, 140-141, 142-143, 144-145, 146-147, 148-149, 150-151, 152-153, 154-155, 156-157, 158-159, 160-161, 162-163, 164-165, 166-167, 168-169, 170-171, 172-173, 174-175, 176-177, 178-179, 180-181, 182-183, 184-185, 186-187, 188-189, 190-191, 192-193, 194-195, 196-197, 198-199, 200-201, 202-203, 204-205, 206-207, 208-209, 210-211, 212-213, 214-215, 216-217, 218-219, 220-221, 222-223, 224-225, 226-227, 228-229, 230-231, 232-233, 234-235, 236-237, 238-239, 240-241, 242-243, 244-245, 246-247, 248-249, 250-251, 252-253, 254-255, 256-257, 258-259, 260-261, 262-263, 264-265, 266-267, 268-269, 270-271, 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It appears to be extracts made from the original book of
 al-Mu'allimīn. (1) Quotations which were made by other writers
 from the book of al-Mu'allimīn do not appear in the
 present treatise. (2) The selections were put in separate
 chapters which vary in length. One of the chapters has
 under it no more than the following sentence:

"وهذان الشبان جاهليان بعيان من التولييد وبخبرة من التكلف.."

"And these two poets are pre-Islamic and far from modernised
 language (3) and safe from artificiality." (4)

This sentence, which comes in a separate chapter, is put,
 immediately, after al-Jāhiz discusses 'Ibn al-Muqaffā' and
 al-Khalīl b. 'Aḥmad, and criticises them. (5) Apparently, the
 judgement has nothing to do with these two 'Abbasid persons,
 a man of letters and a prosodist. It seems to have been
 cut off from a whole chapter on two pre-Islamic poets.

(1) Concerning the original MS., see Br. Mus. MS. 1129.

(2) Yāqūt, Mu'jam al-buldān, vol. II., p. 680; al-'Abshīhī, al-Mustatraf, vol. II., p. 219 (1331).

(3) see about al-Tawlīd and al-Muwalladūn, E. W. Lane, Arabic-English Lexicon, part VIII., p. 2967.

(4) al-Kāmil, margin, vol. I., p. 33, Br. Mus. MS. 1129.

(5) Ibid., pp. 32-3.

As for the subject of this treatise, it is the most confused and the most lacking in unity. The author starts by talking about books and their importance. He then proceeds with the main theme of the treatise, the subject of teachers. After a general survey of teachers and their types and status, al-Jāḥiẓ gives his opinion about teaching of the language and the question of grammar. From the topic of teachers and teaching, we suddenly come across a chapter on the question of homosexuality (al-Liwāṭ⁽¹⁾). No doubt, the chapter is not complete and it has probably been taken from another work. al-Baghdādī mentions a work by al-Jāḥiẓ under the same title of homosexuals (al-Lāṭa), when he criticises al-Jāḥiẓ. al-Thaʿālibī⁽²⁾, in the section which he wrote about sodomy in Khurasān relates many sayings on the authority of al-Jāḥiẓ⁽³⁾. al-Jāḥiẓ's most important position of the question, related by al-Thaʿālibī, does not appear in the treatise of al-Jāḥiẓ. The next chapter of the

(1) al-Kāmil, vol. I., p. 31.

(2) al-Farq., p. 163.

(3) al-Thaʿālibī, Thimār., 1908, p. 439.

work deals with the importance of the Sultan, who is like a shepherd to his people. This chapter, together with the following one, seems completely out of place. The following chapter is on the question of trade and merchants. The reader may wonder why al-Jāhiz should discuss so many topics in one work, and without any apparent connection between them. The reason perhaps, lies in the confusion caused by the selected extracts which were presented in chapter form. The confusion appears in the Risāla of merchants itself, where we find the chapter concerning teaching boys the language and grammar, which belongs to this Risāla, was annexed also to the work of merchants (1) in one of the editions. No wonder, then, that the converse applies and we find that the chapter on merchants has been mixed up with this work as well. The comparison between the profession of merchants and the service of the Sultān (2) goes very well with the title of the treatise on merchants.

(1) see Majmū'., (al-Sācy), pp. 158-60.

(2) i.e. Risāla fī madh al-Tujjār wa dhann'amal al-Sultān.

ii. Risāla fī madh al-Tujjār wa dhamm ʿamal al-Sultān

This work, as has already been mentioned above,
(1)
has been mixed up with the treatise on teachers, and in
discussing it, one should consider the chapter which
comes under the treatise of teachers as part of the
treatise of merchants. As for the chapter which concerns
teaching and which has been published with this treatise,
(2)
it should go under the treatise of teachers.

As for the contents of this work, one finds
once again that al-Jāhiz was writing the work as a refut-
(3)
ation of some other work which was written earlier.
al-Jāhiz seems to have been reluctant to condescend to a
refutation of arguments of the writer, for it appears
(4)
that he was obeying the wish of someone in authority.
He carries on, however, with a defence of the class of
merchants; he describes those who criticised merchants as
"the most common and the lowest grade among the followers

(1) see above, p. 54

(2) see Majmūʿ., (al-Sācy), pp. 158-61; al-Kāmil., (1323),
vol. I., p. 39, and vol. II., p. 246.

(3) Majmūʿ., (al-Sācy), p. 155.

(4) Ibid.

(1)
of the Sultān." If they had any sense in them, according
to him, or any experience and knew the results of things,
they would not have attacked the merchants whose virtue
(2)
was admitted by all high-ranking people. The treatise
goes on with the same theme, in defending the function and
status of merchants and preferring it to the service under
the Sultān, which was not very safe or independent. From
this al-Jāhiz leads the discussion to the status of the
merchants of Quraysh. All Muslims, according to him, are
aware of the fact that the chosen people in whose house
God had entrusted His message and whom He favoured, were
merchants. All people knew their generosity, courage and
patience even before 'Islām. (3) Their name - al-Jāhiz says -
derived from their profession of dealing with money; they
(4)
did not have a father by the name of Quraysh. They were
the chief merchants of their time; and the Prophet himself

(1) Majmū' rasā'il, (al-Sācy), p. 155.

(2) Ibid., p. 156.

(3) see also al-Jāhiz, Risāla Fī'āl-Auṭān., Br. Mus. MS. fol. 202a-b.

(4) see the same explanation; that the name of Quraysh is from Taqrīsh (or Qirsh), which is connected to money or dealing with it; Ibn Manẓūr, Lisān, vol. VIII., p. 225; Zabīdī, Tāj., vol. IV., p. 337; also pp. thesis.

(1)
was a merchant at one stage of his life. The chapter which was put under the treatise of teachers and which concerns the same topic of discussion about the merchants of Quraysh, should fit in here. In the chapter where al-Jāhiz deals with the topic of the importance of the Sultān who is like a shepherd to his people, he also
(2)
discusses merchants. In this chapter, al-Jāhiz justifies Quraysh who, although they were merchants, were not as
(3)
monopolising as the merchants of al-Ḥira and al-'Ubulla. In fact, it was their neediness which made them turn their hands to trade, but they were loved and respected by their people. Poets went to them and praised them and they were most generous and hospitable. al-Jāhiz goes on to
(4)
explain other characteristics of Quraysh. It is obvious that the discussion of the chapter, which was attached to the treatise of teachers, has more to do with the treatise of merchants, especially with the chapter where al-Jāhiz

(1) Majmū' rasā'il., (al-Sācy), p. 157.

(2) Risāla fī 'al-Mu'allimīn, al-Kāmil., vol. I., p. 34.

(3) In his translation of the treatise of al-Mu'allimīn, Hirschfeld reads it al-'Aila. (see 'A Volume of Orient. Stud.', pp. 200-9)

(4) Risāla fī'l-Mu'allimīn, al-Kāmil, vol. I., p. 35.

discusses Quraysh as merchants. Therefore, it would be presumed that the chapter belongs to this treatise. After the discussion about Quraysh, al-Jahiz goes on to make a comparison between trade and other professions, where he expresses his doubt about trade. The comparison between the profession of the merchants and that of the Sultān was made so that it would fit into the treatise of teachers, where the chapter appears⁽¹⁾. The chapter ends by instructions given to teachers, to give their students the right knowledge in order to prepare them to be good rulers.

Another confusion in this treatise appears in the edition of al-Kāmil, where the treatise of al-Shārib wa'l-Mashrūb comes as a chapter of the treatise of merchants.⁽²⁾

(c) The text being lost and only quotation surviving :

i. Kitāb al-Luṣūṣ

This also is ~~one~~ of the more significant works

(1) Risāla fī'l-Mu'allimīn, al-Kāmil., vol. I., p. 36.

(2) al-Kāmil., vol. II., pp. 251-69.

(1)
of al-Jāhiz which has failed to come down to us. Description of it in other writers and quotations from it are, therefore, of the greatest importance in understanding its nature. Fortunately, there is ample material, for the work has been quoted or described, not only by al-Jāhiz himself but also by many other writers.

al-Jāhiz refers to the book in al-Bukhalā' when he says: "You have mentioned - may God save you - that you have read my book on (classifying the tricks of the day/thieves and describing the tricks of night thieves), and that you have mended by it every weakness and fortified with it every defect and that you have improved - by what it told you of subtle tricks - what no cleverness might reach and no craft could outpass. You said that its usefulness is great and studying it is a duty." (2) The book, however, does not seem to have been concerned with thieves only. It appears that it was linked to the large subject of the morals and the character of the common people in general, telling their stories, showing their

(1) The MS. of the work is supposed to be in al-Mūsil, no. 265 (see Dāwood al-Chelebī, Makḥṭūṭāt., p. 264, no. 16)

(2) al-Bukhalā', p. 1. §1948).

behaviour and evincing an interest in their views and ideals. This is clear in the quotation which al-Jāḥiẓ makes from the book in al-Ḥayawān, where, after talking about pigeons, he says:

"... and similar to this kind of narration is what was related about Bābūya, the owner of pigeons. If you heard his stories in the book of Thieves, you would know that he was far from telling lies and false stories. I have seen him and sat with him, but I have not heard this story directly from him. It was told to me by one of the chiefs of al-Baṣra of those who had settled down in the mosque of Muḥammed b. ⁽¹⁾⁽²⁾Ruḡbān..."

al-Jāḥiẓ goes on to relate the story of Bābūya, which is concerned with the pigeons which Bābūya used to keep and train. There is another paragraph in the book of al-Ḥayawān, which is believed, by al-Ḥājirī, to have been quoted from this same work on thieves. ⁽³⁾al-Jāḥiẓ, however, does not,

(1) About this mosque, see Yāqūt, Muʿjam al-Buldān, vol. IV., p. 265; al-Ḥājirī, comments on al-Bukḥalāʾ, p. 327.

(2) al-Ḥayawān, vol. II., p. 156.

(3) al-Bukḥalāʾ, p. 230.

especially, refer to it as a quotation from the book of
(1)
thieves.

The work known as Waṣiyat 'Uthmān al-Khayyāt (2)
li'luṣūṣ, the MS. of which is supposed to be in al-Mūṣil,
seems to be only part of the Waṣiya, which would be
translated here; "In the will of 'Uthman al-Khayyāt to the
Shuṭṭār and the thieves: (Avoid, avoid the love of women
and listening to the music of the lute and the drink
(made of) cooked raisin, choose the Ghilmān instead, for
your young man (Ghulām) is more useful to you than your
own brother and more helpful than your cousin. I recommend
to you the wine of dates and the music of tambourine and
what the early generations used to have.. Make your
preserves from broad beans, and if you can afford it, the
pistachio and the Basil-Royal or the Jasmine. Leave
aside wearing the turban (al- 'Imāma) and wear the mask
(3)
(al-Qinā') instead. The cap (al-Qalansuwa) is unbelief

(1) al-Ḥayawān, vol. III., p. 409.

(2) see above, p. 59, footnote no. 1.

(3) see about these head dresses, al-Jāhiz , al-Bayān.,
(edit. al-Sandūbī), vol. III., pp. 65 and 67-8.

and the boot (al-Khuff) is polytheism. Take pleasure in pigeons and romp with dogs, avoid wild sheep and playing with small falcons and gerfalcons and avoid lynx). When he reached the cock, he said: (As for the cock, he has patience, vigour, craft, good management and skill in using arms, he is as dazzling as a brave (man). He said also: I advise you to play the Backgammon and leave the Chess to its people. Do not play the Backgammon except with al-Ṭawīlatayn - the two long ones. As for the amulet, it is a source of capital, its first benefit is to skill in catching).⁽¹⁾ This quotation of the supposed will make it easy to understand a general idea of the nature of the work.⁽²⁾ The supposition that the Will is only part of the whole book is also supported by another quotation which is interesting. al-Tanūkhī, who was one of the writers who showed great interest in the life and morals of the common people in the 4th century A.H., quotes the book of al-Jāhiz. This quotation is most interesting in showing the way al-Jāhiz dealt with the question of thieves and the way he looked at it. What makes it more important is that none of the

(1) No explanation of this term is to be found, in al-Jāhiz or elsewhere in dictionaries.

(2) al-Ḥayawān, vol. II., p. 366.

(3) Analysis and details of the characteristics of this class, as gathered from al-Jāhiz is made later, pp. 106-113 of this thesis.

writers who are interested in al-Jāhiz has paid any attention to it. al-Tanūkhī said, on the authority of a robber:

"Have you not heard what al-Jāhiz has said in the book of al-Luṣūs, about one of them who said: (Those merchants were not exempted from the alms-tax (al-Zakāt) of people, because they withheld it and cleared themselves (from it), so it was left in their possession and thus their money for that reason was consumed while the thieves were in need of it. If the latter, therefore, took the money of the merchants, even if the merchants did not like it, it would be lawful, because the money itself should be consumed as alms-tax, and they (i.e. the thieves) have a right to take the alms-tax, whether the possessors of wealth agree or not.)⁽¹⁾ I said: That is true⁽²⁾, al-Jāhiz did say so..."

The book, however, was attacked and criticised by many writers, who thought that it was leading to corruption.⁽²⁾ The importance of the book, however, was not limited to its own time, for it affected the literature of the following centuries. Besides its great popularity among

(1) al-Faraj., vol. II., p. 117.

(2) see criticism of al-Baghdādī, al-Farq., p. 162; al-'Isfrā'īnī, al-Tabṣīr., pp. 50-1.

the common people, as is shown above, it seems to have enjoyed a considerable influence on the literature of the 4th and 5th centuries A.H., al-Rāghib al-'Iṣfahānī is believed to have been influenced by al-Jāḥiẓ's work on thieves, in the chapter which he wrote about theft and kinds of thieves.⁽¹⁾ al-Bayhaqī, in the book of al-Maḥāsin., makes a long quotation from al-Jāḥiẓ about thieves, which has a direct bearing on the social study of this class.⁽²⁾ al-Bayhaqī does not mention the work from which he made the quotation, but it is apparent that it was this same work on thieves.⁽³⁾

ii. Kitāb Ḥiyāl al-Mukaddīn

Connected to the subject of lower classes is the work on beggars and their tricks. The work, too, has not come down to us, but from the one surviving paragraph, it is clear that al-Kudya (beggary), was not only an art, but

(1) al-Rāghib, Muḥāḍarāt al-'Uḍabā', vol. II., p. 81; see also al-Ḥājirī, al-Bukhalā', p. 232.

(2) vol. III., pp. 521-3.

(3) see Gh. Pellat, Arabica, May, 1956, p. 167, no. 95.

also a profession which needed certain methods and special skill. This point, however, is dealt with, in some detail, in the following chapter.⁽¹⁾

al-Baghdādī mentions the work, very briefly, when criticising al-Jāhiz, and says: "...and among his books..... is (his book) on the Tricks of beggars, the content of which is appropriate to him (al-Jāhiz), his profession and his family..."⁽²⁾ al-'Isfrā'inī calls it Ḥiyal al-Mākirīn,⁽³⁾ which is apparently, misreading of (المكرين) as (الماكرين). Quotations from al-Jāhiz on "al-Mukaddīn" were made by later authors without categorical mention of the work they were taking from.⁽⁴⁾ One may presume that the work in question must have been well-known to these writers. The long paragraph quoted by al-Bayhaqī from al-Jāhiz is apparently from this same work. The characteristic description of the beggar, who appears in al-Bayhaqī's quotation, is very similar to that which one comes across in the book of

(1) see pp. 99-106 of this thesis.

(2) al-Farq., p. 162.

(3) al-Tabṣīr., p. 51.

(4) see for instance, al-'Abshīhī, al-Mustaṭraf., (1331), vol. II., p. 221.

(1)
al-Bukhalā' of al-Jāhiz. The paragraph which I have translated here, is helpful in illustrating the scope of the work.

al-Bayhaqī said: "al-Jāhiz said: I have heard an old chief (shaykh) of the Mukaddīn, when he met with a young fellow who had been only recently practising the profession. The old man asked him about himself, and he answered: (God damn the Kudya for a profession, and damn its people, how mean and how low! So far as I know, it disgraces one's own self and humiliates men. Have you ever seen a beggar who prospered?)". He said: the old man was enraged and he turned round to the youngman and said: (You there! talk no more, for you have said too much. One like you does not prosper because you have been frustrated, and you are still not experienced enough, for the Kudya has its men. So, why say all this?) Then he turned round and said: (You hear this, by God, there comes to us every useless Nabatean and oft-slapped weaver and boasting coward, who talks sevens and eights. If anyone of them did not get

(1) al-Jāhiz, al-Bukhalā', pp. 39-46; also pp. 263-76 of this thesis.

(2) The phrase is: (يَتَكَلَّمُ سَبْعًا فِي ثَمَانٍ) which indicates that he talks nonsense.

anything one day, he would start blaming the craft and condemning it. Have you not known that al-Kudya is an honourable profession and it is delightful and tasteful? The man who practises it is in everlasting happiness, for he is on the space of the whole earth. He is the vicegerent of Dhū'l-Qarnayn who reached the east and west. Wherever he goes, he never fears misery. He walks where he likes, obtaining the best in each town: at the time al-Nirsyān and al-Ḥayrūn, ⁽¹⁾ he is in al-Kūfa, at the time of large carp and sugar cane in al-Baṣra, at the time of al-Burnī and ⁽²⁾ al-'Āzadī, and ⁽³⁾ al-Rāziqī and the pomegranates in Baghdād Oh, by God! you should have seen me as I entered a town of al-Jabal and stood in its great mosque, with a waist-wrapper which I wrapped round myself, and made my turban from a fiber rope, with a stick in my hand made of oleander wood. A crowd of people gathered around me, as if I were al-Ḥajjāj b. Yūsuf on his pulpit, while I was saying: (Oh ye folks, a man from Syria and from a town called al-Maṣīṣa, one of the conquerors, who were stationed (to fight) for the path

(1) These are kinds of dates, see al-Faḡīh al-Hamadānī, al-Buldān, (1302), p. 251

(2) Kinds of dates too.

(3) A kind of grapes.

of God, of the running soldiers (al-Rakkāḍa) and guards of 'Islām. I have taken part with my father in fourteen raids, seven in land and seven in the sea, and I have raided with the Armenian. Say: (Mercy be upon Abū'l-Ḥasṣan!) The last one with whom I fought was Yāzamān the servant, and I entered Constantinople and performed prayers in the mosque of Maslama b. 'Abdul-Malik. Whoever has heard of my name has heard, but (to him) who has not, I introduce myself - I am the son of al-Ghuzayil b. al-Rakkān al-Maṣīṣī, the well-known, the famous on all the frontiers, the fighter with the sword, the user of the lance, one of the defendants of 'Islām....)" The appeal of the beggar goes on in the same way. He ends his description saying: "and by God, I had hardly finished my appeal when I saw a shower of Dirhams falling on me from all sides. I left with more than a hundred Dirham." Here, the young fellow jumped on his feet and (went to him) and kissed his head and said: (You, by God, are the teacher of good. God may reward you for the sake of your brethren with all that is best.)"

This quotation leaves us in no doubt concerning

(1) see about Yāzamān, al-Ṭabarī, Tārīkh., vol. III., p. 1168, (year 220).

(2) al-Bayhaqī, al-Maḥāsin., vol. III., pp. 622-4.

the subject matter and nature of the book - a romantic representation of professional beggary, seemingly couched sometimes in terms of poetic flamboyance. It is a pity that nothing more can be found about this work of al-Jāhiz.

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Chapter Two

SOCIETY IN AL-JĀḤIẒ'S WORKS

Part I. Social Classes

(a) Specialisation in Labour and Knowledge:

The specialisation of labour and knowledge is an outward and manifest sign of progress in any human society. This characteristic specialisation was manifest in Islamic society together with the material and intellectual activity of town life; it reached in the 'Abbasid town a high stage of maturity. The degree of specialisation which obtained is shown by the number of professions and in the skill of the craft trades. al-Jāḥiẓ relates a conversation between himself and a carpenter who fixed a wooden door for him with great skill and care. He did not fix the latch, however, and asked al-Jāḥiẓ to find someone who would do it with the same care in order not to spoil the whole work. al-Jāḥiẓ

expresses his great admiration for the man because he showed
(1)
that he knew what he was doing. It would seem that already
the organization of labour had to be established and a
tendency towards the association of craftsmen of the same
(2)
profession had emerged. The organizations of labour, in
fact, go back, according to Massignon, to as early as the
(3)
Babylonian and Assyrian times. Christensen speaks about
(4)
classes of craftsmen in Persia under the Sasanids. al-Jāḥiẓ
relates stories about 'Arīf al-Kannāsīn (the chief of
sweepers), who had all the sweepers of al-Karkh, the western
(5)
side of Baghdād, gathered around him. The conversation
which takes place between him and a half-witted man shows
the low level of life and knowledge of these craftsmen.
There is no doubt that al-Jāḥiẓ sympathized with the class
of craftsmen and it is significant that he cites them as an
example of cohesive mutual sympathy particularly so in the

(1) al-Ḥayawān, vol. III., p. 276; see also Ch. Pellat, *Le Milieu.*, (1952), p. 233.

(2) Ch. Pellat points out that the beginning of these organizations may have started at this epoch, but he himself had no attestation for this (*Ibid.*, p. 232).

(3) *Ency. Soc. Sc.*, vol. VII., p. 205.

(4) *l'Iran Sous les Sasanids*, (1952), pp. 92-5.

(5) al-Ḥayawān, vol. III., p. 13.

case of the market-professions, such as the butchers and
(1)
small tradesmen. The occasion for this strong sympathy
seems to have been the first steps that were then being
taken towards the organization of labour in Islamic society,
(2)
established later throughout the whole Muslim world.

The wider the field of knowledge became, the
stronger the sense of specialisation grew, and this tendency
is reflected also in Islamic literature. al-Jāhiz portrays
the process of specialisation in various forms and takes
towards it different attitudes according to the aspects
which he deals with. It is clear that al-Jāhiz accepts
specialisation of function in a society and, indeed, thinks
(3)
it necessary for the life of man and social harmony.

(1) see al-Jāhiz, *Risāla fī Dhann akhlāq al-kuttāb*, Three
Essays, (Finkel), p. 46.

(2) It is interesting to see that al-Khaṭīb al-Baḡhdādī who
writes in the 4th cent. A.H. about al-Mutaṭṭafilūn - those
who went to banquets without being asked or invited -
gives the impression that they had an organization with
a chief and special system in al-Baṣra (see K. al-Taṭṭīl.,
(1927), pp. 81-2). al-Rāghib al-Iṣfahānī, on the other
hand, talks about blood-letters (or barbers) in the city
of Qumm who seem to have a kind of professional grouping
[*Muhāḍarāt.*], Br. Mus. MS., (add. 7305 Rich.), fol.
128a.]

(3) al-Jāhiz, *Ḥujaj al-nubuwa*, al-Kāmil., vol. II., p. 23;
also al-Ḥayawān, vol. I., pp. 42-4.

al-Jāhiz, however, does not approve of the tendency where
knowledge is concerned. ⁽¹⁾ With his intense sense of humour,
al-Jāhiz presents a picture of this group of people of
various professions whose knowledge he mocks at and presents
as an example of the extreme narrow-mindedness of those
specialised professions. In a most cynical way, al-Jāhiz
produces an amusing picture of this group of people with
one-track minds, whose narrow professional field affected
even their language. The treatise which al-Jāhiz wrote
and which is called "Ṣinā'āt al-quwwād", was presented to
the Caliph al-Mu'taṣim, advising him to teach his sons every
knowledge, lest their minds be as narrow as these craftsmen,
who could not express themselves beyond the verbal mannerism
and expressions used in their own professions. ⁽²⁾ al-Jāhiz
does not by any means despise these craftsmen whose speech
he represents in poems with such immense interest and skill
but it is clear that he does not approve of this kind of
discipline. On the contrary, al-Jāhiz set himself as the

(1) Man, according to al-Jāhiz's argument, unlike animal, is distinguished by his ability to know more than one art or knowledge. (al-Ḥayawān, vol. II., p. 147)

(2) al-Jāhiz, Rasā'il, (Sandūbī), pp. 260-6.

example of the man of catholic and encyclopaedic knowledge. This is significant because it illustrates the lack of a sense of specialisation where the field of literature and letters is concerned. (1) It is interesting to see that at this time, a great number of men of letters, theologians, scholars and poets lived by following professions which had nothing to do with their literary careers. (2) Some of them, it is true, lived exclusively by their pens and al-Jāhiz himself is an example of those who lived by their own writing. (3)

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- (1) There was a current saying that he who wanted to be a scholar should look for one art, but to be a man of letters, he should know all sciences (see al-'Iqd., 1940, vol. II., p. 208).
- (2) Wāṣil b. 'Aṭā', the famous theologian, was a wool-seller (see al-Bayān., (1332), vol. I., pp. 13-9), although Yāqūt attributes his appellation (al-Ghazzāl) to the fact that he used only to sit in the market of wool (Irshād., vol. VII., p. 223). The surnames of many theologians, scholars and men of letters seem to have derived from the names of professions such as al-Khayāt al-Mu'tazilī, al-Jubbā'ī, al-'Allāf, etc. al-Jāhiz, however, denies the fact that these names indicated the professions, and he wrote a special treatise on this point (al-Bayān., (1332), vol. I., p. 20).
- (3) al-Jāhiz received large sums of money through the dedication of his books to some of the 'Abbasid authorities. (Yāqūt, Irshād., vol. VI., pp. 72 and 75-6; see also Ch. Pellat, R.S.O., (1952), p. 50).

However, al-Jāhiz's disapproval of specialisation should not be exaggerated, for he recognizes the various needs of society and the fact that these needs required various special functions. al-Jāhiz says that God did not create anyone who is mighty enough as to satisfy all his needs himself without the help of others, therefore, "He made the kings' need in their people and the people's need in their kings..."⁽¹⁾ al-Jāhiz goes on to categorise the nature of need itself into: the need whose fulfillment is essential for living, and secondly a luxurious need for pleasure and prosperity. The amount of either of these two, according to al-Jāhiz, depends on the amount of necessity,⁽²⁾ knowledge, depth (in thinking) and the human capacity and nature.⁽³⁾ Therefore, specialisation in function depends,⁽⁴⁾ according to this, on one's own capacity. al-Jāhiz, in fact,

(1) al-Ḥayawān, vol. I., p. 44.

(2) al-Jāhiz uses here for both (need) and (necessity) the term (al-ḥāja). The lack of accuracy is perhaps due to his literary nature which takes its freedom on the expence of his scholastic arguments.

(3) al-Ḥayawān, vol. I., p. 43.

(4) It is interesting to see this same conception of specialisation in pre-Islamic Persian literature. "It is the duty of artisans not to muddle themselves in things which they do not understand..." (see Christensen, l'Iran., p. 314, ref. to anonymous book).

discusses this point in connection with the metaphysical order and in connection with God's power and justice. His scholastic method depends here on a round-about way of argument to which he tries to give a rational colour.⁽¹⁾

It is interesting to see that al-Jāhiz, who does not encourage a special discipline in knowledge tends to apply the idea of specialisation to certain nations while discussing their characteristics. The elements of need and capacity appear as a means which help in achieving the specialisation of function or knowledge. Therefore, "the Greeks who looked into causes were not merchants or craftsmen with their own hands, neither were they people of agriculture, farming, building or planting, nor of collecting and protecting (i.e. money)..."⁽²⁾ Their specialisation, according to al-Jāhiz, became to concern themselves with creating new theories and methods of life. They were concerned with philosophy and not with practical life. As

(1) al-Jāhiz proves that the need is decided according to the necessity and capacity, on one hand, but on the other hand, God limits one's own capacity within his own requirements, therefore, according to him, one is equal to the other by nature and by the creation of God. (al-Hayawān, vol. I., p. 43).

(2) al-Jāhiz, Risāla fī Manāqib al-Turk., al-Kāmil., (1323), vol. I., pp. 260-7; also Majmū'., (Sācy), p. 41.

for the Chinese people, they were, according to al-Jāhiz, people of moulding and forming, melting and shaping. They had wonderful colours and cloth making. Therefore, al-Jāhiz concludes, "... the Greeks know the causes and do not practise the work, and the Chinese practise the work and do not know the reason, because the former were philosophers (1) and the latter were practitioners..." al-Jāhiz, however, fails to give the reasons for their different characters.

It would be interesting to point out that al-Jāhiz, who lived in a society where relations with China were mainly commercial and who seems to have known almost nothing about Chinese philosophy whilst Greek philosophy had made a great impression on him and on his time, generalises in giving judgement on the two nations, referring them to the crafts by which they were particularly known to him and to the Islamic world of his time. This is clear in al-Jāhiz's various references to the Chinese and to the (2) Greeks. al-Tha'ālibī, in the 4th century A.H., follows

(1) *Risāla fī Manāqib.*, al-Kāmil., vol. I., pp. 261-7; (Sācy), p. 42.

(2) see about this ~~in~~ al-Hayawān, vol. I., pp. 75-83; vol. V., p. 36; and vol. VII., p. 230

al-Jāhiz in his idea about the Chinese people as good
(1)
craftsmen.

al-Jāhiz, also, is inclined to classify the characters of nations into practical and theoretical aptitudes - a point which is consistent with his analysis of social classes and types of people. al-Jāhiz refers not only to the Greeks and Chinese, but also to the Arabs and the Turks. It is interesting to see how enthusiastic al-Jāhiz becomes when he describes the Arabs about whom he, apparently, knew a good deal. The detailed description which I quote here is significant not only in relation to the subject of specialisation which al-Jāhiz explains in his own way, but also to these explanations given by al-Jāhiz which are reflections of his own society and of his personal interest and knowledge. He says:

(2)

"... and so were the Arabs; they were not merchants, crafts-

(1) Thimār., (1908), pp. 432-3; see also about the early trade with China and commercial relations, al-Ya'qūbī, Tarīkh., (1883), vol. I., p. 206.

(2) al-Jāhiz uses here the term (al-'Arab), which seems to have meant the nation in general. The term (al-'Arāb), used in other occasions is a comparative term used for the Beduin Arabs in comparison with townspeople. However, the singular of (al-'Arab) in the treatise is used as ('A'rābī). (al-Kāmil, vol. I., p. 271). The reference may be presumed to have been to the pure Arab nation before the settlement in towns.

men, physicians, accountants or farmers as to be (considered) professional people, neither were they cultivators, for they feared the humiliation of taxes (al-Jizya). They were not people of earning and collecting or monopolizing of what they possessed and looking for the possessions of others. They did not earn their living from scales and measures, neither did they know the Dawānīq (small silver coins) or the Qarārīt (the 24th part of a Dīnār), and they did not become so poor as to be pre-occupied (with their poverty) from knowledge, neither were they so rich (to an extent of) the riches which brings stupidity and the wealth which causes vanity. They never bore any humiliation which would kill their spirit and make them despise themselves; they were inhabitants of deserts and were brought up in the open air..... They have strong memories and proud souls, when they reached their limits and directed their capacities for making poetry and eloquence in speech, cultivating the language and forming speech, tracking human beings... and using the guidance of stars, etc... they reached in that
(1)
their best....."

(1) al-Jāhīz, *Risāla fī Manāqib al-Turk.*, al-Kāmil., vol. I., p. 265; also *Majmūʿ.*, (Sacy), pp. 42-3.

This speciality of the Arabs, therefore, sprang from their environment and the nature of their life and habitat. (1) It is significant that al-Jāhiz makes his judgment on professions with a mind that had been influenced by the circumstances of his own society. Agriculture is connected in al-Jāhiz's mind with the humiliation of taxes, the feeling against which was prevalent in Islamic society. The taxation system throughout the whole rule of the caliphate had been (2) of a most unsteady nature. Professions connected with the market and trade which al-Jāhiz describes in terms of "scales and measures", were common in the town, but al-Jāhiz could not be justified in thinking that the Arabs did not practise them, or deal with any kind of trade. His attitude, however, reflects another fact - that is the status of these professions in the 'Abbasid town-life and the public feeling about them, which will be discussed soon. On another

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- (1) In the 8th century A.H., 'Ibn Khaldūn shows great interest in the question of environment as an effective power on the human society and the nature of tendencies of man. 'Ibn Khaldūn does not seem to have known about al-Jāhiz's interest in this, for he ignores him altogether, see Ṭāhā Ḥusain, *Falsafat 'Ibn Khaldūn*, (1925), p. 74.
- (2) see about this institution of taxation: for early Islamic times; Ṣāliḥ A. al-'Alī, *al-Tanzīmāt*, pp. 112-23; for the 3rd century A.H., al-Dūrī, *al-Nuzum al-Islamiya*, pp. 106-85; and finally F. Løkkegaard, *Islamic taxation in the Classic period*, (1950).

occasion al-Jāhiz, however, admitted that Quraysh were
(1)
merchants, although he defended them.

It is interesting to see that al-Jāhiz assigns different functions to different nations; the Greeks were philosophers, the Chinese were craftsmen and practitioners, the Arabs poets and men of speech, the Persians politicians and men of diplomacy and the Turks soldiers and leaders. (2)
All these different nations represent the different cultures and elements of civilisations which were absorbed by the Islamic society of al-Jāhiz's time. It could be pointed out that al-Jāhiz's lack of knowledge in one aspect shows itself in his judgement. He gives, for instance, the privilege of making poetry to the Arabs only, who were known to him as poets and eloquent speakers. This may indicate, too, that al-Jāhiz knew nothing about Greek or other nations' poetry or literature. In fact, al-Jāhiz believed that the

(1) al-Jāhiz, *Risāla fī al-Mu'allimīn*, al-Kāmil., vol. I., p. 34.

(2) It could be pointed out that this treatise was written especially by al-Jāhiz in praise of the Turks as soldiers of the Caliphate. (see al-Kāmil., vol. III., p. 267.)

Arabs were the first to make poetry and that Aristotle and Plato were "generations before the beginning of poetry
(1)
among the Greeks."

(b) The Social Status of Professions:

"With the division of labour and trades" Landtman says, "varying degrees of social estimation are assigned to the different groups of workers. One craft is valued more highly than another, and in consequence the man working at that craft enjoys greater consideration." This characteristic emerges in the Islamic town with the progress of material life, and the tendency towards specialisation in function and craft. Social estimation of crafts, however, was affected by various circumstances in the Islamic town, and so varying attitudes towards crafts appeared. In spite of the fact that the craft may be indispensable, it may still be despised. The weavers were condemned in Islamic society and considered the lowest in status and morals,

(1) al-Jāhiz, al-Ḥayawān, vol. I., p. 74; al-Jāhiz does not seem to have known about the "Poetics" of Aristotle.

(2) The Origin of Inequality., (1938), p. 81.

although the craft became more common and practised more in towns. A weaver in al-Kūfa once claimed to be a prophet; a crowd of people gathered round him and said: "Aveid (the wrath of) God and have fear of Him. Have you ever heard of a prophet (who is) a weaver?" He said: "You do not want your prophet but a banker." Traditions were attributed to the Prophet Muḥammed against the weavers; he said to 'Alī b. 'Abī Tālib "Oh 'Ali, aveid the weavers, for God has taken away the blessing from their earning in this world, and they are the despised ones." All the bad deeds which were committed against the prophets are attributed to the weavers. It is interesting, however, to see how political life in the Islamic town is connected to this attitude. In current stories and legends, the weavers appear in contrast with merchants; and while the former are condemned, the latter are praised.

(1) 'Ibn al-Jauzī, 'Akhbār al-zirāf, (1928), p. 31. The number of prophets who appeared in the time of al-Ma'mūn among the common people was great. (al-'Iqd., vol. III., p. 305).

(2) see Lughat al-'Arab, vol. V., p. 335 (1931); also al-Rāghib, Muḥāḍarāt., vol. II., pp. 284-5.

(3) Lughat al-'Arab, vol. V., p. 335 (1931).

(4) Ibid.

I suggest that this seems to reflect one of the characteristic attitudes of Islamic society. It is interesting to see who the actual practitioners of these two crafts were. It is a truism to say that Quraysh are distinguished as merchants and that their profession is always attached to their names. (1) al-Jāhiz himself maintains that the name of Quraysh did not derive from a name of a father of the tribe but was a description attached to their profession as merchants, from "trade and Taqriṣh." (2) As for the weavers, the Arabs of the South, and especially the Yemenites, are famous for their cloth making since pre-Islamic times. (3) The great conflict between the Arabs of the South and the Arabs of the North developed and took various shapes in the political life of the Islamic community. Social attitudes towards these crafts seem to reflect clearly this conflict.

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- (1) 'Ibn al-Nadīm mentions a book which attacked Quraysh as merchants. (Fihrist., -Flügel- vol. I., p. 105). al-Jāhiz cites a poem taken by the Yemenites as evidence against Quraysh the merchants (Fakhr al-Sūdān, Majmū', -Sacy- pp. 57 sq.) see also Ṭabarī, vol. II., 959, a poem by Abū Nu'ās against Quraysh.
- (2) al-Kāmil, R. fī Madh al-tujjār, vol. II., p. 249; see also 'Ibn Manẓūr, Lisān., vol. VIII., p. 225; Tāj., vol. IV., p. 337.
- (3) see about cloth making, 'Ibn Sīda, al-Mukhaṣṣaṣ, vol. IV., pp. 72-3; Yāqūt, ~~Kay~~ Mu'jam., (1869), vol. IV., p. 1036.

This suggestion is confirmed by the fact that the Yemenites are mentioned, and scorned, in connection with the craft of weaving. al-Jāhiz relates a saying of Khālīd b. Ṣafwān, blaming people from Balbārith b. Ka'b and criticising them before the Caliph 'Abū'l-'Abbās, the first 'Abbasid caliph, he says: "What shall I say to people who have been either weavers of Burd, or tanners of leather, trainers of monkeys or riders of donkeys; a hoopoe led to them, a rat drowned them and a woman reigned them..." This antagonism may explain to us the statement put by the false prophet, in al-Kūfa, who refers to a banker-prophet which seem to be an insinuation to Quraysh.

The lower craftsmen were never able to become wealthy enough as to be raised in social estimation, al-Jāhiz says: "I have never seen a water-carrier who reached the stage of luxury and wealth, neither a brick-maker, worker in clay or cultivator, nor any other small trades(men) and

(1) A cloth made especially in al-Yemen, see al-Mukhaṣṣaṣ, vol. IV., pp. 72-3.

