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ARTICLES

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– A Critical Approach –

Âdem Arıkan

Nuzūl of the Qurʾān and the Question of *Nuzūl* Order

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Mohd Yaseen Gada

ON THE PROBABILITY OF THE CREATION OF THE IBN TAYMIYYA SCHOOL OF OTTOMAN THOUGHT VIA BIRGIWĪ MEḤMED EFENDĪ
– A Critical Approach –

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Abstract

Ottoman religious thought is divided into two essential schools named after Fakhr al-Dīn al-Rāzī and Ibn Taymiyya. The Fakhr al-Dīn al-Rāzī School is identified with Māturīdism, whereas Ottoman scholar Birgiwī Meḥmed Efendī (929-981/1523-1573) is considered a disciple of the Ibn Taymiyya School. Birgiwī's *madhhab* is often described as Salafī, Ḥanbalī, Ashʿarī, or Māturīdī. This study assesses such claims using evidence from the sources whose attribution to Birgiwī is indisputable. An analysis of Birgiwī's works clearly shows that he is a member of the Māturīdī School. Nevertheless, the study reveals the necessity of reviewing certain classifications, denominations, and generalizations. Based on Birgiwī's extant works, this paper makes several objections to his being considered a representative or member of the Ibn Taymiyya School and demonstrates that Birgiwī is completely aligned with Māturīdī with regard to theological issues.

Key Words: Birgiwī Meḥmed Efendī, Ibn Taymiyya, Salafism, Māturīdism, Ottoman religious thought

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Introduction

The Ottoman Empire existed for centuries and covered a vast geographical area. Studies on this era adopt numerous approaches and use a variety of definitions and classifications. According to one of these classifications, Ottoman religious thought is principally shaped by two schools: the 'Fakhr al-Dīn al-Rāzī School' and the 'Ibn Taymiyya School.' According to this classification, Birgiwī Meḥmed Efendī (929-981/1523-1573) is a representative of the Ibn Taymiyya School.[1]

The influence of Ibn Taymiyya in Wahhābī circles made his other circles of influence the subject of scholarly research. Prior to Wahhābism, Ibn Taymiyya's views influenced certain scholarly circles in the vast Ottoman territory. In the history of Islamic sects, Salafism comes to mind as the first to incorporate the opinions of Ibn Taymiyya. According to certain academics, Salafism, however, is an ideology rather than a *madhhab*.[2] The acceptance of Salafism as a *madhhab* is unwelcome (*bidʿa*) to those who are tied to the *Salaf*.[3]

By consulting Birgiwī's extant works, this study intends to reveal possible objections to his positioning within the Ibn Taymiyya School.

Birgiwī and the Ibn Taymiyya School

Birgiwī was born in Balıkesir in 929/1523.[4] His father was mudarris Pīr ʿAlī who provided Birgiwī with his initial education.[5] Birgiwī later

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1 Ahmet Yaşar Ocak, *Yeniçağlar Anadolu'sunda İslam'ın Ayak İzleri: Osmanlı Dönemi, Makaleler-Araştırmalar* (Istanbul: Kitap Yayınevi, 2011), 178 (hereafter cited as *Osmanlı Dönemi*).

2 Mehmet Hayri Kırbaşoğlu, "Maziden Atiye Selefî Düşüncenin Anatomisi," *İslâmiyât* 10/1 (2007), 142.

3 Muḥammad Saʿīd Ramaḍān al-Būṭī, *al-Salafiyya: marḥala zamaniyya mubāraka lā madhhab Islāmī* (8th edn., Damascus: Dār al-Fikr, 2006), 219 ff.

4 In Birgiwī's words, "I was born on the tenth day of Jamādī al-awwal in the year nine hundred twenty-nine (929)." See Muḥammad ibn Pīr ʿAlī al-Birgiwī, *Vasiyyet-nâme: Dil İncelemesi, Metin, Sözlük, Ekler İndeksi ve Tıpkıbasım* (ed. Musa Duman; Istanbul: Risale Yayınları, 2000), 122 (hereafter cited as *Vasiyyet-nâme*).

5 Abū Muḥammad Muṣṭafā ibn Ḥusayn ibn Sinān al-Janābī, *al-ʿAylam al-zākhir fī aḥwāl al-awāʾil wa-l-awākhir* [also known as *Tārīkh al-Janābī*] (MS Istanbul,

left for Istanbul and attended courses taught by Akhī-zāda Meḥmed Efendī (d. 974/1563) and Qāḍī-ʿaskar ʿAbd al-Raḥmān Efendī (d. 983/1575). He was also a follower of ʿAbd Allāh al-Qaramānī (d. 972/1564-5), the Bayrāmī sheikh. At the recommendation of his sheikh, he resumed his courses and *irshād* activities. He was subsequently appointed *mudarris* of Dār al-Ḥadīth, which was built in Birgi at the behest of ʿAṭāʾ Allāh Efendī (d. 979/1571), the mentor of Sultan Selīm II (1566-1574).[6] He spent the remainder of his life in Birgi, pursuing educational and writing activities. He became known by the name Birgiwī (from Birgi). In the twilight of his life, Birgiwī returned to Istanbul to advise Soqollu Meḥmed Pāshā (d. 987/1579), the Grand Vizier. Birgiwī passed away in 981/1573 and was interred in Birgi.[7]

Birgiwī's views remained influential for many years. According to classical references, Birgiwī had many followers during the Ottoman era. Terzioğlu found the expression "*khulafāʾ* of Birgiwī" among fatwās by Asʿad Efendī (Sheikh al-Islām between 1615-1622 and 1623-1625) and also "Birgiwīs" in a treatise written by one Ḥājī Aḥmad in 1056/1646-1647.[8]

Nuruosmaniye Library, no: 3100), 427a. Muḥammad ibn Bahāʾ al-Dīn (d. 953/1546), the cousin of Birgiwī, consulted Pīr ʿAlī before writing a commentary on *al-Fiqh al-akbar* by al-Imām Abū Ḥanīfa; see Ḥājī Khalīfa Muṣṭafā ibn ʿAbd Allāh Kātib Chalabī (as Kâtip Çelebi), *Mîzânü'l-Hakk fî ihtiyâri'l-ehakk* [=*Mīzān al-ḥaqq fī ikhtiyār al-aḥaqq*] (translated into Turkish Orhan Şaik Gökyay and Süleyman Uludağ; Istanbul: Kabalcı Yayınevi, 2008), 51, 179, 297.

6 For a description of Birgiwī's educational activities at the madrasa, see Huriye Martı, *Osmanlı'da Bir Dâru'l-Hadis Şeyhi: Birgivî Mehmed Efendi* (Istanbul: Dârulhadis, 2008), 59 ff.

7 ʿAlī ibn Bālī, *al-ʿIqd al-manẓūm fī dhikr afāḍil al-Rūm* [as an annex to *al-Shaqāʾiq al-Nuʿmāniyya* by Ṭāshkuprī-zāda] (Beirut: Dār al-Kitāb al-ʿArabī, 1975), 436-437; Nawʿī-zāda ʿAṭāʾī, *Ḥadāʾiq al-ḥaqāʾiq fī takmilat al-Shaqāʾiq* (Istanbul: Çağrı Yayınları, 1989), II, 179-181; For further information and sources about the life of Birgiwī, see Kasım Kufrevî, "Birgewī," in: *Encyclopaedia of Islam Second Edition* (eds. P. Bearman, Th. Bianquis, C.E. Bosworth, E. van Donzel, and W.P. Heinrichs; accessed June 16, 2015), http://dx.doi.org/10.1163/1573-3912_islam_SIM_1434.

8 Derin Terzioğlu, *Sufi and Dissident in the Ottoman Empire: Niyāzī-i Miṣrī, 1618-1694* (PhD dissertation; Cambridge, MA: Harvard University, 1999), 200, 202; id., "Sunna-minded sufi preachers in service of the ottoman state: the *naṣīḥatnāme*

Ottoman religious thought is generally categorized into the 'Fakhr al-Dīn al-Rāzī School' and the 'Ibn Taymiyya School.' Within this division, Birgiwī is typically positioned as a follower of the Ibn Taymiyya School:

> Ottoman scholars preferred two regions, namely, the Middle East and Central Asia, for education in the religious sciences. (…) Whoever studied and was specialized in these regions essentially brought two theological schools into the Ottoman lands. The first is the Fakhr al-Dīn al-Rāzī (or briefly Fakhr al-Rāzī) school, preferred by the Ottoman central government during the establishment of the Ottoman religious bureaucracy; and the second is the Ibn Taymiyya school, which was initiated as a reaction to the former in the 16th century.
>
> Based on reason (*ʿaql*) and ideas (*raʾy*), the Fakhr al-Rāzī School was strongly represented by prominent scholars during the post-Ghazālī era (d. 1111) from the 12th to the late 14th century, including Najm al-Dīn ʿUmar al-Nasafī (d. 537/1142), Abū l-Qāsim Maḥmūd al-Zamakhsharī (d. 538/1144), Burhān al-Dīn al-Marghīnānī (d. 593/1197), Fakhr al-Dīn al-Rāzī (d. 606/1209), Naṣīr al-Dīn al-Ṭūsī (d. 672/1274), Qāḍī al-Bayḍāwī (d. 685/1286), ʿAḍud al-Dīn al-Ījī (d. 756/1335) Quṭb al-Dīn al-Rāzī (d. 766/1364), Saʿd al-Dīn al-Taftāzānī (d. 792/1390), and Sayyid Sharīf al-Jurjānī (d. 816/1413).[9]

Numerous studies repeat these views about the foregoing classification. Māturīdism is described under the heading of "the Fakhr al-Rāzī School and followers," indicating that Māturīdism replaced the Rāzī School. The Rāzī School is therefore identified with Māturīdism, and the same scholars are mentioned as representatives of both:

> Māturīdism, one of the two major faith schools in Sunnī Islam (Ashʿarism is the other), was founded by Muḥammad Abū Manṣūr al-

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of Hasan addressed to Murad IV," *Archivum Ottomanicum* 27 (2010), 255 (The records by Terzioğlu about the manuscripts are as follows: Asʿad Efendī, *Fatāwā-yi Muntakhab* (MS Istanbul: Süleymaniye Library, Kasidecizade, no: 277), 1b-6b, 46b; Ḥājī Aḥmad, *Risāla-i ʿajība* (MS Istanbul: Topkapı Palace Museum Library, Bağdat Elyazmaları, no: 404), 96b-98b.

9 Ocak, "Ottoman Intellectual Life in the Classical Period," in H. C. Güzel, K. Çiçek, and S. Koca (eds.), *The Turks* (Ankara: Yeni Türkiye Yayınları, 2002), III, 749-750; Ocak, "Religious Sciences and the Ulema," in Halil İnalcık and Günsel Renda (eds.), *Ottoman Civilization* (translated into English by Ellen Yazar and Priscilla Mary Işın; Ankara: Ministry of Culture, 2003), I, 260-261.

> Māturīdī (d. 333/944) in Samarqand. Based on *ʿaql* and *raʾy*, the school achieved great progress thanks to efforts by scholars educated in the Transoxiana and Khwārizm, such as (…) ʿUmar al-Nasafī, al-Zamakhsharī, (…), Fakhr al-Dīn al-Rāzī, and Naṣīr al-Dīn al-Ṭūsī, (…) who were notable names in the *mutaʾakhkhirūn* tradition.[10]

Fakhr al-Dīn al-Rāzī's criticisms of Māturīdism during his discussions with Māturīdī scholar Nūr al-Dīn al-Ṣābūnī (d. 580/1184) can be read today in al-Rāzī's own works.[11] Therefore, it could be possible to oppose against this categorization through al-Rāzī's own writings. Other sources and studies about the Rāzī School and its disciples or followers also mention the names of certain scholars within the context of restrictions to the definitions of terms such as wisdom (*ḥikma*), logic (*manṭiq*), and investigation (*taḥqīq*).[12] In the abovementioned categorization, these scholars are known for "concentrating on *ʿaql and raʾy*;" therefore, these features must be taken into account when positioning them within the Rāzī/Māturīdī School.[13] Nevertheless, descriptions about Birgiwī, which place him at the center of the opposite side (the Ibn Taymiyya School), prove that the classification was also based on *madhhab* identities:

> Thus, as early as his lifetime, Birgiwī gave birth to a second and purist Sunnī approach as an alternative to the pragmatic Sunnī theology of the Ottoman central government; therefore, even though he is actually a Ḥanafī, it would not be incorrect to associate him with Ibn Taymiyya, or even the Ḥanbalī School.[14]

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[10] Ocak, *Osmanlı Dönemi*, 175; id., "Religious Sciences and the Ulema," 261; id., "al-Ḥayāt al-dīniyya wa-l-fikriyya," in Ekmeleddin İhsanoğlu (ed.), *al-Dawla al-ʿUthmāniyya: tārīkh wa-ḥaḍāra* (translated into Arabic by Ṣāliḥ Ṣaʿdāwī; Istanbul: IRCICA, 1999), II, 247.

