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done of methodology. In Ḥanafī as well as non-Ḥanafī sources, Zufar is regarded as a specialist in ḥiyyā, i.e. he clung to solutions dictated by systematic reasoning. By contrast, Abū Yūṣūf and al-Shaybānī often adopted solutions dictated by iṣṭiḥsān (juridical preference) rather than ḥiyyā. It is plausible that the traditionists preferred Zufar’s doctrine to Abū Yūṣūf’s and al-Shaybānī’s. A report transmitted on the authority of the Basran traditionist and jurist Yabhū b. Akhīm (d. 242/857) is revealing: the Kufān traditionist Wāki‘ b. al-Jarrāḥ (d. 197/812) used to frequent the circle of Zufar in the morning and that of Abū Yūṣūf in the evening, but subsequently he attended only the former’s circle, stating: “Praise be to God, who has made you [viz. Zufar] the successor to the Imām [viz. Abū Ḥanīfa]”.

Tsafir writes that Zufar’s affiliation with the Banū ‘Anbar, whose members were influential in the Basran legal milieu, and the connection of Zufar and his family with Isfahan made it easier for the Basrans and the Isfahanis to accept the authority of Abū Ḥanīfa (pp. 32, 66). This argument is persuasive, but it is also plausible that the content or the methodology of Zufar’s doctrine played a certain role in introducing Ḥanafīsm both to Basra and to Isfahan.

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This is a revised version of Powers’ 2001 Ph.D. dissertation, University of Chicago. It addresses the question of what jurists thought when they demanded everywhere the correct niyya for an action to be valid. Chapter One reviews the religious problem of intent in general. Chapters Two and Three review the problem of intent in Islamic ritual law. Powers proposes that it is the nature of ritual that it is framed not by the actor but by others long beforehand (in the case of Islamic ritual, this means the Prophet under inspiration), and hence requires the link of conscious intent between actor and action. It seems that legal handbooks saw intent as entailing neither intense communion with God nor any form of words.

Chapter Four concerns intent in commercial law. (Outside ritual law, niyya appears less often than other words for “intent” but still often enough to justify covering the law of interpersonal relations in the same book.)
Legal handbooks examine words that on being spoken create a binding contract (inshā’ is the technical term). The possibilities seem to be words so clear that they have legal effect no matter what the speaker’s intent, ambiguous words whose effect depends on the speaker’s intent, and words too ambiguous to have any legal effect, whatever the speaker’s intent. Powers associates heavy stress on intent with moralism. This seems right, for the moralists would have been most concerned to hold people to their word. But it seems to me there is also a political slant (pointed out to me long ago by Roy Mottahedeh): the easier it is to get out of a contract (Islamic law generally seems to make it fairly easy), the less call there will be for state intervention, which Muslim jurists characteristically preferred to avoid.

Chapter Five concerns marriage and divorce contracts and the making of wills. Here, Powers continually associates ease of getting out of a contract with “flexibility.” Well, yes, but what does that mean? He reviews various other attempts at generalization and finds none satisfactory. My guess is that we are once again up against a law with various sources and therefore inconsistent in detail. Chapter Six discusses intent in penal law, as in distinguishing between murder and manslaughter. On the side of research, it is disappointing that Powers uses so narrow a range of sources for different school positions. For example, he makes heavy use of Ibn Qudāmā (d. 620/1223), al-Mughnī, to supply ḥanbalī positions. This is understandable, for Ibn Qudāmā was a vigorous writer with a strong interest in khitāf. However, he also adopted some idiosyncratic positions, imported Shāfi‘ī discussions as if they had been ḥanbalī, and of course cannot represent ḥanbalī elaborations of the Mamluk period. Anyway, no one writer should ever stand for a whole school, and al-Mughnī needs to be supplemented by one or both of Ibn Mufliḥ al-Qāʿīnī (d. 763/1362), al-Furūʿ, and al-Mardāwī (d. 885/1480), al-Insāf. Similarly, Ibn Rushd (d. 595/1198), Bidāyat al-mujtahid, should be supplemented for Mālikī positions by at least al-Ḥattāb (d. 954/1547), Mawāhib al-jaštī, perhaps also now al-Qarāfī (d. 684/1285), al-Dhakhīra.

Transliteration is disappointingly careless. The most annoying example, because often repeated, is “Ibn Mawdūd al-Muṣālī.” A glance at Brockelmann (GAL 1:476 [382]; S 1:657) would have confirmed what should have been plain from the probability that someone should be known as coming from Mosul (Ar. al-mawsil), hence rather “al-Mawsil.” Talḥa is correctly spelt (127 n.) but not talbiya. Iṣrāʾ should be yaddaʾi (187). There are others.

The greater disappointment comes as to significance: it seems as though intent in ritual law amounts to little, in the end, while intent in various forms of social interaction does not lend itself to wide generalization. This is one risk of picking a topic in Islamic law for a doctoral dissertation: that one will end up with either a great pile of conflicting opinions or a simplistic description of the field, especially from overlooking disagreement within schools. Powers avoids questions of change over time, which might have increased his opportunity for interesting generalization. On the other hand, a study of intent seems to have been overdue, especially in the field of ritual law, where Powers’ own greater reliance on primary