(2) This is a reference to the Qur'ānic story of Solomon with the queen of Sāba (see al-Bayān, (1926), vol. I., pp. 219-20). See the narration also in Yāqūt, Mu'jam, vol. IV., p. 1036, Ibn Qutayba, 'Uyūn, vol. II., p. 217 (1920).

crafts(men). Don't you see that money often exists among secretaries, diamond traders, the sellers of adorned (cloth) and carpets and among bankers..." al-Jāhiz attributes this to the fact that the great sum of money (i.e. capital) brings big profit while small sums bring only little.

al-Jāhiz realises the importance of crafts in the life of the society, but reflects at the same time the social status of these crafts. Therefore, God, according to al-Jāhiz, made some people choose these crafts in order to make life easy, because "... if all people were averse to the shame of weaving, we all would have been left naked and if all were averse to the hardness of building, we would have been left without shelter..." The need of society for these crafts did not prevent shame being attached to them.

Professions and crafts which bring wealth, presumably would lead to respect and high position in the society.

(1) al-Ḥayawān, vol. IV., p. 434.

(2) Ibid.

(3) Ḥujaj al-Nubuwwa, al-Kāmil., vol. II., p. 23; Rasā'il, (Sandūbī), p. 127.

(4) In another occasion, al-Jāhiz indicates that the profession in itself is not to blame (see chapter III of this thesis).

"One of the chiefs of al-'Ubulla was heard saying that the poor people of al-Baṣra are better than those of al-'Ubulla." When he was asked why and in what way he preferred them he answered: "Because they respect the rich people more and they know their duty."⁽¹⁾ al-'Ubulla was one of the important centres of trade for a long time before the foundation of al-Baṣra,⁽²⁾ although its importance grew less later. On the other hand, its people were described as the most poverty-stricken and savage. A story related by al-Baghdādī shows that the lowest class (al-Sifl) of al-'Ubulla were the poorest of all other towns; and their main occupation was fishing.⁽³⁾ al-Jāhiz⁽⁴⁾ describes its merchants as the most monopolising of all.⁽⁵⁾ Their attitude towards wealth and riches is one of respect and love; the poor man is not allowed to be rude to the rich, but the latter can insult the former without being blamed, otherwise the poor, according to them, will dare to punish the rich and this itself will bring destruction.⁽⁵⁾ Merchants, therefore, enjoyed a high position and respect

(1) al-Jāhiz, al-Bukhalā', (1948), p. 113.

(2) see about al-'Ubulla, Yāqūt, Mu'jam., vol. I., pp. 96-8.

(3) al-Bukhalā', Br. Mus. MS., fol. 53a.

(4) Risāla fī'l-Mu'allimīn, al-Kāmil, vol. I., p. 34.

(5) al-Jāhiz, al-Bukhalā', p. 113.

in Islamic society. This, however, was not without qualification, for trade was considered shameful to the old nobility of the 'Abbasid court - although trade was not forbidden by Islam, but on the contrary encouraged.⁽¹⁾ When Yaḥya b. Barmak intended to take part in commercial activities, a merchant advised him saying: "You are a noble man and a descendant of a noble, and trade is not your business."⁽²⁾ This, perhaps, was due to the fact that the merchants did not want the high officials and courtiers competing with them in the field of their own profit.⁽³⁾ Nevertheless, the occupation of a high office like that of a Wazīr is considered higher in the estimation of society than that of a merchant.⁽⁴⁾ This does not obscure the fact, however, that the merchants enjoyed a great influence in the life of the Islamic town, whether economic, social or political.

(1) ~~see~~ art. Tidjāra, E. I.

(2) al-Jahshyārī, al-Wuzarā', p. 183; also al-Dūrī, Tārīkh., p. 112.

(3) This is confirmed by a current saying which goes as follows: "If the monarch shared with the people in their own trade they will perish and if they shared with him the (duty of) carrying arms, he will perish." (al-Dimashqī, Maḥāsīn., 1318, p. 41).

(4) 'Abdūl-Malik al-Zayyāt, the 'Abbasid Wazīr, is reported to have said: "The Commander of the Faithful has indeed lifted me from the disgrace of trade to the greatness of Wizāra." (al-Tha'ālibī, Khāss., p. 5; al-Dūrī, Tārīkh., p. 112).

One of the great factors that raises the status of a man in society is his education and knowledge. This was a very important factor in the life of the Islamic community. The lack of barriers between classes in the Islamic social system, helped the individual to climb up the social ladder through his personal qualifications and merits, (1) regardless of his origin or profession. Many theologians, poets or men of letters in 'Abbasid society depended merely on their qualifications to raise them in the social estimation. Wāṣil b. 'Aṭā', the theologian and speaker, whom al-Jāḥiẓ praises and respects, used to deal with wool, but distinguished himself as a theologian. Although Wāṣil was criticised and reminded of his low profession, he was a respectable (2) man. It is interesting to see that al-Jāḥiẓ cites a (3) long argument as to whether Wāṣil was a wool-seller or not. It seems that some people could not accept the idea that a man with such eloquence and intellect would be of such a

(1) al-Jāḥiẓ himself is a remarkable example of this type; in his early life he used to sell fish in the market of al-Baṣra, Sayḥan, (Yāqūt, 'Irshād., vol. VI., p. 56 sq.)

(2) Bashshār b. Burd made a satire against Wāṣil while Safwan al-'Anṣārī praised Wāṣil and his knowledge, (al-Jāḥiẓ, al-Bayān., vol. I., pp. 35 and 37-8).

(3) al-Bayān., vol. I., p. 174.

profession, especially when it was an accepted fact that weavers and lower craftsmen were foolish and could never prosper. However, men connected with any intellectual activity were highly esteemed, even in the pre-Islamic society where the status of poets and priests was high.⁽¹⁾ This continued to be so after Islam and developed with the development of knowledge and science. A literary profession was one of the accepted means of livelihood. 'Umar b. al-Khaṭṭāb is reported to have said: "The best employment among the Arabs was the verses which a man offers before proposing his need, in order to make the generous (man) hospitable or the miser kind."⁽²⁾ Poets addressed kings and princes and lived on their gifts. The importance of poetry in this respect was not less in later Islamic society; poets praised the caliphs and lived under their protection. Besides, knowledge and education were appreciated by all classes of people, although they varied in their appreciation. Eloquent speakers had great impression on the common people; they sat in the mosque, listened to orators and preachers and admired them,

(1) al-Bayān, (al-Khaṭīb) vol. III., p. 32; also Muqaddasī, Laṭā'if, pp. 25-7 and 27-8 (1900, Cairo).

(2) see al-Jāhiz, al-Bayān., vol. II., p. 225.

although they may not have been able to judge the most
(1)
truly knowledgeable men. It seems that this appreciation
of the common people of eloquence on one hand, and the
impoverishment existing among the lower classes on the
other, encouraged the classes of baggars and story-tellers
to use literature as a means of beggary. The middle class
in 'Abbasid society in their turn recognized the great value
of literature and knowledge, for it was through their know-
ledge that they could prosper and follow the example of
the 'Abbasid aristocracy whose position was mainly dependent
(2)
on their wealth. The position of this middle class was
gained through flattery and praise of the monarch and the
eminent personalities of the court - this is obvious in the
(3)
whole Arabic literature of this time. But the life of the

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- (1) An interesting story is related by al-'Asma'ī, the Arab
grammarian, who had an argument once with Sībawayh, the
Mawla grammarian, in the mosque of al-Basra. In order
to gain the sympathy of people, al-'Asma'ī, on purpose,
raised his voice to show his eloquence to the audience;
as soon as they heard his good accent, they sided with
him, although he was not on the right. (see Yāqūt,
Irshād., vol. VI., p. 87).
- (2) see about this point Ch. Pellat, *Le Milieu.*, p. 229.
- (3) The story related by al-Jāhiz about Sahl b. Hārūn who
regained his threatened position through flattery and
praise, is an example of this position. al-Jāhiz relates
his speech as the highest example of eloquence. (see
al-Bayān., vol. I., p. 216).

individual who was attached to the court was by no means safe, it depended entirely on the mercy of the caliph who could send him at any time to his death. ⁽¹⁾ Nevertheless, the middle class tended to attach themselves to the court, following the example of the court aristocracy in their luxury and pleasure. Secretaries were considered next to kings in their value and position. ⁽²⁾ al-Isfahānī holds the opinion that all crafts are dependent on poverty, for if there was no poverty or need, people would not have worked in them, except government, trade and working as secretaries. ⁽³⁾ al-Jāhiz regrets the fact that in his time the rivalries among men of letters were stronger than in any other profession. ⁽⁴⁾

The dispute among Islamic parties about leadership in matters of the faith stands as a remarkable example of the high level of intellectual activity which reached its zenith under the Caliph al-Ma'mūn. It is interesting, however, to see that the profession which is most attached to knowledge, and which is expected to give the people engaged in it respect and

(1) see the story of 'Abū 'Ayūb al-Muryānī, (al-Ḥayawān, vol. II., p. 361). This man was killed by the Caliph al-Manṣūr (see 'Ibn Khallikān, Wafayāt., vol. I., pp. 215-6; al-Abshīhī, vol. I., p. 112.)

(2) Muḥāḍarāt., vol. II., pp. 283-4.

(3) This is, evidently, similar to al-Jāhiz's own explanation of the choice of men of lower professions.

(4) Faṣl mā bayn al-'Adāwa., Majmū'., (Kraus-Hajiri), p. 107.

value, was most despised in Islamic society. Teachers were compared in their status and foolishness to the weavers
(1)
and lower craftsmen. Their social status does not by any means reflect the nature of their profession which is connected to knowledge and which is expected to be highly respected
(2)
in society. The great consideration of scholars and men of letters, however, is reflected not only in the influence they had on the people and in the Abbasid court, but also in the sayings of the time. People are said to be of three categories: Scholars, men of letters and orators, as for the rest, they raise the prices, make the markets crowded
(3)
and disturb the waters. al-Jāhiz's great interest in the intellectual middle class is not due only to the fact that he was one of them, but also to the great importance he attaches to reason and to the value of personal qualification and wide knowledge which are great means, in his opinion,
(4)
to power and prosperity.

(1) see sayings in al-Bayān., vol. I., p. 174.

(2) This point is made clear in the discussion of this class later. al-Jāhiz gives his interesting explanation of this point. (see below, pp. 128-31).

(3) The saying is attributed to Khālīd b. Saifwān, see 'Ibn 'Abd Rabbih, al-'Iqd., vol. I., p. 157.

(4) see chapter III of this thesis.

(c) The Common People and Their Occupations:

The importance of the common people in the writing of al-Jāhiz appears in his great interest not only in the lower craftsmen, but also in the beggars, rogues and thieves. Beggary, in al-Jāhiz's writing appears, for the first time⁽¹⁾ in Arabic literature as a professional activity. The appearance of this class, however, in the social life of the Islamic town was by no means a sudden phenomenon. It is necessary before proceeding further, to discuss at this point the figure of the beggar in literature and to examine⁽²⁾ the origin of beggary in Islamic society.

al-Kudya (beggary) is naturally connected with poverty and need. This fact by itself, however, hardly explains the origin and increase of beggary in any society without considering the special circumstances obtaining in

(1) see al-Jāhiz's description of the beggar, al-Bayhaqī, al-Maḥāsin., vol. II., p. 622-24

(2) This discussion will be of a great relevance with the character of the beggar in the book of al-Bukhalā' which is discussed later in Ch. IV of this thesis.

that society. It is interesting to see how close the connection was in Islamic society between social and economic conditions, and the march of political events. It is true that beggary grew out of social and economic factors, but most significantly these conditions were exacerbated to a great extent by others of political nature. The manifest sign of the power of the caliphate was its tendency towards expansion. Wars and raids against the neighbouring countries were carried out under the name of holy wars. Since 'Umayyad rule, the campaigns were directed against the Roman empire. ⁽¹⁾ Under the 'Abbasids, these raids continued and the frontiers were maintained and enforced. As early as the time of the Caliph al-Mahdī, the third 'Abbasid caliph, new garrison towns on the borders between the 'Abbasid and the Roman territories were established; ⁽²⁾ al-Maṣīṣa and Ṭarsus were built (162 A.H.), and were considered most important in the wars against the Romans. The social and economic conditions which these

(1) see about these campaigns Vasiljev, History of Byzantine Empire, vol. I., p. 257 sq.; B. Lewis, The Arabs in History, p. 66; also Muir, The Caliphate, pp. 297, 366 sq.

(2) Yāqūt, Mu'jam., vol. II., p. 218

continuous wars created among the inhabitants of these bordering towns stand as an illustration of the continuous suffering of the people. In 163 A.H., al-Rashīd, the son of al-Mahdī, attacked the settlers near al-Maṣīṣa and Ṭarsus, captured a great number of the inhabitants and the rest were sold in the markets. The inhabitants of these areas suffered from both sides, the Muslims and the Romans. The Romans, in their turn, answered these raids; in the year 190 A.H., al-Ṭabarī says: "al-Rūm reached 'Ayn Zariba - a town built by al-Rashīd - and Kanīṣatu'l-Sawdā'; they raided and captured. The people of al-Maṣīṣa tried to save what was in their hands.." In the same year, al-Rashīd paid back the raid and captured Hiraqla, destroyed it and enslaved its people. In the year 216 A.H., news reached al-Ma'mūn, the son of al-Rashīd, that the Romans attacked Ṭarsus and al-Maṣīṣa and he attacked them in return. The raids became more regular between the years 237-248 A.H. and more people were captured, enslaved or killed.

(1) Yāqūt, Mu'jam., vol. III., p. 419

(2) Ibid., vol. III., p. 761

(3) Tā'rīkh., vol. III., p. 709

(4) Ibid.

(5) Ibid., p. 1104

(6) Ibid., pp. 1419, 1420, 1434, 1447, 1449, 1508

It would not have concerned us in the least to discuss these raids, had they not had repercussions on social life in the near territories and consequently, on Islamic town-life. These conditions of life help to explain an important fact, they explain why al-Jāhiz chose to bring his beggar from al-Maṣīṣa and to make him appeal to the people by telling them about his great deeds and courageous past and that he took part in over 14 raids against the Romans and that he knew the leaders of these raids.⁽¹⁾ It is significant that these raids against the Roman empire were considered by Muslims as part of the holy war (al-Jihād). People who took part in these raids were treated with great respect by the caliphate and, indeed, by the whole Muslim world. The common people considered the leaders of these campaigns as heroes of the faith and their death meant martyrdom for the sake of religion. "When the news reached Dār al-Salām (Baghdād), Samarrā' and the other Islamic towns of the death of 'Amr b. 'Ubayd al-'Aqṭa' and 'Alī b. Yaḥya al-

(1) The names of the leaders which al-Jāhiz's beggar cites seem to have been of authentic historical persons. His own name is cited by al-Jāhiz as Ibn al-Ghuzayil b. al-Rakkān al-Maṣīṣī; (al-Bayhaqī, al-Maḥāsīn., vol. III., p. 622-24). A very similar name to this is cited by al-Mas'ūdī to have taken part in these raids with the leaders whom the beggar of al-Jāhiz himself cites, the name appears as al-'Urayil b. Bakkār; (Murūj., vol. VIII., p. 73)

'Armanī", says al-Ṭabarī, "who were both chief leaders of the Muslims with strong power and great deeds, it was very hard on the people and great was (the calamity of) their death, especially when the period between their deaths was so short..⁽¹⁾" The feeling of agitation was increased by the murder of the Caliph al-Mutawakkil by the Turks. "The common people in Baghdād gathered, shouting and crying for a general recruitment (Nafīr), and the Abnā' (the Khurasānī soldiers) and the Shākiriya (the Turkish soldiers) joined them, pretending that they wanted their pension.. They opened the prison of Naṣr b. Mālīk and let free all those in it..⁽²⁾" The weak central government had no longer any control over the people, the state of chaos spread over all the country, the confidence in the caliphate was no longer valid and people themselves decided to take action. Therefore, "A group of well-to-do people from Baghdād and Samarrā' collected a big sum of money to enforce those who were rising to go to the frontier to fight the Romans..⁽³⁾" It is significant that the common people themselves show such a

(1) Ṭabarī, Tārikh., vol. III., p. 1510. These are some of the leaders whom the beggar refers to.

(2) Ṭabarī, Ibid.

(3) Ibid.

great interest in the raids against the Romans, their sympathy being infused by their religious feeling.

Coming back to the beggar of al-Jāhiz, it is noticed that when he stands in the mosque appealing to the people, he stresses his religious achievements as one of the defenders of Islam. He had, according to his own saying, a duel with the king of the Romans on the gate of Ṭarsūs. He does not forget to tell them that he had paid a visit to the mosque of Maslama b. 'Abdu'l-Malik in Constantinople. He boasts about his courage in killing the men and enslaving the women, a fact that was characteristic in these raids. In spite of all this courage and this heroic past, this man appears not only as a beggar but also as a chief one. Why is this so ?

The conditions of life in these border territories should be taken into consideration, in order to understand al-Jāhiz's suggestion for the origin of his beggar. Besides the fact that the people were exposed to the danger of raids, slavery and suffering in these changeable conditions, the people of these towns do not seem to have been representative of the average town-dweller. They were a mixture of unwanted

elements, whom the government wanted to get rid of, such as al-Zuṭṭ who were mainly working labourers on the land in Mesopotamia and who were under very bad conditions. After the failure of their rebellion in the Caliphate of al-Mu'tasim, a great number of them were recruited and transferred to the north to 'Ayn Zariba. Soon afterwards, the Romans swept them before them. As for the Khurasānī settlers, they settled in 'Ayn Zariba as early as the Caliphate of al-Rashīd. It seems, however, that some agricultural and commercial activities flourished for a time in these territories. Besides, Yāqūt mentions a number of poets and scholars who came originally from these towns. Nevertheless, the fact remains that the inhabitants of these towns were either killed, robbed, enslaved or driven out of their homes.

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- (1) al-Ṭabarī, Tārikh., vol. I., p. 1961, vol. III., pp. 1044, 1045, 1166; also Rifā'ī, 'Asr., vol. I., p. 277
- (2) al-Ṭabarī, Ibid., vol. III., p. 1168
- (3) Yāqūt, Mu'jam., vol. III., p. 761
- (4) Ibid. Yāqūt also mentions that al-Maṣīṣa used to export furs and that it had many gardens and a river, (vol. IV., p. 557)
- (5) Ibid., vol. III., p. 761; vol. IV., p. 557
- (6) Yāqūt himself was captured from Byzantine territories, when a boy, and sold as a slave in Baghdād, (see art. Yāqūt, E.I.)

This became more frequent when the central government could no longer maintain its frontiers.

It is significant that al-Jāhiz constructs a magnificent picture of all these elements epitomised in the outstanding figure of the beggar. This figure is an example of the 'Abbasid society in its gradual social and political disintegration. At the same time, he represents the heroic spirit of the religious wars of the Islamic empire which was at the same time being reduced to poverty and decline. One may point out in this connection that in the 5th century A.H., al-Ḥarīrī, the Maqāmāt writer once again comes to choose his beggar out of the same type of conditions. It does not seem to have been a mere coincidence that al-Ḥarīrī should choose his beggar from Sarouj the Syrian town which was exposed to the raids of the Franks and the inhabitants of which were driven out and made as refugees in 494 A.H./1101 A.D. (1) It is significant, however, that the beggar of al-Jāhiz appears as a hero who had taken

(1) al-Sarouji is said to have met with al-Ḥarīrī in the mosque of al-Baṣra and told him about the disaster that befell the city. al-Ḥarīrī describes this incident in the Maqāma No. 48; (Assemblies, English translation, introd., p. 13)

part in the holy wars, whereas the beggar of al-Ḥarīrī was not so, he lost his home and was reduced to the utmost poverty and beggary. Nevertheless, both beggars appear as professional, skilful and crafty men. The beggar of al-Jāhiz defends his profession and considers those who complain of beggary as good-for-nothing people, "... if anyone of them did not earn anything one day," he says, "he would blame the craft and condemn it. Didn't you know that al-kudya (beggary) is an honourable profession and it is tasteful and delightful; its man is in everlasting happiness, for he is on the roads of the whole world and the space of all the earth..⁽¹⁾"

The universal character of al-Jāhiz's beggar appears in the great similarity which one finds between him, whether in his attitude towards the people, the excuses he makes or the devices of his trade, and the class of vagabonds, rogues and minstrel poets who appear in England in the 16th century. A very short comparison between the characteristics of al-Jāhiz's beggar and an Elizabethan minstrel-retainer, who was described as "not technically a vagabond", but

(1) al-Bayhaqī, al-Maḥāsin., vol. III., p. 622-24

(1)
"evidently a skilful beggar", illustrates this similarity. al-Jāhiz's beggar was, above all, a dignified man whose past stands as a witness for his great deeds. Eloquence in speech was necessary for him to perform his part in public. His appearance in the mosque, however, is a characteristic of Islamic society where the mosque acts as a public place for meetings, besides its religious significance to the people. The beggar could get more sympathy from the people there. After appealing to the people, the beggar reveals his purpose saying: "... two sons of ours were captured and taken to the country of the Romans. Therefore, I ran away aimlessly accompanied by letters from the merchants, but I was robbed and here I am seeking refuge with God and with you, should you think that you are going to send back a pillar of Islam to his home..."
(2)

In the 16th century England, a minstrel-retainer appears with same characteristic. He was an honest man, "respectable enough to wish to pay his debts.. he gained a

(1) see Frank Aydelotte, Elizabethan Rogues., p. 46

(2) al-Bayhaqī, al-Maḥāsin., vol. III., p. 622-24

The professional beggars, vagabonds and story-tellers had common characteristics in their privation and roaming life. The Islamic mosque, the streets and highways were the field where they made their appearance and earned their living. Sukkar, the chess-player, was the most foolish among story-tellers, al-Jāhiz says, but the most skillful in playing chess; he used to travel earning his living by chess-playing⁽¹⁾. Chess was considered the game of immoral lower classes⁽²⁾, although, of course, it was played in the 'Abbasid court⁽³⁾. Story-telling was a profession which needed craft, skill and eloquence⁽⁴⁾. However, it was not a degraded profession in early Islamic times⁽⁵⁾. Besides, there were many theologians, preachers and good speakers who practised story-telling⁽⁶⁾. In the 4th century A.H., beggars seem to have some

(1) al-Jāhiz, al-Ḥayawān, vol. II., p. 147

(2) see al-'Isfrā'īnī's criticism of al-Jāhiz, al-Tabṣīr., p. 50-51; also al-'Abshīhī, al-Mustaṭraf., 1331, vol. II., p. 214

(3) see al-Mas'ūdī, Murūj., vol. VIII., p. 311. Books were written especially about it, (Ḥājī Khalīfa, Kashf., vol. II., p. 14-30).

(4) al-Mas'ūdī, Ibid., p. 161 sq.

(5) On the beginning and development of story-telling, see al-Makkī, Qūt al-qulūb., vol. I., p. 148 sq.; al-Maqrīzī, al-Khiṭaṭ., vol. II., p. 253; al-Balkhī, al-Bad', vol. I., p. 2-3; also art. Kiṣṣa and Masdjid, E.I.

(6) al-Jāhiz cites a number of respectable men who were story-tellers, al-Bayān., vol. I., p. 234-5.

co-operation with the story tellers. al-Kān, a type of beggars, al-Bayhaqī says, makes an agreement with the storyteller early in the evening that he would give him half, or one-third, of what he earns in order to let him ask the ⁽¹⁾ people.

The descriptions given by al-Jāhiz of this class, their behaviour and morals present them in a distinguished colour different from the ordinary traditional moral of the society. According to them, poverty and suffering should be faced with courage and will. al-Jāhiz relates that a man complained, because the youth of his time were not as courageous as they used to be, because they could not face prison without complaints and that they betrayed their ⁽²⁾ friends. According to the vagabonds, robbery was not~~e~~ shameful, but was as good as any fighting for the sake of the faith. The man round whose instructions to thieves al-Jāhiz's book on thieves was written, ⁽³⁾ seems to have been a well-known chief of thieves himself. The instructions and sayings related about him represent some of the characteristics of this

(1) al-Maḥāsīn., vol. III., p. 625. It would be suggested that the name of this beggar, al-Kān, may have been taken from his connection with story-tellers.

(2) al-Bayān., vol. III., p. 132

(3) see about this al-Ḥayawān, vol. II., p. 410

class. 'Uthman al-Khayyāt is reported by al-Rāghib al-Isfāhānī to have said: "Nations are endlessly capturing each other, and they call (what they do) raids and what they take a booty. It is considered the best (means) of earning. But you, in taking the money of traitors and vile people are more excused .. therefore, call yourselves conquerors (Ghuzāt), as the Khārijites called themselves (1) (Shurāt).." The thief, according to them, was more honest than the judge who accepted bribes and took the money of (2) orphans. They believed in certain measures of chivalry, Ibn al-Jauzī says that al-'Ayyārīn say: al-Fatā does not commit adultery, does not tell lies and avoids the unlawful and is never aggressive against a woman, but, according to 'Ibn al-Jauzī, they do not avoid taking by force the money of people. (3) The bond of al-Futuwwa is, however, most powerful among them. 'Uthmān al-Khayyāt says that he never robbed his neighbour

(1) Muḥādarāt., vol. II., p. 81-4; also al-Jāhiz, al-Ḥayawān, vol. II., p. 410. al-Shurāt (sing. Shārī) are the Kharijites who sell their life for their faith.

(2) al-Rāghib, Ibid.

(3) Talbīs., 1919, p. 421. About the movement of al-Futuwwa, see Taeshner, Die Islamische Futuwwabune, ZDMG, 1933, p. 6 sq.; Ritter, Der Islam, 1920, vol. X., p. 244 sq.; 'Umar al-Dusūqī, al-Futuwwa 'Ind al-'Arab, 1951; also al-Mashriq, 1947, vol. 40., p. 480 sq; Massignon, arts. Sinf and Shadd, E.I.

(1)
whoever he was. In the 4th century, al-Tanūkhī describes
a highway robber saying: "... In 'Ibn Ḥamdūn, there was Futuwwa
and good humour. If he robs, he does not rob the people
who have a few goods, the value of which is less than one
thousand (Dīnars ?), and if he takes the money of those
people, he would share it with them.." (2) The groups of al-
Fityān and wine-drinkers were praised and known for drinking
wine, poverty and little earning. (3) al-Shuṭṭār, who were
described by al-Jāḥiẓ, were fond of wine; "one of the
Shuṭṭār may be left alone with an unexperienced young man,"
al-Jāḥiẓ says, "he would say to him: (The young man -al-
Ghulām- will not be a Fatā until he meets with a Fatā, other-
wise, he is inferior in al-Futuwwa) (4) (5) ", and also "he who does
not drink before breakfast is inferior in al-Futuwwa and
spurious among wine-drinkers.." (6) al-Jāḥiẓ reveals interesting

(1) al-Rāghib, Muḥāḍrāt., vol. II., p. 81-4

(2) al-Faraj., vol. II., p. 119

(3) al-Jāḥiẓ, al-Ḥayawān., vol. III., p. 220; al-Bukḥalā', 1900, p. 128; al-Nuwayrī, Nihāyat., vol. IV., p. 90

(4) The word (نكس) is used in this and the following quotation too. It was explained by al-Jāḥiẓ that, according to al-Fityān, he who is not educated by a Fatā is (Niks) in al-Futuwwa, (al-Ḥayawān, vol. I., p. 168)

(5) Ibid.

(6) al-Jāḥiẓ, al-Bukḥalā', 1948, p. 87

sides of the life and morals of this class of people, in
(1) various occasions. Among the advice of 'Uthmān al-Khayyāt
to the thieves, is that they should avoid relations with
women and make their friends among men, for young men are
(2) more helpful to one another. According to him, they should
play with pigeons, romp with dogs and avoid playing with
falcons. The cock is described as the most courageous among
(3) animals. The mention of animals in connection with the
morals and behaviour of these groups of people draws the
attention of the reader.

In Islamic society, dealing with pigeons appears as
a practice of the lower classes. It was condemned in trad-
(4) itions attributed to early authorities. In the tradition
which condemns playing with pigeons, the game is attributed
to the people of Lot, the prophet whose story is famous in

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- (1) see the stories related by al-Jāhiz about Bābūya, the
pigeon trainer, (al-Ḥayawān, vol. II., p. 157). Bābūya
seems to have been one of the characters in al-Jāhiz's
book of thieves.
- (2) al-Ḥayawān, vol. II., p. 366
- (3) Ibid. The cock is described like a human being. This is
true on other animals in al-Ḥayawān, see vol. II., p.340.
- (4) see al-Damīrī, Ḥayāt., 1868, vol. I., p. 291. In the
Qur'ān, however, it was the hoopoe who took the message
of king Solomon and not the pigeons, see chapter XXVII.

connection with the habit of Sodomy which was practised by
his people. ⁽¹⁾ Besides, playing with pigeons is supposed to
cause poverty and bad luck; "he who plays with pigeons will
not die until he had suffered poverty." ⁽²⁾ al-Jāhiz himself
seems to have been trying to show the connection between
dealing with pigeons, drinking wine and being from the lower
classes of people; he describes a man who was an extremist
Shī'a as follows: "... I have never seen a poorer man than
he, yet he was a wine-drinker and a player of pigeons and
he looks in his figure and shape like the chiefs of al-
Ḥarbīya." ⁽³⁾ Dealing with pigeons, however, was a trade. 'Abū
'Aḥmad al-Tammār, the theologian, was a merchant of pigeons
before he became a seller of dates. ⁽⁴⁾ Special kinds of pigeons
were used for correspondence by the government. 'Abdullah b.
al-Mukhtār al-'Alawī is reported to have been appointed as
a special secretary of pigeons and remained till the caliphate
of al-Musta'ṣim. He also made special reports about their
origins. ⁽⁵⁾ al-Futuwwa in its later development is said to

(1) see Qur'ān, chapter XI., (Hūd)

(2) al-Damīrī, Ḥayāt., vol., I., p. 293

(3) al-Jāhiz, al-Ḥayawān, vol. III., p. 20. al-Ḥarbiya was the headquarter of the common people in the civil war against the army of al-Ma'mūn, (al-Ṭabarī, vol. II., p. 1008)

(4) al-Ḥayawān, vol. III., p. 294 sq. and p. 297

(5) see Mustafā Jawād, Luḡhat al-'Arab, 1930, vol. IV., p. 241-9

have included playing with pigeons, singing, and playing
(1)
other games.

al-Jāhiz shows great interest in animals in connection with the social life of man. It would be pointed out that he depicts the characters of animals from the view point of their moral behaviour. The pigeons are compared
(2)
with the human beings in their emotions and nature. The use of animals by human beings as companions is no less significant; the dog which is a very cautious animal was used by the groups of stranglers in al-Kūfa, who attacked certain
(3)
quarters, spread horror and robbed the people. The use of dogs by beggars and vagabonds appears to have been common and universal. In Roman society, it seems to have had the same significance; "in antiquity," says R. Lewinsohn Morus, "and indeed until well into the middle ages, the dog was a proletarian among the domestic animals. He was the beggar's companion and in Rome he was exploited in fine style as a

(1) Mustafā Jawād, *Lughat al-ʿArab*, 1930, vol. IV., p. 241-9; see about Futuwwa also p. 107 of this thesis.

(2) al-Jāhiz, *al-Ḥayawān*, vol. III., p. 164-9; also about the behaviour of chickens vol. II., p. 340

(3) *Ibid.*; also vol. II., p. 264-7

worker, while in the arena he had to fight along with wild
beasts against the gladiators..⁽¹⁾ In Persian tradition, the
dog was held in great esteem by the Zoroastrians.. The dog
was used by the shepherds to protect their sheep.⁽²⁾ It should
be pointed out that in Islamic society, the dog was also used
by the guards of the markets to protect the goods of mer-
chants.⁽³⁾ The significance of the dog among the lower classes,
however, does not seem to lie in his function as a protector
only, but also in its usefulness for games..⁽⁴⁾

Playing with animals, such as falcons, pigeons or
cocks seems to have been common games in old oriental
societies; "the art of falconry came from India and had also
been practised in Persia at an early date.. After the 8th
century A.D., falconry became the rage at princely courts
and it continued to be so for a thousand years..⁽⁵⁾ In the
book of al-Ḥayawān, al-Jāḥiẓ relates with great interest an

(1) Animals, men and myths, p. 119

(2) Christensen, l'Iran., 1936, p. 317

(3) al-Jāḥiẓ, al-Ḥayawān, vol. I., p. 302-3

(4) An indication of the dog's relation with al-Fityān is
given by al-Jāḥiẓ, see al-Bayān., vol. III., p. 132.

(5) R. L. Morus, Animals., p. 116-9

argument between two Mu'tazilite theologians in preference of dogs and cocks. al-Jāhiz was blamed for wasting his time and the time of his reader in useless arguments like this.⁽¹⁾ al-Jāhiz makes a reference, however, to 'Abū 'Ishāq al-Nazzām and Ma'bad as the two Mu'tazilites who held the argument between themselves.⁽²⁾ This in itself may be an indication of the interest of the time in animals in connection with social habits and new emerging social phenomena. al-Jāhiz, however, attributes the interest of theologians in arguments concerning animals to a religious interest, for animals, according to him, are manifest signs⁽³⁾ of the creation of God.

(d) The Middle Class and Its Importance:

In connection with this class in the 'Abbāsid society, as well as in al-Jāhiz's writings, two main points should be taken into consideration; the question of education which was mainly carried out by this class, and secondly the

(1) al-Jāhiz, al-Ḥayawān, vol. I., p. 216

(2) Ibid., vol. I., p. 3

(3) Ibid., vol. II., p. 109

question of wealth as a decisive factor, and a competing power, in the life and status of this class. Therefore, my approach to this class in al-Jāhiz's writing is concerned with these two points.

In connection with al-Jāhiz's writing, that section of the middle class whose livelihood depended mainly on an educational occupation is represented in the groups of teachers and secretaries, or clerks, who seem to have occupied a great deal of al-Jāhiz's interest. ⁽¹⁾ The close connection of this class with the intellectual activities of their time is germane to the question of knowledge and education in Islamic society. Therefore, before discussing the characteristics of this class, as al-Jāhiz portrays them, some general discussion is necessary on this point. My discussion of the question will be made in connection with al-Jāhiz's views and attitudes, for it is of the utmost relevance that al-Jāhiz himself was a member of this class.

(1) al-Jāhiz wrote about four treatises on the praise and condemnation of teachers and clerks; two of these works only have come down to us, see Yāqūt, *Irshād.*, vol. VI., p. 76 sq.; also chapter I., of this thesis.

The close connection in Islamic society of teaching with religious studies seem to have helped to make teaching a widely practised profession. Teaching, whether in the Ḥalaqāt (the circles) of the mosque or in houses and schools, was of cardinal significance in the life of Islamic community. One of the characteristic features of the growth of education and learning in the Islamic world, in the 2nd and 3rd centuries A.H., was the idea of seeking for knowledge and making long journies for the collecting of traditions. al-Jāhiz was not a traditionist himself, but worked part of his life as a teacher, and indeed spent most of his life in teaching through his writing. He was not described later as "the Teacher of reason and literature" in vain. His fame, which reached Spain, is said to have brought him students from there who studied under him for several years. al-Jāhiz, in fact, represents the tendency

(1) see 'Aḥmad Shalaby, Hist. of Muslim education, p. 116

(2) see also this Guillaume, The Traditions of Islam, p. 68

(3) al-Jāhiz, in fact, was accused by traditionists as having forged traditions, see al-'Asqalānī, Lisān., vol. IV., p. 355-6; al-Baghdādī, al-Farq., p. 61; 'Ibn Qutayba, Mukhtalif., p. 71-3, 'Ibn 'Asākir, RAAD, vol. IX., p. 204

(4) This is said by 'Ibn al-'Amīd, Yāqūt, 'Irshād., vol. VI. p. 74

(5) see Yāqūt, 'Irshād., vol. VI., p. 74-5; al-Tanūkhī, Nishwār. (1930), p. 119-20. Ch. Pellat argues this point and the influence of al-Jāhiz in Spain, see al-Andalus, (1956), vol. XXI., p. 277-9.

in Islamic education towards vast and unlimited activities which were no longer confined within the field of religion. The Greek culture, which al-Jāhiz tends to copy, did not have a regular and systematic effect on his methods. However, 'Ibn Shahīd, one of the eminent men of letters in Spain who criticised teachers bitterly, thought that al-Jāhiz did not write all he knew in the book of al-Bayān wa'l-Tabiyīn, because, according to 'Ibn Shahīd, al-Jāhiz was careful about the bestowal of knowledge upon the ungrateful people of his time. Zaki Mubārak, who does not agree with Ibn Shahīd that al-Jāhiz was concealing his knowledge, thinks that al-Jāhiz did not do that on purpose, but that it was his own idiosyncratic way of writing, the simple reason being that he wrote for himself and not for the sake of teaching people. Ibn Shahīd may be justified in thinking of al-Jāhiz in this way, because it is apparent that nothing of al-Jāhiz's works, besides al-Bayān. and al-Tarbī', was known in Spain. Besides, al-Bayān. does not follow a

(1) Tāhā Husain thinks that there is no pure Arabic rhetoric but a mixture of Greek and Persian influence is clear, especially in al-Bayān. of al-Jāhiz, see introduction to Qudāma's Naqd al-Nathr, (1933), p. 9

(2) see Zaki Mubārak, al-Nathr., vol. II., p. 48-9

(3) Ibid., p. 49

(4) Yāqūt, Irshād., vol. VI., p. 75; also al-Tanūkhī, Nishwār. p. 119-20.

didactic method and only specialists may appreciate it and be able to sort out the ideas from amongst numerous examples (1) and poems. However, no one who knew al-Jāhiz through his works would be able to ignore his concern about the knowledge of the people, and about his readers, whom he seeks to please and teach. Even so, it seems that al-Jāhiz did not hold a very high opinion of his reader. The irregular use of scientific methods and the continuous interruption of his serious arguments by anecdotes and short stories, in order to please his reader, are evidence of his taking pains to appeal to the ordinary reader. In al-Ḥayawān, he refrained from discussing certain subjects for the simple reason that they were boring -as he himself puts it, "... another defect of this is that it is so vast and long that you would not bear it even if Mukharriq (the singer) were to sing it for you, or Zalzāl play^{it} (on the lute), or Barṣūma play it (with the flute); that is why I did not discuss it". (2)

(1) 'Abū Hilāl al-ʿAskarī says that although al-Bayān. included numerous examples of poems, speeches and sayings, knowledge is scattered in it, see al-Ṣināʿatayn, (1952), p. 4-5. al-Masʿūdī places it first on the list, on account of its many sidedness and versatility, see Murūj., vol. IV., p. 24; also A. Mez, Renaissance, English trans., (1937), p. 240

(2) al-Ḥayawān, vol. VI., p. 16

The quality of being teacher of the common people, which al-Jāhiz enjoyed, does not mean that al-Jāhiz approved of the easy knowledge of a parrot, for he detested learning by heart which would paralyse the faculty of thinking and would stifle intelligence.⁽¹⁾ This, perhaps, is one of the reasons why al-Jāhiz was not a good traditionist. The attitude of al-Jāhiz towards knowledge and education is that of great respect. His condescension in making knowledge as easy as possible for his ordinary reader did not deprive him of the scientific mindedness of the scholar. al-Ḥayawān is a representative of the intellectual activities of the class of theologians of his time, but its significance does not lie in its compendious knowledge as much as in the reflection it bears of the ways of thinking among the intellectuals of al-Jāhiz's time. The scientific curiosity which dominated the minds of the class of thinkers who founded Muslim scholasticism is a most interesting feature which al-Jāhiz reflects and represents. Besides, al-Jāhiz does not fail to portray the rivalries between educated people, showing his great concern, in doing so, about the leadership of the

(1) al-Jāhiz, *Risāla fī'l-Mu'allimīn*, al-Kāmil., vol. I., p. 29-30. H. Hirschfeld thinks that, in this description, al-Jāhiz was alluding to his contemporary al-Kindī, the Arabic philosopher, see a Volume of *Oriental Studies*, (1922), p. 200-9. However, there is no justification for this belief.

common illiterate classes of the people. One can hardly be justified in thinking that al-Jāhiz held back his knowledge from undeserving folk, when his attitude towards the common people was that of a teacher. "It is not lawful", al-Jāhiz says, "for him who has only a little of knowledge to neglect teaching those who have less knowledge than his.." The great energy of al-Jāhiz in recording all his thoughts by putting them in books, seems to have been one of the reasons why al-Jāhiz's works deal with almost every subject. He seems to have held the opinion that books were the best means by which one could face one's rivals in arguments, whereas in arguing with them face to face, there is the risk of quarrel and rage which may spoil the free spirit of reasoning and argument. The long paragraphs in al-Ḥayawān, which al-Jāhiz devotes to books, defending their value, are not only indications of al-Jāhiz's great interest in education through writing, but also a reflection of its value in his own time.