[11] Abū ʿAbd Allāh Fakhr al-Dīn Muḥammad ibn ʿUmar al-Rāzī, *Munāẓarāt Fakhr al-Dīn al-Rāzī fī bilād Māwarāʾ al-nahr* (ed. Fatḥ Allāh Khulayf; Beirut: Dār al-Mashriq, 1966), 53, and 14, 17, 23.

[12] For sources, studies and other details about the Rāzī School, see Mustakim Arıcı, "İslâm Düşüncesinde Fahreddin er-Razi Ekolü," in Ömer Türker and Osman Demir (eds.), *Fahreddin Râzî* (Istanbul: İSAM Yayınları, 2013), 167-202.

[13] Indeed, in his discussion of Birgiwī's attitude toward *bidʿa*, Ocak says, "Even though he was a Ḥanafī, he followed the Ibn Taymiyya School in this respect," *Osmanlı Dönemi*, 222.

[14] Ocak, *Osmanlı Dönemi*, 179-180; id., "al-Ḥayāt al-dīniyya wa-l-fikriyya," 251; id., "Religious Sciences and the Ulema," 263. For similar opinions, see Hulusi Lekesiz,

Birgiwī himself states his affiliation with the Ḥanafī School.[15] He also mentions the names and views of al-Zamakhsharī, Qāḍī al-Bayḍāwī, (Fakhr al-Dīn) al-Rāzī, and Abū Manṣūr[16] (al-Māturīdī) who all are accepted to be main figures of the other school.[17] Nevertheless, Birgiwī never mentions the name of Ibn Taymiyya in any of his works. Birgiwī's disagreement with contemporaneous scholars on some issues[18] does not change the fact that he was Ḥanafī and Māturīdī. Birgiwī often refers to Ḥanafī books on jurisprudence and fatwā to justify his views. It is well-known that Māturīdism "is not represented in the same manner in every region."[19] It would therefore be inaccurate to identify the various opinions of Birgiwī exclusively with Ḥanbalism, the Ibn Taymiyya School, and Salafism.

Ahl al-sunna is often divided into three main subcategories: Salafiyya (Athariyya, Ḥanābila), Māturīdiyya, and Ashʿariyya. This traditional three-part classification, which includes Ḥanbalī scholars,[20]

"Osmanlı İlmi Zihniyeti: Teşekkülü, Gelişmesi ve Çözülmesi Üzerine Bir Tahlil Denemesi," *Türk Yurdu* 11/49 (1991), 24, 25; Fahri Unan, "Dinde Tasfiyecilik Yahut Osmanlı Sünnîliğine Sünnî Muhâlefet: Birgivî Mehmed Efendi," *Türk Yurdu* 36/382 (1990), 34-35.

15 If asked "to which *madhhab* do you belong in deeds?" tell them "Imām Abū Ḥanīfa," but never say "Abū Ḥanīfa's *madhhab* is right and the others are deviant." *Vasiyyet-nâme*, 107. See also Birgiwī, *al-Ṭarīqa al-Muḥammadiyya wa-l-sīra al-Aḥmadiyya* (ed. Muḥammad Ḥusnī Muṣṭafā; Aleppo: Dār al-Qalam al-ʿArabī, 2002), 399.

16 Birgiwī, *Inqādh al-hālikīn* in *Rasāʾil al-Birgiwī* (ed. Aḥmad Hādī al-Qaṣṣār; Beirut: Dār al-Kutub al-ʿIlmiyya, 2011), 73.

17 Birgiwī, *al-Ṭarīqa*, 201; id., *Inqādh al-hālikīn,* 54.

18 The Cash waqf, one of the subjects Birgiwī expresses a dissenting opinion, had already been discussed by the Ottoman scholars who preceded him. Abū Ḥanīfa and his followers expressed various opinions about these foundations. For the scholars who participated in these discussions prior to Birgiwī, see Tahsin Özcan, *Osmanlı Para Vakıfları* (Ankara: Türk Tarih Kurumu, 2003), 28 ff.

19 Mehmet Kalaycı, *Tarihsel Süreçte Eşarilik-Maturidilik İlişkisi* (Ankara: Ankara Okulu Yayınları, 2013), 129.

20 ʿAbd al-Bāqī ibn ʿAbd al-Bāqī Ibn Faqīh Fiṣṣa al-Mawāhibī al-Ḥanbalī*, al-ʿAyn wa-l-athar fī ʿaqāʾid ahl al-athar* (ed. ʿIṣām Rawwās Qalʿajī; Damascus: Dār al-Maʾmūn li-l-Turāth, 1987), 53; Abū l-ʿAwn Shams al-Dīn Muḥammad ibn Aḥmad ibn Sālim al-Saffārīnī al-Ḥanbalī, *Lawāmiʿ al-anwār al-bahiyya wa-sawāṭiʿ al-asrār al-athariyya li-sharḥ al-Durra al-muḍiyya fī ʿaqd al-firqa al-marḍiyya* (2nd edn., Damascus: Muʾassasat al-Khāfiqīn wa-Maktabatuhā, 1982), I, 73.

is generally accepted despite certain variations.[21] Nevertheless, Wahhābīs, who also identify with the Ḥanbalī School, claim that Māturīdiyya and Ashʿariyya are not sects that will attain salvation (*al-firqa al-nājiya*). According to this exclusivist Wahhābī view, "Ahl al-sunna is but a sect," and Ibn Taymiyya is the one who declared the faith of Ahl al-sunna.[22] As we will discuss later, some certain researchers who adopt Wahhābī views conclude that Birgiwī adhered to the Māturīdiyya and criticize him for his views showing that they do not agree with Ibn Taymiyya's ones.

Allegations of References to Ibn Taymiyya in Birgiwī's Works

Birgiwī incorporates the views of many scholars into his works. For example, Birgiwī's *al-Ṭarīqa* includes many references to al-Ghazālī.[23] Relevant studies have identified similarities between his views and those of al-Ghazālī in *Iḥyāʾ*.[24] We also know[25] that Birgiwī did express dissidence with al-Ghazālī when it occurs.[26] Birgiwī also frequently consults many sources that discuss similar themes, such as those by Ḥanafī scholar Abū l-Layth al-Samarqandī (d. 373/983).[27]

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21 Saʿd al-Dīn Masʿūd ibn ʿUmar ibn ʿAbd Allāh al-Taftāzānī, *Sharḥ al-Maqāṣid* (ed. ʿAbd al-Raḥmān ʿUmayra; 2nd edn., Beirut: ʿĀlam al-Kutub, 1998), V, 231; Abū Saʿīd Muḥammad ibn Muṣṭafā ibn ʿUthmān al-Khādimī, *al-Barīqa al-Maḥmūdiyya fī sharḥ al-Ṭarīqa al-Muḥammadiyya* (Istanbul: Shirkat-i Ṣaḥāfiyya-i ʿUthmāniyya, 1316), I, 201; Abū l-Fayḍ Muḥammad al-Murtaḍā ibn Muḥammad al-Zabīdī, *Itḥāf al-sāda al-muttaqīn bi-sharḥ Iḥyā ʿulūm al-dīn* (3rd edn., Beirut: Dār al-Kutub al-ʿIlmiyya, 2002), II, 8; İsmail Hakkı İzmirli, *Yeni ʿIlm-i Kalām* (Istanbul: Awqāf-i Islāmiyya Maṭbaʿasi, 1339-1341), I, 98.

22 Ṣāliḥ ibn ʿAbd al-ʿAzīz ibn Muḥammad ibn Ibrāhīm Āl al-Sheikh, *al-Laʾālī l-bahiyya fī sharḥ al-ʿAqīda al-Wāsiṭiyya* (ed. ʿĀdil ibn Muḥammad Mursī Rifāʿī; Riyadh: Dār al-ʿĀṣima, 2010), I, 88-90; Muḥammad Ṣāliḥ al-ʿUthaymīn, *Sharḥ al-ʿAqīda al-Wāsiṭiyya li-Sheikh al-islām Ibn Taymiyya* (ed. Saʿd ibn Fawwāz al-Ṣumayl; 6th edn., Riyadh: Dār Ibn al-Jawzī, 2000), I, 53.

23 Birgiwī, *al-Ṭarīqa*, 52, 60, 95, 151, 152, 398, 412.

24 Mustafa Çağrıcı, "Gazzâlî'nin İhyâ'sı ile Birgivî'nin Tarîkat-ı Muhammadiyye'sinin Mukayesesi," *İslâmî Araştırmalar (Gazzâlî Özel Sayısı)* 13/3-4 (2000), 473-478.

25 See Martı, *Birgili Mehmed Efendi'nin Hadisçiliği ve et-Tarîkatü'l-Muhammediyye: Tahkik ve Tahlil* (PhD dissertation; Konya: Selçuk University, 2005), 290-291.

26 Birgiwī, *al-Ṭarīqa*, 151-153.

27 Birgiwī, *al-Ṭarīqa*, 52, 53, 54, 56, 59, 66, 105, 202, 253, 291, 301, 324, 370, 419-420.

Some scholars who associate Birgiwī with Ibn Taymiyya have given misleading examples to prove the connection. One of these is the claim that Birgiwī "mentions the name of Ibn Qayyim al-Jawziyya (d. 751/1350)" in *al-Ṭarīqa.*[28] The alleged mention of Ibn Qayyim al-Jawziyya is actually a reference to Abū l-Faraj Ibn al-Jawzī (d. 597/1201),[29] whose views Birgiwī reports.[30] Therefore, Abū l-Faraj Ibn al-Jawzī is confused with Ibn Qayyim, the disciple of Ibn Taymiyya.[31]

Another error has been perpetuated by a translation of *al-Ṭarīqa* by Wadādī called *Takmilat al-Ṭarīqa.*[32] Wadādī's translation does not consist exclusively of text written by Birgiwī. Indeed, Wadādī introduces the work by indicating that "it is called *Takmilat al-Ṭarīqa* because some passages are derived and added from various books"[33] and admits that he has made additions from numerous sources.[34] Therefore, the references to Ibn Taymiyya in this translation are

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[28] Lekesiz, *XVI. Yüzyıl Osmanlı Düzenindeki Değişimin Tasfiyeci (Püritanist) Bir Eleştirisi: Birgivî Mehmed Efendi ve Fikirleri* (Phd dissertation; Ankara: Hacettepe University, 1997) 114, and footnotes (hereafter cited as *Birgivî Mehmed Efendi ve Fikirleri*). Lekesiz refers for the place in which the name Ibn Qayyim is mentioned to the manuscript of *al-Tarīqa al-Muḥammadiyya*. The bibliography gives the following citation: MS Ankara: Milli Kütüphane [National Library], Celal Ökten Manuscripts Section, no: 2178, 97b, (https://www.yazmalar.gov.tr/detay_goster.php?k=66009, 107).

[29] Abū l-Faraj ʿAbd al-Raḥmān ibn ʿAlī Ibn al-Jawzī, *Talbīs Iblīs* (ed. Sayyid al-Jumaylī; Beirut: Dār al-Kitāb al-ʿArabī, 1994), 224.