(1) This point is discussed at length in the 3rd chapter of this thesis.

(2) al-Jāhiz, al-Ḥayawān, vol. VI., p. 36

(3) al-Jāhiz, Ḥujaj al-nubuwwa, Rasā'il, (Sandūbī), p. 123

(4) al-Ḥayawān, vol. I., p. 84-5, 100; also Carra-de-Vaux, les Penseurs de l'Islam, vol. I., p. 297

Knowledge in Islamic society was highly esteemed. In current sayings of the time, reason and knowledge are put in a position even higher to that of the caliph; "Abū'l-'Aswad al-Du'alī is reported to have said; (Nothing is as valuable as learning; kings govern people and scholars govern kings)⁽¹⁾ " The value of knowledge, however, depended sometimes entirely on the amount of profit that the knowledge would bring in practical life. Therefore, the practical knowledge of counting was more appreciated than writing and reading alone, because in a society where financial activities were much encouraged, and trade was a profitable profession, counting was needed for the merchants, bankers and money-dealers, etc. Counting is preferred to learning⁽²⁾ how to read and write for the people, but the kings and princes were not in need of learning it. Their essential subjects were history and arts; al-Jāhiz reports a saying that goes as follows: "Teach the kings the knowledge of Nasab, narration and law (or jurisprudence), teach the merchants counting and writing and teach the warriors the books

(1) 'Ibn Jammā'a, Tadhkira., p. 10; also 'Aḥmad Shalaby, History of Muslim education, p. 128

(2) 'Ibn al-Taw'am is reported to have said: "Teach your son counting before reading, because it is more profitable and the costs of its learning are cheaper, al-Jāhiz, al-Bayān., vol. II., p. 138.

of campaigns and biographies (al-Maghāzī wa'l-Siyar)⁽¹⁾."

al-Jāhiz's attitude towards education and its systemisation is not clear enough to be attributed specifically to him, for al-Jāhiz does not seem to express a personal opinion about this point. He attributes a system of education which recognizes two main categories of knowledge, as well as two grades of people, to some past generation, whom he calls (al-'Awā'il), the Ancients, without specifying whom he is quoting. In this system, al-Jāhiz maintains that education was of two main grades:

1. The education of a certain special class of people which consisted of all branches of knowledge, whether science, arts, sports or games, etc.
2. The education of people in general. This is planned by the first class, mentioned above. It is meant for teaching people a hand-craft by which they could earn their living, in order to become cultivators, traders, builders and tailors, etc.⁽²⁾

(1) al-Jāhiz, al-Bayān., vol. III., p. 211.

(2) see al-Jāhiz, Risāla fī'l-Mu'allimīn, al-Kāmil., vol. I., p. 21.

According to this classification, people are of two main categories; those who work with their hands in order to make their living and, secondly, those who deal with arts, sciences and skilled work, plus the knowledge of games and sports. This classification is not out of place in al-Jāhiz's attitude towards the question of specialisation of aptitude and function among nations, which has been discussed previously.⁽¹⁾ The interesting point, however, is to see how far this system agrees with the conditions of education in Islamic society itself.

Education in Islamic society grew in close connection with religious studies. Knowledge could be obtained through narration and by joining the public classes and circles, whether in the mosque or outside it.⁽²⁾ It was by no means a privilege of a certain class of people to join these classes, or to travel for the sake of knowledge. Besides, there were no restrictions on joining certain faculties.⁽³⁾ It is evident that higher positions, such as

(1) see p. 70-82 of this thesis.

(2) It is significant that with the development of sciences, classes were limited and, later, teachers and students formed separately their guilds, especially under the Fatimids, see J. Pedersen, art. Masdjid, E. I.

(3) 'Aḥmad Shalaby, Hist. of Muslim education, p. 164

that of a Wazīr or a secretary could be obtained by qualif-
(1)
ied persons who proved to be competent. The caliphs' sons,
on the other hand, had their own tutors and teachers, but
it is difficult, in this context, to think of a system of
education being imposed by an upper class for the people to
follow. Therefore, al-Jāhiz can hardly be thought to have
been referring to the Islamic educational system itself.

In the old Persian system of education, the boys
were taught three subjects only; to ride, to shoot and to
speak the truth. According to Strabo's account, their
training was mainly physical. On the other hand, Artaxshir
Papakin is reported to have been so "proficient in liter-
ary knowledge, riding and other arts that he was renowned
throughout Pars. Bahram Gur, another Persian monarch, was
taught by three teachers, various games, instructions in
(2)
letters and administrative duties. It is understood that
the majority of people were illiterate, but the nobility
(3)
were taught in the court together with the royal princes.

(1) see for instance al-Tamūkhī, Nishwār., p. 27-8; also
'Iṣfahānī, al-'Aghānī, vol. XX., p. 46

(2) On Persian education, see L. H. Gray, art. Education,
Ency. of Religion and Ethics, p. 208.

(3) see Christensen, l'Iran., (1936), p. 410-12

However, there is no evidence that the Persian system of education defines the education of the people within certain conditions, although this may be implied in the special education of the kings which should prepare them for their duties.

As for the Greek system of education, Plato, in the Republic, expresses the necessity of compulsory education. "His educational scheme", Sabine says, "falls naturally into two parts; the elementary education which includes the training of young persons up to about the age of twenty and culminates in the beginning of military service, and the higher education intended for those selected persons of both sexes, who are to be members of the two ruling classes, and extending from the age of twenty to thirty five..⁽¹⁾" Although Plato maintains that education in the Republic should be compulsory, the actual system of education in the Greek society was not so. "The education of the Athenian boys, for which the family not the state was responsible, was carried on at private day-schools. It, mainly, consisted of reading and writing (Grammatics), learn-

(1) G. H. Sabine, A History of political theory, (1954), p. 64

ing and reciting epic and dramatic poetry, lyre playing and singing lyric poetry, the rudiments of arithmetic and geometry (Music) and athletic exercises (Gymnastic)⁽¹⁾.."; after which military service starts. After about the age of fourteen, the Athenian citizen, generally, was expected to choose the education which would fit his future career. "The sons of the wealthy might then do as they pleased, others must think of fitting themselves to earn a living."⁽²⁾ In the Republic, which is thought to be the greatest work on education ever written,⁽³⁾ Plato is concerned, mainly, with the mental education of his Guardians. The education is supervised by the state and directed towards a single aim. Physical training is no less important for the mental life of the citizens.⁽⁴⁾ Above all, however, the ideal academic education which included arts and sciences is required after the age of twenty, in order to prepare the class of rulers.⁽⁵⁾

(1) Plato, the Republic, English trans., F. M. Cornford, (Oxford-1946), chapter IX., p. 65.

(2) W. Murison, art. Education, Ency. of Religion., p. 189.

(3) This is Rousseau's saying, see Sabine, A History., p. 64.

(4) Plato, the Republic, pp. 65-78, 90.

(5) Ibid., chapter XXIII., p. 206.

If al-Jāhiz had this idea in mind, he could not have been thinking of the Islamic system of education, but was, perhaps, falling under the influence of a Greek conceptual system, which was reflected not only in Plato, but also in Aristotle, whom al-Jāhiz seems to know more. It is to be regretted that, because of the loss and interconfusion of his works, no clear elaboration of al-Jāhiz's views on the theory of education is available.

In spite of the great respect of knowledge in Islamic society, which is reflected in the great educational activities, the social status of teachers was not always reflective of this great esteem of the society for knowledge. "The importance attached to the work of elementary teachers," Goldziher says, "... is by no means reflected in his social status - the prevailing attitude of Muslim society towards the teacher of children .. is represented in Arabic literature as one of extreme disrespect. His position is on a

(1) see The Politics, English trans., by W. Ellis, book VII., chapter XIV., p. 228; book V., chapter IX., p. 167.

(2) The Republic is said to have been translated by Hunayn b. 'Ishāq (194-260 A.H./ 809-873 A.D.), under the title of the Book of Politics (Kitāb al-Siyāsa), see al-Fihrist, vol. I., p. 247. al-Jāhiz does not refer to it specifically. Tāhā Husain doubts that the Republic of Plato was known to al-Jāhiz, see Tāhā Husain, Falsafat 'Ibn Khaldūn.

level with that of weavers, blood-letters and other despised trades..."⁽¹⁾ This attitude is reflected in the great number of traditions and sayings current in Islamic society.⁽²⁾ Various explanations are given, by many scholars, of this attitude. Goldziher says that it is possible that "this deprecation of indispensable profession of teachers may be due simply to the haughtiness of the Arabic race. In passing judgment upon it, however, we must not forget that analogous features appear in the educational annals of Greece and Rome..."⁽³⁾ Mez says: "It is very likely that the low status of teachers may have had its origin from Greek comedies in which the pedagogue was always a comic person..."⁽⁴⁾ Other reasons within Islamic society are given by Lammense.⁽⁵⁾ In his thesis on the history of Muslim education, 'Aḥmad Shalaby refers this condition to financial reasons, that is the low standard of living among the teachers, especially of children.⁽⁶⁾ In the sayings, current in Islamic society, the

(1) see art. Education, Ency of Religion., p. 201

(2) al-Jāhiz, al-Bayān., vol. I., p. 173; al-Tha'ālibī, Thimār., p. 194; Khāṣṣ., p. 51; al-Bayhaqī, al-Maḥāsin., vol. III., p. 621; al-'Abshihī, al-Mustatraf., vol. II., p. 219

(3) art. Education, Ency. of Religion., p. 202

(4) Renaissance, Arabic trans., vol. I., p. 307

(5) Mu'āwīya., p. 361

(6) History of Muslim education, p. 134-5

pieces of bread of teachers were taken as example for the variety of things, for teachers used to live on the bread brought to them by their pupils.⁽¹⁾

In discussing teachers, al-Jāhiz distinguishes two grades, in general. In his classification, he seems to take two facts into consideration; the fact that people are mainly of two classes, common and special, and secondly the fact that knowledge of man is an essential factor in raising him up in social estimation. Therefore, al-Jāhiz classifies teachers into two categories, according to the class of students they teach and the knowledge they possess; he says: "Teachers, as I believe, are of two grades: among them are men who were raised above the teaching of children of common people to the teaching of children of the special. Some were raised from teaching children of the special to that of the children of kings themselves, who are prepared for the caliphate. How can you think that one like 'Alī b. Ḥamza al-Kisā'ī and Muḥammed al-Mustanīr, known as Quṭrub, and the like, could be described as fools. This saying is not true on these and the grade below them, but if you mean the teachers of village-

(1) al-Tha'alibī, *Khāṣṣ.*, p. 51. This characteristic among teachers, can still be noticed among village teachers.

schools (Katātīb al-Qurā), there are lower as well as upper grades in every class. Therefore, they are not different in this from others." ⁽¹⁾ al-Jāhiz admits that there were fools among teachers, but those were only the teachers of the children of the lower classes. Moreover, his belief in unlimited knowledge is illustrated in his attitude here. The man of knowledge, according to al-Jāhiz, should be good at it and skilful, no matter how vast his knowledge is. al-Jāhiz attacks al-Khalīl b. 'Aḥmad that the latter was ~~dis-~~ under the illusion that he knew every knowledge, and the result was, according to al-Jāhiz, that he muddled everything. This, al-Jāhiz says, cannot happen except to a person whom ⁽²⁾ God Himself fails. The teacher who lacks creativeness is on the same level with any craftsman who is skilled only in his own field, al-Jāhiz says: "... the grammarian who has no great interest ('Imtā') is like the carpenter who is called to fix a door, and he is the most skilful of all people (in that), but after he finishes fixing the door, it would be said to him: Go; while the man of wide interests is wanted

(1) al-Bayān., vol. I., p. 174

(2) Risāla fī'l-Mu'allimīn, Br. Mus. MS., fol. 15b-16a; also al-Mas'ūdī, Murūj., (Paris), vol. VIII., p. 431

(1)
in all cases.." The stories which al-Jāhiz relates about the common grade of teachers are cited to show that in spite of their hard work, they had neither ambitions nor dignity in their profession. Anyone of them may learn all branches of knowledge, whether grammar, prosody, counting and reading the Qur'ān, etc., but at the same time he may be satisfied to teach with sixty Dirhams only, whereas a man with good consideration and understanding of things will refuse

(2)
even thousand Dirhams. al-Jāhiz, in fact, must have had great ambitions for the educated middle class. He thought that from amongst teachers, themselves, whose profession is dependent on their knowledge, there were people who were raised to higher positions and were attached to kings. It is from amongst teachers, al-Jāhiz says, that one finds political leaders, judges, governors and all other high officers. They possess the gift of speech and lucid argu-

(3)
ment. It is evident that al-Jāhiz is referring to the teachers of the upper grade, amongst whom many tutors enjoyed great influence in the 'Abbasid court and were able even to

(1) al-Bayān., vol. I., p. 253

(2) Ibid.

(3) Risāla fī'l-Mu'allimīn, al-Kāmil., vol. I., p. 23

(1)
influence political life. al-Jāhiz is among the few Muslim
writers who showed great interest in this class and was very
careful in stressing their rights in the society, defending
(2)
them from any prejudice. This, however, did not prevent
him from admitting that there were fools among them, and
(3)
from relating anecdotes and jokes on them.

al-Jāhiz's ambitions for the class of the in-
tellectuals of his time are remarkable. It was these am-
bitions that made him criticise them and be severe against
them too. His belief is that they should be good examples
of leaders and should not disillusion the common people by
their false appearance. al-Jāhiz regrets the fact that the
(4)
class of official clerks of his time were preoccupied with
false education and appearances, following the Persian ex-
ample in extravagance, so much so that they hated and des-
pised everything Arabic, even the learning of the Qur'ān,
which is, according to al-Jāhiz, the best example of the

(1) Instances can be shown in the following persons: Yahya al-Barmakī, the tutor of al-Rashīd, 'Abū 'Iyād, the tutor of al-Ma'mūn and 'Ibrāhīm b. al-Mahdī, see 'Ahmad Shalaby, Hist. of Muslim education, p. 124.

(2) see Goldziher, art. Education, Ency. of Religion, p. 202.

(3) al-Abshīhi, al-Mustatraf., (1331), vol. II., p. 216.

(4) I translate the word (Kātib) into clerk, after the example of Mez, Renaissance, English trans., (1937), p. 171.

(1) language. It seems that the clerks, who were a mixture of Arabs and non-Arabs, especially Persians, were adopting (2) new styles, whether in manners, appearance or writing. This caused the criticism of al-Jāhiz. Although the good appearance of these people is deceiving, al-Jāhiz says, they are actually empty and full of conceit. As soon as they put (3) on the costume of clerks, they feel vain and important, because they have joined the class and were going to have (4) authority over everything. al-Jāhiz points out their vanity about Persian culture, saying that as soon as anyone of them is appointed and learns a few anecdotes and sayings of Buzurgmehr, Ardashir, 'Abdu'l-Ḥamīd al-Kātib or Ibn al-Muqaffa' and holds the book of Mazdak as a basic knowledge and Kalīla wa Dimna his treasure, he feels as if he became

(1) R. fī Dhamm 'Akhlāq al-Kuttāb, Thalāth., (Finkel), p.42-3.

(2) see Ṭāhā Ḥusain, min Ḥadīth al-shi'r., p. 37; introd. to Naqd al-nathr., Qudāma, p. 9; Ch. Pellat, R.S.O., (1952), p. 52.

(3) The clerks seem to have had their own costume and a distinguished style of dressing up and make-up, see al-Nuwayrī, Nihāya., vol. VII., p. 12. The idle clerks seem to have had a different costume, see al-Tanūkhī, Nishwār., p. 27. As for the expression (تخفيف الشبورتين), which comes in al-Jāhiz's text and which Finkel doubts, see Lughat al-'Arab, (1931), vol. VII., p. 620-1. It is a particular style of shaving which was taken up by the noblemen, as well as the high clerks.

(4) R. fī Dhamm 'Akhlāq al-Kuttāb, (Finkel), p. 42-3.

capable of knowing everything. As for Islamic culture and traditional knowledge, al-Jāhiz says, they despised it and put it behind their backs. They never approached the Qur'ān or tried to quote it. If anyone of them tried to learn it, the rest of his class would despise him, but even if he could learn it, al-Jāhiz says, it would be impossible for him to pronounce it properly.⁽¹⁾ In his attack, al-Jāhiz seems to reject not only the social manners of the clerks of his time, but also their school of thought which was distinguished in connection with official writing of letters and administrative works.⁽²⁾ al-Jāhiz, however, did not deny the good qualities of their style, but, in fact, points that out as one of their merits.⁽³⁾ al-Jāhiz's attack was not directed against individuals, but against the whole class of clerks, their culture, way of thinking and manners. al-Jāhiz quotes other theologians who criticised the superficial knowledge of the clerks. The concern

(1) al-Jāhiz, R. fī Dhamm., Thalāth., (Finkel), p. 43.

(2) Tāhā Husain distinguishes this school of writers from the belles-lettres writers, see min Hadīth al-Shi'r., p. 37, 53-81.

(3) al-Jāhiz, al-Bayān., vol. I., p. 105

of theologians about this class, as indicated by al-Jāhiz,
(1) is significant. The clerks had a great influence on the culture and the whole literature of Islamic society. Their high position in the 'Abbasid court gave them great privilege over the fields of knowledge, whether in the court or outside it. Their relation with the court, as illustrated by al-Jāhiz, is a striking example of the conflict of the interests of the aristocracy and the rising middle class, even in matters concerning administration and culture. al-Jāhiz says that the relation of the clerks with the caliph was very formal and strict; as soon as the caliph finished with them, he got rid of them. Away from their own field, al-Jāhiz says, they are worth nothing, they are at the same level with the common people. Besides their own profession, they can do nothing, because it is not suitable for any of them to be anything else, after having been a clerk. They may enjoy a good influence among the special people, al-Jāhiz says, but they hate each other. The incurable disease

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- (1) al-Jāhiz relates that a group of Mu'tazilite theologians once gathered and were discussing the common people and how easily they imitate other classes and were deceived by the appearance of the clerks, and passed on them the best judgment, see R. fī Dhamm., Thalāth., (Finkel), p. 44
- (2) see al-Qalqashandī, Subh., vol. I., p. 146; also details in 'Aḥmad 'Amīn, Duḥa., vol. I., p. 177-8.

of this class, according to al-Jāhiz, is their greediness, especially the clerks of *Diwān al-Jund*. As for the common people, they respected them, because they have been deceived by their appearance, and their respect is due to the position of the clerks and not to their merits, because the common people thought that they must have deserved what they were given. al-Jāhiz addresses the clerks personally, reminding them of their baseless knowledge. They are nothing, he says, more than the scum that fades away; "woe to them of what their hands write and woe to them of what they earn..⁽¹⁾" Instead of cooperating with each other, like the craftsmen, they were busy with rivalries; "they are just like dogs in their dwellings, various people pass them and they never move, but if a dog like themselves passes them, they will all get up against him until they kill him..⁽²⁾" It is interesting that the clerks are compared to the groups of craftsmen in the market, but that, unlike the latter, they were far from being helpful to each other. If a butcher in the market announces his bankruptcy, all his market mates would sympathize with him. They would collect from their own earning to help him, until they save him, whereas the clerks are

(1) R. fi Dhamm., Thalāth., (Finkel), p. 45

(2) Ibid., p. 46

fain⁽¹⁾ to eat one another. Their morals are those of the mobs, although their appearance is that of respectable decent men. All this in spite of their small number.

The fact that al-Jāhiz did not remain in the office of a clerk under the Caliph al-Ma'mūn, more than three days, after which he resigned,⁽²⁾ confirms his disapproval of the conditions of this post. These bad conditions were due to various facts. In the 'Abbasid times, the profession of writing became so common that a man could become a secretary after learning how to read and write.⁽³⁾ Non-Arabs, especially Persians, formed the majority of this class, after learning⁽⁴⁾ Arabic, but we hear that among the clerks, there were persons who could not distinguish the letter (ح) from the letter (ط).⁽⁵⁾ The clerks, however, enjoyed great influence and privilege in the 'Abbasid administrative life and among

(1) al-Jāhiz, R. fī Dhamm., Thalāth., (Finkel), p. 46

(2) Yāqūt, 'Irshād., vol. VI., p. 58

(3) see the story of al-Faḍl b. Marwān who used to work in the kitchen of Harthama. After learning writing, he became the secretary of the Caliph al-Rashīd, see al-Tanūkhī, Nishwār., pp. 27-8.

(4) see 'Aḥmad 'Amīn, Duḥa., vol. I., p. 176.

(5) see al-Qalqashandī, Ṣubḥ., vol. I., p. 48; also 'Ibn Qutayba, 'Adab al-Kātib., (1900), p. 7

(1)
the caliphs. Some of them acquired lands through their work
as clerks, and by receiving the gifts of the caliph. (2) It
seems, however, that the corruption among this class was pre-
valent and there were many who entered the profession with-
out being qualified for it. Complaints were made that "the
clerks were very few, but those who called themselves clerks
were many.." (3) al-Jāhiz explains the conditions of the life
of clerks and the reason why they were weak in character,
saying that although they enjoyed all this noble appearance
and fame, the clerks were, actually, the lowest in earning.
The clerks of Dīwān al-Jund earned very little compared to
what, for instance, the administrators of taxes earned.
Moreover, the clerks, according to al-Jāhiz, never trusted
their time; whenever the caliph wished to throw them away,
they would have nothing more left to live on. No wonder,
then they followed crooked means, in order to flatter
the caliph, pretending that they were doing that out of
mere advice. An example is shown by al-Jāhiz in the secretary

(1) The secretary of Dīwān al-Rasā'il was the first to see
the caliph and the last to leave him, see al-Qalqashandī,
Ṣubḥ., vol. I., p. 101; also the story of 'Amr b. Mus'ida,
al-Bayhaqī, al-Maḥāsīn., vol. II., p. 447; also Ṣubḥ.,
vol. I., pp. 142-4.

(2) see al-Tanūkhī, Nishwār., p. 28

(3) 'Abdullah al-Baghdādī, Kitāb al-Kuttāb, B.E.O., (1952),
vol. XIV., p. 150.

of al-Ma'mūn, after the latter entered Baghdād. His secretary consulted him about re-organising Dīwān al-Jund on new bases and expelling all those undeserving people who were still receiving pension. His action caused the contempt of people and their fear that many of them stopped claiming their rights for their pension.⁽¹⁾

* * *

al-Jāhiz's attitude towards knowledge and its practical utilisation in the life of the community reflects an interesting side of the development of Islamic society. His dealing with knowledge, in comparison with wealth, is a remarkable reflection of the competition in 'Abbasid society, between two great factors, that played a vital part in the life of the middle class, whose position depended either on wealth or intellectual qualifications. Knowledge, of course,⁽²⁾ was used as a means to attain good positions. al-Jāhiz says: "Wealth and knowledge, the more they are, the more the appetite and admiration (for them) become, for the

(1) al-Jāhiz, R. fi Dhamm., Thalāth., (Finkel), p. 49.

(2) see the story of Muḥammed b. 'Abd al-Malik al-Zayyāt, 'Isfahānī, Aghānī, vol. XX., p. 46.

intention of people is not to satisfy a need.. but (they) are wanted (in order) to uproot greediness, and greediness is endless and everlasting..⁽¹⁾" The long scholastic argument which al-Jāhiz makes about the value of knowledge and reason, in comparison with wealth and luxury is most interesting in this respect. In his argument, it is evident that while wealth can bring nothing, when accompanied by ignorance, knowledge organizes everything and leads the way of the wealthy man to pleasure and happiness..⁽²⁾ The wealthy man who is not willing to enjoy his wealth is, according to al-Jāhiz, worse than a donkey. Knowledge itself, al-Jāhiz says, brings fame, for its main quality is that it makes the man active and willing to transfer it to others..⁽³⁾ The privilege of man of knowledge, relative to the man of wealth, is that the former does not fear misery, because once he finds his happiness in knowledge, he does not fear losing it, whereas the wealthy man is disturbed by the thought of losing his wealth..⁽⁴⁾ Besides, he cannot help guarding it and being care-

(1) al-Jāhiz, R. fī Kitmān al-Sirr, Majmū^c., (Kraus-Hājirī), p. 49.

(2) al-Hay^{aw}an, vol. II., p. 96 sq.

(3) Ibid.

(4) Ibid.; al-Hay^{aw}an, vol. II., p. 96 sq.

(1)
ful and worried about it.

al-Jāhiz's concern about this question is, in fact, a reflection of a great competition in the society between two great powers, the power of wealth and that of knowledge. (2) The bitterness expressed by Ibn Qutayba, a contemporary of al-Jāhiz, is an illustration of the disappointment of the men of knowledge. 'Ibn Qutayba himself attacks those who learned to read and write and were satisfied with their superficial knowledge, because they were able to attain good positions. 'Ibn Qutayba's disappointment, however, is more constructive than that of al-Jāhiz; he wrote a whole book for the sake of instructing the writers (3) and showing them the way. The tendency of the time towards the appreciation of wealth is expressed in the current sayings and proverbs. al-Muqaddasī relates, on the authority of al-Tha'ālibī, that the people of Baghdād used to say in their proverbs: "Ignorance that supports me is better than knowledge I support", and "A handful of fortune is better

(1) al-Jāhiz, al-Ḥayawān, vol. I., pp. 51-5, 100

(2) see arguments in al-ʿIqd., vol. II., pp. 209, 212-4, 242; 'Ibn Qutayba, ʿUyūn., vol. II., p. 118.

(3) see 'Ibn Qutayba, 'Adab al-Kātib, (1900), p. 7 sq.

(1)
than a load of knowledge." This also can be an expression
of the disappointment of the scholars, in comparison to
(2)
the men of wealth.

Wealth, naturally, is one of the means to attain
good position and power in the society. The wealthy fam-
ilies of 'Umayyad times maintained their position under
the 'Abbasids; the family of al-Muhallab b. 'Abī Šufra, for
(3)
instance, enjoyed a good position in the 'Abbasid time. The
old wealthy Persian families cooperated with the 'Abbasid
(4)
aristocracy against their own people. In a society like
the 'Abbasid, where the competition in all aspects of life,
(5)
whether political, economic or racial, reached its zenith,
the middle class could not help being money-conscious and
to see the great value of wealth. The 'Abbasid poet com-
plains, because, in spite of the educated man, he was pushed

(1) al-Laṭā'if., p. 21 sq.

(2) see al-Jāhiz's letter in condemnation of the time,
Rasā'il, (Sandūbī), pp. 310-11; also poems in al-Ḥayawān,
vol. III., p. 467; al-'Iqd., vol. II., p. 242.

(3) see al-Jāhiz, al-Bayān., vol. III., p. 138; also Mez,
Renaissance., Arabic trans., p. 262.

(4) The common saying that the nobleman is a relative of the
nobleman, illustrates this, see 'Ibn Qutayba, Kitāb al-
'Arab, al-Muqtabas, vol. IV., pp. 657-668.

(5) see 'Aḥmad 'Amīn, Duḥā., vol. I., pp. 50-80.

into oblivion for the sake of the wealthy man. (1) The poets, however, were willing to make poetry, in order to receive the gifts of the court. When 'Abū'l-ʿAtāhiya, who is known (2) as the mystic among poets, heard that al-Rashīd, the Caliph, had received the revenue of al-Kharāj and distributed it among his concubines, he was furious, but made a poem in (3) praise of the Caliph, in order to have a share in the money. Another poet criticises the mystics who pretended to be performing spiritual ceremonies, whereas their minds were (4) actually preoccupied with money. al-Jāhiz says that the reason why a man would blame a wealthy man and criticise (5) him for his unlawful means lies in his envy to him. The money consciousness of the middle class of the ʿAbbāsīd society found expression in various types of activities. The life of the individual who was attached to the caliph and the court, however, cannot by any means be said to have been secured and independent. In order to prosper, the

(1) see the poem cited by al-Jāhiz, al-Bayān., vol. III., p. 135.

(2) 'Abū'l-ʿAtāhiya praised poverty and criticised money-loving people, see al-Muqaddasī, al-Laṭāʾif., p. 39.

(3) al-ʿIṣfahānī, al-Aghānī, vol. III., p. 159.

(4) al-Jāhiz, al-Ḥayawān, vol. III., p. 667.

(5) al-Jāhiz, R. fī'l-Ḥāsīd., Majmūʿ., (Sācy), p. 4

educated man had to attach himself to an authority, and use flattery, in order to gain the favour of the men in power. It is true that those who sought only for wealth through knowledge were despised, but the fact remains that the prosperous life was always appealing to the middle class.

Trade was one of the important means of wealth in Islamic society. Its traditional character goes back not only to early Islamic times, but also to old pre-Islamic societies. The attitude of Islam itself towards trade was that of favour, for Islam appeared in a commercial society. Islam, however, did not encourage the accumulation of wealth, although there were no drastic steps taken against it, besides the Zakāt and the prohibition of usury. The state, however, seems to have stopped being responsible for the Zakāt of money since the Caliphate of 'Uthmān, the

(1) al-Jāmiḡ relates a story of a man who wanted to learn without the cost of learning, in order to attain more riches, al-Ḥayawān, vol. I., p. 54.

(2) see Heffening, art. Tidjāra, E.I.; also Ṣāliḡ A. al-'Alī, al-Tanẓīmāt., (1955), p. 85.

(3) For the most valuable account of trade and capitalism in Islam, see Ṣāliḡ A. al-'Alī, al-Tanẓīmāt, p. 185 sq.

(1)
3th Orthodox Caliph. Under the 'Abbasids, people seem to have tried various means to escape the payment of Zakāt. al-Jāhiz relates about a wealthy man, who at the time of the payment of the tax, used to pay a sum of money to a young man as a Zakāt on his money, while he makes relations with the young man. (2) al-Tanūkhī, in the 4th century A.H., reports, on the authority of al-Jāhiz, that one of the highway robbers claimed that the merchants stopped paying the due Zakāt on their property, therefore, the robbers (3) made themselves responsible for taking it by force.

Merchants formed the wealthy class in the society. The earliest wholesale merchants in Islam are believed to have been those who accompanied the Muslim armies in their campaigns, buying the booty of war and supplying the army with other things. (4) These, however, do not seem to have formed a class in the society, until later. In the 'Abbāsīd society, there were various degrees of wealth among merehants,

(1) Ṣāliḥ A. al-'Alī, al-Tanzīmāt., p. 185 sq.

(2) al-Jāhiz, al-Ḥayawān, vol. III., p. 26.

(3) al-Tanūkhī, al-Faraj., (1904), vol. II., pp. 106-7.

(4) Ṣāliḥ A. al-'Alī, al-Tanzīmāt., pp. 236-7.

according to the types of trade. al-Jāhiz speaks of merchants dealing in male-cats; they were either traders, intermediaries or trainers. There were also merchants of snakes, who used to import them from Sijistān for medical purposes, or to earn money by displaying them to the public. Traders in pigeons were common in 'Abbasid society. Besides, the works of al-Jāhiz reflect the high stage of activity which the economic life reached in the Islamic town, in realisation of the basic laws of commerce, although he often failed to realise their practical significance. It would be interesting, however, to see that besides the well-developed methods of dealing, the simple kind of dealing still existed in the 'Abbasid town. Among the lower classes, dealing by barter seems to have been predominant. al-Baghdādī, in his book about misers, relates a story about a butcher from Baghdād, who wanted to open a shop in al-Kūfa, but could not sell anything, because the people

(1) al-Ḥayawān, vol. V., p. 339; al-Bayan., vol. I., p. 219; al-Isfahānī, al-Aghānī, vol. XV., p. 155.

(2) al-Ḥayawān, vol. IV., pp. 169, 303.

(3) Ibid., vol. III., pp. 294, 297.

(4) see about this point, al-Jāhiz, K. al-Tabaṣṣur., RAAD, vol. XII., p. 326.

there wanted to barter in other kinds of food, while he re-
fused to recognize, or accept, their method of dealing. It⁽¹⁾
is interesting to point out, here, that al-Jāḥiẓ himself
bases his recognition of money on the amount of goods it
can buy. The standard of living in the Islamic town is
measured by al-Jāḥiẓ according to the value of money and its
validity, in comparison with the goods and their validity
too, he says: "There is no town better for its inhabitants
than a town where money is not dear and every purchase in it
is possible. In Syria, the Dīnār and Dirham are dear and
the goods in it are cheap, because of the long distance of
transport and the small number of customers, there is always
a surplus in their products. Whereas, in al-'Aḥwāz and
Baḡdād and al-'Askar, the money is available, but goods
are dear, because of the big number of people and the big
amount of money. In al-Baṣra, money, as well as goods, are
possible and so are the crafts and the payment of craftsmen."⁽²⁾
al-Jāḥiẓ, obviously, realises many economic facts in his
judgment. The most interesting is that al-Jāḥiẓ seems to

(1) al-Bukḥalā', Br. Mus. MS., vol. V., fol. 53a, 54a.

(2) al-Jāḥiẓ, R. fī'l-'Auṭān., Br. Mus. MS., fol. 217b.

attach the greatest importance to trade. It is known that al-Baṣra was, above all, a commercial centre, therefore, according to his observation, it was in al-Baṣra where money, as well as goods, besides other economic activities, were available and easy-running. al-Jāḥiẓ's discussion on the value of money, in his most interesting meditation on the mutual interests of people and their social relations, is made also in connection with goods and their value. He says that a man may buy a thing for one Dirham. Had he not seen in the purchased article a quality preferred to his own (1) Dirham, he would not have given the Dirham away. This is an example cited by al-Jāḥiẓ to explain the exchange of interests among people, which makes one willing to give away what is in his hand for what is in the hands of other people, "... God is to be praised", al-Jāḥiẓ says, "for making us love what is in other people's hands and making them love what we (2) possess, in order to make life easy.."

(1) al-Jāḥiẓ, Ḥujaj., al-Kāmil., vol. II., p. 39. It would be pointed out, too, that al-Jāḥiẓ attaches great importance to money where ruling power is concerned, see R. fi'l-Ma'ād., Majmū'., (Kraus-Ḥājirī), pp. 111-12, 19.

(2) Ibid.

The class of merchants and land-owners played an important role in the 'Abbasid political life. When their interests were in conflict with the 'Abbasid court, they had either to evade it by offering a certain amount of their money or expose themselves to the danger of confiscation.⁽¹⁾ One of the typical examples of the influence of this class and their interference in political events of this period is the part they played in the civil war between the two 'Abbasid Caliphs, al-'Amin and al-Ma'mun. In the critical moment, when the army of al-Ma'mun was attacking Baghdad, and the street fights were going on, the merchants of the western side of Baghdad, (al-Karkh), says al-Tabari, consulted one another and decided to contact Tahir, the commander of al-Ma'mun's army, they said: "We ought to explain our position to Tahir and show him our innocence from helping against him."⁽²⁾ They were about to send a letter to Tahir, when one of them suggested not to do so, lest "some of the lowest people (al-Sifla) would know about it and in this, there will be definite ruin.." and "exposing your-

(1) see Rifā'i, 'Aṣr al-Ma'mun, vol. I., pp. 312-3; al-Dūrī, Tārīkh., pp. 116, 249 sq.

(2) al-Tabarī, Tārīkh., vol. II., ser.3., pp. 899-900.

selves to the war of those is greater than asking forgiveness of Ṭāhir, out of fear..⁽¹⁾ al-'Amīn, on the other hand, was tracing the wealthy people and confiscating their property, in order to save his position.⁽²⁾ The wealthy men of the 'Abbasid court, in fact, showed no interest in either of the two Caliphs, they were ready to side with the winner, as long as that would save their property. Ṭāhir, on the other hand, is reported to have sent threats to the land-owners and eminent personalities of the court, stating that if they did not submit to his will, he would "leave no estate left for them without seizing it..⁽³⁾"

This method of confiscating the property of the merchants and the other wealthy people seems to have become one of the characteristics of the 'Abbasid Caliphate.⁽⁴⁾ Whenever the caliph faced any financial crisis, his only resolution was to get the money through confiscations. This situation created greater conflict between the power of the 'Abbasid court and the class of wealthy merchants. The in-

(1) al-Ṭabarī, *Tārīkh.*, vol. II., ser. 3., pp. 899-900.

(2) see al-Mas'ūdī, *Murūj.*, vol. VI., p. 469.

(3) al-Ṭabarī, *Tārīkh.*, vol. II., ser. 3., pp. 912-6.

(4) al-Mas'ūdī, *Murūj.*, vol. VI., pp. 445, 468-9.

teresting point appears in the writing of the authors of the time, who were interested in these activities, which bears a reflection of this situation. al-Dimashqī, who wrote about commerce, maintains that it is essential that commercial activities should be independent from the activities of the court.⁽¹⁾ al-Jāhiz, himself, wrote a whole treatise, dealing with "Praise of merchants and criticism of the function of the monarch."⁽²⁾ al-Jāhiz maintains that merchants are independent in their life, because they are independent in their own capacity to earn a living; they need not be submissive to anyone. Whereas all those connected to the court and the Sultān, al-Jāhiz says, are always clothed with humiliation and hypocrisy, besides their fear of his wrath, which may bring sudden disaster.⁽³⁾ On the other hand, al-Jāhiz admits the fact that merchants can themselves monopolise. He refuses, however, to believe that Quraysh, who were famous as being merchants, were of the same type as the merchants of al-'Ubullah.⁽⁴⁾ Apart from

(1) see al-'Ishāra ila maḥāsin al-tijāra, (1318), p. 41.

(2) see Majmū', (Sacy), p. 155 sq.

(3) Ibid., p.156.

(4) In his translation of the treatise, H. Hirschfeld reads al-'Ayla (**الأيلة**) for al-'Ubullah (**العبلة**), see A Volume of Oriental Studies, (1922), pp. 200-9. As for al-'Ubullah, see Yāqūt, Mu'jam., vol. I., pp. 96-8.

being a natural thing that al-Jāhiz defends the family of the prophet, following the example of the majority of Muslims, it seems that his attitude is a refutation against those who attacked Quraysh and claimed that they were niggardly and miser. al-Jāhiz himself, in another occasion, cites a poem by al-Ḥayqatān, where the poet criticises Quraysh and their means of living and their poor country, in contrast with the fertile land of the southern part of Arabia. In spite of his effort in defending the merchants of Quraysh, however, al-Jāhiz could not help expressing his doubts about the profit motive. He makes an interesting remark, in this respect, when he points out that when Quraysh tried to reconstruct the Holy Ka'ba, they avoided using the money which they earned in trade, lest the money might have been unlawful. Therefore, they financed it from their personal and their wives' property.