[30] Birgiwī, *al-Ṭarīqa*, 196. See also Martı, *Birgili Mehmed Efendi'nin Hadisçiliği*, 284.

[31] Ahmet Kaylı, *A Critical Study of Birgiwī Meḥmed Efendī's (d. 981/1573) Works and Their Dissemination in Manuscript Form* (MA thesis; Istanbul: Boğaziçi University, 2010), 57 and footnote 137.

[32] See Unan, "Dinde Tasfiyecilik," 42 (footnote 55) The author's reference is to this translation, (Birgiwī, *Takmila-i tarjama-i Ṭarīqat-i Muḥammadiyya* [translated by Wadādī; Istanbul: Dār al- Salṭana, 1256]), 412, 419, 436, 449, 450, 465, 466, 467.

[33] Wadādī, *Takmila-i tarjama-i Ṭarīqat-i Muḥammadiyya* (Istanbul: Dār al-Salṭana, 1256), 3.

[34] See also İsmail Kara, *İlim Bilmez Tarih Hatırlamaz: Şerh ve Haşiye Meselesine Dair Birkaç Not* (2nd edn., Istanbul: Dergâh Yayınları, 2013), 49; Martı relates that Wadādī later faced criticisms due to his additions to the translation. In her PhD thesis on *al-Ṭarīqa*, Martı writes, "The name Ibn Taymiyya is not found in any of Birgili [Birgiwī]'s works." Martı, *Birgili Mehmed Efendi'nin Hadisçiliği*, 126, 331, 332.

found in the passages added by Wadādī, and do not belong to Birgiwī himself. Most of the views, which are presented in the translation as if they belong to Birgiwī, are indeed nothing but additions by Wadādī. At least some of the comments and criticisms of Birgiwī that are based on this work should be comprehensively reassessed.

Numerous scholars insist on the presence of references to Ibn Taymiyya in Birgiwī's works,[35] referring to a PhD thesis by Yüksel on Birgiwī.[36] In the Turkish translation of his thesis, however, Yüksel indicates that Birgiwī "mentions the name of neither Ibn Taymiyya nor his disciples," noting the discovery that the tract called *Ziyārat al-qubūr (Visitation of Graves*) was not written by Birgiwī.[37] In a previous study, Yüksel wrote, "we do not find the name of Ibn Taymiyya"[38] in any work by Birgiwī.

According to scholars who believed in the connection between Birgiwī and Ibn Taymiyya, *Ziyārat* was considered "the clearest evidence of his awareness of the views of Ibn Taymiyya."[39] *Ziyārat* was actually written by Aḥmad ibn Meḥmed al-Rūmī al-Āqḥiṣārī al-Ṣarūkhānī (d. 1041/1631); nevertheless, the book was attributed to

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[35] "An analysis of the books and treatises by Birgiwī clearly reveals the influence of Ibn Taymiyya above all, as well as other subsequent Ḥanbalī scholars. In his works, Birgiwī often recommends to his readers the books of the persons he mentions and quotes from his references." Ocak, *Osmanlı Dönemi*, 222; id., "İbn Kemâl'in Yaşadığı XV ve XVI. Asırlar Türkiye'sinde İlim ve Fikir Hayatı," in S. Hayri Bolay, Bahaeddin Yediyıldız, and. M. Sait Yazıcıoğlu (eds.), *Tokat Valiliği Şeyhülislam İbn Kemâl Araştırma Merkezi'nin Tertip Ettiği Şeyhülislâm İbn Kemâl Sempozyumu: Tebliğler ve Tartışmalar* (2nd edn., Ankara: Türkiye Diyanet Vakfı Yayınları, 1989), 31, 32.

[36] Ocak, *Osmanlı Dönemi*, 234, and footnote 17.

[37] "Based on the *Risālat ziyārat al-qubūr*, which is attributed to Birgiwī, I wrote that Birgiwī might have been indirectly influenced by Ibn Taymiyya. … The paper by Ahmet Turan Arslan (…), however, revealed that the treatise was not written by Birgiwī. Therefore, we have no grounds to claim that Birgiwī, who never mentioned Ibn Taymiyya or his followers in his works, was influenced by Ibn Taymiyya." Emrullah Yüksel, *Mehmed Birgivî'nin Dinî ve Siyasî Görüşleri* (Ankara: Türkiye Diyanet Vakfı Yayınları, 2011), 147-148.

[38] Yüksel, "Mehmed Birgivî," *Atatürk Üniversitesi İslâmî İlimler Fakültesi Dergisi* 2 (1977), 184.

[39] Lekesiz, *Birgivî Mehmed Efendi ve Fikirleri*, 114, 115.

Birgiwī, whereupon it became famous and was printed several times.[40]

Apparently, Shīʿa (Rāfiḍa) is the target of the descriptions and related criticisms found in *Ziyārat.*[41] Therefore, any relationship between the conclusions derived from any of the information in this tract and members of other groups in the Ottoman era or the assessment of them as Birgiwī's observations of his environment are misleading.

In another work, *Majālis al-abrār*, al-Āqḥiṣārī again addresses issues about graves and refers to Ibn Qayyim and his sheikh (Ibn Taymiyya).[42] Al-Āqḥiṣārī, as a Ḥanafī scholar under the influence of Ibn Taymiyya, is the subject of various studies.[43] Importantly, however, al-Āqḥiṣārī is connected to the Māturīdī School in his theological discussions.[44] Al-Āqḥiṣārī uses various Kalām and Sufi

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40 Ahmet Turan Arslan, "İmam Birgivî'ye Nisbet Edilen Bazı Eserler," in İbrahim Gümüş (ed.), *1. Ulusal İslam Elyazmaları Sempozyumu (13-14 Nisan 2007) Bildiriler Kitabı* (Istanbul: Türkiye Çevre Koruma ve Yeşillendirme Kurumu [TÜRÇEK], 2009), 180-181. See also Yahya Michot, introduction to *Against Smoking: An Ottoman Manifesto*, by Aḥmad al-Rūmī al-Āqḥiṣārī (ed. and translated by Yahya Michot; Leicestershire: Interface Publications & Kube Publishing, 2010), 1.

41 The reference to *Manāsik al-ḥājj al-mashāhid*, which is attributed to al-Sheikh al-Mufīd by Ibn Taymiyya (*Ziyārat al-qubūr*, in *Rasāʾil al-Birgiwī* [ed. Aḥmad Hādī al-Qaṣṣār; Beirut: Dār al-Kutub al-ʿIlmiyya, 2011], 164) leads us to these opinions. Ibn Taymiyya (d. 728/1328) wrote a refutation called *Minhāj al-sunna* against *Minhāj al-karāma*, which was written by contemporaneous Shiite scholar Ibn al-Muṭahhar al-Ḥillī (d.726/1325). In this work, Ibn Taymiyya attributes *Manāsik al-ḥājj al-mashāhid* to al-Sheikh al-Mufīd, whom he criticizes. See Taqī al-Dīn Aḥmad ibn ʿAbd al-Ḥalīm Ibn Taymiyya, *Minhāj al-sunna al-Nabawiyya* (ed. Muḥammad Rashād Sālim; Riyadh: Muʾassasat Qurṭuba, 1986), III, 419.

42 Aḥmad al-Rūmī (al-Āqḥiṣārī), *Majālis al-abrār,* in ʿAlī Miṣrī Simjān Fawrā, [*Study on*] *Majālis al-abrār* (PhD dissertation; Medina: al-Jāmiʿa al-Islāmiyya, 2007), 213, 215, 219, 654.

43 For a discussion of Ibn Taymiyya's influence on al-Āqḥiṣārī, see Mustapha Sheikh, "Taymiyyan Influences in an Ottoman-Ḥanafī Milieu: The Case of Aḥmad al-Rūmī al-Āqḥiṣārī," *Journal of the Royal Asiatic Society* 25/1 (2015), 1-20; Michot, introduction to *Against Smoking,* 1, 4, 8.

44 ʿAlī Miṣrī Simjān Fawrā, "*Dirāsa*" [*Study on Majālis al-abrār* by Aḥmad al-Rūmī (al-Āqḥiṣārī)] (PhD dissertation; Medina: al-Jāmiʿa al-Islāmiyya, 2007), 13; Sheikh,

books as sources and indicates that it is the obligation (*wājib*) of every mature believer to derive authentic faith about Ahl al-sunna wa-l-jamāʿa from the science of Kalām. He asserts that reasoning (*naẓar*) and deduction (*istidlāl*) are obligatory if one is to know Allah and argues that whoever leaves this path will be a sinner.[45]

Comparison between Birgiwī's and Ibn Taymiyya's Views

Seeking to establish a connection between Birgiwī and Ibn Taymiyya, researchers have compared the views of the two scholars. These comparisons focus on numerous issues, including the concept of heretical innovation (*bidʿa*). Works by Birgiwī incorporate a variety of significant details on innovation; for example, he uses the concept "*al-bidʿa al-ḥasana.*"[46] Ibn Taymiyya, however, rejects a division that includes "*al-bidʿa al-ḥasana.*"[47]

Another important point to consider regarding the connection between Birgiwī and Ibn Taymiyya is their attitudes towards Sufism. According to Birgiwī, Sufism consists of the purification of the heart from disgrace and its adornment with virtues, and he gives practical advice to its followers (*sālik*s).[48] However, Birgiwī criticizes his Sufi contemporaries.[49] Birgiwī accuses Sufis of claiming to be holders of hidden knowledge, of claiming that they obtain fatwā directly from the Prophet whenever they are in trouble and that otherwise they can access Allah in person and do not need to read scholarly books, etc. For Birgiwī, such Sufi views are false, and whoever hears and believes in them should be considered a heretic (*zindīq*). Birgiwī criticizes the Sufis of his time as ignorant because they claim that "knowledge is a veil."[50] In his criticism, Birgiwī respectfully cites al-Junayd al-Baghdādī, who says, "our knowledge and *madhhab* is bound through the Book and Sunna." Moreover, he quotes[51] the

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"Taymiyyan Influences in an Ottoman-Ḥanafī Milieu," 4.

45 Al-Āqḥiṣārī, *Majālis al-abrār*, 2, 14, 15, 74, 144, 510.

46 For details, see Birgiwī, *al-Ṭarīqa*, 25-26; Yüksel, *Mehmed Birgivî'nin Dinî ve Siyasî Görüşleri*, 67, 68

47 Ibn Taymiyya, *Iqtiḍāʾ al-ṣirāṭ al-mustaqīm li-mukhālafat aṣḥāb al-jaḥīm* (ed. Nāṣir ʿAbd al-Karīm al-ʿAql; Riyadh: Maktabat al-Rushd, 1994), II, 585.

48 Birgiwī, *al-Ṭarīqa*, 84, 235, 391-393.

49 *Ibid.*, 28, 47, 67, 362-364.

50 *Ibid.*, 28-29.

51 *Ibid.*, 29-31, 236, 392.

views of certain great Sufis found in Abū l-Qāsim al-Qushayrī's (d. 465/1072) *al-Risāla.*[52] Birgiwī also cites the following phrases from Ḥanafī scholar Abū l-Layth al-Samarqandī: "If one learns jurisprudence but does not seek ascetic knowledge and wisdom, his heart hardens. A hardened heart is distant from Allah."[53]

Miḥakk al-ṣūfiyya, which addresses Sufism and is attributed to Birgiwī,[54] refers to several texts on creeds popular among Ottoman scholars.[55] The axis proposed by Birgiwī reportedly found many supporters even in Sufi circles.[56]

Birgiwī's criticism of the Sufi practices of *raqṣ* and *samāʿ* by music[57] does not necessarily make him a follower of Ibn Taymiyya.[58] Indeed, Birgiwī quotes many sources about *raqṣ*, including Ḥanafī fatwā sources. A treatise by ʿUmar al-Nasafī, author of one of the most popular creed texts in Ḥanafī/Māturīdī circles and allegedly a member of the *Rāzī* School,[59] addresses this topic. This treatise by al-

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52 Abū l-Qāsim Zayn al-Islām ʿAbd al-Karīm ibn Hawāzin al-Qushayrī, *al-Risāla al-Qushayriyya* (eds. ʿAbd al-Ḥalīm Maḥmūd and Maḥmūd ibn Sharīf; Cairo: Dār al-Maʿārif, n.d.) 38, 45-46, 48, 57, 58, 61, 79, 87, 98.

53 Birgiwī, *al-Ṭarīqa*, 66-69.

54 Kaylı (*A Critical Study of Birgiwī Mehmed Efendi's Works*, 138) found copies of this treatise recorded under al-Āqḥiṣārī's name; therefore, he claims they might belong to the latter.

55 According to Lekesiz (*Birgivî Mehmed Efendi ve Fikirleri*, 81), Birgiwī shows Sufis the right path to follow pursuant to the Salafī creed in *Miḥakk al-ṣūfiyya*. Nevertheless, the sources of this treatise do not support this finding. In the treatise, Birgiwī refers to the following works on creeds: *al-ʿAqāʾid* by ʿUmar al-Nasafī (p. 11), *Iḥyāʾ* by al-Ghazālī (p. 13, 28), *al-Mawāqif* by al-Ījī (p. 14, 17), *al-Fiqh al-akbar* by Abū Ḥanīfa (p. 17), and *Sharḥ al-ʿAqāʾid* by al-Taftāzānī (p. 19).

56 Terzioğlu, "Bir Tercüme ve Bir İntihal Vakası: Ya da İbn Teymiyye'nin Siyāsetü'ş-Şerʿiyye'sini Osmanlıcaya Kim(ler), Nasıl Aktardı?" *Journal of Turkish Studies: Türklük Bilgisi Araştırmaları* 31/2 (2007), 267.

57 Birgiwī, *al-Ṭarīqa*, 362.

58 Lekesiz, *Birgivî Mehmed Efendi ve Fikirleri*, 112, 113.

59 This treatise, called *Risāla fī bayān madhāhib al-taṣawwuf* by al-Nasafī, exists in manuscript copies under different names. For information about the publication and translation of the treatise, see Ayşe Hümeyra Arslantürk, "Nesefî, Necmeddin," *Türkiye Diyanet Vakfı İslâm Ansiklopedisi (DİA),* XXXIII, 572. Al-Ḥurr al-ʿĀmilī published this treatise in *Risālat al-ithnay ʿashariyya fī l-radd ʿalā l-ṣūfiyya* (ed. Muḥammad ibn al-Ḥasan al-Tafrishī al-Darūdī; Qom: al-Maṭbaʿa al-ʿIlmiyya, 1400),

Nasafī is quoted in *Dāmighat al-mubtadiʿīn*,[60] which was attributed to Birgiwī upon publication.[61] Ottoman scholars prior to Birgiwī have also given fatwā against Sufis who perform *raqṣ* and *samāʿ*.[62]

Al-ʿUrābī[63] states that in *Dāmighat al-mubtadiʿīn*[64] there are quotations of critical expressions by Ibn Taymiyya, particularly about

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23-25, available at http://www.alhawzaonline.com/almaktaba-almakroaa/book/238-aqa'ed/0334-al%20ethna%203asharia/01.htm (accessed October 3, 2009).

60 In his master's thesis, *Dāmighat al-mubtadiʿīn wa-kāshifat buṭlān al-mulḥidīn: al-Imām Muḥammad ibn Pīr ʿAlī ibn Iskandar al-Birgiwī – Dirāsa wa-taḥqīq – min awwal al-kitāb ilā qawlihī "wa-ammā thawāb al-ʿamal bi-l-sunna"* (MA thesis; Mecca: Jāmiʿat Umm al-Qurā, n.d.), Sulṭān ibn ʿUbayd ibn ʿAbd Allāh al-ʿUrābī studies the first chapter of *Dāmighat al-mubtadiʿīn*. al-ʿUrābī claims that the published version of *Dāmighat al-mubtadiʿīn* (eds. ʿAbd al-Raḥīm al-Sāyiḥ and Tawfīq ʿAlī Wahba; Cairo: Dār al-Āfāq al-ʿArabīyya, 2010) comprises only the chapter studied in his own thesis and that there is no second part. (See https://twitter.com/sultanalorabi/status/462506744607174656, accessed May 3, 2014). Nevertheless, this is misinformation; the end of the text used in al-ʿUrābī's thesis is on page 150 of the Cairo edition of the book.

61 The expression "ṣāḥib *al-Bayān*" in the text (Birgiwī, *Dāmighat al-mubtadiʿīn*, 55) is construed by researcher al-ʿUrābī as Abū l-Maʿālī Muḥammad al-Ḥusaynī al-ʿAlawī (d. 485/1092), the author of *Bayān al-adyān*, though only tentatively (see al-ʿUrābī, *Dāmigha*, 216). Nonetheless, an intertextual comparison shows that the quotations are from al-Nasafī. Birgiwī's notes to chapter 23 demonstrate that this information may have been cited from *Sirr al-asrār* by ʿAbd al-Qādir al-Jīlānī. Indeed, chapter 23 of *Sirr al-asrār* has similar content; see Abū Muḥammad ʿAbd al-Qādir ibn Abī Ṣāliḥ ʿAbd Allāh al-Jīlānī, *Sirr al-asrār wa-maẓhar al-anwār fī-mā yaḥtāj^u ilayhi l-abrār* (eds. Khālid Muḥammad ʿAdnān al-Zarʾī and Muḥammad Ghassān Naṣūḥ ʿAzqūl; 4th edn., Damascus: Dār al-Sanābil, 1995), 140.

62 Ferhat Koca, "Osmanlı Fakihlerinin Semâ, Raks ve Devrân Hakkındaki Tartışmaları," *Tasavvuf: İlmî ve Akademik Araştırma Dergisi* 5/13 (2004), 27, 59. In his study Koca touches upon views of numerous scholars about the issue before and after Birgiwī, including Abū l-Suʿūd. Also see Reşat Öngören, "Osmanlılar Döneminde Semâ ve Devran Tartışmaları," *Tasavvuf: İlmî ve Akademik Araştırma Dergisi* 11/25 (2010), 123-132.

63 Al-ʿUrābī, *Dāmigha*, 105, 125, 130, 228.

64 Birgiwī, *Dāmighat al-mubtadiʿīn* (eds. ʿAbd al-Raḥīm al-Sāyiḥ and Tawfīq ʿAlī Wahba; Cairo: Dār al-Āfāq al-ʿArabiyya, 2010), 60.

the unity of existence (*waḥdat al-wujūd*).[65] According to Evstatiev, these findings are based on solid textual analysis and are significant because they enable us to establish a connection between Ibn Taymiyya, Birgiwī, and Qāḍī-zādalis.[66]

The unity of existence (*waḥdat al-wujūd*) is also criticized by Ḥanafī scholars such as ʿAlāʾ al-Dīn al-Bukhārī (d.841/1438).[67] Moreover, ʿAlāʾ al-Dīn al-Bukhārī accuses Ibn Taymiyya of anthropomorphism and claims it would be blasphemy to call him Sheikh al-Islām.[68] *Dāmigha* also includes citations from many other scholars. The initial quotations[69] that appear at the beginning of the book are relevant to this discussion. The first quotation is from *al-Tawḍīḥ*, a work on *uṣūl al-fiqh* by Ṣadr al-sharīʿa (d. 747/1346). The quotation is about the learning of Kalām, Sufism, and Fiqh together.[70] The second citation is from *Shirʿat al-Islām*, the popular work among Ottoman scholars on catechism (*ʿilm-i ḥāl*) and ethics (*akhlāq*), by Imām-zāda (d. 573/1177), the Ḥanafī faqīh.[71] According to this quotation, whoever demands only Kalām from Allah is a heretic (*zindīq*), whoever demands only asceticism is an innovator (*mubtadiʿ*), and whoever demands only jurisprudence is a sinner (*fāsiq*). One who displays competence in all attains salvation.[72] Al-

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65 Ibn Taymiyya, *Majmūʿ fatāwā* (ed. ʿAbd al-Raḥmān ibn Muḥammad ibn Qāsim; Medina: Mujammaʿ al-Malik Fahd li-Ṭibāʿat al-Muṣḥāf al-Sharīf, 2004), II, 122.

66 Simeon Evstatiev, "The Qāḍīzādeli Movement and the Revival of *takfīr* in the Ottoman Age," in Camilla Adang, Hassan Ansari, Maribel Fierro, and Sabine Schmidtke (eds.), *Accusations of Unbelief in Islam: A Diachronic Perspective on* Takfīr (Leiden & Boston: Brill, 2015), 232.

67 ʿAlāʾ al-Dīn al-Bukhārī, *Fāḍiḥat al-mulḥidīn,* in Muḥammad ibn Ibrāhīm al-ʿAwḍī, *Fāḍiḥat al-mulḥidīn wa-nāṣiḥat al-muwaḥḥidīn* (MA thesis; Mecca: Jāmiʿat Umm al-Qurā, 1414).

68 For details, see Khaled el-Rouayheb, *Islamic Intellectual History in the Seventeenth Century: Scholarly Currents in the Ottoman Empire and the Maghreb* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2015), 16.

69 Birgiwī, *Dāmighat al-mubtadiʿīn*, 34.

70 Al-Taftāzānī, *Sharḥ al-Talwīḥ ʿalā l-Tawḍīḥ li-matn al-Tanqīḥ fī uṣūl al-fiqh* (ed. Zakariyyā ʿUmayrāt; Beirut: Dār al-Kutub al-ʿIlmiyya, 1996), I, 16.

71 Recep Cici, "İmamzâde, Muhammed b. Ebû Bekir," *Türkiye Diyanet Vakfı İslâm Ansiklopedisi* (*DİA)*, XXII, 210-211.

72 Sayyid ʿAlī-zāda, *Mafātīḥ al-jinān: Sharḥ Shirʿat al-Islām* (Istanbul: al-Maṭbaʿa al-ʿUthmāniyya, 1317), 41.

ʿUrābī indicates that he could not obtain any information about *Shirʿat al-Islām.*[73] However, he notes some details about the joint publication of some of Birgiwī's works with commentaries on *Shirʿat al-Islām.*[74] Al-ʿUrābī draws other erroneous conclusions about Ḥanafī authors referenced in the *Dāmigha* who wrote particularly about issues related with Sufism. Also, it could be noted that there is a fatwā that *Shirʿat al-Islām* should not be allowed to be read, because it includes nonsense stuff such as those in *Iḥyāʾ* by al-Ghazālī. The fatwā allows only those who know the Sufi creed and have specialized knowledge of the Salafī creed to read *Shirʿat al-Islām.*[75]

Dāmigha includes long citations from al-Ghazālī. For example, one citation from al-Ghazālī's *Minhāj al-ʿābidīn*[76] covers many pages.[77] Nevertheless, sources that are more or less contemporaneous with Birgiwī do not attribute the *Dāmigha* to him. *Hadiyyat al-ʿārifīn* by ʿIsmāʿīl Pāshā al-Baghdādī (d. 1920) and subsequent authors of bibliographical works mention *Dāmigha* to have been authored by Birgiwī. The assertion that the lack of association between Birgiwī and this work during his lifetime was due to his fear of Sufi molestation is groundless.[78] Indeed, he fearlessly addresses and criticizes many other controversial aspects of Sufism in *al-Ṭarīqa* and other works. Janābī Muṣṭafā Efendī (d. 999/1590) asserted that Birgiwī never refrained from telling the truth for Allah's sake, even when he addressed the Sultan.[79]

An analysis of the creed issues shows that *Dāmigha* was written by a Māturīdī scholar. According to the author, men are equal in faith and differ in their deeds, but deeds are not a part of faith. It is necessary (*wājib*) to know Allah (*Ṣāniʿ*) through reason; moreover, the good or evil nature of things can be known through reason. For

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[73] Al-ʿUrābī, *Dāmigha*, 161.

[74] *Ibid.,* 82, 83, 84.