The question which seems to trouble al-Jāhiz's

(1) see a poem by 'Abū Nu'ās in al-Ṭabarī, *Tārīkh*., vol. II., p. 959. Ibn al-Nadīm mentions books written by the *Shu'ūbīs*, on the same subject, al-Fihrist, vol. I., p. 105.

(2) al-Jāhiz, *R. fī Fakhr al-Sūdān*., Majmū'., (Sacy), pp. 57-60.

(3) al-Jāhiz, *R. fī'l-Mu'allimīn*, al-Kāmil., vol. I., p. 34.

mind is the position of trade amongst other professions in the Islamic town. Trade, according to al-Jāhiz, is by no means secured or safe, because it depends on dealing with money and, therefore, the life of the merchant depends entirely on the turns of fortune. The Sultān, on the other hand, is safer, because he does not deal with money. ⁽¹⁾ It is interesting to notice that when al-Jāhiz looks back to olden days, he finds himself more inclined to praise the life of those independent wealthy merchants. Yet, when he comes to consider his own time, he seems to be less certain. The Sultān is preferred in one place, because of his high position and his safe future, but is rejected in another, because subservience, gratitude and slavery are associated with him. The position of merchants varied according to these conditions too; they may be independent in their earning, but they are uncertain about their fate. This uncertainty of al-Jāhiz is a reflection of the conditions of his own time. It seems it was easier for ^{him} to judge the position of Quraysh not only because they were the family of the prophet, but also because in their case, power of wealth, as well as that of rulership, were both in their own hands.

(1) al-Jāhiz, R. fī'l-Mu'allimīn, al-Kāmil., vol. I., p. 34.

Part II. Social Problems

The Question of Inequality

The question of inequality in the 'Abbasid society is many-sided. In the former part of this chapter, it has been dealt mainly with questions pertaining to the development of the material life. In this part, I intend to deal with the question of inequality in the 'Abbasid society, which resulted from differences of race, nations, culture and the differences between the status of man and woman in the society.

(a) Inequality, Racial and National:

After Islam, the Arabs became a conquering nation. The combination of the two qualification (Arab) and (Muslim), together, gave the individual privileges which neither the non-Arab nor the non-Muslim enjoyed. With the growing con-

(1) see, for example, "the fiscal rescript of 'Umar II.", translated by H. A. R. Gibb, Arabica, Janvier, 1955, pp. 1-16.

tact of the Arabs and non-Arabs, the consciousness of this, distinction, whether among the Arabs or the non-Arabs, grew more powerful. The Arabs acted, as any other conquering nation, with condescension towards the non-Arab elements. Under the 'Umayyads, the Arabs formed the aristocracy who⁽¹⁾ owned the land and received the profit of the conquests. The Arabic element was predominant in administration and other activities. The 'Abbasid Caliphate is believed to have been more than a mere change of dynasties; it resulted in radical changes in the social status of various elements,⁽²⁾ especially the non-Arab Persians. Much has been said about the oppressed elements under the 'Umayyads, through whose⁽³⁾ help the 'Abbasids came to power. Whether due to the freedom which the non-Arabs obtained under the 'Abbasids, or to the disappointment which the oppressed elements suffered from the new rule, the antagonism grew stronger and the racial and national feeling appeared clear and powerful. The characteristic feature of the 'Abbasid society, however, is that it was a dynamic society, which gave the opportunity to

(1) see B. Lewis, The Arabs., pp. 68-70.

(2) B. Lewis, art. 'Abbasids, E.I. (new edit.), vol. I., p.17.

(3) see Welhausen, The Arab kingdom., pp.492-566; B. Lewis, The Arabs., pp. 71-4; Muir, The Caliphate, pp. 432-5.

various powers to meet and to clash and various interests to emerge. The question of al-Shu'ūbiya, which I intend to discuss here with a special reference to al-Jāḥiẓ, is one of the sparks which resulted from this close contact of the powerful elements.

al-Jāḥiẓ's reference to the national antagonism between the Arabs and Persians, under the term of al-Shu'ūbiya, is one of the earliest references which has come down to us of this movement under this description. This has been suggested by 'Aḥmad 'Amīn.⁽¹⁾ To support his suggestion, 'Aḥmad 'Amīn depends mainly on a linguistic deduction.⁽²⁾ However, al-Jāḥiẓ may not have been the first Islamic writer who used the term, for when he first employs it, he does not explain it, presuming that his reader understood it.⁽³⁾ al-Jāḥiẓ's use of the term al-Shu'ūbiya is applied mainly to the non-Arabs who stood against the Arabs.⁽⁴⁾ It is interesting,

(1) Duḥa., vol. I., p. 58.

(2) The argument is that all Islamic sects which belong to early times of Islamic history have the same form of names, such as al-Mu'tazila, al-Khawārij and al-Shi'a, etc., whereas the later ones were distinguished by a different form, like al-Dahriya, al-Qadariya and al-Shu'ūbiya, etc., (Duḥa., Ibid.)

(3) al-Bayān., (al-Khaṭīb), vol. III., pp. 3-14.

(4) Ibid.; also vol. I., p. 120.

however, to point out that al-Jāhiz considers the Mawālī in a different way from both, the Arabs and the 'Ajam. In fact, he represents them as being against both, he says: "... From amongst the Mawālī, a group was founded and an offshoot has come out, who claim that the Mawlā becomes Arabic through his bond, because the prophet said: (The Mawlā of the people is one of them)⁽¹⁾" The problem which al-Jāhiz deals with, here, is not the partisanship of the 'Ajam and the Arabs, but in fact, is the status of the Mawālī in connection with both, the Arabs and non-Arabs. al-Jāhiz finds it very hard that a Mawlā should claim that he is better than his master. The Mawālī, according to al-Jāhiz's report, claimed that they were better than the Arabs, because of their origin in the 'Ajam, and better than the 'Ajam themselves, because of their new bond with the Arabs.⁽²⁾ al-Jāhiz says that there is nothing harder than the fact that your slave claims that he is better than you, although he admits that he became good through his bond with you.⁽³⁾ The distinction made by al-Jāhiz of this trend is very im-

(1) see R. Bī Banī 'Umayya, Rasā'il, (Sandūbī), p. 299.

(2) Ibid.

(3) Ibid.

portant. In his attitude towards the 'Ajam and the Arabs,
al-Jāhiz gives both sides their due rights and merits. ⁽¹⁾ As
for the question of al-Shu'ūbiya, al-Jāhiz deals with it
effectively. Before going into details of al-Jāhiz's views,
it would be interesting to discuss the explanation of another
writer, who was a contemporary to al-Jāhiz and who wrote on
the same question. 'Ibn Qutayba, in his account of the
movement, brings out interesting factors, which, according
to him, were important in the question of discrimination.
'Ibn Qutayba thinks that the lower classes of the Persian
nation were most bitter against the Arabs. As for the no-
bility, 'Ibn Qutayba says, they felt as relatives to one
another, he says: "I have never seen in this Shu'ūbiya firm-
er in hostility and more trying for the Arabs than the low-
est (al-Sifla), and the common stuff (al-Hashwa), the mobs,
the Nabaṭ and the sons of villagers. As for the nobility
of the Persians and the people of importance and religion,
they know what they have to do and what should be done for
them; they think that nobility is a strong blood relation." ⁽²⁾

(1) al-Bayān., (al-Khaṭīb), vol. III., pp. 12-13. This dis-
tinction is supported by the suggestion made previously
that al-Jāhiz wrote two books on the question, one deal-
ing with them in general terms and the other in connect-
ion with the question of the Mawālī, see pp. 26 of this
thesis.

(2) K. al-'Arab, al-Muqtabas, (1909), vol. IV., p. 658.

'Ibn Qutayba also explains why the Persians were prejudiced against the Arabs in the fact that the lower classes among them were raised in the social ladder, through some literary merits, to a compatible degree with the nobility. Therefore, they imagined, according to him, that they were themselves noble and became partisans for their own culture by which they were raised, and despised all other cultures, (1) whereas the original noblemen cooperated with the Arabs. According to this, the rising middle class, on whose responsibility it was to preserve the culture of the nation, were (2) most bitter against the Arabs. 'Ibn Qutayba, however, does not speak of the Arab ' attitude towards the non-Arabs.

In his discussion of the arguments of the Shu'ū-bīya, al-Jāhiz does not refer to any kind of class differences. It is understood from al-Jāhiz's refutation of the argument of the non-Arabs, that the criticism was directed against the traditional culture and customs of the Arabs since pre-Islamic times, and was concentrated on the moral

(1) 'Ibn Qutayba, K. al-'Arab, al-Muqtabas, (1909), vol. IV., p. 658

(2) see about al-Shu'ūbiya and the Iranian aristocracy, P. Kraus, al-Thaqāfa, (1943), vol. V., p. 12; also Ṭaha al-Ḥajirī in al-Bukhālā', (1948), pp. 383-4.

(1)
and intellectual aspects of their life. The criticism is directed by a standard class of one nation against the same standard of the other, it does not bear any idea of classes. al-Jāhiz, in his turn, defends the culture and traditions of the Arabs, without referring to any class distinctions. (2)
His main concern was the tradition itself and not the people. al-Jāhiz's great respect for knowledge seems to have been a very important factor in his attitude. His criteria of distinction depend mainly on intellectual differences, therefore, he who deserves any respect, it is through his knowledge that he would get it. In this way, al-Jāhiz recognizes the merits of the Arabs, as well as the non-Arabs. The Persians, according to al-Jāhiz, possessed the privilege of old traditional culture, while the Arabs possessed the gift of natural wit and intelligence. (3)
We have already seen that al-Jāhiz assigns to every nation their special characteristics, by which they are distinguished from other nations. (4)

(1) It is known, however, that the attacks took all other aspects of life, see I. Golziher, *Muhammadanische Studien*, vol. I., p. 154; also D. B. Macdonald, art. al-Shu'ūbiya, E.I.; 'Aḥmad 'Amīn, *Ḍuḥā.*, vol. I., pp. 50-80.

(2) al-Jāhiz, *al-Bayān.*, vol. III., p. 3 sq.

(3) Ibid., pp. 12-13.

(4) see pp. 81-2 of this thesis.

It should not be ignored, however, that al-Jāhiz's attitude towards the question of Arabs and non-Arabs was criticised and suspected by his critics from both sides, the pro-Arabs and pro-ʿAjam. al-Baghdādī, and al-ʿIsfarāʾīnī, who seems to quote al-Baghdādī himself, attribute al-Jāhiz's interest in the question of al-Mawālī and the Arabs to the fact that al-Jāhiz himself was of a non-Arab origin and that (1) he was prejudiced against the Arabs. ʿAḥmad ʿAmin, who rejects the idea that al-Jāhiz was a Shuʿūbī, thinks that the book of the Mawālī was written by al-Jāhiz in the mouths of the Mawālī themselves, and that al-Jāhiz was simply a re- (2) porter. The loss of the book of al-Mawālī, however, opens a big gap in our knowledge about this point. As for the treatise where al-Jāhiz defends the Turks as soldiers of the Caliphate, it has been maintained by ʿAḥmad ʿAmin that al-Jāhiz wrote it for the sake of the Caliph al-Muʿtaṣim, therefore, al-Jāhiz is to be excused for counting the (3) merits of the Turks. It is significant, however, to see that al-Jāhiz tries to achieve an important point, the im-

(1) al-Farq., p. 162; al-Tabṣīr., pp. 50-1.

(2) Duḥa., vol. I., pp. 62-3.

(3) see R. ʿilaʾl-Faṭḥ b. Khāqān., Majmūʿ., (Sacy), p. 2 sq; Duḥa., vol. I., p. 63.

portance of this work lies in the fact that it is an attempt of establishing an idea of equality through a reconciliation between all the elements which the caliphate had to employ under its own power. Whether the treatise was inspired by the Wazir of al-Mu'taṣim, al-Faṭḥ b. Khāqān,⁽¹⁾ as is clear in parts of it, or it expresses al-Jāḥiẓ's views, the fact remains that it was written in accordance with the 'Abbasid policy at this time. al-Jāḥiẓ denies that he wrote the treatise as a refutation or argument.⁽²⁾ Although the treatise was written for the Caliph al-Mu'taṣim, as is clear from al-Jāḥiẓ himself, it does not seem to have reached him.⁽³⁾

al-Jāḥiẓ's behaviour towards this question was suspected by the Arabs, as well as the non-Arabs. The latter believed that he gave too much credit to the Arabs.⁽⁴⁾ On the other hand, al-Jāḥiẓ is said to have been a great sympathiser with the Mawālī; it is reported that he used to help a Mawlā, who spoke good Arabic, to find for himself an

(1) R. 'ila'l-Faṭḥ., Majmū'., (Sacy), pp. 4-17.

(2) Ibid., p. 17.

(3) Ibid., p. 22.

(4) al-Jāḥiẓ, al-Ḥayawān, vol. II, p. 5.

(1)
Arabic genealogy and claim that he was an Arab. This behaviour may not agree with al-Jāḥiẓ's attitude towards the Mawālī who claimed the privilege of being Arabs, as well as having the non-Arabic origin, but it is by no means strange in al-Jāḥiẓ, when one takes into consideration the fact that al-Jāḥiẓ's appreciation of knowledge was above all other considerations, and that the question of origin and descent counted little in his judgment. al-Jāḥiẓ considered himself above the disputes of race and origin. In his letter to 'Abū'l-Walīd Muḥammed b. 'Aḥmad b. 'Abī Du'ad al-'Ayādī, al-Jāḥiẓ addresses him saying: "Avoid a quality which I noticed that people have ignored and lost thinking about, although it contains much evil and stirs hatred in the hearts and hostility between friends, (namely) the rivalries of descent. No wise man has ever made this mistake. Besides, human beings all have the same images, although it is accepted that there is a difference between the good and bad, beauty and ugliness, bad nature and generosity, cowardice and courage in every age and that they

(1) see Yāqūt, 'Irsnād., vol. VI., p. 68. There seems to have been a number of the Mawālī who claimed Arabic descent. al-Jāḥiẓ relates about a Mawlā of 'Abū Bakr al-Shaybānī who used to sit in the sun to make himself tanned to look like an Arab, see al-Rayawān, vol. VI., p. 367.

are transferred from one nation to another, but there is
no good or bad in every race of human beings per se." (1)

According to al-Jāhiz, there are reasons and explanations for these differences. In his refutation of the arguments of the Shu'ūbiya, al-Jāhiz says: "... and if they realised the characteristics of each group and the nature of every language and the reasons of differences in gestures, means, characters and constructions and the reasons of all these things and why they invented them or adopted them, they would have saved themselves trouble, and their trouble (2) would have been lighter for those who mixed with them."

al-Jāhiz's preference for Islamic culture was made, regardless of local differences or differences of race and origin. In his attack of the class of clerks, al-Jāhiz criticises their partisanship to everything Persian, without much discrimination. (3) It is true that his attitude towards Islam (4) as a religion was suspected too, but it is clear that al-Jāhiz had a great respect for Islamic culture. al-Jāhiz

(1) al-Jāhiz, R. fī'l-Ma'ad., Majmū'., (Kraus-Hājirī), p. 29.

(2) al-Bayān., vol. III., pp. 13-14.

(3) al-Jāhiz, R. fi Dhamm 'Akhlāq al-Kuttāb, (Finkel), pp. 42-6

(4) see 'Ibn 'Asākir, RAAD., (1929), vol. IX., p. 215.

attacks the Manichaeans, because their main concern in their culture was to decorate their books of religion, in order to attract the people and appeal to them, while in fact, they had no real interest in knowledge.⁽¹⁾

One of the interesting aspects of the racial problem which appears in al-Jāhiz's writing is the question of negroes and white. This question may be studied in al-Jāhiz's writing from two aspects: First, the social aspect, and Second, the physical and natural aspect, where the question of physical environment, in connection with differences of races, comes in. It would be pointed out, however, that al-Jāhiz does not separate the two questions from one another. In the arguments which he puts in the mouth of the negroes, al-Jāhiz brings out the question of environment and the adaptation of animals and human beings to it. The negroes say, according to al-Jāhiz, that God has not made them black in order to punish them or deform them, but it was only the effect of their own country. For the same reason, al-Jāhiz goes on, we find that many Arab

(1) al-Jāhiz, al-Ḥayawān, vol. I., pp. 55-6.

tribes were themselves dark and even their cattle and sheep.⁽¹⁾
al-Jāhiz's most interesting work on the social aspect of
this problem is the treatise where he brings out the ques-
tion of negroes and deals with their rights in the society.⁽²⁾
The question, as well as the work itself, as has already
been suggested, seems to have been only part of a whole
question, i.e. the question of origing and status in the
society. al-Jāhiz claims, as he usually does, that the
arguments were put by the negroes themselves against the
white.⁽³⁾ The arguments and the technique used in tracing
the matter to its origin, are typical of al-Jāhiz himself.
al-Jāhiz argues the question of colours itself and reaches
the conclusion that the black colour is preferred to all
other colours, whether in plants, animals or human beings.
The author proceeds into more advanced argument, drawing
conclusions from current sayings and traditions of Islamic
origin, where black people were preferred. Unlike many

(1) al-Jāhiz, R. fī Fakhr al-Sūdān., Majmūʿ., (Sacy), p. 78.

(2) Ibid., pp. 54-82.

(3) Ibid., p. 56 sq.

other defenders of negroes, al-Jāhiz does not tend to find relation for the negroes with the white, in order to give them credit, but on the contrary, it is argued that the Arabs who are neither white nor red, are related to the negroes, because they are brown.⁽¹⁾ The prophet was sent to all races and nations, whether Arabs or non-Arabs, and he who denies the rights of the negroes is not a good Muslim.⁽²⁾ The use of traditions attributed to the prophet is, in fact, a typical method of Islamic society at this time.

The conditions of Islamic society are taken into great account by al-Jāhiz. One of the interesting arguments against those who attributed to the negroes the lack in thinking, is the following: al-Jāhiz says that Islamic society did not know of the negroes, except those who were captured as slaves. Therefore, they do not represent the whole nation. The same is true with other captives such as those who were captured from India, for it is well-known that the Indians had great wisdom and skill, but those who were captured do not represent the nation.⁽³⁾ al-Jāhiz's

(1) R. fī Fakhr al-Sūdān., Majmūʿ., (Sacy), pp. 68-76.

(2) Ibid.

(3) Ibid., p. 73.

argument seems to have been directed against a common conception about the mentality of the negroes, even among some scholars.⁽¹⁾

The significance of al-Jāhiz's argument of colours and races appears in his discussion of animals, as well as human beings, in connection with the environment. In al-Ḥayawān, al-Jāhiz pausesⁱⁿ the question as to what reason the differences of colours and features among races are due?⁽²⁾ In discussing the views of al-Dahriya, on the idea of al-Maskh, al-Jāhiz discusses their views on the question of climate and the changes it effects on the beings, whether human or animals. According to al-Jāhiz, a branch of al-Dahriya believed that the changes in the features and colours of the creatures are due to the changes of climate: the air changes and becomes bad, the water follows this change and so does the soil. All these changes would gradually⁽³⁾ affect the nature of the inhabitants. The desert of Banū Sulaym gives a black colour to all its inhabitants, whether

(1) see about this point, later pages of this chapter.

(2) about al-Dahriya, see 'Ibn al-Jauzi, Talbis., (1919), p. 44; al-Khayyāt, al-Intiṣār., (1925), pp. 6, 17, 81, 173

(3) al-Jāhiz, al-Ḥayawān, vol. IV., p. 71.

(1)
human, animals or insects. The climate and the whole environment may not affect only those who are created in it, but may also change the features and colours of those who come to settle later. The Arabs, who settled in Khurasān, were changed, al-Jāhiz says, in colour and complexion, which they used to have, to that of the inhabitants of the country. (2)
This example, of course, ignores the fact that, besides the effect of the environment, those new settlers mixed with the original natives and intermarried with them. The effect of the environment, according to this explanation, appears much stronger in the groups who stick to one another in one place, shutting themselves from other societies; therefore, they preserve their own features and characteristics (3) and become distinguished from the others.

Besides what he relates on the authority of al-Dahriya, al-Jāhiz seems to have made a good use of this explanation to reject the idea of inequality between negroes and white. (4)
Moreover, al-Jāhiz traces the question in his

(1) al-Jāhiz, al-Hayawān, vol. IV., p. 71; vol. V., p. 370.

(2) Ibid.

(3) Ibid., and vol. IV., p. 72.

(4) R. fī Fakhr al-Sūdān, Majmūʿ., (Sacy), p. 78.

own way, using experimental methods to show how the difference emerged, he says: "If you bring a hair near to the fire, it will become curly. The closer you bring it, the curlier it becomes; the nearest, it will burn..⁽¹⁾" This is to explain that it was the heat that brought this effect on certain races in their features. This is true, according to al-Jāhiz, on animals, as well as human beings. al-Jāhiz discusses, at this point, an interesting idea about the effect of heat on the colours of creatures, he says: "If the pigeons became black, it was because they have passed the degree of ripening to the degree of burning. Equal to the black pigeons are the negroes among human beings, for their wombs have outpassed the degree of ripening to that of burning and the sun consumed their hair, so it shrank..⁽²⁾" The idea of being ripe in the womb seems, somehow, obscure. It does not seem, however, to have anything to do with inheritance, for al-Jāhiz connects these differences with the heat of the sun directly. On the other hand, when the heat is weak, the complexion of the race becomes fair, as is the case of al-Sakāliba.⁽³⁾ al-Jāhiz seems

(1) al-Jāhiz, al-Ḥayawān, vol. III., p. 245.

(2) Ibid.

(3) Ibid., p. 244. about al-Sakāliba, see E. Levi-Provencal, art. Sakāliba, E.I.

to have inherited this explanation from his master, al-Nazzām. In another occasion, al-Jāhiz refers, among other things, to the relation between the race and their functions, as had been argued by al-Nazzām. Here again, we find a reference to the same theory. al-Nazzām says: "The nations who have not been ripened by their wombs and whose skin, pupil of the eye and hair differ from the standard colour, their reasoning and natural gift will ultimately follow..."⁽¹⁾ The significance of al-Jāhiz's explanation, however, lies in his attempt to connect the change with the environment and the heat of the sun.

The significance of al-Jāhiz's interest in this question does not lie only in the relation which his explanation has with his belief, as well as al-Nazzām's, in the idea of natural attributes of things,⁽²⁾ but also, to a great extent, in the reflection it bears of the concern of the thinkers of the time about this question. Greek thoughts and Indian astronomy and astrology seem to have

(1) al-Jāhiz, al-Ḥayawān, vol. V., p. 35.

(2) According to this theory, the attributes of the substance, such as heat, cold, humidity and dryness, etc., lie in its nature; they are brought out through the various changes of environment and other circumstances, see al-Ḥayawān, vol. V., pp. 10-15.

had a great influence on Islamic thinkers in this. al-Mas'ūdī, for instance, relates an interesting explanation, attributed to Ya'qūb b. 'Ishāq al-Kindī, on the same point. The latter, according to al-Mas'ūdī, said: "... The soul is the cause of the movement of stars and is not caused by it, but it is in the nature of the soul to follow the combination (Mizāj), of the body, when it does not find anything, as is the case of the negro, whose place has become hot and the figures of astronomy have influenced him, the humidities were drawn to his upper parts and goggled his eyes, pulled down his lips and pressed flat his nose and made it big, and lifted up his head, (all because) of the humidities' power in the upper part of his body, therefore, the combination of his brain was different from the normal standard and, thus, the soul could not have influence over him to reach perfectness. His sense of discrimination was spoiled and actions of reason were taken out of him..."⁽¹⁾ The connection of human existence with the movement of stars is not strange in Islamic thought.⁽²⁾ As for the conception of

(1) Muṭūj., vol. I., p. 165.

(2) al-Mas'ūdī himself refers to some of these explanations, Ibid., also al-Bīrūnī, Kitāb al-Tafhīm., trans. by Wright, 1934, p. 359.

the lack of mental power among the negroes, it seems to have been held by some Greek thinkers. al-Mas'ūdī, who quotes Galen's explanation of the differences of races, says that Galen distinguished the black race by ten qualities, among which is the love of pleasure, which Galen attributes to the lack of mental reasoning.⁽¹⁾

As for the idea of the combined elements which are supposed to influence ~~not only~~ racial differences, but also differences among the individuals, it seems to have been known by many Islamic thinkers. al-Jāhiz himself refers to the theory of al-'Akhḫlāṭ (combination of natures),⁽²⁾ more than once.⁽³⁾ In al-Jāhiz's explanation of racial differences, all these thoughts find expression, although he avoids to a great extent, the metaphysical element and brings up his explanation to a scientific standard through his experimental approach and the interest he shows in the physical environment. It is obvious, too, that al-Jāhiz

(1) al-Mas'ūdī, *Murūj*, vol. I., p. 164.

(2) see, for instance, *Rasā'il Ikhwān al-Ṣafā*, (1928), vol. I., p. 229, vol. II., p. 32.

(3) see al-Jāhiz, *al-Bukhalā'*, (1948), p. 2, p. 237; al-Tarbī', (1955), p. 83. The reference, apparently, is made to Aristotle.

does not presume that the negroes are mentally defective.

(b) The Woman and Her Status in The Society:

al-Jāhiz's attitude and discussion of the subject of women is distinguished by two main characteristics:

(i) a great deal of tolerance, and (ii) a true recognition of human nature, in connection with social life and a great appreciation of beauty, which dominates a major part of his judgment and frees him from conventional considerations.

It should be pointed out, before proceeding further, that the woman whom al-Jahiz discusses and portrays in connection with the 'Abbasid social life, is not the Arab reserved woman, but the woman who appeared in the society and played an eminent role in social life, the life of art, (1) pleasure and literature. It is true that al-Jāhiz mentions

(1) see about the activities of al-Jawārī, Ahmad 'Amīn, Duha., vol. I., p. 193. al-Jāhiz refers to the women of al-Ḥaramayn, who never used to go out, except at night, and the women of al-Miṣrayn, who used to go out only in the day times, the reason being their fear of men and thieves, see al-Ḥayawān, vol. I., p. 303.

women who played an important part in the political life, such as Laylā al-Nāʿizīya, the leader of the extremists Shīʿa, but the subject of this woman cannot be said to have formed a theme of any of al-Jāhiz's works and the reference to her is but occasional.⁽¹⁾ This is due, perhaps, to the fact that the part which the ʿAbbasid woman played in political life was insignificant, compared to the activities of the woman of society.⁽²⁾ It may be also due to al-Jāhiz's own interest in public life, social and literary activities.

al-Jāhiz's attitude towards the question of women is not merely that of an observer or a reporter, but also of a critic. al-Jāhiz tries to give explanations for some of the social phenomena. The reason why concubines had more significance in the life of society than the free women, according to al-Jāhiz, is that they were free from conventions

(1) al-Jāhiz mentions Laylā a few times, in connection with a sect of Shīʿa, see al-Ḥayawān, vol. II., p. 268, vol. V., p. 290, vol. VI., p. 390. He also mentions her among the misers, al-Bukhālāʾ, p. 31.

(2) A book like al-ʿAghānī, by ʿAbūʿl-Faraj, is an outstanding example that illustrates the life of slave women in the ʿAbbasid society and the great importance given to this aspect of woman's life.

and were allowed to do what the free woman could not do. (1)
A slave woman may be transferred among various people, while a free woman, according to al-Jāhiz, would be despised if she gets married to more than one man. But, on the other hand, al-Jāhiz says, in early times, the woman could get married more than once. (2) al-Jāhiz, however, puts the question as to what made the difference in social attitude towards the free woman and the slave, in the 'Abbasid society, which gives freedom to the latter and restricts the former, in spite of the fact that a slave woman may become a mother of a child and a wife of a caliph. (3)

Relations, in the 'Abbasid society, were not necessarily family relations. (4) A possessor of a number of concubines may trade in their relations with other men; 'Uṭayṭ, the singer, was seen once beating his concubines. When he

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- (1) al-Jāhiz, K. al-Nisā', Rasā'il, (Sandūbī), p. 274. Ch. Pellat thinks that al-Jāhiz is justifying here his own personal relations with concubines, le Milieu., p. 242.
(2) see about examples, al-'Iṣfahānī, al-'Aghānī, vols. II., p. 138; III., pp. 107, 113, 122; XVI., p. 88; XVII., pp. 93, 164; also al-Jāhiz, Mufakharat., fol. 173b.
(3) al-Jāhiz, R. fi'l-Qiyān, Thalāth., (Finkel), p. 61.
(4) Concubines, in the 'Abbasid society, were possessed even by Christians and Jews, see al-Jāhiz, al-Ḥayawān, vol. IV., p. 27; also about other aspects, vol. V., pp. 467, 591

was asked why, he complained that he could not support
them, because they did not bring him any money. ⁽¹⁾ al-Jāhiz
says that the possessors of female slave singers encouraged
them to trap rich men, so that they themselves would earn
through them. ⁽²⁾ Although he warns people not to make these
relations, because they would bring ruin to their life,
there is no evidence that al-Jāhiz detested this class and
their relations. ⁽³⁾ al-Jāhiz's interest, however, is shown
in his attempt to explain the position of these female
slave singers. He suggests that a woman who was brought
up in a surrounding where she learns nothing but these
means is apt to behave in this way, besides the fact that
she is earning her living from this profession. ⁽⁴⁾

al-Jāhiz's picture of the woman in the society,
however, lacks the image of family life. It is true that
al-Jāhiz admits the necessity of marriage, but his refer-
ence to it is insignificant. al-Jāhiz defends the tradition

(1) 'Ibn Qayim al-Jauziya, 'Akhbār al-Nisā', p. 130.

(2) al-Qiyān, Thalāth., (Finkel), pp. 70-2.

(3) There is hardly any information about al-Jahiz's family life, although it is evident that he possessed a concubine, see Yāqūt, Irshad., vol. VI., pp. 75-6.

(4) al-Qiyān, p. 73.

-al relations of marriage and family life on the basis that the woman, according to him, follows by nature the man and is created for him, "like a Mawlā to his master"⁽¹⁾. This relation, however, is ruled by a law of kindness and love for the sake of the generations to come, al-Jāhiz says: "... was it not for the trial and test in prohibiting what was prohibited and making lawful what was made lawful and clearing the children from the doubt of being mixed up and the question of inheritance in the hands of the successors, no man would have been more rightful for a woman than the other..."⁽²⁾ This argument is directed against the societies where free relations were practised without restrictions; al-Jāhiz here rejects the relations among the Manichaeans. This does not mean, however, that al-Jāhiz denied the existence of these relations in other societies. His explanation of this fact in pre-Islamic Arab society is interesting. He maintains that in that society, where the need was great for men to fight and take part in their wars, the need for children was also great, therefore, they ignored the fact that the child may be illegitimate.⁽³⁾

(1) al-Qiyān, Thālāth., (Finkel), p. 55.

(2) Ibid.

(3) al-Jāhiz, al-Ḥayawān, vol. I., p. 108.

The fact that the woman appeared in social life and took part in the activities of music and art, had great importance not only in social relations, but also in the artistic taste and social manners. al-Jāhiz attributes all beauty of social life and customs to the presence of women singers for whom, according to him, men put on all their make-up and good appearance. ⁽¹⁾ The taste of beauty, however, seems to have been greatly influenced by the system of slavery. The measures of beauty varied in the different parts of the Islamic world, according to the types of women the trade of slaves usually brought, al-Jāhiz says: "The most appreciated women among the Baṣrians are the Indians.. among the Yemenites, the Abyssinian women.. among the Syrians, the Greek women.." ⁽²⁾ al-Jāhiz comments on this: "and every (group of) people appreciate but their own trade and captives, except a few, who cannot be reckoned upon.." The art of singing, gradually, became the speciality of women. Besides the great number of slave singers, there was a number of free women singers. ⁽³⁾ Some pious Muslims did not

(1) al-Jāhiz, K. al-Nisā', Rasā'il, (Sandūbī), p. 267.

(2) R. fī Fakhr al-Sūdān., Majmū'., (Sacy), p. 75.

(3) 'Ulayya bint al-Mahdī, the Caliph, was one of the best singers of her time, see 'Iṣfahānī, 'Aghānī, vol. IX., pp. 83-95; also Khadīja bint al-Ma'mūn was a poetess and a singer, Ibid., vol. XIV., p. 114.

approve of the idea of women singers and thought that this
(1)
would lead to adultery. al-Jāhiz makes a long comparison
between the songs sung by a woman and those sung by a man,
preferring the female singers for the sake of beauty, say-
ing that the natural power of love of women is stronger than
the attraction of music itself, therefore, music is more
(2)
beautiful from a woman.

al-Jāhiz's great concern about the question of
woman and the trouble he takes to explain her position and
relations in the life of man and society seems to have been
a reaction against one of the most obvious tendencies in the
'Abbasid social relation, the tendency towards sodomy, with
which al-Jāhiz deals effectively.

In spite of the fact that Islamic society condemned
this habit and the fact that the Qur'ān itself refers to it
(3)
with disgust, the growth of it in the 'Abbasid society was

(1) al-Nuwayrī, Nihāyat., vol. IV., p. 168.

(2) al-Jāhiz, K. al-Nisā', Rasā'il, (Sandūbī), p. 269.

(3) Qur'ān, English trans. by Palmer, chapter XI., pp. 190-1.

(1)
strong and obvious. Its prevalence was not among a certain class of people, but among all classes whether lower, middle or upper. Its prevalence among judges, teachers, clerks (2) and scholars was well-known to the 'Abbasid society. No secret was made of this practice, whether among old or young (3) people. The presence of various elements in the 'Abbasid society seems to have helped a great deal, to bring the practice of this habit to the open. al-'Amīn, the 'Abbasid Caliph, is said to have been one of those who exaggerated (4) in buying the eunuchs in the 'Abbasid court. The great service which the eunuchs offered was mainly connected with the protection of the Ḥaram, which was highly appreciated by the caliphs and the owners. It was, perhaps, one of the reasons why the eunuchs enjoyed a good position in the 'Abbasid court,

(1) This does not mean, however, that the habit did not exist before. al-Jāḥiẓ himself refers to the pre-Islamic society in connection with this practice, see R. fi Fakhr al-Sūdān, Majmū'., (Sacy), pp. 60-1.

(2) The judge of al-Ma'mūn, Yahya b. 'Aktham, see al-Mas'ūdī, Murūj., vol. VII., p. 43; Hammād b. 'Ajrad, the tutor of al-'Amīn, see al-Bayhaqī, al-Maḥāsin., vol. III., p. 618; 'Abū 'Ubayda, Ma'mar b. al-Muthannā, the scholar, Ibid., p. 646; Muḥammed b. 'Abdu'l-Malik al-Zayyāt, 'Iṣfahānī, Aghānī, vol. XX., p. 49.

(3) see al-Jāḥiẓ, Mufaḥharāt., fol. 73a, b.; al-Rāghib, Muḥaḍarāt., Br. Mus. MS., fol. 247b.

(4) al-Ṭabarī, Tārīkh., vol. II., ser. 3., pp. 950-1.

in spite of the fact that the status of the eunuchs generally
(1)
is the lowest in the society.

al-Jāḥiẓ writes a chapter on (al-Liwāṭ), homo-
sexuality, where he argues the question and condemns the
(2)
habit. His argument is based, mainly, on religious grounds;
God has prohibited many practices in the society, such as
drinking wine, but He promised to recompensate His good
believers by allowing them the prohibition in the next world.
God, however, according to al-Jāḥiẓ, did not promise to com-
pensate for this prohibition, therefore, it is unnatural,
(3)
abominable and hateful. It should be pointed out, however,
that the mention of the Ghilmān in the Qur'ān was taken by
the supporters of this practice as an argument to justify
it as legal and good; God, according to them, praised the
(4)
Ghilmān and often referred to their beauty.

(1) al-Jāḥiẓ discusses this class in details in al-Ḥayawān, vol. I., p. 70 sq. As for the status of eunuchs in the society, see Ency. of Religion., Luis H. Gray, art Eunuchs, pp. 582-3; also al-Muqaddasī, al-Laṭā'if., pp. 78-9.

(2) R. fī'l-Mu'allimīn, al-Kāmil, vol. I., p. 31 sq.

(3) Ibid., p. 31.

(4) al-Jāḥiẓ, Mufākharāt., fol. 165a.

The condemnation of al-Jāhiz of this habit did not prevent him from dealing with the subject with great interest, in connection with his society. One of the interesting works on this aspect of the 'Abbasid life is the treatise where al-Jāhiz relates a debate between the Sup-⁽¹⁾porter of al-Jawārī, and the Supporter of al-Ghilmān. Besides the fact that the way in which al-Jāhiz represents the debate between the two men, on relations with men and women, is remarkably free, it is significant to notice that al-Jāhiz makes it clear that there were people who even criticised relations with women and considered that a weakness. It was against this tendency in the society that al-Jāhiz seems to have written his works on the sub-⁽²⁾ject of woman and her position in the society. The rivalries between the two sides, as represented by al-Jāhiz, seems to have been greatly influenced by the taste and interests of the slave dealers, (al-Nakhkhāsūn), whose main purpose was to sell their (goods), regardless of moral considerations. al-Jāhiz's narration of their discourse re-

(1) K. Mufākharāt al-Jawārī wa'l-Ghilmān which is in a MS. in Cairo, photographed- Dāmād, 949, see Fu'ād Sayyid, Fihrist al-Makhtuṭāt., (1954), p. 513.

(2) al-Jāhiz, K. al-Nisā', Rasā'il, (Sandūbī), p. 272.

presents them as two competitors of one trade, who seek to support their interests by various means, whether through historical instances, in poetry and other facts, or through arguments deduced from the Qur'ān itself. (1) According to the supporter of al-Ghilmān, this habit was a sign of civilization and luxury, which were not known to the wild people of the desert. (2) Some of the poems which are cited to support the argument of the homosexuals were actually written earlier than this time, but they are interpreted to suit (3) the arguments of their supporter.

It should be pointed out that the literary taste among poets who appreciated these relations, were greatly influenced by their practice. In poetry, the woman is described and her beauty is appreciated with descriptions that are usually applied to the Ghilmān. (4) There are among poets, however, those who appreciated both types of beauty and had relations with both, like 'Abū Nu'ās and Wālība b. al-Ḥubāb. (5)

(1) al-Jāhiz, Mufākharrāt., fol. 165a, b; fol. 170a, b.

(2) Ibid., fol. 167a, b.

(3) Ibid., fol. 165a.

(4) Ibid.