[75] http://fatwā.islamweb.net/fatwā/index.php?page=showfatwā&Option= FatwāId& Id=118878 (accessed February 5, 2016).

[76] Abū Ḥāmid Muḥammad ibn Muḥammad ibn Muḥammad al-Ghazālī, *Minhāj al-ʿābidīn ilā jannat Rabb al-ʿālamīn* (ed. Maḥmūd Muṣṭafā Ḥalāwī; Beirut: Muʾassasat al-Risāla, 1989), 112, 114, 117.

[77] Birgiwī, *Dāmighat al-mubtadiʿīn*, 203, 207, 230.

[78] For details, see al-ʿUrābī, *Dāmigha*, 101-103.

[79] Al-Janābī, *ʿAylam al-zākhir*, 427a.

the author, man would be responsible to believe in Allah even if no prophet were sent because reasoning and deduction are man's primary obligations. He interprets attributes of Allah such as his hand, face, descent etc. by associating them with meanings such as His power or His favour. [80] A scholar with such views would be considered a Māturīdī.

Relationship between Ibn Taymiyya, Birgiwī, Qāḍīzādalīs and Wahhābism

The Qāḍīzādalīs' and Wahhābīs' interventionist attitudes toward society's religious life result in a tendency to establish a connection between these two groups. Therefore, the views of Birgiwī and Ibn Taymiyya, two reputable references of these sects, are often compared, especially on the base of their views that constitute the foundation of an interventionist approach. Indeed, it could be asserted that there are contradictions between the writings of Birgiwī and the practices of his followers. Sources reveal that Birgiwī was typically direct and blunt. According to Janābī Muṣṭafā Efendī, Birgiwī was a strictly religious person (*mutasharriʿ*) who feared molestation from nobody when he told the truth for Allah's sake. He was determined about commanding good and forbidding wrong (*al-amr bi-l-maʿrūf wa-l-nahy ʿan al-munkar*), even if he addressed the Sultan. He was a custodian of the Qurʾān and a patron of knowledge and had an abstemious personality with regard to eating and clothing.[81] Cook emphasizes Birgiwī and his followers' views about the prevention of evil.[82]

For Birgiwī, commanding good and forbidding wrong is a communal obligation (*farḍ al-kifāya*) that must be sufficiently discharged, if can afford, on condition that not to harm people. The expressions found in verses (*āya*) and ḥadīths indicate that this is an obligation for every person. In contrast, commanding wrong and forbidding good is the attribute of hypocrites,[83] as indicated in the

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[80] Birgiwī, *Dāmighat al-mubtadiʿīn*, 220.

[81] Al-Janābī, *ʿAylam al-zākhir*, 427a.

[82] Michael Cook, *Commanding Right and Forbidding Wrong in Islamic Thought* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2004), 323.

[83] Birgiwī, *al-Ṭarīqa*, 281.

Qurʾān.[84] When discussing the subject of *riyāʾ* (doing good deeds for show), Birgiwī gives following examples: to manifest knowledge during sermons and discourses, to show care for the attitudes of *Salaf*, to command good before the public, to show anger against evil and to seem worried about sin.[85] When addressing sedition (*fitna*), Birgiwī speaks to preachers and muftīs about how to prevent sedition among the people. Birgiwī recommends that they remain aware of the customs of the public, of what people may accept or reject, of what they strive to fulfill or seek to avoid. He also advises that the public be addressed in the most appropriate manner possible. Any deed intended to command good and forbid wrong could become a sin if it leads to the promotion of evil or pushes someone into an undesired position. About the hazard of sedition, the verse "fitna is worse than killing"[86] is more than enough.[87] The records of conflicts among Birgiwī's followers are proof that his warnings were overlooked. Moreover, there appear to have been different mentalities among those who read his works.

Several studies about the Qāḍīzādalīs indicate their relationship with Birgiwī.[88] Both Birgiwī and the Qāḍīzādalīs are mentioned in connection with Ibn Taymiyya and the Wahhābis.

> The Salafī movement, started by Ibn Taymiyya, gave birth to the Birgiwī School in the 16th century, to the Qāḍīzādalī movement in the 17th century and to Wahhābism in the 18th century within the Ottoman Empire.[89]

Michot dubs Birgiwī the "spiritual father of Ottoman Puritanism" and argues that the Qāḍīzādalī movement, which emerged under the influence of Ibn Taymiyya and Ibn Qayyim, was the precursor of Wahhābism.[90] For Currie, there is a striking similarity between the

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84 Q 9:67.

85 Birgiwī, *al-Ṭarīqa*, 90.

86 Q 2:191.

87 Birgiwī, *al-Ṭarīqa*, 224.

88 Madeline C. Zilfi, *The Politics of Piety: The Ottoman Ulema in the Postclassical Age: 1600-1800* (Minneapolis: Bibliotheca Islamica, 1988), 143.

89 Ocak, *Osmanlı Dönemi*, 218-219. For comparison, see id., "İbn Kemâl'in Yaşadığı XV ve XVI. Asırlar Türkiye'sinde İlim ve Fikir Hayatı," 31, 32; id., "Religious Sciences and the Ulema," 263; Lekesiz, *Birgivî Mehmed Efendi ve Fikirleri*, 106.

90 Michot, introduction to *Against Smoking*, 2.

Qāḍīzādalīs and the Wahhābīs, and he cites several scholars to establish a connection between the two groups.[91]

An important source of evidence for the connection between Ibn Taymiyya and the Qāḍīzādalīs is the Turkish translation of Ibn Taymiyya's *al-Siyāsa al-sharʿiyya*. This translation is attributed to Qāḍī-zāda Meḥmed Efendī (d. 1045/1635).[92]

ʿĀshiq Chalabī (d. 979/1572) made an expanded translation of this work by Ibn Taymiyya into Ottoman Turkish under the title *Miʿrāj al-ʿiyāla wa-minhāj al-ʿadāla* and presented to Selīm II, the Sultan of the Ottoman State. *Tāj al-rasāʾil wa-minhāj al-wasāʾil* (or *Nuṣḥ al-ḥukkām sabab al-niẓām*), reportedly translated by Qāḍī-zāda, makes certain additions to the translation by ʿĀshiq Chalabī. Qāḍī-zāda Meḥmed presented his translation to Murād IV (r. 1623-40), the Ottoman Sultan.[93]

One who accepts certain statements in the text by Qāḍī-zāda can by no means be a follower of the Ibn Taymiyya School. One example will be sufficient. According to the text, there are four letters in the name of Sultan 'Murād,' and this is equal to the number of letters in the word 'Allah,' this coincidence comprises countless mysteries.[94]

In her study of this translation, Terzioğlu declares that Qāḍī-zāda's translation was plagiarized from ʿĀshiq Chalabī and notes the following:

> Recently, many modern historians interested in this movement (Qāḍī-zādalis) bear in the back of their minds the parallelism between this

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91 James Muḥammad Dawud Currie, "Kadizadeli Ottoman Scholarship, Muḥammad ibn ʿAbd al-Wahhāb, and the Rise of the Saudi State," *Journal of Islamic Studies* 26/3 (2015), 265-288.

92 Ocak, *Osmanlı Dönemi*, 224.

93 Vecdi Akyüz, "Preface," in Ibn Taymiyya, *Siyâset: es-Siyâsetü'ş-şer'iyye* (translated into Turkish by Vecdi Akyüz; 2nd edn., Istanbul: Dergâh Yayınları, 1999), 6-7.

94 Qāḍī-zāda Meḥmed [Muḥammad ibn Muṣṭafā ibn Muḥammad], *Tāj al-rasāʾil wa-minhāj al-wasāʾil* (MS Istanbul: Süleymaniye Library, Hacı Mahmut Efendi, 1926), 11a-b. A similar assessment is made by ʿĀshiq Pāshā, who made an earlier translation of the same book, about the fact that the name of Selīm II, the Sultan of the Ottoman State, consists of four letters. See Pīr Muḥammad ibn ʿAlī ibn Muḥammad ʿĀshiq Chalabī, *Miʿrāj al-ʿiyāla wa-minhāj al-ʿadāla* (MS Istanbul: Süleymaniye Library, Şehid Ali Paşa, 1556), 14.

movement and various ‘radical,’ ‘fundamentalist,’ or – as a less political and more academic expression – ‘salafī’ Islamic movements. Furthermore, several historians consider Ibn Taymiyya as an important junction within the intellectual genealogy of such Islamic movements and accordingly want to establish a connection between the Qāḍīzādalīs and the Ibn Taymiyya School. Nevertheless, neither Ibn Taymiyya nor his *al-Siyāsa al-sharʿiyya* seems to have been a particular inspiration for the Qāḍīzādalī – sharīʿa emphasized – movement that appeared in the 17th century.[95]

As is seen in the example of ʿĀshiq Chalabī, you do not have to be on the ‘Salafī,’ as described today, axis to translate a text by Ibn Taymiyya. Indeed, neither Qāḍī-zāda Meḥmed of Balıkesir nor Mehmed Effendi of Birgi, the main inspiration of the movement named after him in the 16th century, grant a special place to Ibn Taymiyya in their respective works.[96]

Remarks on Birgiwī's Views on Kalām

For Birgiwī, *ʿilm al-kalām* is a communal obligation (*farḍ al-kifāya*).[97] Nevertheless, it should be learned and taught by those who are faithful and clever and have no sympathies with deviant sects.[98] Kalām includes logic.[99] Birgiwī's attitude toward Kalām and logic is

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[95] Terzioğlu, “Bir Tercüme ve Bir İntihal Vakası,” 270.

[96] Ibid., 266. Referring to a PhD thesis by Hüseyin Yılmaz, Terzioğlu argues that Birgiwī's works include references to Ibn Qayyim al-Jawziyya but not to Ibn Taymiyya. Yılmaz makes a similar claim, referring to a paper titled “Mehmed Birgiwî” by Emrullah Yüksel. See Hüseyin Yılmaz, *The Sultan and the Sultanate: Envisioning Rulership in the Age of Süleymān the Lawgiver (1520-1566)* (PhD dissertation; Ann Arbor: Harvard University, 2005), 78. As mentioned above, Yüksel, in his subsequent writings, indicates that “Birgiwī never mentioned the name of Ibn Taymiyya or his disciples in his works;” these findings should be reassessed.

[97] A master's thesis has been written about Birgiwī's views on Kalām. Nevertheless, we could not obtain this thesis. ʿĀṭif Ibrāhīm Aḥmad, *al-Birgiwī wa-ārāʾuh*ū *l-kalāmiyya* (MA thesis; Cairo: Jāmiʿat al-Qāhira, 2013), available at http://cu.edu.eg/ar/Cairo-University-Faculty-News-2489.html (accessed April 18, 2013).

[98] Birgiwī, *al-Ṭarīqa*, 53.

[99] *Ibid.,* 55. See also Khaled El-Rouayheb, “The Myth of ‘The Triumph of Fanaticism’ in the Seventeenth-Century Ottoman Empire,” *Die Welt des Islams* 48/2 (2008), 200.

considered explicit evidence that he was not influenced by Ibn Taymiyya.[100]

The theological opinions of Birgiwī can be found in his *Waṣiyyat-nāma*, several tracts and a chapter dedicated to the subject in *al-Ṭarīqa*.[101] *Al-Risālat al-iʿtiqādiyya*,[102] a work containing detailed and systematic information on theological issues and considered the Arabic version of *Waṣiyyat-nāma*, was published under the name of Yaḥyā ibn Abī Bakr (d. 893/1488).[103]

It has been found that Birgiwī based his writings about kalām in *al-Ṭarīqa* on *al-ʿAqāʾid* by ʿUmar al-Nasafī.[104] Quotations from al-Nasafī's text are frequent, as are certain extracts, changes in order, varying expressions, and additions. Birgiwī presents a 'Māturīdī creed' in short.[105]

Birgiwī accuses certain Sufis of valuing *awliyāʾ* above the Prophet, referring to al-Jurjānī's *Sharḥ al-Mawāqif* and to *Sharḥ al-Maqāṣid* and *Sharḥ al-ʿAqāʾid* by al-Taftāzānī, which were mostly referenced works by Ottoman scholars.[106]

Dāmighat al-mubtadiʿīn, which is attributed to Birgiwī, also deals with theological issues in some parts, assesses the views of other

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[100] El-Rouayheb, "From Ibn Ḥajar al-Haytamī (d. 1566) to Khayr al-Dīn al-Ālūsī (d. 1899): Changing Views of Ibn Taymiyya among non-Ḥanbalī Sunnī Scholars," in Yossef Rapoport and Shahab Ahmed (eds.), *Ibn Taymiyya and His Times* (Karachi: Oxford University Press, 2010), 103.