(5) Ibid., and fol. 167b, 168a.

al-Jāhiz's explanation of this habit in the society is interesting. al-Tha'ālibī, who quotes al-Jāhiz very often in his works, relates al-Jāhiz's explanation in full, in connection with the inhabitants of Khurasān, where ,⁽¹⁾ according to him, this habit was prevalent. al-Jāhiz attributes the reason of this practice to the fact that the people of Khurasān used to leave their homes very often, in order to join the frontiers to fight. The difficulty of travelling made them leave their wives and concubines behind and accompany only their young men to help them. Therefore, this habit grew among them and when they returned back, they could not get rid of it. al-Jāhiz proceeds by denying the prevalence of this habit among the Arabs of the desert, otherwise, according to him, it would have been mentioned in their poems. As for the few references about it in some poems, al-Jāhiz maintains that these do not refer to the pure chivalrous Arabs of the desert, but to those who lived near the towns and were mixed up with other

(1) It is believed by many Islamic writers that sodomy came originally from Khurasān with the armies, see A. Mez, Renaissance., English trans., p. 358. About Adhribayjān, see 'Ibn Qayim al-Jauziya, K. Akhbār al-Nisā', p. 62.

(1)
foreign elements.

al-Jāhiz's interest in this aspect of social problems seems to have influenced his writing. The treatise which al-Jāhiz calls (fī Tafdīl al-Baṭn 'ala'l-Zahr), in preference of the belly to the back, seems to have been another kind of illustration and a refutation of the same tendency in the 'Abbasid society.⁽²⁾

(1) al-Tha'ālibī, Thimār., (1908), p. 439. al-Jāhiz himself, however, relates poems which accused tribes of Kulayb, Dārim, Sulaym and 'Ashja', etc. of practising this habit, see R. fī Fakhr al-Sūdān., Majmū', (Sacy), pp. 60-1.

(2) Br. Mus. MS., 1129, fol. 220b-227b; also pp. 11-12.

Chapter Three

AL-JĀḤIẒ'S SOCIAL PHILOSOPHY

The civil war between the two 'Abbāsid Caliphs, al-'Amīn and al-Ma'mūn, marks the beginning of a new epoch in the life of the 'Abbasid society. The change was not only political, but also social, as well as mental. The power which the oppressed common classes were seeking for was expressed, for the first time, by the appearance of the professional groups on the platform of political life. In no other time in Islamic history we hear of the hucksters and the lower craftsmen taking such great interest in political disputes and taking part, with great enthusiasm in the political events. The Caliphate, on the other hand, was undergoing a difficult time. In spite of the fact that

(1) see al-Ṭabarī, Tārīkh., vol. II., p. 872; al-Mas'ūdī, Murūj., vol. VI., p. 452; al-Dūrī, Tārīkh., p. 68.

the activities of the common people were not under a very well organized leadership, it seems that their support was important, and was, in fact, used by certain interested parties. ⁽¹⁾ al-Ṭabarī makes it clear, however, that the street fighters were actually interested mainly in looting and ⁽²⁾ getting immediate benefit. A great number of them were killed in the fights.

The succession of al-Ma'mūn to the Caliphate, after the death of his brother al-'Amīn, who was killed in the war, is said by the historians to be the beginning of a new glorious reign "... ushering, as it did, the palmy days of literature, science and philosophy..." ⁽³⁾ The rational trend was encouraged greatly by the Caliph and the dogma of 'I'tizāl was taken up by the state, for the first time, as the official rite, which was protected and supported by the Caliph himself. The traditional believers were persecuted

(1) see, for instance, about 'Ibrāhīm b. al-Mahdī, al-Mas'ūdī, Murūj., vol. VII., p. 62.

(2) al-Ṭabarī, Tārīkh., vol. II., pp. 893-4.

(3) see Muir, the Caliphate, p. 508.

(1)
and the doctrine of 'I'tizāl was imposed on them by force.
This change seems to have had an important connection with
the development taking place, then, in the political and
social conditions.

al-Ma'mūn, after the death of his brother, felt
the need of justifying his position in the eyes of the whole
Muslim world. (2) The feeling of the common people was against
(3) him. The moral support was greatly needed for the prestige
of the Caliphate. al-Ma'mūn, therefore, being the spiritual
leader of the community, took it on his own responsibility
to strengthen the faith and protect it. When he entered
Baghdād, for the first time, the first thing al-Ma'mūn did
was to call for a general conference for all scholars and
(4) and men of religion. al-Ma'mūn is shown as the most tolerant

(1) see about the Inquisition, (al-Mihna), of 'Aḥmad b. Ḥanbal and the attitude of the common people, W. M. Patton, 'Aḥmad b. Ḥanbal and al-Mihna, (1897), p. 3 sq., also 'Ibn al-Jauzī, Talbīs., (1340), p. 421.

(2) see about this, Ch. Pellat, R.S.O., (1952), pp. 147-67.

(3) see the story of the sailor who refused to believe that al-Ma'mūn was noble, after he had killed his own brother, Ibn al-Jauzī, 'Akḥbār al-zirāf, p. 48. al-Ma'mūn is said to have taken the comment with great patience.

(4) al-Baghdādī, Tārīkh., vol. VI., p. 75 sq.

Caliph in discussions concerning religion and philology, etc.⁽¹⁾
It seems that the great freedom of thought and the favour given to the rational thinkers and the interest shown by the Caliph in such activities were a spontaneous reaction against the general trend among the lower common classes, who represented the irrational tendency in the society. It is interesting to see this characteristic manifesting itself in a great antagonism between two big parties, the Mu'tazila, presenting the rational thinking and backed by the Caliph himself, and the Traditionists, on the other hand, supported by the common people and common believers.

al-Jāhiz's part in this battle of thought was significant. The background of political and social activities of his time cannot be ignored, while analysing his thoughts. The significance of his part was not only because he was a Mu'tazilite, but also that he was a man of letters, greatly interested in all trends in the society.

It has been suggested by Carra de vaux, that a

(1) see al-Mas'ūdī, Murūj., vol. VII., pp. 39-43.

philosophy or a system cannot be drawn from al-Jāhiz, although one may find in him the highest point of the philosophical thinking and the most intense taste of the intellectual life. Charles Pellat, on the other hand, suggests that a special monograph of al-Jāhiz's social philosophy would have been very interesting, were it not for the difficulty of lack of documents. My attempt, therefore, will be limited within one aspect of al-Jāhiz's philosophy; the question of power in the society, which is relevant to the question of social classes, on one hand, and al-Jāhiz's rationalisation of actual social facts, on the other. A special reference to the Mu'tazilite doctrine is essential, in this respect. al-Jāhiz's remarks and observations, though individual and scattered as they may be, cannot be detached from the background of his society. This, however, did not deprive them from their genuine and universal character. The attempt which al-Jāhiz makes to rationalise social facts is an interesting characteristic in his way of thinking, for although he could not ignore actual social conditions, al-Jāhiz, as a Mu'tazilite, claims the right for the power of

(1) les Penseurs de l'Islam, vol. I., p. 297.

(2) le Milieu Basrian., p. 223.

reason and rational thinking, in the life of man.

One of the interesting characteristics of the Mu'tazilite doctrine is the attempt they made to compromise between two powers; the power of reason, on one hand, and the power of divine faith, on the other. This is clear in their attempt to reorganize Islamic faith on rational principles. Their philosophy, in fact, is a most significant manifestation of the trial which Islam as a faith had to undergo in its first contact with Greek philosophy. It is not my intention to judge here their attempt and whether it was successful or not. What is more interesting is the fact that the tendency of the Mu'tazilites towards rational thinking was not an individual phenomenon. Between progress in material life, contact with new thoughts and cultures, on one hand, and the Arabic ideals and Islamic principles, on the other, a conflict emerged and the rational movement was pushed forward.

al-Jāhiz's thoughts are to be appreciated, therefore, within the frame of society, and with a reference to

(1) see Albère N. Nādir, *Falsafat al-Mu'tazila*, in two volumes, (1950).

the Mu'tazilite thoughts.

The Question of Power in the Society:

In al-Jāhiz's discussion, as well as in the Mu'tazilite doctrine, the faith is the starting point on which any argument is built up. This point is manifest in al-Jāhiz's discussion of human society. The faith of the group is an effective factor in their life, whether as a power in social life or as a personal belief. Before going into details of the question, a distinction should be made between two types of the faith: the faith as a conscious belief and, secondly, the faith as a traditional belief. This is important in the whole system of thought of the Mu'tazilites. While the first acts, in al-Jāhiz's conception of social life, as an inducing power in the life of man, the second is inherited and, therefore, is ineffective. A detailed discussion of this point is interesting in al-Jāhiz's social philosophy.

In his explanation of the behaviour of groups and nations in history, al-Jāhiz tries to find reasons of human

actions and behaviour in the ideals and principles of these nations, represented in their beliefs, which acted as inducing power and leading principles, which led them either to glory or deterioration. The power which lies behind their action is attributed by al-Jāhiz to their faith. This power may make a turning point in the whole character of the nation. al-Jāhiz's explanation of the history of nations, such as the Romans, the Turks or the Arabs, is the most interesting analysis of history ever known by any Muslim historian before him and long after him till the time of 'Ibn Khaldūn. (1) In reference to the Roman history, al-Jāhiz discusses the history of wars of the Romans against the Persians. The reason why the Romans were weakened and defeated, after they had been the most powerful nation, lies, according to al-Jāhiz, in the fact that they adopted Christianity, which preached the belief in peace. This belief made them abstain from fighting and, therefore, resulted in their defeat, al-Jāhiz says: "We have learned that the Romans (al-Rūm), before

(1) 'Ibn Khaldūn criticises historians for being uncritical of historical events, see Ibn Khaldūn, al-Muqaddima, (1902), pp. 8-33; also Tāhā Husain, Falsafat 'Ibn Khaldūn., (1925), pp. 30-50.

adopting Christianity as a faith, used to revenge themselves from the kings of Persia. Wars were continuous between them. When they discarded the belief in killing, fighting, revenge and ransom, it befell them what befalls the cowards, (to the extent), that they started fighting (as if) artificially. When this faith became part of their natures and ran into their flesh and blood, until it stood in their way, they, instead of conquering, were conquered.⁽¹⁾ The same fact is applied to the Turks, who, according to al-Jāhiz, were defeated, because of their belief in al-Zandaqa.⁽²⁾ He says: "To the same destiny the conditions of the Toghuzghuz,⁽³⁾ of the Turks, ended, after they had been most courageous and powerful in defence and used to precede al-Khazlajiya,⁽⁴⁾ even though the latter were twice their number, but when they came to

(1) al-Jāhiz, R. fi'l-'Auṭān., Br. Mus. MS., fol. 209a.

(2) This term is used by Muslim theologians, mainly, in reference to the Manichaeans, see al-Jāhiz, al-Ḥayawān, vol. I., p. 57; also Brown, Literary Hist. of Persia, pp. 159.

(3) A tribe of the Turks who settled on the borders between China and Tibet. They were Manichaeans, see Yāqūt, Muṣjam vol. I., p. 839; vol. III., p. 448; Barthold, E.I., vol. IV., p. 902; also Ch. Pellat, in al-Tarbī', p. 42.

(4) Another tribe of the Turks. Their name comes also as al-Kharlakhīya, see Yāqūt, Muṣjam., vol. I., pp. 397, 839; vol. III., pp. 449, 402; also al-Mas'ūdī, Murūj., vol. I., p. 288.

believe in the religion of al-Zandaqa, and al-Zandaqa in matters of peace and abstaining from fights, is worse than (1) the religion of the Christians, their courage weakened.." Apart from the fact that al-Jāḥiẓ's approach to historical events is critical, the changes in man's history are attributed to the character of the nation, which falls under the impact of a new belief.

The changes in the society from one stage into another are attributed by al-Jāḥiẓ to a similar factor, that is the belief of the society. In contrast with the above mentioned examples, one may think that al-Jāḥiẓ had Islam in mind and its effect on the Arabs. al-Jāḥiẓ, however, does not touch on the question of Islam directly, but discusses the religion of Quraysh before Islam as an example of the same type. The change in the tribal life of Quraysh into a settled life is due, according to al-Jāḥiẓ, to the fact that Quraysh were very strict about their own religion which prohibited raids, robbery and other deeds which were practised by other tribes. This prohibition, al-Jāḥiẓ says,

(1) al-Jāḥiẓ, R. fī'l-'Auṭān., Br. Mus. MS., fol. 209b. See about the religion of these tribes, al-Mas'ūdī, Murūj., vol. I., p. 290 sq.

effected the future career of Quraysh, as well as their social customs. They abstained from raids, enslaving women and killing the female child, also they turned their hands towards trade and travelled all over the country and distinguished themselves as merchants. ⁽¹⁾ al-Jāhiz goes on to say that this does not imply that Quraysh were cowards and that they abstained because of that, for they were able to fight when they wanted. On the other hand, many tribes who adopted their religion, al-Jāhiz says, could not follow the same principles and the religion did not have the same influence on them.

al-Jāhiz seems to realise that the reason which he gives to explain the behaviour of these groups is not universally sufficient to explain all cases. In other occasions, al-Jāhiz expresses his doubts and even refutes his own arguments. Pausing the same question in al-Tarbī' wa'l-Tadwīr, al-Jāhiz says: "... Why did men of all faiths have kingdoms and kings, except al-Zanādiqa, and why did all

(1) al-Jāhiz, R. fī'l-'Auṭān., Br. Mus. MS., fol. 209b. It is interesting to point out, in this connection, that in the poem which is cited by al-Jāhiz as an argument against Quraysh the merchants, their career is attributed to the poor nature of their country, see R. fī Fakhr al-Sūdān., Majmū'., (Sacy), p. 57.

other nations kill them. Why do you think that, while we have seen al-Mazdakiya, al-Dināwariya and al-Toghuzghuziyya too ? If you say; (It is because he in whose belief fighting is prohibited and in whose nature, force is non-existent, is defeated and enslaved), then why have the Romans not been enslaved or defeated, while no killing, fighting, dispute or defence are allowed in their religion ?" al-Jāhiz, obviously, contradicts here the analogical argument which he used in judging the Turks and the Romans, as well as the Toghuzghuz. In another occasion, however, where al-Jāhiz passes judgment on the religion of al-Zanādiqa, it is maintained by him that their religion is not concerned with the affairs of man, but deals only with imaginary beings, therefore, it provides no philosophy of life. In spite of the fact that they tend to be individual, al-Jāhiz's remarks are genuine and interesting in historical analysis, in connection with the life of man.

Besides being a factor that gives the progress of human society its character, the faith, according to al-

(1) al-Jāhiz, al-Tarbi', (1955), p. 77.

(2) al-Jāhiz, al-Hayawān, vol. I., p. 57.

Jāḥiẓ, plays a powerful part in maintaining the solidarity of the group. It outpasses all other powers, whether that of place, time or race, etc. The example which al-Jāḥiẓ takes to illustrate this point is interesting. al-Jāḥiẓ cites the most strict puritanic sect among Muslims; the ⁽¹⁾ Khārijites, who were most idealistic and sacrificing. The faith which al-Jāḥiẓ refers to in this connection, by the name of Diyāna (religion), is in fact, more than a religious belief. It is an idealisation of the religious belief, where the stress is laid more on its moral significance. al-Jāḥiẓ himself considers the Khārijites as the most sacrificing and daring group. The reason, according to him, lies in their faith, he says: "... and the obvious reason for the extreme courage among all types of the Khārijites and their priority in it, lies in their religion, for we find that their slaves, clients and their women, all, fight as they themselves do. We find also that the Sijistānī, who is Persian, as we find the Yemenite, the Bahrānī and the Khūzī, who are all Arabs, and we find the Ibadites of 'Umān,

(1) see about al-Khawārij, Suhair al-Qalamāwī, 'Adab al-Khawārij., (1945), pp. 37, 40; also G. Della Vida, art. Khārijites, E.I.

(1)
which is an Arab country, as we find the 'Ibaḍites of Tāhert,
which is a non-Arab country, all of them are the same in
fighting, courage, strong will and patience. Therefore,
their qualities in courage are equal, in spite of the dif-
ference in their origin and countries. Is this not a suf-
ficient proof that what made them all equal is their reli-
gion ?.."
(2)
According to this, if the faith is strong enough
in the group, it can unite people of different classes, re-
gions and origins. The Khārijites, whom al-Jāḥiẓ cites for
his example, were faithful to their principles, and indeed
had severe fights with the local authorities. It would be
interesting, however, to examine one point, in connection
with this. If al-Jāḥiẓ admires the idealistic character of
the Khārijites, is it to be presumed, then, that they were,
according to him, the most deserving group of power ?.

In spite of the fact that al-Jāḥiẓ gives the
Khārijites all the credit of courage and will, he does not
seem to be prepared to follow their example, in ignoring

(1) In the MS., it is written as (Nāhert), but Tāhert is a
name of two towns, old and new, in North Africa, see
Yāqūt, Muʿjam., vol. I., p. 813.

(2) al-Jāḥiẓ, R. fī'l-'Auṭān., Br. Mus. MS., fol. 210a, b.

facts and real conditions of Islamic society. This is clear in his attitude towards all those who claimed the right to any power, especially that of rulership, without having the means by which they can reach their aim, or the required qualifications, which would prepare them for it, he says: " .. it is not up to the people themselves the question of (fulfillment of) ambitions, its strength or weakness, but ambitions lead the people to the goal, in as much as they have of means. Don't you see that the most ambitious (man) and the most willing in position among people does not think of claiming the caliphate, because that would require the lineal descent (al-Nasab), or the grounds that have been prepared for it, by (upholding) a cause, like the cause of the first Khārijites, who claimed the caliphate with religion only and without the (qualification of) descent. Therefore, if he becomes a Khārijite, the cause for his claim is made, whether he succeeds or fails." (1) Although the Khārijites have enough reason in their piety, this does not secure their success. al-Jāhiz does not ignore the actual conditions of the society. This, however, should not take us into the details of the question

(1) al-Jāhiz, al-Ḥayawān, vol. II., p. 101.

of the caliphate, and the rightful 'Imām, which has but slight relevance to this thesis.

In connection with the faith and society, al-Jāhiz discusses the second type of faith, which is only a traditional belief. In his discussion of the idol worships, al-Jāhiz says that he does not blame those believers who were brought up to believe in these worships, for their faith is part of their traditions and inherited customs. The exaltation of people for their forefathers and their customs, according to al-Jāhiz, is the reason why these customs became like worships, for "the disease of tradition and habit", al-Jāhiz says, "is a disease that neither Galen nor other physicians can cure. The exaltation of the ancient and the following of the fathers and getting used to nothing else besides it, need a drastic cure..⁽¹⁾" al-Jāhiz maintains, however, that this does not mean that the worshippers of idols are inferior in reason or rational thinking, for it is known, according to him, that the reasoning of the Greeks, the Indians and the Pagan Arabs was above

(1) al-Jāhiz, al-Ḥayawān, vol. V., pp. 326-8.

the worships of idols and stars. It is interesting to point out, however, that, in discussing this point, al-Jāhiz does not refer to any of the divine religions or cite his examples from them, his reference is made only to the worships of idols and stars.

The difference between religion as a traditional belief and as an inducing power is important in al-Jāhiz's views. The religion, which is a mere unconscious belief, may not act significantly in the behaviour of man, therefore, other factors take its place, al-Jāhiz says: "... the reason may be anger, may be drink, partisanship, or the love of fame, it may be a nature like that of the cruel, the kind or the generous, etc., or it may be religion, but a man cannot reach as far as raising the sword through the power of religion in his heart only and without the help of the other reasons mentioned above, because religion is acquired and not original or natural, and its reward comes (1) later while the reward of these qualities comes sooner.."

The faith, in connection with social classes, is

(1) al-Jāhiz, K. al-^cUthmāniya, (1955), pp. 47-8.

important. It will bring us to an interesting question in al-Jāhiz's discussion of power; i.e. Where does power rest ?

Before going into details of this question, it is essential to know the Mu'tazilite conception of faith. The true faith, according to the Mu'tazilites, goes in accordance with reason. The distinction is, therefore, important between the faith of a common believer and that of a rational man. The Mu'tazilites hold the opinion that "no one can be called a believer who does not fathom God in the way of speculation, therefore, the common people with their naive beliefs, have no part with Muslims. There can be no belief without the operation of reason. The question of Takfīr al-ʿAwāmm, who shall be condemned as unworthy orthodox of the people in general", Goldziher says, "is a standing formula in the Mu'tazilite science of religion."⁽¹⁾

The interesting point in al-Jāhiz's attitude towards this question is his recognition of social factors

(1) see Goldziher, *Mohammed and Islam*, pp. 124-5.

in connection with the faith of people. Social class and status of man are taken into consideration, while judging their beliefs. It is true that al-Jāhiz is greatly interested in the common people, but his ambitions for the class of scholars and men of knowledge seem to have been greater.

The profession of men, according to al-Jāhiz, may not cause as much difference in their skill as it does in their faith and reasoning: "In the farmer, craftsman, carpenter, designer, drawer, writer and accountant of any nation or any faith", al-Jāhiz says, "you will not find much difference in their capacity and skill or wrong judgments and extreme inferiority as you find in their reason, when you test their beliefs..⁽¹⁾" The character of the common people is described as being naive and far from discerning and being deep, they are "less sceptic than the special people, because they do not judge the true or untrue things, and never doubt themselves. They have nothing but mere belief or mere unbelief, they have excluded the third state

(1) This is a quotation from al-Jāhiz made by al-Murtaḍā in al-Munya wa'l-'Amal., see Lughat al-ʿArab, (1931), vol. III., p. 174.

(1)
of scepticism .." The position of man in the society has
a great relevance to the value of his knowledge. The Wazīrs,
according to al-Jāhiz, have a different knowledge from
that of ordinary scholars, the caliphs from the Wazīrs,
the prophets from the caliphs and the angels from the pro-
phets, etc.
(2)

In dealing with the question of the solidarity
of the groups, their morals and characters, al-Jāhiz re-
fers, as has already been mentioned, to their faith and
beliefs as inducing powers behind their actions. In con-
trast with this, it is interesting to see that al-Jāhiz
cites lower trades as examples in solidarity in bad morals
and characters. The reason of the bad morals of the lower
craftsmen is sought for by al-Jāhiz in their own crafts.
The example which al-Jāhiz cites is taken from the lowest
crafts. He says: "You may find all foolishness, ignorance,
unfulfillment of promises and cheating in the craft among
the weavers. Their one characteristic in this indicates

(1) al-Jāhiz, al-Ḥayawān, vol. VI., p. 36.

(2) Ibid., vol. V., p. 201.

one reason. There is no other reason than their craft, for the weavers are the same everywhere, so are the slave-dealers, rag-sellers, fish-mongers, sailors and sellers of plant-fertiliser. Their first (man) is the same as their last, their old is the same as their young⁽¹⁾." The craft, therefore, is recognized as an important factor in shaping the characteristics of the group. al-Jāhiz, however, rejects here the character and moral of the lower trades, in comparison with the characters of the Khārijites⁽²⁾. It should be pointed out, however, that al-Jāhiz himself, in another occasion, cites the lower craftsmen as an example of good consideration and sympathy and solidarity, when he criticises the class of clerks⁽³⁾. al-Jāhiz wonders, in his discussions, why a profession in itself should shape the characters of man. "The means may limit (a man) to be a weaver or a money-dealer", al-Jāhiz says, "If it had designed them for weaving, it should not design them to delay and cheat⁽⁴⁾."

(1) al-Jāhiz, R. fī'l-'Auṭān., Br. Mus. MS., fol. 210b.

(2) Ibid., fol. 210a-b.

(3) al-Jāhiz, R. fī Dhamm 'Akhlāq al-Kuttāb, Thalāth., (Finkel), p. 46.

(4) al-Jāhiz, al-Ḥayawān, vol. I., p. 141.

The craft, or profession, of one group, according to al-Jāhiz's observations, which effect their status, may have an effect on the religion which is held by them. People, al-Jāhiz says, may respect a certain faith not because they know more about it, but for the simple reason that the faith may be held by men of good position in the society. The Christians, according to al-Jāhiz, are liked more than the Jews in the Muslim society, because of their social status, which was decided by their profession, "from amongst them", al-Jāhiz says, "are the secretaries of rulers, upholsterers of kings, physicians of noblemen, druggists and bankers. Whereas, you do not find a Jew but a tanner, a varnisher, a cupper, a butcher or a mender. Therefore, when the common people saw the Christians and the Jews like that, they thought that the religion of the Jews, among other religions, is the same as their crafts, among other crafts..." (1) Although al-Jāhiz gives explanation of the attitude of the common people in these facts, this does not mean that he himself agrees with them. al-Jāhiz tries

(1) al-Jāhiz, R. fī'l-Radd 'ala'l-Naṣāra, al-Kāmil, vol. II., p. 169; also Thalāth, (Finkel), p. 17; see also comments and translation of excerpts by Finkel in JOAS., (1927), vol. 47,, pp. 311-34.

to find other reasons to explain the status of the Jews and Christians in Islamic society. The Jews, al-Jāhiz says, did not allow intermarriages with other groups outside their own community and faith, a fact which prevented any foreign element to be mixed with them, therefore, they were avoided in the society⁽¹⁾. On the other hand, al-Jāhiz discusses the old relations of Muslims, Jews and Christians, referring the reasons to their early history.

The recognition of the power of the common people is interesting in al-Jāhiz's judgment, for, in spite of the fact that he rejects their faith, their attitude is taken into great account. This point is illustrated, when al-Jāhiz deals with historical facts, trying to give his own interpretations. In dealing with the question of the prophets and how a new religion starts in any society and how the new messengers draw to their side the people, al-Jāhiz takes into consideration the position of two main classes in the society; a class whom he calls al-Khāṣṣa (Special or élite), and another called al-ʿĀmma (Common).

(1) al-Jāhiz, R. fī'l-Radd ʿala'l-Naṣāra, al-Kāmil, vol. II., p. 169; Thalāth., (Finkel), p. 17.

It is obvious that the élite are the leaders of the common, but the position of the former ones is dependent on the attitude of the latter. Therefore, in order to gain a good support, the new messenger has to appeal to the common first. al-Jāhiz maintains that the new messenger starts by appealing to the common people, through practising the same craft which is most popular among them, and which is mainly practised by their special leaders. In this way, the messenger appeals to the common and beats the élite, by showing skill in the same craft which they practise. Moses used magic, in order to divert the interest of the common people from their chiefs and rulers who used to practise magic. The same was with Jesus, at whose time⁽¹⁾ "the most common practice among his people and special scholars", al-Jāhiz says, "was medicine. The common people used to exalt them. God sent him, therefore, to bring the dead to life, because their (i.e. the scholars') purpose was to cure the sick and the born-blind.. and if the special class were gained in obedience and defeated by proofs, and realised the difference between the weakness

(1) al-Jāhiz, R. fī Ḥujaj al-nubuwwa, al-Kāmil, vol. II., p. 111; also Rasā'il., (Sandūbī), p. 145.

and power, and the difference between a trick and a proof, it would be more gaining over the common and they would be more inclined to have no doubt left..⁽¹⁾" The same question, according to al-Jāhiz, was with Muḥammed, who gained the hearts of the men in power and men of knowledge through eloquence and good speech, which were highly esteemed among his people.⁽²⁾ Naturally, "whenever the Special people are⁽³⁾ mentioned, the common are to follow".

It may be suggested that al-Jāhiz tends to give the power and leadership in the society to the men of knowledge and scholars, in whom the power of reason is represented. As to how al-Jāhiz approaches this point, it need be discussed at length, without ignoring the actual conditions of his own time. The power of reason has a special significance in al-Jāhiz's discussion of the question of power in the society.

(1) al-Jāhiz, R. fī Ḥujaj al-nubuwwa, al-Kāmil., vol. II., 113; Rasā'il., (Sandūbī), p. 146.

(2) Ibid.

(3) Ibid.

The Power of Reason:

The rational belief, according to al-Jāhiz, as well as the whole Mu'tazilite doctrine, is a quality of men of knowledge and scholars. al-Jāhiz maintains that the knowledge of theology, fundamental principles, interpretation of religion and avoiding innovation and, above all, studying the arguments of reason, do not exist except (1) among scholars. The interesting point in al-Jāhiz's conception of the faith does not lie in this distinction itself, as much as in the fact that he tries to give it more a practical estimation. The importance of the rational believers is not limited within matters concerning the faith only, but the faith is only one way of confirming the position and power which the rational element should obtain in the society.

The leadership of the special class to the common is very important in al-Jāhiz's social attitude and social analysis. His great ambition for the class of scholars is expressed frequently in his writing. The pos-

(1) al-Jāhiz, K. al-'Uthmānīya, (1955), p. 17.

ition of the common people is important and their support is needed, al-Jāhiz says: "... as for the refuse of men and the lower people, they are only weapons of the leaders and productive members for the masters..⁽¹⁾" The happiness of mankind, however, rests in the harmony between these two classes; "the good of the world and the perfection of life", al-Jāhiz says, "lie in the good management of the élite and the obedience of the common. It is the same as the general good and the obtaining of perfection which lie in the correct aim of the soul and the obedience of the senses, for if the soul obtained every hope and reached every aim and if it opened every mystery and stirred every concealed (matter) and the tongue did not obey it with good speech and the hand with good writing, the existence of that discovered matter and non-existence, in spite of its great importance, would be the same. Therefore, the élite are in need for the common as much as the common are in need for them..⁽²⁾"

The élite are, usually, a minority in any community.

(1) al-Jāhiz, K. al-‘Uthmāniya, p. 18.

(2) Ibid., pp. 251-2.

"The chosen people of any time", al-Jāḥiẓ says, "whatever big their number is, are less than the common, although they are more knowledgeable..⁽¹⁾" The position of the élite is dependent on the support of the common, who are the majority. The existence of the élite, in al-Jāḥiẓ's view, is important and necessary, for "if the common knew of their religion and secular affairs what the special know, the common would become special and all distinction in knowledge and difference in ability would disappear..⁽²⁾" The difference between people in ability and knowledge, according to al-Jāḥiẓ, is as natural as the difference between them in function, duty, choice and need, which God has designed in order to make life easy..⁽³⁾ The similarity between people equal in position, would lead, according to al-Jāḥiẓ, to competition and, ultimately, to destruction. This is true, he says, among ordinary people, as well as kings..⁽⁴⁾ The best man for power is distinguished, above all, by the quality of reason, al-Jāḥiẓ says: "and if it is said, what is the

(1) al-Jāḥiẓ, R. fī Istiḥqāq al-'Imāma, Rasā'il, (Sandūbī), p. 244.

(2) al-Jāḥiẓ, K. al-'Uthmāniya, p. 256.

(3) al-Jāḥiẓ, al-Ḥayawān, vol. I., pp. 42-4.

(4) al-Jāḥiẓ, R. fī Istiḥqāq., Rasā'il, (Sandūbī), p. 258.

description of the best man, we would say: It is that his strongest qualities should be his reason, then he should relate the power of reason with a power of discrimination and great amount of study, and strengthen that by good habit. If he combines to his good reason (the quality of) knowledge and to his knowledge, good control and to this, a will, he is then the one who cannot be outpassed.⁽¹⁾ Reason, according to al-Jāḥiẓ, is the agent of God among mankind.⁽²⁾ But reason should be strengthened by knowledge and practice; "the natural gift of reason and instinctive high qualities", al-Jāḥiẓ says, could not reach the stage of perfection, without the help of the acquired quality of reason.⁽³⁾

It is natural that any break in the harmony of the two classes, the élite and the common, is to be attributed to the irrational element. The common people may break their relation with the leaders, just as the senses may do with the soul in the body. al-Jāḥiẓ says: "The senses and the common people, although they are employed

(1) al-Jāḥiẓ, R. fī Istiḥqāq., Rasā'il, (Sandūbī), p. 259.

(2) al-Jāḥiẓ, R. fī'l-Ma'ād., Majmū'., (Kraus-Ḥājirī), p. 2.

(3) Ibid., p. 5; also al-Ḥayawān, vol. IV., p. 71. The influence of Aristotle, on this point, seems to be strong.

and managed, may stop for some reason that interferes or accident that sends them off or lack of means, like the hand, struck by paralysis or the tongue by dumbness; the soul cannot correct them and put them right, even if it may have a strong will and a good dealing and kindness. So are the common people, when they are broken loose and stirred, and when they are overcome by passion and foolishness, in spite of the good management of the élite and the carefulness of the leaders..⁽¹⁾" The irrational power of body is the same as the irrational power of the society.

al-Jāhiz makes a reference to the antagonism between the two powers in his own time. It is interesting to see that the helplessness of the élite in face of the common, which is expressed by al-Jāhiz, is accompanied by his regret and careful hopefulness. al-Jāhiz seems to be trying to cope with the principle that reason has the priority in power, on one hand, and the actual conditions of Islamic society, where the common people rebelled and rushed into action. He expresses his hope with careful consideration of their own attitude, In his letter to Muḥammed b.

(1) al-Jāhiz, K. al-Uthmāniya, p. 251.

'Aḥmad b. 'Abī Du'ād al-'Ayādī, al-Jāḥiẓ says: "... The common people, may God save you, were they scattered, their problem would have been much easier and the period of their rising much shorter. If they had a chief who is skilful, obeyed and with good management, and a responsible leader, then all ambitions would be abolished, the right would cease to exist and the rightful would be killed..., but as much as we fear them, we have hope in them, and as much as we avoid them, we are covetous of them..."⁽¹⁾ The power which lies in the impetuous character of the common people, according to al-Jāḥiẓ, is less responsible and more destructive than other powers. This power becomes greater, when it is controlled by a leadership that directs it. al-Jāḥiẓ relates sayings attributed to earlier authorities on this point. 'Alī b. 'Abī Ṭālib is reported to have said: "We seek refuge in God, from people who, while gathering, cannot be controlled and if scattered, cannot be recognized." Wāṣil b. 'Aṭā' said: "They will never gather, without causing offence, but while scattered, they are more useful," Wāṣil says, be-

(1) al-Jāḥiẓ, R. fī Nafi al-tashbīh, MS., Damad, 949., fol. 2a; see also al-Mashriq, (1953), vol. III., p. 283 sq.

cause, "the potter would go back to his work, the weaver to his weaving, the sailor to his sailing, the goldsmith to his business and every man to his work, and in all this there is benefit to Muslim (community), and help to the needy..⁽¹⁾"

al-Jāḥiẓ admits the fact that the Traditionists, whom he calls the anthropomorphists, were popular among the common people, but as a Muṣṭazilite, he condemns them and thinks that they have misled the people.⁽²⁾ This is natural, because al-Jāḥiẓ believes that the rightful leaders of the community were the rational believers who, according to him, are the Muṣṭazilites themselves. In his discussions, this feeling is strongly expressed, he says: "... and I say and confirm this (saying) with argument and seek refuge in God from talking nonsense or not telling the truth, or saying what I do not do, I say: But for the theologians, the common folk of all nations had perished, but for the Muṣṭazilites⁽³⁾ the common folk of all Muslim sects had perished.." The

(1) al-Jāḥiẓ, R. fī Nafī al-tashbīh, fol. 2a.

(2) Ibid.

(3) al-Jāḥiẓ, al-Ḥayawān, vol. IV., p. 206; see also Tritton, Muslim theology, p. 79.

right of the Muṣṭazilites to leadership was deserved by them, because, according to al-Jāḥiẓ, unlike other sects, the Muṣṭazilites did not imitate, but consulted the reason, which is the rightful path to the truth. (1) The theologians who deserve the leadership of the people are not only those who occupied themselves with matters of the worship and faith, without looking into the problems which are closer to the life and nature of people, for "the worship does not bewilder or cause foolishness, except to those who prefer solitude and loose contact with people and (leave) the association with men of knowledge; that was why they became so stupid that no chief or 'Imām will become even out of the best worshipper among them..". (2)

It is significant to point out, however, that there is hardly any idealisation in al-Jāḥiẓ's conception of power. The philosopher king in Plato's Republic had no significance in al-Jāḥiẓ's view. It is interesting that al-Jāḥiẓ realises the practical side of power, it is not

(1) al-Jāḥiẓ, Khalq al-Qur'ān, al-Kāmil., vol. II., p. 143.

(2) al-Jāḥiẓ, al-Bayān., vol. II., pp. 240-1.

abstract knowledge that makes of the scholar a man of authority. Reason should be backed by practical knowledge which enables man to deal with people; "the right man," al-Jāhiz says, "is he who combines the fulfillment of the (idea (1) of) Unity (of God) and giving natures their right function." As for those who were respected and followed by the common people, without being qualified for leadership, al-Jāhiz (2) says, they are false scholars and are misleading the people.

al-Jāhiz, however, realises the difficulty of putting the power of reason into practice. The following question is important in this connection: What will happen if the power is not in the hands of the rational believers ?

This question, although in a slightly different form, was in fact, discussed by the Mu'tazilites themselves. It is illustrated in the question put by the Mu'tazilites: (Whether the good believer should, or should not, take action against the despotic 'Imām). Their attitudes towards the

(1) al-Jāhiz, al-ḥayawān, vol. II., p. 134.

(2) al-Jāhiz, Faṣl mā bayn al-ʿAdāwa wa'l-ḥasad, Majmūʿ., (Kraus-Hājirī), p. 101.

(1)
question varied according to their schools and teachings.
It is interesting, in this connection, that al-Jāhiz makes the distinction between the learned men and the men in power. al-Jāhiz refers to former generations, where scholars, according to him, acted as the transferers of culture and responsible leaders of studies and education, he says: "There was no time in the passing generations, without the rightful scholars who read books of former generations and studied them with the men of their time. So, they were able to write books on various subjects of science and arts for their own generation and the generations to follow (in order) to become nearer to those who had grace upon them, for the knowledge which God had made in them, by which they are distinguished from the others.."⁽²⁾ The scholars, here, appear in a special position in the society which, in fact, reflects clearly their actual position in the 'Abbasid society itself. But, according to al-Jāhiz, there may appear a class of envious ignorant people who pretend to be the

(1) see about this point, Albēre N. Nādir, *Falsafat al-Mu'tazila*, vol. II., pp. 156-9.

(2) al-Jāhiz, *Faṣl mā bayn al-'Adāwa.*, *Majmū'*, (Kraus-Ḥājirī), pp. 100-1

real scholars and may "draw the hearts of the weak common people and the ignorant kings to their side, and the enemies of the real scholars support them, in order to satisfy the common people..⁽¹⁾" al-Jāḥiẓ's bitterness is a justification of the Mu'tazilites' position under the 'Abbasid Caliphate. This is shown also in a private letter which al-Jāḥiẓ wrote in (Condemnation of Time), and which is very similar in tone and spirit to the epistles of 'Ikhwān al-Ṣafā later.⁽²⁾

When the Mu'tazilites were enjoying the brightest period of their power, al-Jāḥiẓ reflects a different attitude towards the ruling power; in some of his letters, al-Jāḥiẓ maintains that the learned men, writers, poets and good speakers ought to cooperate with the men in power, while those look after the prosperity and well-being of the people. al-Jāḥiẓ addresses Muḥammed b. 'Aḥmad b. 'Abī Du'ād al-'Ayādī, who was himself pro-Mu'tazilite, saying: "... was it not for the responsibility of the community, which was invested upon you and the management of the affairs of the special and common and that being pre-occupied with

(1) al-Jāḥiẓ, Faṣl mā bayn al-'Adāwa, Majmū'., (Kraus-Hājirī), p. 101.

(2) al-Jāḥiẓ, Rasā'il, (Sandūbī).., pp. 310-11.

preserving their rights and protecting them, did not leave you spare strength for disputes or writing books on questions and refutations, it would have been your own duty and you would have been more rightful for this matter. However, we never spoke but in your own tongues and never followed but your example and did not gain power except through what you have lent us of your own power. Therefore, all speaking men of letters and eloquent speakers should cooperate with you, help you and support you..⁽¹⁾" It is true that al-Jāhiz puts the learned men, here, in a second place to those in power, but it is by no means maintained that their service is dispensable.

al-Jāhiz, therefore, accepts the fact that the power of reason is not always a leading power, and the rational party are not always the most powerful and that they may be even thrown into the background for the sake of false scholars. They may have to cooperate with the ruling power for their common cause.

The emphasis laid by al-Jāhiz on the power of

(1) al-Jāhiz, R. fī Nafī al-tashbīh, fol. 4b.

reason and the leadership of the rational minority in the society seems to have been a recognition and a confirmation of the rights of the educated middle class, represented, in al-Jāhiz's opinion, by the theologians, at his time, his own party the Mu'tazilites.

al-Jāhiz's characteristic method of thinking manifests itself most significantly in the attempt he makes to compromise between rational principles, on one hand, and social facts as they stand in the actual conditions of society, on the other. Therefore, his effort, as far as this aspect is concerned, cannot be said to have resulted in a theory or a system of philosophy, although his remarks are most significant and genuine, especially on analysis of historical and social facts. Later on, the importance of this way of thinking appears in the philosophy of history, founded by Ibn Khaldūn.

Chapter Four

KITĀB AL-BUKHĀLĀ'

Avarice In Society and Literature:

Avarice, as a subject of writing, was not initiated by al-Jāhiz, neither was he the last writer to deal with it. However, although the idea existed in the mind of Islamic society and in spite of the number of misers and their current stories, al-Jāhiz says that there were only two who cared to write on the subject. Those were Sahl b. Hārūn and 'Abū 'Abdu'l-Raḥmān al-Thaurī. al-Jāhiz himself adopts the two characters into his own book. The epistle of Sahl on avarice forms the beginning of al-Jāhiz's Bukhālā'. 'Abū 'Abdu'l-Raḥmān al-Thaurī is one of the richest misers in the

(1) see about his life and avarice, Ibn Khallikān, Wafayāt., (1838), vol. I., p. 260; also E. I.

(2) see al-Ḥājirī's comments, al-Bukhālā', (1948), p. 323.

(3) pp. 7-12.

(1)
book of al-Jāḥiẓ. However, in considering this point, al-Jāḥiẓ may have been thinking only about his own time, and those whom he came across, for 'Ibn al-Nadīm mentions a book on avarice written by al-Madā'inī. (2) al-Jāḥiẓ relates some of his stories on the authority of the latter, as well as on the authority of al-'Aṣma'ī and 'Abū 'Ubayda, but the number of stories he copied from them did not amount, according to him, to more than "a few tens". (3) It should be pointed out too that many of the stories in Kitāb al-Bukhalā' were, in fact, current in society.

Besides the short chapters which were written by various writers of all times on the question of avarice, (4) al-Khaṭīb al-Baghdādī, in the beginning of the 5th century A.H., (5) wrote another book on misers, to which he gave the same title

(1) al-Bukhalā', (1948), pp. 91-100.

(2) al-Fihrist, (Flügel), vol. I., p. 104.

(3) al-Bukhalā', (1948), p. 135.

(4) see 'Ibn Qutayba, 'Uyūn., vol. III., pp. 233-65; al-Bayhaqī, al-Maḥāsin., vol. II., p. 270; al-Tha'ālibī, in al-Muqaddasī, al-Laṭā'if., pp. 55-6; al-'Abshīhī, al-Mustaṭraf., (1330-, pp. 157-62.

(5) see about him, Yāqūt, Irshād., vol. I., p. 246.

as al-Jāhiz's book, Kitāb al-Bukhālā'⁽¹⁾. The main concern of the writer is to condemn avarice as irreligious and immoral, although he follows the same way as al-Jāhiz's in relating anecdotes and short stories.

The question is: How did the topic grow in Islamic literature and what significance did it have in the life of people that made it a subject of literary writing ?

Before going into details of this question, one cannot ignore the fact that avarice is a universal topic in literature. Long before the time of al-Jāhiz, avarice appears in Greek literature. Plautus, the Greek playwright, seems to have been the first who adopted the subject into drama.⁽²⁾ His play, the Aulularia (or the pot of gold), formed a pattern for all who made the character of the miser, later, a subject of playwrighting.⁽³⁾ The basic plot and theme of Plautus's play were slightly varied by his followers. The

(1) Br. Mus. MS., no. Or.3139. The MS. is in six volumes 59 fols. It starts with traditions attributed to the Prophet, condemning avarice.

(2) Plautus was born about 255 B.C., see Paul Nixon, Plautus's works, (1910), introd., vol. I., p. 5.

(3) see H. Fielding, The Miser, introd., p. 6.

significance of gold and its effect on the morals of the miser, especially in connection with family relations, is shown by all writers. There are critics who are inclined to believe that Moliere portrays, in his famous *l'Avare*, the traditional French sacred notion of family life which was endangered by the material influence of gold and "whatever endangers the security of the family is to be denounced and exposed as a lesson..⁽¹⁾" Moreover, it is believed that Moliere's play is, in fact, determinedly a study of avarice, although he relieved it with scenes of genuine comedy.⁽²⁾ This, however, does not change the fact that Moliere, as well as many other writers had Plautus's play as a model.

On the other hand, as early as the time of the Roman satirist Juvenal, the subject of avarice was reflected in literary writings and dealt with as a problem. Juvenal was born about the second half of the first century A.D. "at some time during the last years of Nero's reign, or shortly after his death..⁽³⁾" The details of the Roman life

(1) see B. Mathews, *Moliere, his life and his works*, (1910), p. 251.

(2) see A. Tilley, *Moliere*, (1921), pp. 201-2.

(3) The date of his birth is given between 55-72 A.D., see Juvenal, *Satires*, introd., by A. F. Cole.

are depicted in his satires. "Juvenal castigates with the lash of his satire", Carcopino says, "the miser who (pinches the bellies of his slaves)⁽¹⁾, the gambler who flings away a fortune on a throw of the dice and (has no shirt to give a shivering slave)⁽²⁾, the coquette who loses her temper, storms and takes out her ill humour on the unoffending backs of her maids..⁽³⁾" Juvenal treats the subject of avarice, among other subjects of the Roman life, as a serious problem which, according to him, was the responsibility of the parents towards their children, for "avarice", he says, "is not natural to children, but they acquire it by lessons, and eventually become more proficient than their teachers, the mad desire of money leads them to folly, discomfort, crime; any means will serve, so long as the end is attained, yet the end is unsatisfying and exacting..⁽⁴⁾"

The subject of avarice is, therefore, universal in all literatures. This, however, does not prevent the fact that each literature has its own characteristics in this.

(1) Juvenal, Satires, no. XIV., 126; VI., 475-84; I., 92.

(2) Ibid., no. I., 192.

(3) J. Carcopino, Daily life in ancient Rome, (1914), p. 58.

(4) Juvenal, Satires, (A. F. Cole), no. XIV.

One of the most interesting explanations given of the question of avarice in Islamic literature, with a special reference to al-Jāhiz himself, which would be discussed here with some details, is that which is given by ⁽¹⁾ Ṭāhā al-Ḥājirī, in the introduction of al-Jāhiz's Bukhalā'. al-Ḥājirī attributes the reason of the great growing interest of Islamic society in the subject of avarice, mainly to political and racial disputes; that is to say the dispute between political parties, on one hand, and Arabs and non-Arabs, on the other. The 'Abbasids attacked the 'Umayyads and called them misers, the writers followed the desire of the rulers and dedicated their flattery to them, condemning their opponents. The non-Arabs despised the ideals of the Arab life and criticised the baseless boasting of the Arabs. A quotation of al-Ḥājirī will be interesting to show his point of view: "... On the other path stand the propagandists of the existing government and those scholars and men of letters who have put themselves at the service of the ruler and decided to follow the same road as he does. Amongst these, were the defenders and partisans of the Arab cause, like al-'Aṣma'ī; while certain others were more sympathetic

(1) al-Bukhalā', (1948), edited by al-Ḥājirī, introd., pp. 9-41

to the Shu'ūbiya, like al-Mada'inī. The argument in favour of the ruling power was not far removed from the argument in favour of the Shu'ūbiya; there were close links between them, even though the latter had taken on a special colour of its own..⁽¹⁾" One may put al-Ḥājirī's points as follows:

1. The rejection of non-Arabs of the Arab life and morals and the refutation of the idea that the Arabs were actually as generous as they described. Works were written to praise avarice by non-Arab writers, on one hand, and refutations of these works were written by Arab writers who condemned it. This was racial, as well as political, antagonism.
2. The second reason is merely political; the disputes among parties in which writers of 'Abbasid tendencies or under 'Abbasid influence, attributed to the 'Umayyads and their governors qualities which were condemned by the Arabs and qualified them as misers.

al-Ḥājirī's interpretation is one of the most interesting explanations of this question and it is, indeed, to a certain extent, true. The clash between the Arabs and

(1) al-Jāḥiẓ, al-Bukhalā', (1948), introd., p. 18.

non-Arabs, on one hand, and the 'Abbasids and the 'Umayyads, on the other, did exist and did have a great effect on the literature of the time. As to what degree of influence this antagonism had on this aspect of literature, it should not be exaggerated. Apart from the fact that ~~it was~~ a universal subject in literature, avarice is a question that is closely related to the life of man, in connection with his wealth and property. In order to understand this problem, therefore, one has to take social and economic development in the society into great consideration.

One of the interesting characteristics of the 'Abbasid society, which cannot be ignored, is what one may call the characteristic of money-consciousness⁽¹⁾. It is interesting to see, for instance, that a middle class man was pleased to be described as a miser, so long as the description⁽²⁾ implies, according to him, the possession of wealth. The rich miser, on the other hand, protected his wealth and

(1) see later pages of this chapter too.

(2) see al-Jāhiz, al-Bukhalā', (1948), the story of al-Ḥizāmī, pp. 52-7. The same saying is attributed by al-Dimashqī to a merchant, see al-Ishāra 'ila mahāsin tijāra, p. 67.

was always under the illusion that the poor people were anxious to ruin his life. al-Dārdarīshī, a man with immense wealth, was asked why he hated the beggars who asked him charity; he replied: "Yes, for the majority of those whom you see, are better off than me", and "all of them, had they been able (to get hold) of my house, they would have pulled it down, and my life, they would have taken away. If I obeyed them and gave them all they asked, I would have become like them long ago⁽¹⁾." It is significant to see that al-Jāhiz pictures the miser and the common man as two antagonistic powers, one is niggard in his wealth and the other is urging and begging. In the epistle attributed by al-Jāhiz to 'Abu'l- 'Āṣ b. 'Abdu'l-Wahhāb al-Thaqafī, they are pictured as follows: "... the common people never slackened in their demands, and the monopolists and misers in no way abated their own efforts, nor did they spare their ability (towards their end) and they showed no shortage of avarice and niggardness... the miser (in this respect, therefore,) is most industrious and in no way does the common man abate in his efforts. Anyone who does not resist what we have described with strong character, resolute desire and true

(1) al-Jāhiz, al-Bukhalā' , p. 121.

insight, must be either a common man or a wretched miser..⁽¹⁾"

As a result of the development of economic and social life in Islamic society, changes in the social structure of classes, differences and social relations emerged. Therefore, in order to understand the antagonism between various measures, it is necessary to take material progress into great consideration. The characteristic difficulty which emerged in Islamic town life and which has a great relevance to this discussion was how to bring together, and compromise between, principles and ideals of different origins; Arab ideals, Islamic principles and the new cultures and philosophies of various elements, within the frame of that material progress. Examples may be taken to illustrate this point:

In Islamic town, no doubt, wealth constituted the back-bone of economic life. Neither trade, nor any other activity could be carried out without the necessary capital. Islam, practically, did not discourage trade, although immense wealth was not approved of.⁽²⁾ Rules in Islam against the

(1) al-Jāhiz, al-Bukhalā', p. 148.

(2) see the discussion on trade in the second chapter of this thesis pp. 143-44.

accumilation of wealth, if regarded, would have been strong enough to hinder trade on a large scale. Usury is prohibited in Islam,⁽¹⁾ a fact which may have stood in the face of the business of bankers.⁽²⁾ The Zakat, although a voluntary tax, would have been another difficulty, but it gradually grew unimportant. According to the Arab ideals, prosperous men were expected to be generous and hospitable. This in itself, if followed strictly, would have caused the ruin of the capital of merchants. It was, therefore, not in the interest of the merchants, whose trade depended mainly on their own capital, to spend their money in actions of hospitality. One of the ways to escape criticism, however, was to pay the sum of the Zakat, in order to satisfy the public opinion; the saying was common that people should protect their money through the payment of the Zakāt, it was said: "Protect your money by the Zakāt and escape the waves of evil by means of prayers."⁽³⁾ al-Jāhiz portrays the character of the miser, in connection with almsgiving, with intended exaggeration. He

(1) see Qur'ān, chapter II., verse 275, 276, 278; III., 130; IV., 161; XXX., 39.

(2) see, about early Islamic times, Ṣālih A. al-ʿAlī, al-Tanzīmāt., p. 184 sq., and about ʿAbbasid times, see al-Dūrī, Tārīkh., pp. 111-12.

(3) al-Jāhiz, al-Bayān., vol. III., p. 157.

talks about a miser from Khurasān who heard al-Ḥasan preaching people to spend in almsgiving and promising them the reward of God. The miser went and spent all his money, in the hope that the reward was going to be soon, but was greatly disappointed when he gained nothing. His reproach to al-Ḥasan was most bitter, he goes to the extreme of accusing the latter of robbing his money and blames himself for listening to him.⁽¹⁾

The idea of generosity was, of course, accepted by Islam; "he who can avoid the stinginess of his own self is among the winners."⁽²⁾ Islam went so far as to expect generosity even from the needy.⁽³⁾ Therefore, those who held back their money and hospitality in general, received severe attacks. In al-Baṣra, merchants received much criticism not only because they were rich, but because they were, unlike the merchants of Quraysh, as al-Jāḥiẓ says, not hospitable. al-Jāḥiẓ reflects the attitude of society towards the merchants, in the treatise written about them.⁽⁴⁾ Merchants

(1) al-Jāḥiẓ, al-Bukhālā', p. 22.

(2) Qur'ān, chapter III., verse 180; IV., 37; IX., 76; also al-Iqd., vol. I., p. 263.

(3) see a chapter written by Ibn 'Abd Rabbih on (Generosity in spite of need), al-Iqd., vol. I., pp. 273-6.

(4) Majmū'., (Sacy), pp. 155-6; also Br. Mus. MS., fol. 203a sq.

were described as very niggard and miser and that no good
(1)
should be expected from them. This, however, seems to have
been met with a counter attack by the merchants themselves.
We hear of sayings attributed to the merchants of Quraysh,
justifying the attitude of merchants, that generosity was
not everything among the virtues of man; a man from Quraysh
is supposed to have said: "We Quraysh, all, do not consider
clemency and generosity an honour, but consider chastity and
(2)
protection of money a manliness."

In Islamic town, the Arabs were not the only
element who enjoyed the privilege of wealth and of running
the machinery of economic life. In fact, the non-Arabs were
running the financial activities in the town long before
Islam. The Arabs who conquered the territories did not show
much interest in the beginning, in these activities. The
Mawālī, on the other hand, were able to assert their pos-
ition through wealth and through leading these ~~a~~activities.
The position which they enjoyed through being rich is, there-
fore, significant. 'Abū Sa'īd al-Madā'ini, one of the chara-

(1) see al-Muqaddasī, *Yawāqīt.*, (1300 A.H.), p. 28; also al-
Baghdādī, *'al-Bukhalā'*, Br. Mus. MS., vol. III., fol. 30a.

(2) al-'Iqd., (1898), vol. I., p. 157.

acters of al-Jāhiz in al-Bukhalā', who was a Mawlā, was a money-dealer in al-Baṣra and was aware of the fact that, were⁽¹⁾ it not for his money, people might have insulted him.

As for the old Persian traditional families, it is clear that they preserved their rights as the upper class of people. "In Persia", 'Ibn Ḥauqal says, "there is a beautiful tradition and a custom like a virtue among them, in favouring people of old families who still inherit the posts of the⁽²⁾ Dīwāns from old days till nowadays." It is also significant to see that, in 'Abbasid town, blood relations and family ties did not have as much significance as relations of power and wealth, among townspeople, although it may have retained its character among dwellers of the desert. al-'Aṣma'ī relates a story about the Caliph al-Mahdī, who went on pilgrimage and came across a beduin Arab who complained to him that the father of his beloved did not want to marry him to her, because he was not of a pure Arab blood. The Caliph is said to have smiled at him and told him that all the brothers of the⁽³⁾ Caliph himself were not purely Arabs. What this story sig-

(1) al-Jāhiz, al-Bukhalā', pp. 128-9.

(2) 'Ibn Ḥauqal, al-Masālik., pp. 205-6.

(3) see 'Ibn Qayim al-Jawziya, 'Akḥbār al-Nisā', p. 121.

nifies may be more important than the authenticity it bears. Besides the idea that purity of blood grew unimportant in the 'Abbasid townlife, it may indicate too that the mixture of descent crept even into the desert. From amongst the misers of al-Jāhiz, examples can be seen where family ties meant nothing besides the importance of wealth and property. al-Dārdarīshī can be remembered again in this connection. He threatened his brother of cutting his relations with him, if the latter continued on offering his friends food and spending money, which he happened to share with him, on that. (1) Khālawayh the beggar advises his son to save his money not out of love for him, but, as he himself puts it, out of his (2) hatred for the judges and deceiving people.

Besides differences of classes, another differences may be taken into consideration, in this connection; it is the difference between the town and the desert. The life of privation and poverty in the desert seems to have received very little change. al-Jāhiz reports, on the authority of 'Abū'l-Hasan al-Madā'inī, the following incident:

(1) al-Jāhiz, al-Bukhalā', pp. 121-22.

(2) Ibid., p. 41. see also about bribery among the judges etc., al-'Abshihī, al-Mustatraf., (1330 A.H.), pp. 92-4.

"After the prayers of the afternoon, in the year 153 (A. H.), I heard in the cathedral mosque of al-Baṣra a (beduin) Arab saying: We are children of the road and people whom travel on roads has weakened and people routed by a year of scarcity. Be charitable to us, for nothing is too little for the reward and no one is too rich to do without God ('s favour) and there is no chance (of acting) after death. By God, we are standing in this manner with bitter breasts and heavy hearts."⁽¹⁾ The significance of this story does not lie in how much truth it bears, but rather in what it indicates. The poverty of the dwellers of the desert is often referred to by al-Jāḥiẓ in his writing. In al-Ḥayawān, al-Jāḥiẓ talks about the food of the 'A'rāb, which goes down to the meanest animals.⁽²⁾ The morals and ideals of the beduins are discussed by narrators to show how little influence Islam had on their character.⁽³⁾ Stories are related, on the other hand, about the beduins who came to town and were dazzled

(1) al-Jāḥiẓ, al-Bayān., vol. II., p. 80.

(2) vol. III., p. 526.

(3) see stories in al-'Abshihī, al-Mustaṭraf., (1331), vol. II., p. 215.

by the luxury and new manners in which townspeople lived.⁽¹⁾
al-Jāhiz says that there is nothing more amusing to his own
taste than listening to a conversation between two beduin
⁽²⁾
Arabs. The taste, as well as the way of life, of the town
was different from that of the desert. Social manners and
other conceptions of life, naturally, follow. This point
will be discussed, at some length, in connection with the
question of hospitality and table manners, later, which are
important in al-Bukhalā'.

The antagonism between morals and ideals of various
groups, therefore, followed not only their political in-
terests and racial differences, but also, and perhaps more
distinctly, their status, classes and social background.
One of the interesting features of Islamic literature at
this time, which illustrates this clash of ideals and meas-
ures, is the literature of (Beauties and Antithesis), which
tends to show the beauty of one idea, such as avarice,
poverty, generosity, knowledge etc., then turns to show its
defects, making judgments from two different points of

(1) al- 'Abshihī, al-Mustatraf., (1331), vol. I., p. 161.

(2) al-Jāhiz, al-Hayawān, vol. III., p. 5.

(1)
view. It may be interesting to see that one of these works,
which may have been the earliest of them all, is attributed
(2)
to al-Jāhiz himself. This literature seems to illustrate
a significant feature of Islamic society at this time; the
fact that various cultures and philosophies were absorbed
within the society and found expression through literature.
It is interesting to examine an example of these differences:

The term (al-Murū'a) is one of the most difficult
to define and limit. My purpose, here, is to show how dif-
ferent measures of town life found expression through this
term. al-Jāhiz himself gives the example to show differences
between people in thinking, which, according to him, is de-
cided by their craft and status in society; he says: "It was
said to someone: What is Murū'a ?; he said: Cleanliness of
the body and good deeds. It was said to Muḥammad b. 'Imrān:
What is Murū'a ?; he replied: It is that you do not do any-
thing in secret which you feel ashamed of in public.. al-
'Aḥnaf said: It is chastity and profession.. 'Abū Hurayra was
asked: What is Murū'a ?; he said: Fear of God, good deeds

(1) Works called al-Maḥāsin wa'l-'Aḍḍād or wa'l-Masāwī', see
Ibn Qutayba, 'Uyūn., vol. I., pp. 239-50; al-Bayhaqī,
al-Maḥāsin., also al-Tha'ālibī, in al-Muqaddasī, al-
Latā'if.,

(2) Published as al-Maḥāsin wa'l-'Aḍḍād, Leyde (1898), also
as al-Maḥāsin wa'l-Masāwī', (1926).

and supper in the in the open space (i.e. hospitality).⁽¹⁾
 There is no need to say that the difference between these people in defining the term does not arise from individual differences, but one finds a mixture of Islamic principles, Arab ideals and other conceptions of town life, all, reflected in these definitions.⁽²⁾

The question of avarice and generosity received much argument and disagreement. Avarice, which was considered as economy in the opinion of some people, was, in fact, a safeguard against turns of fortune and insecurity of life, a characteristic remarkable in the 'Abbasid society of the time. Therefore, "saving what is in your own hand is better than asking charity from other people's hands"⁽³⁾ On the other hand, it is understood that deeds of charity and generosity should, ultimately, be followed by thanks and gratitude of the given person. This, however, was not universally accepted in the

(1) al-Jāhiz, al-Bayān., vol. II., p. 136; also al-Washshā', al-Muwashshā, vol. I., pp. 30-33; about al-Murū'a, see Ibn Qutayba, 'Uyūn., vol. I., pp. 225, 296; al-Tha'ālibī, Mir'āt al-murū'āt, (Cairo-1898), al-'Iqd., (1293), vol. I., p. 221

(2) see about al-Murū'a, the following references: I. Goldziher, Moham. Stud., vol. I., pp. 1-40; Bichr Farēs, art. al-Murū'a, E.I., Suppl., (1938), pp. 157-8.

(3) al-Muqaddasī, al-Laṭā'if., p. 55; Ibn Qutayba, 'Uyūn., vol. I., p. 331 sq.

'Abbasid society. Among some of the lower classes, we find a tendency against this rule of morals. al-Jāhiz tells us that among the thieves, there were those who believed that the Zakāt was an absolute right of the poor man and that they themselves deserved it. Therefore, when the merchants stopped giving it, they took it by force and justified their action as legal and right.⁽¹⁾ This attitude was, naturally, against the traditional conception of gratitude. The common saying, which is even expressed in the Qur'ān, is that who-⁽²⁾ ever thanks will get more. A man in al-Kūfa who was asked why he was so generous and good to people, answered that he never heard a voice or tune in nature more appealing and appreciated than the praise of a thankful person.⁽³⁾ al-Jāhiz explains the necessity of gratitude and thanks in the fact that it is logical and rational, because, according to him, he who does not thank people will not be able to thank God, for God gives easily, but it is not the same with people, they give with difficulty, therefore, he who gives generously

(1) see al-Tanūkhī, al-Faraj., (1904), vol. II., pp. 106-7

(2) al-Jāhiz, al-Bayān., vol. II., p. 147; al-Iqd., (1898), vol. I., p. 74.

(3) al-Tha'ālibī, Khāṣṣ., (1908), p. 29; also al-Iqd., vol. I., p. 61.

(1)
must be thanked and praised.

In a society like the 'Abbasid at this time, full of various elements and tendencies, one is not surprised to see great disagreements and arguments about measures and ideals. The question of avarice, like many other questions, suffered the same reconsideration. It may have been used as a weapon against one party or the other, but it ^{is} by no means a result of one particular antagonism, it is the result of all these changes together.

Social Manners in Islamic Society:

Before discussing the character of the misers in al-Jāḥiẓ's Bukhalā', it is interesting to consider the question of social manners, especially concerning food, table manners and hospitality, which is most relevant to the question of avarice and al-Jāḥiẓ's characters of the miser. The misers of al-Jāḥiẓ were mainly niggard in food; al-Jāḥiẓ even points out misers who preferred to give a thousand

(1) al-Jāḥiẓ, R. fi'l-Ma'ād., Majmū'., (Kraus-Hājirī), p. 3.

(1)
Dirham than to offer food to a guest.

The question of hospitality and table manners is one of the questions where the mixed character of Islamic society is illustrated. In al-Jāhiz's picture of the miser, one is able to find a mixture of Arab ideals, Islamic principles and Persian manners, all, mixed up together. al-Jāhiz produces amusing pictures of the misers by exaggerating one side of their character on the expense of the others. Exaggeration should be borne in mind as one of the characteristics of al-Jāhiz's art in al-Bukhalā'.

Hospitality, in old Arab society, had its conditions and qualifications, which are observed by both, the host, as well as the guest. A man, who happens to pass by a house of a friend, an acquaintance, or even a stranger, especially during the night, expects to receive a welcome and to be offered shelter and food. It is considered as good manners that the guest, who accepts the shelter, should also accept the food, without making apologies, whether he

(1) al-Jāhiz, al-Bukhalā', p. 136.

(1)
was full or hungry. In the miser, al-Jāhiz shows a contrast of this custom. He describes an incident about a man who knocked at his friend's door, at midnight, and asked him to let him stay till morning in the passage of his door. Instead of letting him in, al-Jāhiz says, " 'Abū Māzin pretended to be drunk and showed him that his silence was caused by drunkenness; he loosened his senses, dropped his tongue and said: drunk, by God, I am, by God, drunk..." (2) al-Jāhiz's exaggeration is, apparently, intended; he says that although the man begged 'Abū Māzin and explained to him that he had already had his supper and was not in need of his food, the latter would not understand; he refused him and slammed the door in his face, thinking that his excuse was made clear. The quality of sheltering a man from the street is praised by Islam too. The misers failed to comply with these principles. A rich miser, in al-Bukhalā', scolds a beggar and threatens to break his leg if he went on asking him charity. (3)
The Arab ideals of hospitality were criticised and considered most impractical for town dwellers. One of the misers of

(1) al- 'Abshihī, al-Mustatraf., (1268), vol. I., p. 219.

(2) al-Jāhiz, al-Bukhalā', p. 33.

(3) Ibid., p. 109.

al-Jāhiz, al-Ḥārithī, condemns the poor Arabian who expects his host to kill a camel for each guest who happens to pass by him, for "if this wretched man would kill a camel for every dog that passes him," al-Ḥārithī says, "to avoid his tongue, before one week passes, he would have to stop the passers-by, asking their charity..⁽¹⁾"

People are expected to ask their friends to their houses. In al-Bukhalā', men are cited as misers not because they did not ask their friends, but because the amount of food they offered was scanty and little.⁽²⁾ It should be pointed out, however, that al-Jāhiz makes exception of people whose life was scanty because they were poor. The people of al-Māzih,⁽³⁾ a place near al-Raqqā, were blamed by some people for their avarice. al-Jāhiz says: "... but the people of al-Māzih are not known by avarice, although they are the worst of all people in (their) conditions (of life), so their estimation follows their life..⁽⁴⁾"

(1) al-Jāhiz, al-Bukhalā', p. 64.

(2) Ibid., pp. 108-9.

(3) Ibid., al-Ḥājirī's comments, p. 333.

(4) Ibid., p. 110.

Generosity requires that the amount of food should exceed the number of eaters. Bread has the priority in this. Bread appears to have been one of the most highly esteemed types of food. al-Ghazālī explains this in the fact that life depends on it and that it helps to give strength to the worshippers. (1) In al-Bukhālā', men are blamed because of the shortage of bread on their table. al-Jāhiz cites a man with the misers, because the bread which he offered was of the same number as the eaters, in spite of the fact that the food was carefully prepared and neatly laid down. (2) Another miser is described as a niggard, he would rather see a person break the rules of religion than seeing him breaking the second loaf of bread. (3) Muḥammed b. al-Mu'ammil, one of the characters of al-Jāhiz, used to spend a lot of money on the food of his guests to make it good. al-Jāhiz, however, blames him and even talks to him personally, saying: "people consider him whose bread is little.. a miser" (4) The ground of the table should not be exposed to the eyes of eaters, but should be covered with bread. Muḥammed b. al-Mu'ammil

(1) see 'Iḥyā', (al-Ḥalabī), vol. II., p. 4.

(2) al-Jāhiz, al-Bukhālā', p. 47.

(3) Ibid., p. 146.

(4) Ibid., p. 82.

replies to al-Jāhiz's advice that he thought it better not to show the eaters too much food on the table, because that would put them off, but considered it necessary to prepare the food with care and cleanliness. In this point, one cannot fail to notice the taste of a town-dweller. It would be pointed out, on the other hand, that a man was considered miser if his food was laid down very neatly and carefully; Muways is described by one of those who used to eat with him as a miser in food, because "he used to make it and prepare it in the way of someone who does not want it to be touched..⁽¹⁾"

One of the points, which shows the development of social customs according to the requirements and conditions of townlife, but was criticised in the beginning as a sign of avarice, is illustrated in the following example from al-Bukhalā' :

In talking about al-Thaurī, one of the richest misers in al-Bukhalā', al-Jāhiz says that he was fond of eating the heads of sheep, but would never buy them except on Saturdays. al-Jāhiz attributes this to the fact that they were more available and cheaper and the demand on them is less on this

(1) al-Jāhiz, al-Bukhalā', p. 63.

(1)
particular day. What al-Jāhiz criticised in al-Thaurī,
however, seems to have become a prevalent habit, later,
among the people in Islamic town, the reason being that in
Islamic society, animals are slaughtered mostly on Friday.
On Saturday, the heads of the animals are left and are,
therefore, more available than other days. People became
used to this later on. This habit seems to have survived,
for instance, in Spain long after the Muslims' times. (2)

Among townspeople, food is not eaten only in
order to satisfy a need, but is often a way of showing off
and a cause of pleasure. Historians try to refer the begin-
ning of luxury and extravagance to the time of Mu'āwīya, the
first Umayyad Caliph. (3) Persian manners and showing off in
food were copied by the governors of Iraq since the Umayyad
times. (4) In al-Bukhalā', al-Jāhiz pictures the misers who
wanted to show off in a most niggard way. One of them
quarrels with his neighbours, because the latter ones took
once

(1) al-Jāhiz, al-Bukhalā', p. 99.

(2) see Mez, Renaissance, (English trans., 1937), p. 395

(3) al-'Abshihī, al-Mustatrafi., (1268), vol. I., p. 211.

(4) Ibid., vol. I., p. 178.

away the bones which he placed outside his own door to show
(1)
people that he had eaten meat. Offering guests variety of
food became a sign of luxury and hospitality. Those who
made the attempt to keep up with the traditional way of life
were not successful in their attempt and were also condemna-
ed as misers. al-Jāhiz talks about 'Auf b. al-Qa'qā', who
was a pure Arab, and who used to ask his Mawlā to make
enough food for all the people of the season, but not to
offer more than one kind. His action was described by some
people as avarice, by others as a sign of keeping with the
(2)
Arab traditions and avoiding extravagance of townlife.

A man, however, is not praised for his ability
in eating, although he may be praised for his ability in
drinking. No Arab, al-Jāhiz says in the mouth of one of
his misers, boasts about his fathers as eaters, but al-
Fityān and other people of drink may be praised for drink-
(3)
ing. Boasting about drink is, naturally, against the values
introduced by Islam, which prohibited it. al-Fityān in the

(1) al-Jāhiz, al-Bukhalā'; see also al-Jazzār, Fawā'id al-Mawā'id, Br. Mus. MS., no. Or.6388, fol. 8b.

(2) al-Jāhiz, al-Bukhalā', p. 65.

(3) Ibid., pp. 106-7.

‘Abbasid society, however, seem to have had their own way of life. Their social manners are described by al-Jāhiz in the mouth of ‘Abū Fātik, whom al-Jāhiz calls in al-Bukhalā’, Qādī‘l-Fityān. ‘Abū Fātik gives his followers of the Fityān (1) most interesting instructions in food and table manners.

Although drink is preferred to food, a host is not supposed to suggest it to his guest. This, however, does not seem to have been out of piety or religious fear, but the reason given is that the host may be suggesting that his guest is eating too much. He who does this is considered (2) miser. As to whether the host should make any conversation (3) with his guest or not, it was a matter of disagreement.

According to the Arab manners, al-‘Abshīhī says, they believe in freedom and easy manners with the guest, as well (4) as long conversation. al-Jāhiz, however, criticises a miser who used to make his guests talk and would eat all the food (5) alone.

(1) al-Jāhiz, al-Bukhalā’, pp. 59-69.

(2) Ibid., p. 62.

(3) see the argument in Mez, Renaissance., p. 395.

(4) al-Mustaṭraf., (1268), vol. I., p. 21.

(5) al-Jāhiz, al-Bukhalā’, p. 87.

Manners followed not only townlife, but also classes of people. What was approved of by the common people was not done among certain circles. al-Washshā' discusses a number of examples of what was used by the common people and avoided by the special, even in speech and ways of addressing one another.⁽¹⁾

The Characters of al-Bukhalā':

The significance of studying al-Bukhalā' in the light of society, lies in the fact that al-Jāhiz depicts in it, through the character of the miser, most interesting aspects of Islamic society, enlarged and exaggerated, in order to produce amusing pictures. Unlike most writers, who wrote about avarice, al-Jāhiz was by no means a moralist or a preacher, who condemns avarice for the sake of morals or principles. The material of his characters was selected from various elements without distinction of race or class. His aim, as he himself puts it, was to give amusement by citing the arguments of the misers and by showing their

(1) see al-Muwashshā, (1886), vol. II., pp. 129-30.

(1)
characteristics, through short stories and anecdotes. After reading the book, the reader comes out with no prejudice against one party or the other. al-Jāhiz's merit, however, does not lie in creating the characters of his misers, as much as in the fact that he re-produced them, by transferring them from mere existing characters into living ones. The lack of evidence, however, makes it difficult to find out how far these characters were actual living persons.

al-Jāhiz does not leave us in darkness as to where his characters belonged. He gives us, sometimes, details about their life, which enable us to know more about their social status and class. The way the character behaves and talks may also be helpful to show the type of avarice which al-Jāhiz intends to show. The following example shows this point. The character of Mu'ādha al-'Anbariya was discussed in the circle of the mosque. One of the men of the circle says about Mu'ādha: "This year, a cousin of hers sent her a present, an 'Uḥḥya - a sheep or cow sacrificed at the Muslim festival of Sacrifice ('Īd al-'Adha)- I saw her sad, dejected and thoughtful, with downcast head, and I said to her: What is the matter with you Mu'ādha ? I am a widow

(1) al-Bukhalā', pp. 1-3.

woman, she said, and I have no responsible male relative and I am not used to dealing with the (slaughtering and distribution of) the meat of 'Aḍāḥī (pl. of 'Uḍḥya), and those who used to undertake this duty and deal with it properly, all have passed away, and I am afraid that part of this sheep might be wasted, and I do not know how to allot each piece of it to its appropriate place. I know that God has not created anything in it or in any other creature without some use.."⁽¹⁾ Mu'āḍha's depression is caused by the fact that she did not know how to utilise the blood of the animal. We understand, however, that Mu'āḍha was not a sophisticated rich woman, she was simple and poor. The whole responsibility of life rested on her shoulder, because she was a widow. Instead of pleasing her, the present had bewildered her.

In the following pages, I have made the attempt to analyse the characters of al-Jāḥiẓ, in al-Bukḥalā', in connection with their social background.

(1) al-Jāḥiẓ, al-Bukḥalā', p. 27.

i. Circles of the Mosque

The mosque in Islamic town was the centre of public life. Religious duties, as well as other public meetings, were held in the mosque. It was also a centre of literary activities and entertainment. In al-Bukhalā', the mosque of al-Baṣra, especially, is the place where al-Jāḥiẓ meets with his characters. Besides the mosque, of course, there were the streets, markets and houses. The instance of family life and family relations, however, which were greatly affected by the avarice of misers like Harpagon, the miser of Molière, or Euclio, the miser of Plautus, for instance, has hardly any significance in al-Jāḥiẓ's picture of the miser. al-Jāḥiẓ's great interest in public life, on one hand, and the insignificance of family relations in Abbasid life, on the other hand, drew him far from producing that aspect of life in his picture of the miser. Family picture is overshadowed by the outside activities of man and the lack of proper family relations inside the family.

(1) see art. al-Masdjid, E.I.

(2) see, for example, al-Ḥarīrī, Maqāmat., (1897), al-Maqāma al-Baṣriya, p. 401; also al-Jāḥiẓ, al-Bukhalā', pp. 24-8.

The women whom al-Jāḥiẓ describes in al-Bukḥalā' are either those whom he came across casually or whom he describes
(1)
through other narrators.

al-Jāḥiẓ's narration of stories on the authority of al-Masjidiyūn (people of the mosque), forms a big portion of his description of the misers. It would be pointed out, however, that al-Jāḥiẓ does not seem to take these people of the mosque very seriously. He seems to have sat with them from childhood, but does not seem to have much respect for
(2)
their way of thinking. The circles of the mosque seem to have been the most dynamic groups in Islamic society, which
(3)
contained people of all types, characters and classes. examples from these circles will be interesting to show their characteristics.

The most interesting circle, in connection with the misers, is that which appears under the name of the Circle of al-Muṣliḥūn. In his stories, related on the authority of the

(1) al-Bukḥalā', pp. 31, 25, 27, 102-3.

(2) al-Jāḥiẓ, al-Bayān., vol., III., p. 224.

(3) al-Jāḥiẓ, al-Bukḥalā', al-Ḥājirī's comments, pp. 270-1.

people of the mosque, al-Jāhiz describes a group of people as follows:

"A group of people collected in the mosque, consisting of those who make profession of economising in living expenses and making money profitable, of those who amass money and hold on to it. This principle has become amongst them like ties of kinship which causes people to be friendly with one another and like a pact that joins people in mutual assistance. Therefore, when they met in their circles, they discussed this subject, exchanged views on it and examined all aspects of it, for the sake of gain and from pleasure in talking of it ⁽¹⁾ .."

From the stories of these people, it is understood that they collected together because of their common interest in avarice which they considered as good management. 'Iṣlāḥ, therefore; in their own vocabulary, has become different from what is generally understood by it. In the language, 'Iṣlāḥ is good ⁽²⁾ action, reconciliation or reformation. al-Muṣliḥ is "a man who does well, rightly, justly or properly, in his affairs and his actions..⁽³⁾" According to these misers, avarice is

(1) al-Jāhiz, al-Bukhālā', p. 24.

(2) Ibn Manẓūr, Lisān., vol. III., p. 348; Dozy, part I., p. 842.