[101] Birgiwī, *al-Ṭarīqa*, 44.

[102] For an introduction to the contents of these works, see Martı, *Birgivî Mehmed Efendi: Hayatı, Eserleri ve Fikir Dünyası*, 74.

[103] Marie Bernand, "Le muẖtaṣar fī bayān al-iʿtiqād," *Annales Islamologiques* 18 (1982), 1-33.

[104] Yüksel, *Mehmed Birgivî'nin Dinî ve Siyasî Görüşleri*, 57, 71, 72.

[105] Martı, "Tarîkat-ı Muhammediyye," *Türkiye Diyanet Vakfı İslâm Ansiklopedisi (DİA),* XL, 107. Amīr Muṣṭafā (d. 1143/1731), who translated *al-Ṭarīqa* and is known as a "*ṭarīqa man/ṭarīqatchī*" due to his lectures on *al-Ṭarīqa* (see Martı, *Birgili Mehmed Efendi'nin Hadisçiliği*, 199, 336), also translated the chapter about creed in *al-Ṭarīqa* into Turkish under the title *Farāʾid al-ʿaqaʾid al-bahiyya* and comprehensively commented on them (see Ṭarīqatchī Amīr Muṣṭafā, *Farāʾid al-ʿaqāʾid al-bahiyya fī ḥall mushkilāt al-Ṭarīqa al-Muḥammadiyya* (MS Istanbul: Nuruosmaniye Library, no: 2318).

[106] Birgiwī, *al-Ṭarīqa*, 43, 47.

*madhhab*s and passes judgments on them. For al-ʿUrābī, the similarity of chapters including judgments on *madhhab*s in *Dāmigha*[107] and *al-Ṭarīqa*[108] is proof that Birgiwī is the author of *Dāmigha.*[109] Nevertheless, these similarities do not necessarily mean that both were written by the same author. Indeed, the texts resemble one another because they are based on the same sources. More precisely, both works refer to the Ḥanafī fatwā books, *al-Bazzāziyya* and *al-Tātārkhāniyya*[110] and mention these by name. In fact, *Dāmigha* quotes from *al-Bazzāziyya* and gives its author as al-Zāhid who is also explicitly mentioned as al-Zāhid al-Ṣaffār in *al-Bazzāziyya*;[111] however, perhaps because he did not read *al-Bazzāziyya*, al-ʿUrābī erroneously identifies al-Zāhid as the Muʿtazilī-Ḥanafī scholar Abū l-Rajāʾ Najm al-Dīn Mukhtār al-Zāhidī (d. 658/1260).[112] A comparison clearly shows, however, that the judgments about *madhhab*s were quoted from Māturīdī scholar al-Zāhid al-Ṣaffār al-Bukhārī[113] (d. 534/1139).

We will not discuss all of Birgiwī's views on Kalām; instead, we will limit the discussion to several controversial points attributed to him. Several researchers have drawn different conclusions about which *madhhab* Birgiwī belongs to.

Al-ʿUrābī claims that Birgiwī belongs to the Ibn Taymiyya School.[114] For al-ʿUrābī, Birgiwī "has a tendency to express Māturīdī/Ḥanafī views on some theological issues."[115] Nonetheless,

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[107] Birgiwī, *Dāmighat al-mubtadiʿīn*, 51.

[108] Birgiwī, *al-Ṭarīqa*, 44.

[109] Al-ʿUrābī, *Dāmigha*, 102-103.

[110] Farīd al-Dīn ʿĀlim ibn al-ʿAlāʾ al-Indarapatī al-Dihlawī, *al-Fatāwā l-Tātārkhāniyya* (ed. Shabbīr Aḥmad al-Qāsimī; Deoband: Maktabat Zakariyyāʾ, 2010), VII, 286, 363.

[111] Ḥāfiẓ al-Dīn Muḥammad ibn Muḥammad ibn Shihāb al-Kardarī al-Bazzāzī (Ibn al-Bazzāzī), *al-Fatāwā l-Bazzāziyya* [in the marginal note of *al-Fatāwā l-Hindiyya fī madhhab al-Imām al-Aʿẓam Abī Ḥanīfa al-Nuʿmān*] (Būlāq: al-Maṭbaʿa al-Kubrā al-Amīriyya, 1310), VI, 318.

[112] Al-ʿUrābī, *Dāmigha*, 197.

[113] Abū Isḥāq Ibrāhīm al-Ṣaffār al-Bukhārī, *Talkhīṣ al-adilla li-qawāʿid al-tawḥīd* (ed. Angelika Brodersen; Beirut: Orient Institut, 2011), 727.

[114] Al-ʿUrābī, *Dāmigha*, 52, 105, 125, 130.

[115] *Ibid.,* 54.

the issues indicated by al-ʿUrābī as 'some' are crucial for determining Birgiwī's *madhhab*; indeed, whenever a difference emerges, Birgiwī adopts the Māturīdī approach. Therefore, it is inaccurate to associate him with the Ibn Taymiyya School. Researchers with Salafī/Wahhābī views who studied Birgiwī often rejected theological views of Birgiwī in the introduction (*dirāsa*) of their works referring Ibn Taymiyya.[116]

Tawḥīd

Birgiwī begins his remarks about faith in *al-Ṭarīqa* by stating, "Allah is only one."[117] After stating that Birgiwī classifies divine unity (*tawḥīd*) pursuant to the Māturīdī approach, al-ʿUrābī claims that no salvation is possible without incorporating unity of worship (*tawḥīd al-ʿibāda*) into the concept of unity. Ibn Taymiyya divides unity in types and claims that one cannot become monotheist and a believer without accepting unity of worship. Noting that polytheists of Mecca accepted the unity of God without unity of worship,[118] Ibn Taymiyya says that "they were, however, polytheists; their belief in unity did not help them."[119] This shows the approach of al-ʿUrābī, who quotes these phrases by Ibn Taymiyya[120] and considers salvation impossible without unity of worship, towards Birgiwī and the Māturīdī views.

According to Birgiwī, the faith of an imitator (*muqallid*) is valid; nevertheless, an imitator is a sinner because his beliefs are not based on evidence. Imitation is one of the troubles of the heart and is not permissible in creeds. Reasoning and evidence are needed, even if they are not in-detail (*wa-law ʿalā ṭarīq al-ijmāl*). Indeed, there are several Qurʾān verses that encourage reasoning and denigrate

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[116] The following master's thesis is among the relevant studies: Fuhayd ibn Manṣūr ibn Zāmil ibn Luʾayy al-Sharīf, introduction to *Aḥwāl aṭfāl al-muslimīn*, by Birgiwī (MA thesis; Mecca: Jāmiʿat Umm al-Qurā, 1434).

[117] Birgiwī, *al-Ṭarīqa*, 39. Also see id., *Vasiyyet-nâme*, 95; Ṭarīqatchī, *Farāʾid*, 2b; Qāḍī-zāda Aḥmad [as Kadızâde Ahmed], *Birgivî Vasiyetnâmesi: Kadızâde Şerhi* (simplified by A. Faruk Meyan; Istanbul: Bedir Yayınları, 2009), 22.

[118] Ibn Taymiyya, *Darʾ taʿāruḍ al-ʿaql wa-l-naql* (ed. Muḥammad Rashād Sālim; 2nd edn., Medina: Jāmiʿat al-Imām Muḥammad ibn Suʿūd al-Islāmiyya, 1991), I, 225.

[119] Ibn Taymiyya, *al-Tadmuriyya: Taḥqīq al-ithbāt li-l-asmāʾ wa-l-ṣifāt wa-ḥaqīqat al-jamʿ bayna l-qadar wa-l-sharʿ* (ed. Muḥammad ibn ʿAwda al-Saʿwī; Riyadh: Maktabat al-ʿUbaykān, 2000), 179.

[120] Al-ʿUrābī, *Dāmigha*, 55.

imitation in faith.[121] A passage in *Dāmigha* reads, "The first obligation of a mature responsible believer is reasoning."[122] Ibn Taymiyya, however, criticizes the Kalām scholars who assert that reasoning is the primary obligation of the responsible person.[123]

Divine Attributes

In *al-Ṭarīqa*, Birgiwī lists eight affirmative attributes of God (*al-ṣifāt al-thubūtiyya*): life (*ḥayāt*), knowledge (*ʿilm*), power (*qudra*), hearing (*samʿ*), seeing (*baṣar*), will (*irāda*), speech (*kalām*) and bringing into being (*takwīn*).[124] Bringing into being is a much-disputed issue between the Ashʿarī and Māturīdī scholars.[125] Birgiwī's inclusion of *takwīn* among the eternal attributes of Allah shows his adherence to the Māturīdī School.[126]

When discussing these attributes, Birgiwī indicates that Allah is not a matter (*jism*), substance (*jawhar*), or accident (*ʿaraḍ*) (*et cetera*).[127] According to Ibn Taymiyya, the expression of the existence or non-existence of matter, substance, and accident etc. for Allah (*lā nafy wa-lā ithbāt*) is among the heretical innovations censured by Salaf (*min kalām al-mubtadiʿ*).[128]

For Birgiwī, the vision of God is possible (*jāʾiz*) in terms of reason, and obligatory (*wājib*) in terms of revelation. However, there is no space, direction or distance for that vision.[129] Al-ʿUrābī assesses this view from a Salafī perspective, saying, "People will laugh off one who says Allah will be seen albeit there is no direction."[130] Birgiwī refers to fatwā books to make the claim that any word that attributes

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[121] Birgiwī, *al-Ṭarīqa*, 41, 95.
[122] Birgiwī, *Dāmighat al-mubtadiʿīn*, 223; al-ʿUrābī, *Dāmigha*, 57.
[123] Ibn Taymiyya, *Majmūʿ fatāwā*, XVI, 328.
[124] Birgiwī, *al-Ṭarīqa*, 39.
[125] Al-Khādimī, *al-Barīqa*, I, 211, 315; Ṭarīqatchī, *Farāʾid*, 29a; al-Taftāzānī, *Sharḥ al-Maqāṣid*, V, 232; al-Zabīdī, *Itḥāf al-sāda*, II, 8, 250; Kalaycı, *Tarihsel Süreçte Eşarilik-Maturidilik İlişkisi*, 288.
[126] Yüksel, *Mehmed Birgivî'nin Dinî ve Siyasî Görüşleri*, 72.
[127] Birgiwī, *al-Ṭarīqa*, 39.
[128] Ibn Taymiyya, *Majmūʿ fatāwā*, III, 81.
[129] Birgiwī, *al-Ṭarīqa*, 39-40.
[130] Al-ʿUrābī, *Dāmigha*, 68.

space to Allah will become unbelief.[131] This view of Birgiwī is evidence of his differentiation from Ibn Taymiyya.[132]

According to Birgiwī, Allah is the creator of good and evil, including the deeds of his objects (*ʿabd*s). In turn, the object has free will to choose his actions that is subject to reward or punishment.[133] Similar opinions are expressed in *Dāmigha*.[134] Birgiwī's thoughts on human deeds and free will are entirely compliant with the Ḥanafī-Māturīdī approach.[135] Birgiwī criticizes the Ashʿarī conception of predestination. Mentioning the name of al-Ashʿarī, Birgiwī claims that his view called *al-jabr al-mutawassiṭ* is actually no different than *al-jabr al-maḥḍ*. Although he does not mention Māturīdī, his explanations fit the Māturīdī perspective.[136] Moreover, Birgiwī and his *al-Ṭarīqa* are believed to have a special role in the spread of the concept of the particular will (*al-irāda al-juzʾiyya*), which is highly relevant to this topic.[137] For Birgiwī, the object cannot be held responsible for something that exceeds its power;[138] therefore, he must be affiliated with the Māturīdī approach because he differs from the Ashʿarī approach.[139]

Faith (Īmān)

According to Birgiwī, faith is to approve (*taṣdīq*) and acknowledge (*iqrār*) those things clearly brought by the Prophet.[140] Deeds are not included in the truth of faith. Faith is synonymous with Islām. Faith neither increases nor lessens. It is not permissible to say, "I am a believer, inshāʾ Allāh" (exception in faith).[141] Birgiwī's views accord

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131 Birgiwī, *al-Ṭarīqa*, 43.