(3) E. Lane, Dictionary, part IV., p. 1715.

equal to 'Iṣlāḥ. One of the misers defines 'Iṣlāḥ as follows:
"The first (rule of) 'Iṣlāḥ is that what has accrued to my hand should not be restored to you, so, if what has accrued to my hand was my property, then it is mine. If it was not my property, then I am more entitled to it than he who has given it into my hand. Whosoever gives something out of his hand into the hands of others, unnecessarily, has made it lawful for him to whom he has given it. Your distributing a thing is similar to making it lawful..⁽¹⁾" In the 4th century, A.H., it is interesting to see also this term used with reference to the misers especially; al-Tanūkhī writes:
".. We were discussing the hardship of our time and the group of people, their hard life and their love of avarice,⁽²⁾ so that some of them call it precaution and others 'Iṣlāḥ."
The circle of al-Muṣliḥūn is significant in al-Bukhalā'. al-Jāhiz picks up interesting examples of misers who had close relations with this circle. The two important characters of rich misers are those of 'Abū Sa'īd al-Mada'inī and 'Abū 'Abdu'l-Raḥmān al-Thaurī.

(1) al-Jāhiz, al-Bukhalā', p. 112; see also pp. 25, 57, 79; also 'Ibn Qutayba, 'Uyūn., (1925), vol. I., p. 241.

(2) al-Tanūkhī, Nashwār., vol. I., p. 242.

al-Madā'inī is a money dealer. al-Jāhiz describes him saying: "Abū Sa'īd al-Madā'inī was an 'Imām (leader) in avarice amongst us in al-Baṣra. He was one of the biggest and wealthiest money dealers..⁽¹⁾" al-Madā'inī used to sit in the circle of money dealers in the mosque. This circle seems to have had close relations, and many things in common, with the circle of al-Muṣliḥūn. al-Jāhiz says that al-Madā'inī had a circle in the mosque of al-Baṣra "in which the people of 'Īna (money dealing) and the misers who discussed 'Islāh used to sit..⁽²⁾" al-Madā'inī seems to have been taking a leading part in this circle; the people of the circle address him saying: "... We see that you are doing a thing which we do not know and a mistake from you is greater than a mistake from the others..⁽³⁾" He seems to have been an example for his fellow misers. al-Jāhiz describes him as being a man of wit reason and personality.⁽⁴⁾ Besides, he was a disciple, in the art of story-telling, of Khālawayh the beggar.⁽⁵⁾ al-Jāhiz's portrait of al-Madā'inī shows him spending all his life and energy in running after his money which he gave in loan to

(1) al-Jāhiz, al-Bukhalā', p. 124.

(2) Ibid., p. 125.

(3) Ibid.

(4) Ibid., p. 124.

(5) Ibid., pp. 39-46.

people. His concern about his position, which he had acquired through wealth, was strengthened by the fact that he was a Mawlā⁽¹⁾. He boasts about economising and becoming rich, but his dignity in matters concerning money and dealing with people was even greater. This is illustrated in his sensitive-ness and touchiness about questions pertaining to wealth and money and the fact that he was a Mawlā. He prefers to lose a thousand Dirham to being reminded, even by a hint,⁽²⁾ of his avarice. Nevertheless, he defends avarice, arguing the meanest things. al-Jāhiz's picture of al-Madā'inī reveals a keen sense of humour. The contradiction shown in his character is, apparently, intended by al-Jāhiz and is one typical of his satire.

'Abū 'Abdu'l-Raḥmān al-Thaurī, another rich miser who took part in the activities of the mosque, was one of the big land-owners in al-Baṣra. al-Jāhiz says about him:⁽³⁾ "He used to own five hundred Jarīb .. he would not buy except in a good opportunity and (would buy) a land which is

(1) al-Jāhiz, al-Bukhalā', p. 129.

(2) Ibid., p. 128.

(3) A measure of capacity, used chiefly for cereal, thence a measure of area, see art. Djarīb, E.I., vol. I., p. 1018.

known for its fertility, good position and bountiful production..⁽¹⁾" He was a miser who defended avarice in writing,⁽²⁾ as well as in speech. He used to sit in the circle of al-Muṣliḥūn and listen to their stories and advice.⁽³⁾ He also had certain views and instructions on 'Iṣlāḥ.⁽⁴⁾ He followed the example of this circle in avarice. The argument which he uses in advising his son in economising is said, by al-Jāḥiẓ, to have belonged to the interpretations of storytellers.⁽⁵⁾ The character of al-Thaurī is similar, in many respects, to that of al-Madā'inī. He seems to have dealt with money banking, besides owning lands. He was clever in deceiving his customers about his wealth; he would tell them that, after his death, there would be no one to inherit him, therefore, his money all would go to the people. In this way, al-Jāḥiẓ says, people were encouraged to borrow from him.⁽⁶⁾

In spite of the fact that al-Thaurī, as well as

(1) al-Jāḥiẓ, al-Bukḥalā', p. 91.

(2) Ibid., p. 94.

(3) Ibid., p. 92.

(4) Ibid., p. 93.

(5) Ibid., pp. 94-95.

(6) Ibid., p. 92.

al-Madā'inī, had the characteristics of living misers, nothing can be confirmed as to whether they were historical persons. Their actual existence in a commercial town like al-Baṣra is by no means unlikely. al-Jāḥiẓ, through these two characters, pictures characteristics of money-dealers, as well as land-owners. It is interesting to see, however, that al-Jāḥiẓ shows some connection between these misers and the class of story-tellers, when he states that al-Madā'inī learned this art from Khālawayh the beggar.

ii. Khālīd b. Yazīd or Khālawayh the beggar

This is one of the most interesting characters of al-Bukhalā'. In Khālīd b. Yazīd, al-Jāḥiẓ seems to represent a combination of elements, collected from the lower classes of 'Abbasid society. The doubt is great as to how far this character was a historical person, although al-Jāḥiẓ states that the man was a Mawla of al-Mahāliba, the family of al-Muhallab b. 'Abī ⁽¹⁾Ṣufra. Yāqūt, who tries to give an independent short account of his life, in his biographical dictionary

(1) al-Jāḥiẓ, al-Bukhalā', p. 39.

(1)
seems to believe that Khālawayh was a historical person. It is apparent, however, that Yāqūt himself got all his information about him from al-Bukhalā' of al-Jāhiz, for Yāqūt adds nothing besides what al-Jāhiz says about this man. In this point, I agree entirely with Ṭāhā al-Ḥājirī, who suggests that the copyists of the books of al-Jāhiz must have detached the story of Khālawayh from al-Bukhalā' and spread it among the people as a separate biography, as they may have
(2)
done with other examples, and that Yāqūt, who happened to come across it later, thought that Khālīd b. Yazīd was an
(3)
authentic historical person. Besides, one may bear in mind that al-Jāhiz's reproduction of actual characters in life, in the book, is one of his typical ways. In Khālawayh, a combination of the characters of the beggar, vagabond and story-teller can be found.

One of the remarkable points about this man is the fact that al-Jāhiz gives him two names, neither of which is a (Kunya), nor a (Laqab). al-Jāhiz calls him Khālīd b. Yazīd

(1) Yāqūt, Irshād., vol. IV., pp. 169-71.

(2) The letter of Sahl b. Ḥārūn on avarice is exposed to the same doubt, see al-Jāhiz, al-Bukhalā', pp. 7-12.

(3) al-Jāhiz, al-Bukhalā', al-Ḥājirī's comments, p. 280.

or Khālawayh the beggar. The Persian influence on the form of the name Khālawayh seems to be strong. Names ending in this way do not seem to have been common among the Arabs before. al-Jāhiz, however, tries to refer this characteristic in forming names to the language of the Basrians themselves. But this seems to be only an explanation. He says in al-Hayawān that it was in the Basrian language that the form of al-Tasghīr was made in this way. They would say for Fil, a name of a man, Fīlawayh; 'Amr, 'Amrawayh; Muḥammed, Ḥamdawayh, (1) One may presume that al-Jāhiz meant Khālawayh to be a Tasghir form of Khālīd. The name Khālīd, on the other hand, is purely Arabic. Instances show that it was popular among the lower classes. (2) This may suggest that al-Jāhiz chose it on purpose.

Khālīd b. Yazīd represents two different characters: one is that of a crafty beggar, who practised all tricks of

(1) al-Ḥayawān, vol. VII., p. 83.

(2) see about Khālīd al-Ḥaddād, for instance, 'Ibn al-Jauzī, Talbīs., pp. 421-22; also al-Balādhurī mentions a man by the name of Khālīd al-Shaḥīṭ, Futūḥ., p. 369. A group under the name of al-Khulaydiya took part in the civil war between al-'Amin al-Ma'mūn, see al-Jāhiz, R. fī Manāqib al-Turk, Majmū'., (Sācy), p. 16; al-Bukhārā', (1900), pp. 43, 296.

professional beggar, and the other is that of a rich, but miserly, man. This is not strange among this class of people. Hājī Khalīfa, who cites a special branch of knowledge under the name of (‘Ilm al-Ḥiyal al-Sāsānīya), gives an interesting description of this class, which is true for Khālawayh himself; he says: "... and he who practises this profession would put on, in each city, the appearance which **appeals** to the people of that city and which they respect. At one time, they appear as jurists, other times, as preachers or noble men of the place, etc." ⁽¹⁾ Khalīd b. Yazīd appears, at first, as a rich miser, who has all the appearance of riches and avarice. When he starts relating his story, it is made clear that he obtained his wealth through all kinds of means. According to Khālawayh, wealth can be obtained by the following means:

1. Suffering the journeys of seas (i.e. trade).
2. Being an authority (i.e. holding high position).
3. Knowing the art of **Alchemy** of gold and silver. ⁽²⁾

Khālawayh pretends to have tried all means in order to become rich. His boasting about the art of beggary, however, does not suggest that he belonged to the class of

(1) Kashf., (1914), vol. I., p. 694.

(2) al-Jāhiz, al-Bukhālā', p. 40.

merchants or officers. His boasting is that of a beggar who endured flogging and prison. His mention of the art of Alchemy is most interesting and significant.

The knowledge of Alchemy seems to have been an outlet of the dreams of needy people, a link between their hopes in wealth, on one hand, and the conditions of their life, on the other. (1) The misers, according to al-Jāhiz, seem to have spent great sums of money and part of their energy on this art, in order to satisfy their greediness. (2) The knowledge of this art, which was, according to the common people, transmutation into gold, was attributed to mysterious figures. The first among Arab scholars, who was supposed to have dealt with this craft was Khālīd b. Yazīd b. Mu'āwya b. 'Abī Sufyān. (3) It is interesting to see that the dream of wealth, together with actual frustration, is attributed to him as a reason behind his intentions. Khālīd b. Yazīd, the 'Umayyad

(1) see about this point 'Abū'l-Qāsim al-'Irāqī, Kitāb al-'Ilm al-muktasab., p. 7; also Haj Khalīfa, Kashf., vol. II., p. 1529 sq. and p. 1020.

(2) al-Bukhārā', p. 146.

(3) A great amount of literature was attributed to Khālīd b. Yazīd, but Ruska doubts the majority of these works, see E. J. Holmyard, al-Chemy, (Pelican), p. 64.

prince, was not able to obtain his wishes in political life. He did not become caliph, therefore, he directed his efforts to the art of Alchemy . Stories current about him tell us that Khālīd was asked why he devoted himself to this art, and he replied: "I do not seek for that, except for the sake of enriching my friends and brethren. I looked forward to the caliphate, but it was banned from me, so, I did not find an alternative other than reaching the end of this craft, so that no one of those who have known me or whom I have known, would feel the need of standing at the door of any authority, for fear or desire..⁽¹⁾" This seems, in fact, to have been an expression of the spirit of the time, concerning wealth and avarice, and an illustration of the competition between the power of wealth and that of knowledge. Khālīd b. Yazīd⁽²⁾ is described by Ibn al-Nadīm to have been generous. The connection of Khālīd b. Yazīd of al-Jāhiz and the 'Umayyad prince, however, does not seem to be likely, although the legend of gold which obsessed the common people is found, illustrated in his character too. The common people seem to have attributed to Khālīd b. Yazīd, the prince, all the fantastic stories about Alchemy . Jābir b. Ḥayyān, one of the

(1) Ibn al-Nadīm, al-Fihrist, vol. I., p. 354.

(2) Ibid.

famous scholars of this art, complained from the ignorance of people who associated the idea of this science to the making of gold and riches.⁽¹⁾

The figure of Qārūn, whose knowledge Khālawayh the beggar claims to have known,⁽²⁾ is another character that is connected with the idea of wealth through the means of Al-⁽³⁾ chemistry.⁽⁴⁾ Qārūn is a Qur'ānic figure of a Hebrew origin, but stories and legends were woven around his character, trying to give an explanation of his immense wealth.⁽⁵⁾ The common people of any age seem to be fascinated by the idea of wealth coming from an unknown resource. The story of Qārūn has survived up till nowadays in the minds of people.

It is not clear how close the connection was between the idea of Alchemy and brigandry in Islamic society,

(1) Haj Khalīfa, Kashf., vol. II., p. 1530.

(2) al-Bukhalā', p. 40.

(3) see D. B. Macdonald, art. Karūn and E. Wiedmann, art. al-Kīmyā, E.I.; also al-Jāhiz, al-Tarbī', p. 38; Ibn al-Nadīm, al-Fihrist, vol. I., p. 34; al-Mas'ūdī, Murūj., vol. VIII., p. 177.

(4) Qur'an, English trans., by Palmer, chapters, XI., p. 25; XXIX., p. 38; XXVII., pp. 76-82.

(5) 'Ibn al-Nadīm says that Qārūn guarded the money of Moses, but became powerful and God destroyed him, al-Fihrist, vol. I., p. 351.

although it is obvious that its connection to magic work and mysterious means was known to the common people. al-Kīmyā was used together with magic, as well as medicine and drugs, by the beggars and vagabonds, in order to attract the attention and curiosity of their audience. ⁽¹⁾ Khālīd b. Yazīd, the beggar, claims to have known all the mysterious means which ⁽²⁾ seemed puzzling to the mind of his time. It is interesting to point out that questions which were asked by al-Jāhiz in the book of al-Tarbī' wa'l-Tadwīr, and which were suggested ⁽³⁾ to have been puzzling the mind of the time, appear in al-Bukhalā' in connection with the character of Khālīd b. Yazīd, who claims to know every knowledge of that kind. al-Jāhiz's attribution of this knowledge to Khālawayh in al-Bukhalā' seems to be a continuation of his satire in the book of al-Tarbī'. Magic work, on the other hand, seems to have been a common practice among beggars and story-tellers. Hāj Khalīfa suggests that the book of al-Maqāmāt of al-Ḥarīrī was, in fact, a collection of symbols, related to the know-

(1) see, for instance, 'Aḥmad H. al-Ṣarrāf, (al-Drwīsh), RAAD., (1928), vol. VI., pp. 81-91; also 'Ibn al-Nadīm, al-Fihrist vol. I., pp. 308-13.

(2) al-Jāhiz, al-Bukhalā', pp. 39-40.

(3) see Carra-de-vaux, les Penseures;, vol. I., p. 308; also Ch. Pellat, introd. of al-Tarbī'.

(1)
ledge of Alchemy.

Khālīd b. Yazīd, obviously, belongs to the class of vagabond. When he became rich, he was careful to keep his money against the turns of fortune. His doubt about time and fortune is expressed in his advice to his son. He says about his money: " .. I have saved it for you from the temptation of (spending it on) children, women, acquisition of reputation and ostentation and from the hands of commission agents, for they are the incurable disease.

I do not advise you to save it, by virtue of my love for you, but by virtue of my hatred for the Qāḍī. God, praise to His name, did not give the Qāḍīs jurisdiction over the property of the children, except to afflict the latter thereby.. " ⁽²⁾

Khālawayh's character is, actually, similar to that of professional beggars and story-tellers who appeared in Islamic town. He describes himself, while he practised his profession of beggary, as follows:

"The beard long, flowing and white, the voice fruity and

(1) Kashf., vol. II., p. 1529. A reference is also made by Ḥajī Khalīfa to Kalīla wa Dimna.

(2) al-Bukhalā', p. 41. This seems to be due to the corruption prevalent among the Qāḍīs. The expression is common that they (eat) the money of orphans, which is entrusted in their hands.

loud, the presence good and I would be readily acceptable. If I wish to squeeze a tear from my eye, it would respond and a little kindness from people is better than great riches. During the day, I would practise my tricks and would be a night-bird (at night), or go out as foot pad, a spy or a speaker (in public). Ask the ruffians (Ṣaʿālīk) of al-Jabal about me, the brigands (Zawāqīl) of Syria, the Zutt of the marshes, the chiefs of Kurds, the rebellious Arab tribes, the murderers of Nahṣ Batt and the thieves of al-Qufṣ. Inquire from the Qīqāns of al-Qaṭar about me and ask the masked robbers and the butchers of al-Jazīra, how I fight at the time of violence, how crafty when craft is needed, the sort of person I am, in the time of skirmishing, how firm my heart is at the sight of the vanguard (of the enemy), how vigilant when I am on watch, what account I give of myself when I am brought before the authorities, how my endurance, when I am flogged and how little I am constrained, when I am imprisoned,

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- (1) This is a group of plunderers who appear in the civil war between the 'Abbasid Caliphs, al-'Amīn and al-Ma'mūn, see al-Ṭabarī, *Tārīkh.*, vol. III., p. 843. It appears to me that their name may have derived from the way they wore their turbans, see the meaning of (Zawqala) in Ibn Sida, *al-Mukhaṣṣaṣ.*, vol. IV., p. 82.
- (2) about al-Zutt, see p. 100 of this thesis; also al-Balādhurī, *Futūḥ.*, (1932), p. 166.
- (3) According to al-Karmalī, they are the gypsies, al-Nawar, of Karmān, see al-Mashriq, (1902), vol. IV., p. 934.

and how bravely I walk when I am laden down with chains.

From how many a Dīmās I have broken, how many a Muṭbaq I

have ended up in and how many a prison I have endured..."

The boasting of Khālawayh reminds us of the morals of al-Fityān, who were proud about their endurance and suffering.

The character of al-Jāḥiẓ's beggar seems to have had a great influence on the characters of beggars and vagabonds who appeared later in the literature, especially the Maqāmāt. al-Ḥarīrī's hero, also, makes his first appearance in the mosque of al-Baṣra. The characteristic feature of this literature is its close connection with the life of privation and beggary, which the beggar practises with wit, eloquence and humour. Beggary was the main occupation of Khālawayh, as well as the other Maqāmāt heroes. The feeling of dissatisfaction among this class is expressed by all these beggars. They were able and crafty, but still were presented, in their own style, as beggars. The impression they give to

(1) Dīmās is the prison of al-Ḥajjāj in Wāsiṭ. al-Muṭbaq is the prison of the 'Abbasids in Baghdād, see al-Bukhalā', p. 295.

(2) al-Bukhalā', p. 42.

(3) see about them, 'Ibn al-Jauzī, Talbīs., (1919), pp. 421-22.

(4) al-Ḥarīrī, Assemblies, English translation, introd., p. 13.

their audience is always that of a lost stranger, a trick so common among all beggars.

Khālawayh, as well as al-Saroujī, come out of the life of beggary with good experience. al-Saroujī ends up by repenting and retiring back with a mystic feeling, which he suddenly discovers in himself in one of his assemblies in the mosque of al-Baṣra, while he is performing one of his tricks: "He wore the wool and became a leader of the rows (of prayers) and well-known mystics."⁽¹⁾ al-Saroujī leaves a will to his son⁽²⁾ very similar in spirit to that of Khālawayh. The marked difference between the Maqāmāt heroes and Khālawayh is that the latter never considered beggary a shameful profession, on the contrary, he finds it most delightful. With the Maqāmāt heroes, one feels that the beggar was driven to be crafty and tricky, in order to appeal to the people and in order to earn his living. al-Jāhiz's character lives as a crafty beggar and ends up as a wealthy man, but al-Ḥarīrī's hero lives as a crafty beggar and ends up as a mystic one.

Khālawayh was not only a beggar, but also a storyteller; he says: "If my wealth would be gone, I would sit as

(1) al-Ḥarīrī, al-Maqāmāt, (ed. Steingass), p. 405.

(2) Ibid.

a story-teller, or tour around the countries,,as I used to do, as a beggar..⁽¹⁾ al-Jāhiz seems to satirise the figure of story-teller, in the character of Khālawayh himself. The latter claims that he knows all about the mysteries of story-telling. The character of Tamīm al-Dārī, who was supposed to have been the first story-teller in 'Islām,⁽²⁾ and whose character seems to have been a fantastic idealisation of the figure of story-teller, is mentioned by Khālawayh as inferior to himself in knowledge; he says: "If Tamīm al-Dārī saw me, he⁽³⁾ would have taken from me the description of al-Rūm." The association of Khālawayh with all crafts, whether those of beggary, robbery and story-telling, reveals to us very interesting sides of the life of the lower classes in 'Abbasid society. It is interesting to point out that al-Jāhiz does not give as much importance to the fact that Khālawayh was a

(1) al-Jāhiz, al-Bukhalā', p. 42.

(2) see about him the following: al-Balkhī, al-Bad', vol. V., p. 77; Ibn Khallikān, Wafayāt., introd. by de Slane, vol. II., p. 21; al-Maqrīsī wrote a whole treatise about Tamīm al-Dārī, see al-Makkī, Qūt al-qūlūb, vol. I., p. 148. About the art of story-telling, see al-'Abshīhī, al-Mustatraf., (1331), vol. I., p. 99; arts. Masdjīd and Qiṣṣa, E.I.

(3) Ch. Pellat reads al-Radm for al-Rūm in the book of al-Tarbī', pp. 42-3, also see introd., p. 41. In al-Bukhalā', it is al-Rūm, p. 40.

miser, as to the fact that he was a crafty beggar who used all means of becoming rich. The relation of beggary with other crafts is made clear by al-Jāhiz. al-Bayhaqī, later, (1) shows the relation of story-tellers with beggars more clearly, when he speaks of al-Kān, a type of beggars who had some co-operation with story-tellers. (2)

iii. The Educated Misers

Misers in al-Bukhalā', as we have already seen, were not only those who belonged to the class of wealthy land-owners, merchants and money-dealers, like al-Thaurī or al-Madā'inī, but also to the class of beggars and story-tellers, like Khālīd b. Yazīd. Besides these two types, there are misers who distinguished themselves in society, through their education and knowledge. This class is significant in al-Bukhalā' not only because they appear as misers, but also for the fact that they used their reason and eloquence to create an argument to justify avarice and defend the misers. These arguments

(1) Besides al-Bukhalā', see also Ḥujaj., al-Kāmil., (1323), vol. II., p. 37.

(2) al-Maḥāsin., vol. III., pp. 624-27.

are used by al-Jāhiz in al-Bukhalā', in order to make a new art of amusement. al-Jāhiz's interest in this class seems to be strengthened by the fact that he was in close contact with them and had personal experience with misers of this type. It is apparent that the misers of this class did not enjoy so much the possession of wealth as the consciousness of it; they were, sometime, careful about wealth which may not have existed. The representatives of this class in al-Bukhalā' are misers from amongst theologians, including the Mu'tazilites, teachers, secretaries, physicians, etc.

The epistle of Sahl b. Hārūn, in defence of avarice, in al-Bukhalā', stands as an example of the characteristics
(1)
of this class of misers. Sahl enjoyed his position in the 'Abbasid society through his good knowledge. He was known,
(2)
however, as a niggard miser. As to whether it was Sahl himself who composed this epistle, or it was attributed to him by al-Jāhiz, it cannot be decided with great confidence. On the other hand, if the style of the epistle can be taken as

(1) al-Jāhiz, al-Bukhalā', pp. 7-12; also al-'Iqd., (Būlāq), vol. III., p. 335 sq.

(2) see about Sahl b. Hārūn, Ibn Khallikān, Wafayāt., (Paris), vol. I., p. 260; also Yāqūt, Irshād., vol., IV., p. 256.

a sufficient reason to decide its authenticity, one would be more inclined to think that the epistle is made by al-Jāhiz, for its great similarity, in composition, to al-Jāhiz's own style in the opening of Kitāb al-Ḥayawān. ⁽¹⁾ al-Ḥājirī supports the suggestion of al-Jāhiz's authership of the Risāla by ⁽²⁾ other historical facts.

The epistle of Sahl is a typical expression of the doubts and feeling of insecurity which were prevalent among the educated middle class in 'Abbāsīd society, and which is also expressed by al-Jāhiz himself in most of his writings. ⁽³⁾ Sahl, in the epistle, is aware of the value of money, which, so often, surpassed all other values, whether that of reason, knowledge or qualifications, etc. The following argument, from the epistle, is interesting to illustrate this point; Sahl says: "You have criticised me, when I claimed that I prefer wealth to knowledge, for it is by wealth that the scholar can be assisted and the people exist, even before the value of knowledge is known, and that the route is more en-

(1) al-Jāhiz, al-Ḥayawān, vol. I., pp. 3-15.

(2) al-Bukhalā', al-Ḥājirī's comments, pp. 247-9. One of the interesting arguments is the fact that the epistle does not come except in later references. It may have been detached from al-Bukhalā'.

(3) see the discussion on the middle class in chapter II of this thesis, especially pp. 138-40.

titled to preference than the branch.. and you said: How can you say this, when it was said to the chief wiseman and the most eminent of men of letters: Are scholars or wealthy-men more honourable?; he said: The scholars, and the reply was made: Why is it then that scholars frequent the doors of the wealthy more than the wealthy frequent the doors of scholars?; he said: Because scholars recognize the virtue of riches and the ignorance of wealthy men of the virtue of knowledge.⁽¹⁾ This is, of course, a justification of the avarice of scholars themselves too. At the same time, it is a reflection of their position in society, in comparison with the men of wealth. This argument is by no means strange in al-Jāḥiẓ's writing. The comparison between the value of knowledge and that of wealth is one of the frequent themes.

The significance which al-Jāḥiẓ attaches to the arguments of this class of misers did not deprive him from his keen sense of humour, even in connection with the most respectable theologians. His stories about 'Abū'l-Hudhayl al-ʿAllāf, the Muʿtazilite theologian, are most amusing in this respect. Unlike the witty and clever character of this

(1) al-Jāḥiẓ, al-Bukḥalā', pp. 11-12.

class, 'Abū'l-Hudhayl is represented as a most good-hearted miser, whose avarice is natural and simple, but unintended. al-Jāhiz had nothing against 'Abū'l-Hudhayl, on the contrary, he respected him as one of the great leaders of the Mu'tazilites, but did not refrain from criticising him as a miser. The story of the hen, which al-Jāhiz relates about him is interesting in picturing the characteristics of his avarice. al-Jāhiz says that 'Abū'l-Hudhayl presented Muways with a hen..Although that hen was not as good as what Muways usually had, the man expressed his gratitude and praised the present. al-Jāhiz says, but 'Abū'l-Hudhayl insisted on reminding Muways of it; he would ask him: "And how did you find that hen, oh 'Abū 'Imrān? It was a wonder of wonders, Muways says, Do you know what kind it is, 'Abū'l-Hudhayl says, do you know what age it is?, for the hen is good (or bad) according to her kind and age. And do you know what we used to give her to make her fat, and what place we used to keep her? " ⁽¹⁾ al-Jāhiz says that Muways used to laugh at this and everybody realised why he was laughing, except 'Abū'l-Hudhayl. In another occasion, 'Abū'l-Hudhayl boasts about his own generosity and insists on making al-Jāhiz swear as a witness to

(1) al-Bukhalā', p. 123.

what he says. al-Jāhiz comments on this saying: "He was not satisfied to say this in my presence, but made me a witness, (1) and was not satisfied with that until he made me swear it."

Characters from amongst Mu'tazilite theologians are discussed, in al-Bukhalā', with freedom. Qāsim al-Tammār, a Mu'tazilite scholar, is described in al-Bukhalā', as "big eater, greedy and dirty while eating and very generous in other people's food, but niggard in his own. He used to behave like someone who never heard of decency or good behaviour, at all.."⁽²⁾ al-Tammār, however, was a respectable Mu'tazilite, with a very keen sense of humour.⁽³⁾ al-Jāhiz complains of some low morals among those who attached themselves to theologians (al-Mutakallimūn). His picture of these misers bears a criticism of this class. After describing the character of al-Tammār, al-Jāhiz says: "... among the stuff of theologians, there are ugly characters and there is in them a great trial to the people of theology and men

(1) al-Jāhiz, al-Bukhalā', p. 123.

(2) Ibid., p. 181.

(3) see about him, 'Ibn Qutayba, Mukhtalif., p. 95; also al-Jāhiz, al-Bayān., (1914), vol. III., p. 191; and al-Ḥayawān, vol. VI., p. 82.

(1)
of wit.." 'Alī al-'Aswārī is another respectable Mu'tazilite,
but was very greedy and ill-mannered. His greediness is ex-
tremely bad in food. He is said, once, to have swallowed one
of his teeth with the meat he was eating. He is described by
al-Jāhiz as follows: "... and when he eats, his reason leaves
him and his eyes protrude, he becomes intoxicated, unconscious
and breathless; his face changes colour, his mouth dries up
and he seems to hear nothing and see nothing.." (2) Nevertheless,
al-'Aswārī justifies his greediness with logical arguments
which belong to the language of theologians. (3)

In his picture of these misers, al-Jāhiz satirises more than one aspect of social life of Islamic society of his time. His criticism, through arguments put in the mouth of his character, is most interesting. These arguments are by no means limited within the subject of avarice, which is, however, the main theme of the book. The story of 'Asad b. Jānī is an interesting example to show this point. Through the character of this man, al-Jāhiz criticises the common mentality of the time. 'Asad b. Jānī, according to al-Jāhiz,

(1) al-Jāhiz, *al-Bukhalā'*, p. 182.

(2) Ibid., p. 69.

(3) Ibid., p. 61.

was successful physician. He is presented not only as a miser, but also as an example of those who were victims of social prejudice. al-Jāhiz says that 'Asad was asked why he was not successful in his profession, he replied: "First of all, according to them, I am a Muslim, and before I became a physician, or even before I was born, people believed that Muslims can never be successful in medicine. My name is 'Asad and it should have been Ṣalība, Gabriel, Jonathan or Pīra. My Kunya is 'Abū'l-Ḥārith, when it should have been 'Abū 'Īsa, 'Abū Zakariya or 'Abū Ibrāhīm. I wear white cotton cloth, though my dress should have been black silk. My accent is Arabic, while my language should have been the language of the people of Jundaysapur..⁽¹⁾" al-Jāhiz's criticism is, apparently, directed against the whole conception of society. His concern about the character of Asad as a miser, hardly counts besides the picture of this man as a failure and a victim of social obsession.

The avarice of this class is closely linked up with their status in society. 'Abū 'Uyayna was a miser who earned his money through teaching. al-Jāhiz says that he

(1) al-Bukhalā', p. 90.

was addressed as follows: " . . . An old man of nearly a hundred, with a good income and few children and is given money for teaching..⁽¹⁾ " 'Abū 'Uyayna was a miser that used to beg people for small things, in order to maintain himself. This may be an illustration of the poor life of the lower grade of teachers who are said to have lived on the presents and gifts of their students.⁽²⁾

Money consciousness and fear of the turns of fortune are characteristics that are expressed through most of the misers of this class. One of the outstanding examples of this type is the avarice of al-Ḥizāmī, who was one of the defenders of avarice. al-Ḥizāmī was a secretary of Muways and Dāwood b. 'Abī Dāwood.⁽³⁾ He seems to have tried poetry and was one of the admirers of 'Abū Nuwās.⁽⁴⁾ al-Jāhiz seems to have known al-Ḥizāmī personally.⁽⁵⁾ The niggardness of al-Ḥizāmī, as described by al-Jāhiz, is of a pleasant, but complicated,

(1) al-Bukhalā', p. 132.

(2) see pp. 128 of this thesis; also al-Tha'ālībī, Khāṣṣ., p. 51.

(3) al-Bukhalā', p. 52.

(4) al-Jāhiz, al-Ḥayawān, vol. VII., p. 69; also al-Ḥājirī's comments, al-Bukhalā', pp. 232-3.

(5) al-Bukhalā', p. 52.

nature. al-Ḥizāmī was not rich, but was not even willing to give the impression to people that he possessed any money. We understand, however, that he had more money than he needed, for he was able to lend a friend, 'Alī al-'Aswārī, the sum of a hundred Dirham⁽¹⁾. In describing al-Hizami about this, al-Jāhiz shows a great skill in analysing the psychology of the miser. al-Ḥizāmī regrets it very much that he had to lend one of his closest friends this money, because, according to him, his efforts to show people that he was poor and needy had all gone in vain. If his closest friends did not understand his intention, he would have to expect the worst from other people, who were only neighbours or mere acquaintance. He laments his fortune and thinks that it must have been God's intention to make him poor and that He sent these people to take his money⁽²⁾. On the other hand, al-Ḥizāmī does not mind being described as miser, so long as the term implied that his money was left with him and not spent in action of generosity; he says: "... It will never be said: such and such a man is miser unless he is a man of wealth; give me wealth and call me whatever name you like ..." al-⁽³⁾

(1) al-Bukhalā', p. 54.

(2) Ibid.

(3) Ibid., p. 55.

Ḥizāmī, however, was not a simple man, although al-Jāhiz
(1)
describes him as good-hearted. His farfetched interpretation
of the behaviour of people towards him is an illustration
of his complicated mind. It is understood that al-Ḥizāmī
was a middle class man; he was in the same circle of men as
al-Jāhiz himself, who were in close contact with Dāwood b.
(2)
'Abī Dāwood, the local governor of Kaskar. al-Ḥizāmī, amongst
the others, used to receive the gifts of the Wali. al-Jāhiz
pictures al-Ḥizāmī as a man who had no faith or confidence
in any one, even those who offered him presents. al-Ḥizāmī
refuses a vessel of syrup given to him by 'Ibn 'Abī Dāwood,
because he thought that the man gave him this, deliberately,
in order to make him poor and get rid of his company, for ,
according to his interpretation, consuming the syrup in
various ways would cost him even more and, ultimately, lead
(3)
him to poverty. al-Ḥizāmī was a miser, whose money conscious-
ness was much more than his money.

It is regretted, however, that there are characters

(1) al-Bukhālā', p. 52.

(2) Ibid., p. 55.

(3) Ibid., pp. 56-7.

in al-Bukhalā', whose identity cannot be known for certain. al-Kindī is one of the most interesting characters among the misers of al-Jāhiz. His eloquence in defence of his niggardness is an outstanding example of these clever misers. The suggestion that he was the well-known Arab philosopher is (1) by means confirmed. al-Jāhiz, on the other hand, hardly says any thing about his person, although it is obvious that al-Kindī belonged to the class of proprietors. Through his character, al-Jāhiz satirises conditions of habitation in the town, criticising the characters of the owners who exploit the dwellers. (2)

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(1) see al-Ḥājirī's comments, al-Bukhalā', pp. 233-5; also Ch. Pellat, le livre des Avarès, (1951), p. 339.

(2) al-Bukhalā', pp. 70-81.

Appendix

LANGUAGE IN THE BOOK OF AL-BUKHALĀ'

al-Jāhiz's interest in Islamic society and its development seems to have helped him a great deal in discovering one of the important questions, the language and its development according to social changes. The recognition of what one may call the spoken language as distinguished from the pure old Arabic is illustrated in the following classification which al-Jāhiz makes of people, in connection with the language. al-Jāhiz distinguishes two classes of people, where the language is concerned, al-Khāṣṣa (élite) and al-ʿĀmma (common); he says:

" .. If you hear me mention the common people, I do not
(1)
mean the peasants, the stuff (al-Ḥashwa), the craftsmen and
sellers; neither do I mean the Kurds in the mountains, or
inhabitants of islands in the seas, nor of other nations

(1) The term al-Ḥashwa is explained by 'Ibn Manẓūr as the common stuff of people, see Lisān., 1955, vol. XIV., p. 180. Besides this, the term seems to have had a significant meaning. It may have been applied in Arabia to a certain lower class of people. However, I have no attestation to the use of this very term in Arabia, although there is an interesting suggestion by R.B.Serjeant, concerning the term al-Farḥ, which is similar to it, see BSOAS., 1958, vol. XXI/1; art. Prof. A. Guilaume's Translation of the Sīrah.

(1) (2)
(such as) al-Yabar and al-Ṭaylasān, Mūqān and Jilān, or the
negroes and similar. The nations of all the people are
only four: the Arabs, the Persians, the Indians and the
Romans. As for the rest, they are primitive or similar.
As for the common people of our religion and language, man-
ners and morals, they are the class whose reason and morals
are above those nations, but did not reach the standard of
the élite among us, although the élite vary in classes too..⁽³⁾
al-Jāhiz, apparently, concerns himself only with the people
whose mother tongue was Arabic. The peasants and lower
craftsmen seem to have been disregarded for the simple reason
that the majority of them were considered by al-Jāhiz as
non-Arabs. al-Jāhiz provides us with evidences that confirm
this belief. In a story about a man sent from al-Yemāma to
Banū 'Usayd, who sent him in their turn to work as a guard
of cultivation (nāṭūr),⁽⁴⁾ presumably in al-Sawād of 'Irāq, the

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- (1) al-Ṭaylasān are the inhabitants of al-Daylam and al-Kha-
zar, Yāqūt, Mu'jam., vol. III., p. 571. Nothing is said
about al-Yabar in Yāqūt.
- (2) Mūqān and Jilān are the inhabitants of Ṭabaristān. Jilān
is beyond Ṭabaristān. According to Yāqūt, they have no
proper settlement, but scattered villages in the mountains
Mu'jam., vol. I., pp. 208, 548; vol. II., p. 179; vol.
IV., p. 686.
- (3) al-Jāhiz, al-Bayān., (Sandūbī), vol. I., p. 105.
- (4) The term Nāṭūr was used only among the people of al-
Sawād, see al-Suyutī, al-Muzhir., vol. I., p. 272.

man who meets with no one but the peasants, complains saying: "... God damn a country, where you find no Arab..."⁽¹⁾ In his distinction, therefore, al-Jāḥiẓ is referring to two classes of one nation.

This, however, does not mean that al-Jāḥiẓ ignores technical terms arising from differences of occupations. Whether among craftsmen or theologians, al-Jāḥiẓ thinks, the language falls under the effect of the special field of knowledge.⁽²⁾ al-Jāḥiẓ criticises good speakers and orators, whose inability to express themselves adequately may drive them to use expressions which belong to the technical use of their field of speciality.⁽³⁾

In al-Bukḥalā', this point seems to have been used deliberately, by al-Jāḥiẓ as part of his satire. There are theologians who used arguments and logic in matters that had nothing to do with theology or logic. al-'Aswārī uses arguments at liberty, while defending his greediness.⁽⁴⁾ On the

(1) al-Jāḥiẓ, al-Bayān., (al-Sandūbī), vol. II., pp. 64-5.

(2) Ibid., vol. II., p. 135; also R. fī Ṣinā'āt al-quwwād, Rasā'il., (Sandūbī), pp. 260-66.

(3) al-Jāḥiẓ, al-Bayān., vol I., p. 106.

(4) al-Jāḥiẓ, al-Bukḥalā', p. 61.

other hand, al-Jāhiz talks about those who had nothing to do with logic or theology, but were fond of applying it in their conversation or narration. al-Makkī is a narrator, on whose authority al-Jāhiz relates many of his stories. ⁽¹⁾ al-Makkī was fond of using these terms. He describes a miser who used to eat dates and throw the stones to his adopted child to suck what was left on them. Once he saw her "chewing a stone after she had sucked it, al-Makkī says, he shouted at her (in such a way) that it could not have been harder on him had she killed a man, while she did nothing but exchanged with him (accident) for (substance), she used to have the sweet taste of the stone, adding to it her moist saliva.. " ⁽²⁾ The terms (substance) and (accident) are, frequently, used by al-Makkī. In a story about the same miser, al-Makkī tells that his mother sent once to ask him for cold water, but al-ʿAnbarī sent back the maid to bring him ordinary water, in order to exchange it for cold water; al-Makkī comments: "... thus, he wanted her to give him substance for substance and accident for accident, so that his mother

(1) al-Makkī was fond of theology, but, according to al-Jāhiz, could understand nothing in it, and could get nothing as correct as it should be. He attached himself to the Muʿtazilites in al-Baṣra, see al-Ḥayawān, vol. III., pp. 325-7; vol. IV., p. 217.

(2) al-Jāhiz, al-Bukhālāʾ, p. 101. This is, perhaps, because the stones of dates were used to feed cows or goats, etc.

does not benefit except from the mere difference between the two accidents, which are coldness and warmth, as for the number of accidents and substances, they were to be exchanged one for the other.. " (1)

'Abū Ka'b, another narrator, describes a miser who offered him a dessert made of rice with syrup. When the man remarks to 'Abū Ka'b how he was "grinding it" - i.e. with his teeth - the latter expresses his amazement, saying: "Damn it ! ; (2) don't you fear God ? ; how can I grind an indivisible entity?"

al-Jāhiz maintains that, in stories related about the common people, one should not try to correct their language or give their speech the right pronunciation. On the other hand, stories related about the Arabs should be expressed in the same way as they were spoken, with correct grammar and pronunciation, for "if you change it, by making a mistake in its grammar, or pronounce it in the way of (3) speech of al-Muwalladūn and townspeople," al-Jāhiz says, (4) "you would come out of that story with a great debt."

(1) al-Jāhiz, al-Bukhalā', p. 101.

(2) Ibid., p. 116; see also other stories of the same type, in al-Ḥayawān, vol. III., pp. 37-8.

(3) see about al-Muwalladūn, E.W. Lane, Lexicon, vol. VIII., p. 296.

(4) al-Jāhiz, al-Bayān., (Sandūbī), vol. I., p. 111.

The question to be asked is: How far is al-Jāhiz justified in making this distinction and how far is this point shown in al-Bukhālā'.

Grammar:

There are reasons that made grammarians and philologists concern themselves about putting down rules of grammar of the language. Among these reasons is the fact that mistakes in the language became prevalent. The fear of the loss of the language of the Qur'ān is said to have been one of the important reasons. (1) Stories are often related, where the dispute between grammarians and people, about the language, is shown. (2) With the growing contact of Arabs and non-Arabs, language, like many other aspects of life, received changes that could no longer be avoided. Grammar itself became a necessity, in order to help to speak correctly. An interesting characteristic of the language spoken by people, that shows their avoidance of grammar, is

(1) see about 'Abu'l-'Aswad al-Du'alī and the beginning of writing down grammar, al-'Isfahānī, al-'Aghānī, vol. XI., p. 106.

(2) see, for instance, a story about al-Kisā'ī, the grammarian, with the carpenter, Ibn al-Jauzī, Talbīs., p. 77; also Yāqūt, 'Irshād., vol. VI., pp. 86-7.

the tendency towards stopping at the end of the letter and neglecting the vowels of inflection (ḥarakāt al-ʿIʿrāb). This seems to have been an easy escape of grammar. This characteristic can be observed in spoken Arabic even of nowadays. Instead of saying (نزلت صديقاً), it would be said (نزلت صديق). al-Jāhiz gives us examples of this tendency in language; he says: that al-Mahdī b. Muḥalhil used to say "Hishām told us, with Jazm (i.e. a stop), and would say 'Ibn, using Jazm, and say Ḥasan, using Jazm, for as he was not a grammarian, he found it safer to stop..⁽¹⁾" In another occasion, al-Jāhiz relates a story about al-Nazzām, the Muʿtazilite scholar. The latter was followed by a dog that frightened him. al-Nazzām says:

(2)
(ان كنت سبيع، فاذهب مع السباع وعليك بالبراري والغياض .)

The correct form of the word (سبيع), of course, would be (سبعاً). After relating the story, al-Jāhiz says: "Do not deny my saying and narration about him with incorrect speech, in saying (ان كنت سبيع) instead of (ان كنت سبعاً), for I think grammar spoils the anecdotes of al-Muwalladūn, in the same

(1) al-Jāhiz, al-Bayān., vol. II., p. 162.

(2) al-Jāhiz, al-Ḥayawān, vol. I., p. 28.

way as the incorrect speech would spoil the sayings of al-
(1)
'A'rāb."

The spoken language seems to have taken its way in development, at this time. Various points are made by 'Ibn Qutayba, for instance, about the language of the common people, for the benefit of writers, in his instructions for secretaries and clerks.
(2)

Persian influence on the spoken language, in Iraq especially, seems to have been very strong. This influence does not appear only in the use of new words inserted from Persian in the language, but also in new forms of words.
(3)
Using Persian words in Arabic, however, was not new, it goes back, al-Jāhiz says, to olden days.
(4)
The interesting point in the use of these words in 'Abbasid society is the fact that they were used mainly to express instruments and manners which are new in the life of townspeople.
(5)
On the other

(1) al-Jāhiz, al-Ḥayawān, vol. I., p. 28.

(2) see al-Suyutī, al-Muzhir, vol. I., p. 311; also 'Ibn Qutayba, Adab al-Kātib, (Leiden - 1900).

(3) see, for instance, the verb (تَبَكَّتْ), used in al-Bukhalā' by Khālawayh, p. 40; also RAAD (1945), vol. XX., p. 161.

(4) al-Jāhiz, al-Bayan., vol. I., p. 107.

(5) al-Tha'ālībī cites a number of these terms, see al-Suyutī, al-Muzhir., vol. I., p. 275, especially in food and clothes.

hand, among peasants and cultivators of land in the south of 'Iraq, the use of foreign terms to describe things pertaining to agriculture, was quite common. (1) The effect of Greek terms, on the other hand, on science and theology was obvious.

In al-Bukhalā', al-Jāhiz makes the following remark:

".. If you find, in this book, grammatical mistakes (Lahn), or words without grammatical vowels of inflection, or a word being diverted from its original use, understand, then, that we have only left that, because grammar makes this type of work hateful and would take it out of its limits, except when I relate a speech of one of the highly educated misers, and niggard scholars, like Sahl b. Hārūn and those like him.. (2)" It is clear, from al-Jāhiz's remark, that he made distinction between the language of common misers and that of educated ones. It is regretted, however, that in al-Bukhalā', as it stands now, one is unable to find the distinction and mistakes, which al-Jāhiz refers to, the reason being that the

(1) see instances in al-Bukhalā', p. 19 ; (al-shādhurwān); p. 194: (al-Tibalya wa'l-Barband), etc. also later pages of this chapter.

(2) al-Jāhiz, al-Bukhalā', p. 33.

book has been corrected and put in good and correct Arabic, regardless of what al-Jāhiz has pointed out. In his corrections and comments on al-Bukhalā', Dāwood al-Chelebī has referred to some of these characteristics of the book. ⁽¹⁾ It is interesting to see that many of the characteristics of the spoken language of the present time can be illustrated in examples from al-Bukhalā' itself. In the following examples, suggestions would be made as to how the text should have been spoken. I would point out the differences on the footnotes:

From the speech of an ordinary poor woman to 'Abū'l-Qamāqim, the miser:

" وَقَالَتْ لَهُ امْرَأَتُهُ: وَيْحَكَ يَا أَبَا الْقَمَاقِمِ، إِنِّي قَدْ تَزَوَّجْتُ زَوْجًا سَدْرًا
دَالِيعًا. وَفَتْهُ. وَلَيْتَ عَلَيَّ هَيْئَةً فَاشْتَرَيْتُ بِهَذَا الرَّغِيفِ
(2) آمِنِي وَبِهَذَا النَّكْلِ دَهْنًا فَانْتِ تَزُجَّرِ . "

The use of the stop seems to have become already common in the spoken language. The same characteristic is shown in the following example, from the speech of al-Thaurī:

(1) see RAAD., (1945), vol. XX.

(2) In the edition, it is آمِنِي and دَهْنًا, whereas the MS. shows the text uncorrected, see al-Bukhalā', (1948), p. 112.

(1) "مَنْ كَانَ مَالُهُ كَثِيرًا فَدُبِّرَ لَهُ مِنْ أَنْ يَفْتَحَ لَيْسَهُ لِلنَّفَقَاتِ وَالسَّرَّاقِ"

Another characteristic in the spoken language, which can still be observed in the spoken language, is the prolongation of the vocalization of the letter (i. e. 'Ishbā' al-ḥaraka) and pronouncing it as a letter, as illustrated in the following example:

"وَاللَّهِ مَا كُنْتُ ذَاتَ مَالٍ قَدِيمًا وَلَا وَرَثَةٍ حَدِيثًا. وَمَا نَبِيٌّ بِجَائِزَةٍ فِي
فَقْرِكَ وَلَا ضَيْمًا بِعَلِيٍّ. إِلَّا أَنْ يَكُونِي وَقَعْتُ عَلَى كَثْرٍ وَلَيْفَ
(2) " دَارَ الْأَمْرِ. فَقَدْ أَقْطَعْتُ عَنِّي مُوْنَةً وَلَيْفَتَيْنِ. هَذِهِ النَّائِبَةُ ..

Another type of mistakes is the following, from the speech of Mu'ādh al-Anbariya; she says:

(3) "إِنَّمَا الْمَصْرَانُ فَارِثَةٌ لِأَوْتَارِ الْمَنْدَفَةِ .."

al-Chelebī says: "... al-Jahiz may be relating the speech of Mu'ādh as it stands, for we see that our common people nowadays think that (المصران) is singular and (المصارين) is its plural..."⁽⁴⁾

(1) In al-Bukhalā', it is (كثيرا), p. 92; also al-Chelebī, RAAD., (1945), vol. XX., p. 260.

(2) The correct way is (ورثته) and (كفيتين), see al-Bukhalā' p. 25; also RAAD., vol. XX., p. 66.

(3) The correct way is (فارثا), al-Bukhalā', p. 28; for more examples, see al-Chelebī, RAAD., vol. XX., pp. 23, 92.

(4) Ibid., p. 67.

Diction:

In al-Bukhalā', it is interesting to see that ways of expression used by the common people are still common in the spoken language. These expressions do not go under certain rules or limits, but could be recognized by their spirit or the place they are used in. The following example may illustrate this point:

A poor blind man enters the house of a miser at lunch time. The miser orders lunch for him, but the maid apologises saying that there was nothing more left. The miser says then that there were no formalities between him and the man, therefore, she can bring anything. The blind man expresses his astonishment, when he discovers that nothing more than a piece of bread was offered to him, while he expected a little more than what the man described, therefore, he says:

(1)
" وَيْلَكُمْ ، وَلَئِنْ هَذَا جُرَّةٌ ! رَفَعْتُمْ الْحَشْمَةَ كَذِبًا ؟ وَالْكَرَامُ لَمِيقَعِ الْإِثْلَى هَذَا ! ؟ "

"Damn it ! You've gone to such lengths. You've done away with all formalities, but was all the fuss you made only about this trifle ? "

Another example of the common expressions among people is the following:

(1) al-Jāhiz, al-Bukhalā', p. 108.

al-Jāhiz tells us about a miser who refused a suggestion made by al-Jāhiz to shelter him and al-Nazzām in his house at noon, until the heat of the sun had gone. al-Jāhiz makes his suggestion very clear to the man, but the latter refuses that, saying:

(1) "أما على هذا الوجه ، ليكون والله أبراً ، فضعه في سويدا قلبك "

"As to (have it) this way, by God, it can never be. Put it in the centre of your heart (i.e. believe what I say)."

The phrase (فضعه في سويدا قلبك) is used nowadays in a slightly different way. The people say (خبيّر بكلمة) for a matter that is not supposed to be revealed to other people, but, at the same time, whose keeping secret causes the person some suffering. al-Jāhiz may be using the phrase in a sarcastic way.

Another example: A miser from Merv heard al-Hasan preach people to give their money away in alms, in order to get God's reward. When the miser did not get anything, after having spent his money, he came to al-Hasan and reproached him saying:

"هون ما صنعت بي ؟ صممت لي الخلف فأنفقت على يديك وأنا اليوم منذكدا وكذا سنة انتظر ما وعدت له أرى منه قليلا ولا كثيرا . هذا جمل "

(1) al-Bukhalā', p. 32.

(1) " هك ؟. المّ. كان يصنع. حبّ الكثر.. هذا.. ؟ "

" (Is it) good what you have done to me? You have secured for me the reward, therefore, I spent (all I have) after your promise, but to-day, after such and such a year, I am still waiting what you have promised, seeing nothing (of it), whether little or much. Is this lawful to you? Would the thief have done to me worse than this?"

There are ways of expression in the spoken language which can easily be missed, especially in writing, as in the following example:

A boy, who was a son of a miser, was asked by a man to give him food or water, but the boy refused and apologised to the man. The father expresses his astonishment and satisfaction, saying:

(1) " ما ذنبنا ؟. هذا من عاظم ما تسع ؟! .. "

"What is our fault ? Who told this what you hear ? ! "

This is said about a person, especially a child or a small boy, who is not expected to know about certain matters.

(1) al-Bukhalā', p. 22.

(2) Ibid., p. 14. It would be interesting to see that V. Vloten reads it as follows: (هذا من عاظم ما تسع)

Actually, it implies that "even this boy knows, although he was never told or expected to know". This meaning seems to fit the humour of al-Jāhiz's story that avarice comes to this miser and his son as if by nature. The same expression is used at the present time, in the spoken language. It would be said: (هذا منو غلّته .. ؟) i.e. who told this or who taught him.

The conversation in al-Bukhalā' goes in the same natural way of every day life. The following passage may illustrate this point:

"إِنَّ اللَّهَ وَاللَّهُ أَهْلُ ذَلِكَ .. شَيْخٌ قَدْ قَارِبَ الْمِائَةِ وَغُلَّتْ فَاذْبِلُهُ وَغِيَالَهُ ..
 قَلِيلٌ وَيُعْطَى الْأَمْوَالُ عَلَى مِذْبَاحَةِ الْعِلْمِ وَالْعِلْمُ لَدَيْهِ وَصِنَاعَتُهُ تَمَّ ..
 يَدْعِي إِلَى جُوفِ مَنْزِلِهِ وَأَنْتَ رَجُلٌ لَكَ فِي الْبَسْتَانِ وَرَجُلٌ فِي أَصْحَابِ ..
 الْفِيلِ وَرَجُلٌ فِي السُّوقِ وَرَجُلٌ فِي الْكَلْبَةِ تَطْلُبُ مِنْ هَذَا دَقْرَ حَصَى ..
 وَمِنْ هَذَا دَقْرَ آهْرٍ وَمِنْ هَذَا قِطْعَةَ سَاجٍ وَمِنْ هَذَا هَكَذَا .. مَا هَذَا ..
 الْحَرَمِ وَمَا هَذَا الْكَلْبُ وَمَا هَذَا الشُّجْبُ ؟ لَوْ كُنْتَ شَايًا بَعِيدَ الْأَمَلِ ..
 كَيْفَ كُنْتَ تَكُونُ ؟ وَلَوْ كُنْتَ مَدِينًا كَثِيرَ الْعِيَالِ كَيْفَ كُنْتَ تَكُونُ ؟ ! (1)"

"Indeed, by God, the cap fits. An old man of nearly a hundred, with a good income and few children and is given money

(1) al-Bukhalā', p. 132.

for teaching (⁽¹⁾ من آثرة العلم) and learning is his joy and his profession, then he goes up into the middle of his house. But you have one foot in the garden, one foot amongst the cultivators of young palms, one foot in the market and one foot in al-Kallā', asking for a load of gypsum from this man and a load of baked brick from that man and a piece of teak from such and such a man and so on from another. Why all this keannaess, why all this toil and why all this pre-occupation?. If you were a young a man with a long life before you, how would you be; or you were in debt and with lots of children (to support), how would you be? " al-Jāhiz seems to have changed very little in this passage to make it fit for writing. The repetition of the phrase (كيف كُنتَ . تكون ..), while reproaching, is common in the spoken language. Then the quick change from a question to a statement makes the whole passage very near, in spirit, to every day conversation. Another characteristic of this paragraph is the repetition of the phrases of (ورجل لك .. ورجل لك), which expresses the preoccupation of the man, and which is used very much in the spoken language now to express the same idea.

(1) This may indicate that the man was a teacher of religious sciences or Arabic language and grammar. Ch. Pellat translates it as (qui reçoit de l'argent pour parler de science), see le livre des Avars, (1951), p. 219.

al-Jāhiz, frequently, relates the sayings of people without making any change in them. In describing the son of Khālawayh, who was more niggardly than his father, al-Jāhiz says that people said:

(1) " فخره فوق أبيه ! .. "

"He was even more extreme than his father."

In the spoken language, certain terms are used in a special way. A man, for instance, especially among villagers or reserved circles, does not call his wife by her name, if he happens to mention her before strangers. He would refer to her as (al-‘Ajūz or ‘Ajūzī), i.e. the old woman or my old woman. In al-Bukhālā’, the term occurs in the same way. A miser from the circle of al-Muṣliḥūn in the mosque refers to his wife in ^{the} same way, while mentioning her to his friends in the mosque, he says:

(2) " فقلتُ للعجوز : لمَ لا تبخينَ لعيالنا في كلِّ غداةٍ نخالةً ؟ .. "

"So, I said to the old woman, why don't you cook for our family coarse flour, every day? "

(1) al-Bukhālā', p. 44.

(2) Ibid., p. 26.

Another example of the same type is the use of the word (شهوة), desire or wish. In the spoken language in Iraq, the word is especially applied to a "desired dish or kind of food which is not made or found very often". People would say (نظن اليوم شهوة), when they decide to make it. al-Jāhiz uses this term in the same way in al-Bukhalā'. He says about a miser, who was urged by his family to spend one Dirham to buy them something to eat:

(1) " وَأَنْ أَهْلَهُ. الْحَوَا عَلَيْهِ فِي شَهْوَةٍ .. "

Another term is the word (خضرة), green colour, which is usually used, in the spoken language for field, farm or vegetables, etc. In al-Bukhalā', al-Jāhiz seems to be using the word in the same sense, he says:

" وَرَأَيْتُ أَنَا حَتَّى رَأَيْتُ مِنْهُمْ زَهَادَةً هُنَيْنٍ رَجُلٌ تَيْغَدُونَ عَلَى مَبَاقِلِ خَضِرَةٍ
(2) قَرِيَةٍ. الْأَعْرَابُ .. "

The slang used by lower classes of people is illustrated in al-Bukhalā', by the language used

(1) al-Bukhalā', p. 119.

(2) al-Hajiri reads (خَضِرَةٍ) for (خَضْرَاءَ), Ibid., p. 14.

by Khālawayh the beggar and 'Abū Fātik, the Qādī of al-Fityān. The language of Khālawayh reveals the begging cant at this time. The fact that al-Jāhiz tries, at the end of Khālawayh's story, to explain the vocabulary used by (1) him, seems to suggest that this language was, perhaps, not understood by a great number of people. In the 4th century A. H., al-Tha'ālibī speaks of a group of beggars known as Banū Sāsān, amongst whom the technical use of the language (2) seems to have become common. As for the speech of 'Abū Fātik, it is clear that the terms he used were entirely technical. One may find the terms which he uses in dictionaries, but (3) they seem to convey different meaning.

It seems to me that the link between the spoken language of al-Jāhiz's time and that of the present time, can be traced from instances from al-Bukhalā'. I tried, in the above mentioned examples, to find this illustration in the style and general ways of expression in the book. In

(1) al-Bukhalā', pp. 44-6.

(2) Yatīmat al-dahr, vol. III., p. 323.

(3) al-Bukhalā', pp. 66-8. Compare al-Jāhiz's explanation of these terms to that given by 'Ibn Durayd, for instance, in al-Jamhara, vol. II., pp. 103, 296, 409; vol. III., pp. 66, 70, 97, 169, 313, 330.

the following pages, I have made the attempt to find the same characteristic in terms used by al-Jāhiz in al-Bukhalā'. These suggestions are merely out of personal effort and, therefore, are liable to any preferrable possibility which seems more fitting. I have arranged the words according to their priority in the text of al-Bukhalā'. The edition used for the purpose is al-Ḥājirī's, (1948).

1. al-Khatan: (الختن): p. 25.

the text: (دخلت أمّها في عين الختن.)

The term occurs in the story of Miryam in the circle of al-Muṣliḥūn in al-Baṣra. The Khatan of a man is he who is married to his daughter or sister. Also the man himself is a Khatan to the one who is married to his daughter
(1)
or sister. The word seems to have been used in early Islamic
(2)
times too. It is interesting to see that the word, at the present time, is used more in the north of Iraq, especially among the people of al-Mauṣil, applied also to a bride-groom. The word (Nasīb) is more used in other parts of Iraq.

(1) see 'Ibn Manẓūr, Lisan., vol. XIII., p. 138.

(2) see al-Jāhiz, al-Ḥayawān, vol. III., p. 22; also K. al-Uthmāniya, (1955), p. 15.

2. al-Khazīra: (الخزيرة): p. 26

the text: (أَمْتَكَيْتُ. أَيَّامًا صَدْرِي مِنْ سُعالٍ كَانَ أَهْبَابِي فَأَسْرَفِي
قَرْنًا بِالْفَانِيَةِ السَّكْرِي وَأُسْخِرَ عَلَيَّ آخِرُونَ بِالْخَزِيرَةِ تُقْتَدُ مِنْ إِنْشَاءِ شَيْءٍ وَالْكَثْرَةِ وَدَهْنِ اللَّوزِ)

I read (الخزيرة) al-ḥarīra for (الخزيرة) al-Khazīra. It seems more likely that what al-Jāḥiẓ describes here is what is known in Iraq now as al-ḥarīra, which is made in the same way described above by al-Jāḥiẓ, and which is used as medicine for cough or cold. As for the word al-Khazīra, it is usually made with meat. (1) al-Jāḥiẓ mentions this in (2) another occasion. Although Arabic dictionaries do not make much difference in writing the two words, I prefer to read the above described one as al-ḥarīra, because it is still common among people, known by the same name. Besides, confusion between the two words, in writing, can easily occur.

(1) see 'Ibn Manẓūr, Lisān., vol. V., p. 318; also 'Ibn Sīda, al-Mukhaṣṣaṣ, vol. IV., p. 145.

(2) al-Bukhalā', pp. 214-5.

3. Kelek: (**كله**); p. 39

the text: (ولم يبق في الارض كعبي ولا ملة الا وقد اشدت العرافة عليه)
(حتى صمغ لي اسواق قتال الحر وبعز كروي كله ..)

al-Hājirī suggests, on the footnote, that the word might be read as (**كله**)⁽¹⁾. G. Van Vloten reads it (**كله**). This word is used in the speech of Khālawayh the beggar, describing a character whom he cites as an example of those who learned from his tricks and were disciples under him. The word Kelek is used in Iraq for a kind of old boats, which are used there. It is also used, metaphorically, meaning a trick or deceit; people would say: (ما يعبر علي هذا الكله) i.e. this trick does not escape me or deceive me. As to whether the term here is used in its real meaning or metaphorically, it is not easy to decide. It may be suggested that the word (**كروي**) is, actually, (**قردي**), which is a special stick used in pushing boats. The expression would become (**قردي كله**)

4. al-Salāhiyāt wa'l-Sinīyāt: (**الصالحيات والسينيات**) : p. 92⁽²⁾

the text: (ثم بعد ذلك أتت الى ما بيني فبعته من أصحاب السينيات والصالحيات)

(1) al-Bukhālā', ed. V. Vloten, (1906), p. 48.

(2) also al-Bukhālā', p. 129.

al-Ṣalāḥīya is explained as follows: "Among the common people, it is a big pot, large at the top and narrow at the bottom"⁽¹⁾ This word always occurred in al-Bukhalā', accompanied by the second one. al-Ṣalāḥīya seems to be identical with what people call now al-Sarāḥīya or al-Ṣurāḥīya, which is a pot made of glass and is used for water. It is large at the bottom and narrow at the top, usually with no handle. As for the origin of the word, many conjectures have been made.⁽²⁾ As for the term al-Ṣīnīya, al-Ḥājirī says no more than that it is well-known.⁽³⁾ G. Van Vloten suggests that these two pots are made of copper.⁽⁴⁾ al-Jāḥiẓ mentions al-Ṣīnīya in another occasion, where the description suggests that it is also a pot of water or drink, but after he describes it, he says that he meant (al-Markab al-Ṣīnī)!,⁽⁵⁾ although he uses the term al-Ṣīnīya. It is not clear what al-Jāḥiẓ means by the latter term. We hear, too, of coloured plates called (al-Ṣīnī).⁽⁶⁾ This confusion, perhaps, is due

(1) al-Firūzabādī, Muḥiṭ al-muḥiṭ, vol. II., p. 1199; also see Dozy, Supplement.

(2) see D. Chelebī, al-'Āthār al-'ārāmiya., pp. 60, 62.

(3) al-Bukhalā', p. 327.

(4) al-Bukhalā', (1900), prefāce, p. xv.

(5) al-Jāḥiẓ, al-Ḥayawān, vol. V., p. 116.

(6) see al-'Azdī, Hikāyat 'Abū'l-Qāsim., pp. 38-41.

to the fact that these pots and plates were all imported from China and were all called *Ṣīnī*. The word *Ṣīniya*, however, is still used for tray, whatever it is made of, whether copper, glass or any kind of metal.

5. al-Muzammila: (المزمله): p. 101

the text: (ثم املئيه من ماء فترقتنا حتى يكون شيء بشيء)

This word seems to have been used for the pot which was used for keeping drinking water cold.⁽¹⁾ The water used to be taken from it through a hole with a small tap. The word (*Muzammila*) -or, as pronounced in spoken language, *Mzambila* - is now used for the tap only, whether it is attached to the water pot or not. Any kind of tap is called by the same name.

6. al-Khilāl: (الخنزول): p. 138

the text: (دانة كان يتخلل من الطعام خنزول واحد. سكرًا كلما تغدى، فذق
من رأسه شيئًا ثم تخلل به ثم ومنعه في مجرى دواته)

This seems to be a small tooth-pick made of wood

(1) *al-Bukhalā'*, *al-Ḥājirī's* comments, p. 331.

and used for cleaning the teeth after food. It seems that⁽¹⁾ it was, also one of the signs to show good manners and riches. The word Khlāl -as it is pronounced now- is used in Iraq for a certain kind of hooked needles (the same shape as a crochet), made of wood and used for knitting the fibre of palm-tree, after having been made into cord, to make knitted pieces, used usually for washing.

7. al-Nāṭūr: (الناطور): p. 180.

the text: (عمرونا بناطوري على نهر الأبله ونحن تعبون فحملنا اليه)

The word is still used in Iraq for the guard of gardens and cultivation. It may be of Aramaic origin, but Arabic dictionaries disagree about its origin. al-'Aṣma'ī claims that it was Arabic from the verb (نظر), to see or⁽²⁾ to guard. Others claim that it became (ناطور), due to the Nabateans' pronunciation of the letter (ظ) as (ط)⁽³⁾. But⁽⁴⁾ others say it is not Arabic. It is interesting to see that⁽⁵⁾ the word was, especially, used in al-Sawād of Iraq.

(1) see al-'Azdī, *Ḥikāyat.*, pp. 41-2.

(2) al-Suyūṭī, *al-Muzhir.*, vol. I., p. 272.

(3) al-Jawālīqī, *al-Muṣarrab*, (1942), pp. 334- 5.

(4) Ibn Manzūṭ, *Lisān.*, vol. VII., p. 71.

(5) *Ibid.*; also al-Jāḥiẓ, *al-Bayān.*, vol. II., pp. 64- 5.

8. al-Tablya wa'l-Barband: (التبليا والبربند): p. 194.

the text: (فلما جاد ونظر الى التلمه قال هذه للتصعد ويرتقى)
عليه والتبليا والبربند..... .. (

al-Ḥajirī says: "These are two instruments, used for climbing up palm-trees; the Barband is Persian, which means a tie. As for al-Tablya, it was mentioned in the article of the scholar Fraenkel, which included some Aramaic words, that this word is taken from the Aramaic and it means the ladder which is made of ropes. Then he said that the word is not used any more in Iraq" ⁽¹⁾.

al-Tablya is what people call now in Iraq Tibalya. It is used for climbing up palm-trees and it is made of strong rope. The tool, as well as its name, are still used in Iraq. It is a belt woven of ropes, the centre of which is broad,, and which goes round the back of the climber; the other end goes round the tree, and both ends then are fastened together. Usually, the part which goes round the tree is made of a bent piece of strong metal, fastened from both ends to the belt, so

(1) al-Bukhalā', al-Ḥajirī's comments, p. 367.

that it is easy to move it on the tree. The climber leans back on the fastened belt, pushing the trunk with his feet, and moving the metal piece with his hands, upwards or downwards, on the tree.

al-Tibalya is used only for palm-trees. In Najd, it is called Karr. This, according to 'Ibn Manẓūr, is the (1) Arabic word for Tibalya. As for al-Barband, obviously it is Persian. It may be a similar type of tie. It is possible too, that both words (al-Tablya and al-Barband), are used together to indicate one tool. I am not certain whether al-Barband is still used in Iraq.

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(1) Lisān., vol. XIX., p. 180; also al-Ḥājirī, al-Bukhalā', p. 367.

APPRECIATION

Two characteristics appear in al-Jāḥiẓ's writing; concerning the life of Islamic town:

- a) The characteristic of specialisation in labour and knowledge, which al-Jāḥiẓ portrays and towards which he takes different attitudes, according to the field of specialisation.
- b) The status of professions in society, as decided by the factor of specialisation, or other factors.

In his writing, al-Jāḥiẓ gives great consideration to these two characteristics, concerning groups and classes in the town

His recognition and appreciation of knowledge of man as a significant factor in his position in society, led al-Jāḥiẓ to distinguish the educated middle class in the 'Abbasid society with the ability of leadership of the common people. The importance al-Jāḥiẓ gives to the lower professions and common people, on the other hand, is the earliest

instance in Islamic literature that has come down to us. It is significant that al-Jāḥiẓ is quoted, a number of times by writers of later times, in the mouth of the common people themselves, who appear to have been well-acquainted with his writings. al-Jāḥiẓ's example, on the other hand, in giving the groups of professions a special place in literature, was followed by later writers, who showed the same interest in townlife. In the 4th century, A. H., writers like al-Thaʿālibī or al-Tanūkhī quote al-Jāḥiẓ in various occasions on themes pertaining to professional groups, classes and other characteristics of townlife.

al-Jāḥiẓ's classification of people into two major classes is not the only example of its kind. In about the VIth century A. H., the same classification appears in one of the interesting writers of the time. al-Rāghib al-ʿIṣfahānī was a theological writer of whose life nothing much is known, beyond the fact that he died about the beginning of the VIth century A. H., (XIIth A.D.) al-Suyūṭī says that al-Rāghib was believed by many people to have been a Muṣṭa-⁽¹⁾zīlite, but that this was refuted by Fakhr al-Dīn al-Rāzī. In al-Rāghib's writing, the idea of two classes: al-ʿĀmma

(1) al-Suyūṭī, *Bughyat al-wuʿāt.*, p. 396.

(common) and al-Khāṣṣa (élite), is based on the same criteria as that of al-Jāhiz. It is clear in al-Rāghib's classification, that knowledge and reason are given priority in distinguishing the class of al-Khāṣṣa from al-ʿĀmma. Quotation from al-Rāghib will be interesting to show this point:

"People are of two categories; élite and common. The élite is he who is specialised in knowledge, the true not the imitation, and in deeds those by which he reaches eternal Heaven not that which limits him within earthly life. The common, if considered from the viewpoint of religious matters, are those who content themselves with imitations of knowledge and in most deeds, those which lead to worldly benefit. If considered from secular viewpoint, the élite is he who specialises in the affairs of town, the absence of which would cause a gap in one of the activities of the town. The Common is he (1) by whose absence nothing is affected.

The reader cannot fail to see Plato's ideal of the Philosopher King in al-Rāghib's notion of the special class. It cannot be suggested, however, that al-Jāhiz had the same idea in mind, although it is interesting that the initiatives were taken by him towards the recognition of knowledge as an important

(1) al-Rāghib, al-Dharīʿa., (1882), p. 152; also al-Muqtabas, (1908), vol. III., p. 15.

factor in the life of society.

The question of avarice in Islamic literature was studied, in this thesis, with a special reference to society, its development, groupings and position of classes. A general comparison between Islamic literature and other universal literatures, such as the Greek and later French and English, concerning avarice, was made in order to show that writing on the subject in Islamic literature was not a unique example, therefore, it should not be attributed to political disputes, but also to social and material development. In this, I have come to the conclusion that racial struggle was not the actual reason that prompted writers to deal with this topic in literature. Studying avarice in the light of social differences and social classes seems to me to have been more essential. In al-Bukhālā', instances were taken to show different types of misers of different classes. Money-consciousness, however, can be observed, practically, in all classes, although the expression of it varied according to classes. The clash of ideals and traditions of various origins was also taken into consideration, while discussing the problem of avarice, towards which various attitudes were taken by people, according to their culture and background.

Town life and daily life of people are the theme of al-Bukhālā'. The tendency of al-Jāhiz towards picturing life of people and depicting its details in simple manner, became more prevalent in Islamic literature of later times. Even the vulgar language of the common people appears in literature of the 4th century A. H. It is interesting to see one example of this type of literature. In the story of 'Abū'l-Qāsim al-Baghdādī, written by 'Abū'l-Muṭahhir al-'Azdī, the author states that he related the story of the man as he himself related it, following, in doing so, the example and advice of al-Jāhiz himself. I would quote, here, al-'Azdī:

is
"... and this is a story about a man from Baghdād with whom I lived, for a short time, and out of whose mouth good, as well as coarse language, adequate and shameful expressions, used to come My mind preserved them, in order to be like a record, showing the character of the Baghdādī people, in their different classes, and like a model put for their customs.. I may have done as 'Abū 'Uthmān al-Jāhiz once
(1)
said.."

(1) al-'Azdī, Hikāyat 'Abū'l-Qāsim., ed. A. Mez, p. 1.

Talking about the style and method of al-Jāhiz, one cannot ignore one of the important writers, who was a great admirer of al-Jāhiz ; al-Tauḥīdī who lived about (312-402 A.H.). A study of this author, with a special reference to al-Jāhiz, his style, as well as his philosophy, would be interesting. The influence of al-Jāhiz on al-Tauḥīdī does not seem to have been limited within the fact that both writers were of Mu'tazilite inclinations. The influence of al-Jāhiz's writing on al-Tauḥīdī is also obvious. Besides the fact that al-Tauḥīdī had the same characteristics in writing, such as digressions, variety of subjects, portrait making and satirical style, etc., which have been pointed out by those who studied al-Tauḥīdī,⁽¹⁾ it seems to me that one interesting characteristic that appears in al-Jāhiz's writing has developed in al-Tauḥīdī himself more strongly. The polemic style of al-Jāhiz's writing seems to have developed in al-Tauḥīdī into another form, i.e. the dialogue form. al-Tauḥīdī tends to put his thoughts in a dialogue between two persons, one raises a point and the other makes the discussion. This also reminds us of Plato's dialogues. The

(1) see, for instance, 'Ibrāhīm Keilānī, 'Abū Ḥayyān., Beyrouth 1950, pp. 84, 94-5, 97, 98; also Ṭāhā Ḥusain, min Ḥadīth al-shi'r., (1957), p. 79.

most important works of al-Tauḥīdī, that have come down to us, were written in this way. In al-Muqābasāt, as well as al-'Imtā' wa'l-mu'ānasa, al-Tauḥīdī tends to show himself only as a reporter of a discussion, conversation, or a dialogue that took place in his presence. He may take part in the discussion or himself lead it, as in al-'Imtā'⁽¹⁾.

In the book of al-Baṣā'ir wa'l-dhakhā'ir, al-Tauḥīdī follows the same style of al-Jāḥiẓ in the book of al-Ḥayawān, in relating anecdotes and short stories and sayings, on various subjects, without much connection. However, al-Jāḥiẓ is more definite in al-Ḥayawān about the subject matter, which is supposed to be the world of animals than al-Tauḥīdī in al-Baṣā'ir, which is only a collection⁽²⁾ of sayings.

While al-Jāḥiẓ represents to us the polemics and disputes of parties, about theological, political and social matters, and the active part of scholars in these disputes,

(1) al-Muqābasāt, published by H. al-Sandūbī, Cairo-1929; al-'Imtā':, ed. by 'Aḥmad 'Amin and 'Aḥmad al-Zayn, III vols., Cairo- 1939-1944; also about a dialogue of al-Tauḥīdī, see D.S. Margoliouth, J.R.A.S., (1905), pp. 79-90.

(2) al-Baṣā'ir wa'l-dhakhā'ir, (1953).

al-Tauḥīdī's picture, on the other hand, is more sober and deep. The philosophical side of problems is more prominent in his discussions. This is clear, for instance in al-Muqābasāt. However, being himself a copyist, al-Tauḥīdī seems (1) to have benefited from books that came into his hand. Nevertheless, this did not deprive him from the originality in writing or restyling the arguments and arranging these selections.

al-Jāḥiẓ's wit and humour, however, which saved him from many a disastrous situation, especially after the fall of the Mu'tazilites, unfortunately, was non-existent in al-Tauḥīdī's character. His life was a continuous suffering. This is illustrated in his bad relations with almost all (2) men in power of his time.

There were writers who tried al-Jāḥiẓ's methods, but were criticised of being unsuccessful. 'Ibn al-ʿAmīd is said to have been one of the great admirers of al-Jāḥiẓ.

(1) see, for instance, al-Muqābasāt, p. 162.

(2) see about his relations with al-Ṣāḥib b. ʿAbbād and 'Ibn al-ʿAmīd, Yāqūt, 'Irshād., vol. V., p. 392.

He wanted to be like him, but was disillusioned about his ability, and the result was, according to al-Tauḥīdī, on the authority of Ibn Thawāba, that "... he fell far from al-Jāhiz, near to his own self.." ⁽¹⁾ This is, perhaps, due to the fact that there is a distinction between two schools of writers; the school of belle-lettre writers, to which al-Jāhiz himself belongs, and the school of official writers, which goes back to the time of Ibn al-Muqaffa' and 'Abd al-Ḥamīd al-Kātib, and to which Ibn al-'Amīd and al-Ṣāhib b. 'Abbād seem to have belonged. ⁽²⁾ A special study of these two schools would be interesting.

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(1) al-Tauḥīdī, al-'Imtā', (1939), vol. I., p. 66.

(2) see details about trends of literature at this period, Tāhā Husain, min Hadīth al-shī'r., especially, pp. 54-6, 79-80, (1957).

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