132 El-Rouayheb, *Islamic Intellectual History*, 15.

133 Birgiwī, *al-Ṭarīqa*, 40; Ṭarīqatchī, *Farāʾid*, 54b.

134 Birgiwī, *Dāmighat al-mubtadiʿīn*, 225, 226.

135 Yüksel, *Mehmed Birgivî'nin Dinî ve Siyasî Görüşleri*, 93.

136 Birgiwī, *al-Ṭarīqa*, 118. For details, see Çağrıcı, "Gazzâlî'nin İhyâ'sı ile Birgivî'nin Tarîkat-ı Muhammediyye'sinin Mukayesesi," 477.

137 Philipp Bruckmayr, "The Particular Will (*al-irādat al-juzʾiyya*): Excavations Regarding a Latecomer in Kalām Terminology on Human Agency and Its Position in Naqshbandi Discourse," *European Journal of Turkish Studies* 13 (2011), 4.

138 Birgiwī, *al-Ṭarīqa*, 40.

139 Ṭarīqatchī, *Farāʾid*, 61b.

140 Birgiwī, *al-Ṭarīqa*, 41, 84.

141 Birgiwī, *al-Ṭarīqa*, 41; cf. Birgiwī, *Vasiyyet-nâme*, 104; Ṭarīqatchī, *Farāʾid*, 120a.

with those of al-Imām al-Māturīdī on īmān and Islām.[142] Ibn Taymiyya mentions al-Māturīdī and his belief that "all human are equal in terms of faith; faith either is or is not, it is indivisible," a view that differs from his own.[143]

For Ibn Taymiyya, the definition of faith as "approval of heart, acknowledgement of tongue" is actually associated with Murjiʾa.[144] It is permissible to say, "I am a believer, inshāʾ Allāh" (exception in faith).[145] Īmān and Islām are different.[146] Deeds are part of faith.[147] Faith increases and lessens;[148] it changes and becomes fragmentary in terms of virtue.[149] The divisions that constitute faith, may partially fade away or survive.[150]

Once deeds are included within the description of faith, some interesting interpretations inevitably follow. According to Ibn Qayyim, a disciple of Ibn Taymiyya, unbelief and belief, polytheism and unity, piety and wrong, hypocrisy and faith may be simultaneously present in a person. This is one of the most fundamental principles. Ahl al-bidʿa, however, opposes this argument.[151] Though he expresses himself differently, Ibn Taymiyya seems to have adopted the same approach.[152] Nevertheless, we should also note his acceptance of "unbelief that does not dismiss one from religion" (*kufr lā yanqul ʿan al-milla, kufr dūn kufr*).[153] A

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142 Yüksel, *Mehmed Birgivî'nin Dinî ve Siyasî Görüşleri*, 94, 95.

143 Ibn Taymiyya, *Majmūʿ fatāwā*, VII, 582.

144 Id., *al-Īmān* (ed. Muḥammad al-Zubaydī; Beirut: Dār al-Kitāb al-ʿArabī, 1993), 172; id., *Majmūʿ fatāwā*, XIII, 50.

145 Id., *al-Īmān*, 384-388; id., *Majmūʿ fatāwā*, VII, 439, 509.

146 Ibn Taymiyya, *Majmūʿ fatāwā*, VII, 6.

147 *Ibid.*, III, 151, 177; VII, 308, 330, 642.

148 Ibn Taymiyya, *al-Īmān*, 28, 32, 204, 211, 216, 279, 308, 330; id., *Majmūʿ fatāwā*, III, 151; VI, 479; VII, 223, 505; XIII, 51; XIX, 188.

149 Ibn Taymiyya, *Majmūʿ fatāwā*, III, 355; VII, 517, 647; XI, 654; XVIII, 270.

150 *Ibid.*, VII, 517.

151 Abū ʿAbd Allāh Shams al-Dīn Muḥammad Ibn Qayyim al-Jawziyya, *Kitāb al-ṣalāt* (ed. ʿAdnān ibn Ṣāfākhān al-Bukhārī; Mecca: Dār al-ʿĀlam al-Fawāʾid, 1431), 60.

152 Ibn Taymiyya, *Majmūʿ fatāwā*, VII, 353, 404, 520.

153 *Ibid.*, VII, 350, 312, 325.

person who commits a major sin (*murtakib al-kabīra)* is a believer with incomplete faith (*nāqiṣ al-īmān*).[154]

According to Wahhābī commentators of Ibn Taymiyya, Māturīdiyya is out of Ahl al-sunna; it is a deviant (*ḍālla*) sect.[155] Birgiwī adopts the same views as the Māturīdī scholars about faith and almost all theological issues discussed among other Sunnī *madhhab*s. Therefore, it is impossible to claim that Birgiwī is affiliated with the Ibn Taymiyya School or Wahhābism.

Conclusion

Birgiwī has been described as a 'Salafī' and a representative of the Ibn Taymiyya School of the Ottoman Empire. Nevertheless, when we elaborate various studies, we can see that the concepts developed on Ibn Taymiyya School and its alleged represantative Birgiwī are complicated. Birgiwī's dissenting character in several controversial issues during his lifetime has been highlighted. The sensitiveness in some issues such as criticisms against those who are considered heretics and Sufi circles has been widely seen as if they are specific to only Ibn Taymiyya and mentioned only in Ibn Taymiyya's work. As Birgiwī hints in his notes, the Ḥanafī circle and tradition had already dealt with these issues and dissenting opinions; thus, it is a deficiency to overlook and ignore this fact.

Assumptions have been made about the relationship between Ibn Taymiyya and Birgiwī. Because of the discovery that *Ziyārat al-qubūr* was not written by Birgiwī, it is necessary to review the arguments asserting this connection that have been based on this treatise. The references to translations of Birgiwī's *al-Ṭarīqa* also require revision because they are occasionally based on additions by the translator and not on Birgiwī's original writings. Moreover, the findings based on erroneous information, such as the confusion of Ibn Qayyim, a disciple of Ibn Taymiyya, with Abū l-Faraj Ibn al-Jawzī, who lived and died in an earlier period, should be corrected. There are some quotations in *Dāmighat al-mubtadiʿīn* that have been attributed to Birgiwī. Nevertheless, there are doubts about whether

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[154] *Ibid*., VII, 354.

[155] Āl al-Sheikh, *al-Laʾālī l-bahiyya*, 88-90; al-ʿUthaymīn, *Sharḥ al-ʿAqīda al-Wāsiṭiyya*, I, 53.

the book was really written by Birgiwī. Moreover, its contents reveal a completely Māturīdī text.

Birgiwī's views are consistent with the Māturīdiyya from the conventional classification of three sub-categories of Sunnī Islam: Salafiyya, Māturīdiyya and Ashʿariyya. It is noteworthy that who assessed Birgiwī's thoughts with a Salafī approach found them ridiculous or associate with the ideas of polytheists. On the other, the traditional categorization of Ottoman religious thought as the Rāzī (Māturīdī) School and Ibn Taymiyya School is also open to criticism in terms of *madhhabī* identities. Recognizing this, this study aimed to reveal the issues of Birgiwī's *madhhabī* association. Considering Birgiwī's views on creeds, it seems impossible to dissociate him from the Māturīdīs and to categorize him as a member of the Ibn Taymiyya School. Birgiwī is a Ḥanafī scholar, sensitive to religious deviations in society, and affiliated with Māturīdī approaches to theological problems. Various sub-classifications may be established within Māturīdism. Indeed, Māturīdism is represented in different ways in different regions. However, it seems impossible to trace the Ibn Taymiyya School of the Ottoman Empire through Birgiwī. The developments that occurred after Birgiwī's death also require further study.

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NUZŪL OF THE QURʾĀN AND THE QUESTION OF *NUZŪL* ORDER

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Abstract

In the modern Islamic world, there is growing interest in reading and interpretation of the Qurʾān according to its *nuzūl* order; accordingly, many translations and exegeses, based on *nuzūl* order, are published every day. This fact compels us to consider questions about the descent of revelation, arrangement of the text of the Qurʾān, and its arrangement pursuant to the chronology of revelation, as well as relevant general acceptance. Classical references seldom questioned the reliability of revelation order narrated by *Ṣaḥāba* (Companions), such as ʿAlī ibn Abī Ṭālib and ʿAbd Allāh ibn ʿAbbās, and *Tābiʿūn* (Followers), such as Jābir ibn Zayd, al-Ḥasan al-Baṣrī, and Ibn Shihāb al-Zuhrī, as well as later personalities, such as Jaʿfar al-Ṣādiq, al-Wāqidī, and other scholars; moreover, it has never been extensively studied whether all of the sūras (chapters) of the Qurʾān can be chronologically arranged pursuant to the available information. Herein, this study intends to draw attention to the necessity for a serious examination and analysis of such issues regarding the revelation and arrangement of the Qurʾān.

Key Words: *Nuzūl*, *tartīb* al-Qurʾān, *nuzūl* order, *inzāl*, revelation.

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Introduction

The revelation of the Qurʾān to Muḥammad is expressed in many *āya*s (verses) through *maṣdar* (verbal noun) such as *nuzūl, inzāl,* and *tanzīl* or verbs derived from these nouns. The word *nuzūl* is mentioned in approximately three hundred verses and is attributed to divine revelations, such as the Torah, Bible, and the Qurʾān, in verses and chapters, as well as to tangible or intangible things such as angels, devils, provisions, water, clothes, meals, benevolence, torment, measures, sultans (strong evidence), peace, and calmness. In Arabic, *nuzūl* means "to descend, to lodge." According to some linguists, its essential meaning is "to descend," while others believe that *nuzūl* actually signifies *ḥulūl*, in other words, "to arrive and settle in somewhere."[1]

According to certain scholars, such as al-Rāghib al-Iṣfahānī (d. 1st quarter of 5th/11th century), the utilization of *nuzūl* on the pattern of *ifʿāl* (i.e., *inzāl*) with reference to the Torah and Bible, and on the pattern of *tafʿīl* (i.e., *tanzīl*) with reference to the Qurʾān's revelation, signifies a semantic nuance. Therefore, the verbal noun *inzāl* signifies "descending" both "at once" and "gradually," while *tanzīl* exclusively means "gradual" and "sending down." [2] Nevertheless, some other scholars have claimed that there is no semantic difference between *inzāl* and *tanzīl*, which, according to us also, are synonymous. Indeed, al-Suyūṭī (d. 911/1505) related the common acceptance among scholars that the Torah and Bible descended at once but added that contemporaneous scholars rejected such an argument due to a lack of appropriate evidence and justification.[3]

For Quṭb al-Dīn al-Rāzī (d. 766/1365), because Allah is non-spatial, and the Qurʾān has a nature of meaning that can replace the divine

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1 Abū l-Ḥusayn Aḥmad ibn Fāris ibn Zakariyyāʾ, *Muʿjam maqāyīs al-lugha* (ed. ʿAbd al-Salām Muḥammad Hārūn; 3rd edn., Cairo: Muṣṭafā al-Bābī al-Ḥalabī, 1979), V, 417; Abū l-Faḍl Muḥammad ibn Mukarram Ibn Manẓūr, *Lisān al-ʿArab* (Cairo: Dār al-Ḥadīth, 2003), VIII, 523.

2 Abū l-Qāsim al-Ḥusayn ibn Muḥammad al-Rāghib al-Iṣfahānī, *al-Mufradāt fī gharīb al-Qurʾān* (ed. Muḥammad Khalaf Allāh; Cairo: Maktabat al-ʿAnjlū al-Miṣriyya, 1970), 744.

3 Abū l-Faḍl Jalāl al-Dīn ʿAbd al-Raḥmān al-Suyūṭī, *al-Itqān fī ʿulūm al-Qurʾān* (ed. Muṣṭafā Dīb al-Bughā; Beirut: Dār Ibn Kathīr, 2002), I, 134.

personality, it is not permissible to ascribe the meaning "to make to descend from above" to the verbal nouns of *inzāl-tanzīl* about revelation of the Qurʾān to the Prophet. The lexical meaning of *inzāl* is "to accommodate, to host" (*īwāʾ*) and "to move something downward;" nonetheless, neither meaning seems accurate when the usage is related to discourse/word. Thus, the noun *inzāl* is only figuratively applied for abstract concepts, such as discourse/word.[4]

Such an explanation might work in the context of discourse or belief related to discussions of divine attributes; however, it does not seem accurate with regard to the historical and social context in which the Qurʾān was revealed. Accordingly, some verses read that Allah is in the sky. For example, Q 67:16 indicates that Allah is in the sky, while Q 6:158 and Q 2:210 discuss the advent of Allah or His appearing among the clouds. Q 2:144 indicates how Muḥammad turns his face toward the sky; according to exegetes, this action signifies his waiting for a revelation of the change of Qibla and the consideration that Gabriel sent the revelation from the heavens.[5] In addition, Q 51:22 reads, "*And in the heaven is your provision and whatever you are promised.*" In a well-known ḥadīth, a concubine is asked, "Where is Allah?," whereupon she responds, "He is in the heavens," and then Muḥammad says, "Set her free, for she is a believer."[6]

In his interpretation of the expression *man fī l-samāʾ* in Q 67:16, the Muʿtazilī exegete Abū Muslim al-Iṣfahānī (d. 322/934) writes the following: "Arabs accepted the existence of Allah, but also believed that He was in heaven. This is why, Allah says, '*Do you feel secure that He who holds authority in the heaven would not cause the earth to swallow you, and suddenly it would sway?*'"[7] In contrast, according

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4 *Ibid.*, 138.

5 See Abū ʿAbd Allāh Muḥammad ibn ʿAbd Allāh ibn ʿĪsā Ibn Abī Zamanīn, *Tafsīr al-Qurʾān al-ʿazīz* (Beirut: Dār al-Kutub al-ʿIlmiyya, 2002), I, 185; Abū Ḥafṣ ʿUmar ibn ʿAlī Ibn ʿĀdil, *al-Lubāb fī ʿulūm al-Kitāb* (eds. ʿĀdil Aḥmad ʿAbd al-Mawjūd and ʿAlī Muḥammad Muʿawwaḍ; Beirut: Dār al-Kutub al-ʿIlmiyya, 1998), III, 31-32.

6 See Abū Saʿīd ʿUthmān ibn Saʿīd al-Dārimī, *al-Radd ʿalā l-Jahmiyya* (ed. Badr al-Badr; Kuwait: al-Dār al-Salafiyya, 1985), 38-39.

7 Abū ʿAbd Allāh Fakhr al-Dīn Muḥammad ibn ʿUmar al-Rāzī, *al-Tafsīr al-kabīr aw Mafātīḥ al-ghayb* (eds. Ibrāhīm Shams al-Dīn and Aḥmad Shams al-Dīn; 2nd edn.

to several ḥadīth narratives, Allah descends to the earthly skies every night, and in the small hours, He says, "Isn't there anyone praying to Me; I would respond such prayers …;"[8] some other narratives relate that Allah will descend to Earth on judgment day to hold people accountable.[9]

Mode of Descent of the Qurʾān's Revelation

Many verses and ḥadīths indicates that the revelation of the Qurʾān occurred by descent from heaven to earth. Nevertheless, this explanation is closely related to traditional beliefs and conceptions of first addressees and/or Arabs in Muḥammad's time with regard to abstract beings in general and Allah in particular. More precisely, the imagination of pre-Islamic Arab society conceived Allah and angels as heavenly beings; therefore, the Qurʾān indicates that revelation was sent from heaven down to earth.

Indeed, as indicated in Q 15:17-18, Q 26:210-212, Q 37:7-10 and Q 72:8-9 about *istirāq al-samʿ* (attempt by a *jinn* to steal news from heaven), for Arabs in the time of revelation, it was impossible for a human to be in direct contact with Allah or the space of abstract beings, and such a connection could only be established by virtue of the jinn (demons and angels); pursuant to this conventional belief, such intermediary beings are expressed via words or concepts such as Gabriel, *al-Rūḥ al-amīn* or *Rūḥ al-quds* [Holy Spirit] with regard to descent of the Qurʾān's revelation.

In addition, Q 36:69-70, Q 52:29, and Q 69:41-43 negate the conventional beliefs and arguments of polytheists about *istirāq al-samʿ* (attempts to steal news from heaven) to emphasize the divine nature of the Qurʾān's revelation; moreover, these verses indicate that Muḥammad was not one among seers or poets who were believed to have contact with the jinn and to obtain information from them, that the Qurʾān was sent by Allah, the God of the universe, and that it is not the word of seers or poets.

Then again, Q 15:9 and Q 56:77-79 read that the Qurʾān was sent from the presence of Allah and was protected from intervention by

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Beirut: Dār al-Kutub al-ʿIlmiyya, 2004), XXX, 61-62.

8 Al-Bukhārī, "Tahajjud," 14; Muslim, "Ṣalāt al-musāfirīn," 168-172.

9 Al-Tirmidhī, "Ṣawm," 39; "Zuhd," 48.

evil beings such as jinn and demons, and only *muṭahhar* (those purified/made purified from evil and sin) beings can have contact with it. The word *muṭahharūn* in Q 56:79 has been interpreted as "angels" by exegetes such as Ibn ʿAbbās, ʿIkrima, Mujāhid, and Saʿīd ibn Jubayr.[10]

In pre-Islamic Arab tradition, abstract/spiritual beings were classified as good and evil or pious and malignant; angels are accepted as good and pious, whereas demons are considered evil and malignant. In addition, during Days of Ignorance, the jinn were categorized as follows: those that lived together with humans were called "āmir," those that interfere with and hurt children were called "arwāḥ," those with evil and stubborn natures were called "shayṭān," those that were extremely evil were called "mārid," and those that committed violence for evil were called "ʿifrīt;" in contrasts, the *jinn*, which are pure and clean and far from evil, were qualified as "angels."[11]

Because the descent and sending of revelation, as well as guidance and administration, are believed to have been performed by means of angels since the former Semitic-Hebrew culture, pre-Islamic Arabs most probably owed this point of view to Ahl al-kitāb in general and to Jews in particular. In Jewish tradition, various words/concepts, such as theophany, visions, and dreams, are employed to express revelation as direct conversation of God with humans; nevertheless, the concept of angels, which are referred to as "angels of Jehovah" or "angels of the Lord" in the Tanakh, possess peculiar importance.

These angels are sent to establish communication with humans as abstract beings that act for God and speak on His behalf. Many expressions in the Tanakh identify the angel of God with God Himself due to its connection with the divine source. The identification that was established between the angel and God caused

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[10] See Abū l-Faraj Jamāl al-Dīn ʿAbd al-Raḥmān ibn ʿAlī Ibn al-Jawzī, *Zād al-masīr fī ʿilm al-tafsīr* (4th edn., Beirut: al-Maktab al-Islāmī, 1987), VIII, 152.

[11] For further information see Jawād ʿAlī, *al-Mufaṣṣal fī tārīkh al-ʿArab qabla l-Islām* (Qom: Manshūrāt al-Sharīf al-Raḍī, 1380), VI, 705-725.

people to fear these angels so much that it was considered as dangerous to see the angel of God as to see God in person.[12]

In this regard, the dialogue in the Qurʾān between Mary and the angels[13] and the fear of Mary of the angel, which, in the guise of a human, heralds to her the good news of a child,[14] seems to reflect the perception of angels in Jewish tradition. Indeed, statements in the Qurʾān about many issues, including creation and sharīʿa, fables and revelation, coincide with their counterparts in the Torah and Tanakh. The emphasis in various verses on how the Qurʾān confirms the Torah[15] might be considered related to this question. Conversely, the first Muslims reportedly used to meet and exchange ideas with Jews in Medina; even some famous Companions went to Bayt al-midrās in Medina to participate in Torah discussions with Jewish men of the cloth and had occasional debates with them.[16]

Because Allah was believed to be from heaven within the earliest circle of addressees, it is normal that, in some Qurʾān verses, things such as iron, clothes, and cattle are said to be sent from heaven to earth, just like revelation. Nevertheless, such verbiage is not intended to inform (*fāʾidat al-khabar*) the primary and directly addressed masses but to provide them with another message (*lāzim al-fāʾida*) by means of what is known to them.

In other words, the Qurʾān does not bring forth definitive/descriptive and primary statements about actual facts with regard to the presence of Allah in heaven and descent of many other things from above; rather, the text interprets and formats these words to reflect the imagination of Arab society. As a matter of fact, pursuant to the expression *anzalnā l-ḥadīd* in Q 57:25, which literally means "*we sent down iron*," there is a narrative ascribed to the companion Ibn ʿUmar. According to the narrative, Allah sent down four things from heaven to earth as benedictions: iron, fire, water, and salt.

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[12] For further information see Muhammet Tarakçı, "Tanah'ta Vahiy Anlayışı," *Uludağ Üniversitesi İlahiyat Fakültesi Dergisi* 11/1 (2002), 193-218.

[13] Q 3:42-51.

[14] Q 19:17-18.

[15] Q 3:50; 5:46; 61:6.

[16] See Abū Jaʿfar Muḥammad ibn Jarīr al-Ṭabarī, *Tafsīr al-Ṭabarī al-musammā Jāmīʿ al-bayān fī taʾwīl al-Qurʾān* (3rd edn., Beirut: Dār al-Kutub al-ʿIlmiyya, 1999), I, 478; III, 217-218.

Another narrative from Ibn ʿAbbās claims that Adam came down to earth with a few objects made of iron, such as an anvil, a hammer, and needles/nails.[17]

Consequently, expressions in the Qurʾān about the form of descent of revelation have a conditional, contextual, and historical content. This fact is also evident in the example that, through the meaning "descent/sending down" of the word *nuzūl/inzāl*, together with the adjective of quality *Qurʾānan ʿArabiyyan* (Q 12:2), divine revelation is formulated in harmony with Arab culture and mentality. However, in the history of Islamic thought, Muʿtazilī and Sunnī paradigms have claimed that Allah is independent of time and space with regard to discussions on divine attributes; thereupon, the expression *man fī l-samāʾ* (Allah, who is in heaven) in the related verse is construed to be a figurative metaphor for supremacy and sovereignty pursuant to this absolving approach.[18] Similarly, the ḥadīth on Allah's nightly descent to earth is considered to denote the descent of divine benediction and graces.[19] Nonetheless, during the 2nd and 3rd centuries AH, Ahl al-ḥadīth and Salafī (*Ahl al-sunna al-khāṣṣa*) scholars claimed that the omnipresence of Allah, not in heaven but everywhere, was an argument and belief peculiar to Jahmiyya and Zanādiqa (heretics).[20] Therefore, even faith in Allah, which is the strongest and solidest principle of Islamic faith, has interestingly undergone radical changes regarding perception and conception within a few centuries.

Regarding the word *inzāl* in the verses about the sending by Allah of iron, clothes, and cattle from heaven, it is explained as "to create or to bring forth means for a benefaction so that mankind benefits from

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17 Abū ʿAbd Allāh Muḥammad ibn Aḥmad al-Qurṭubī, *al-Jāmiʿ li-aḥkām al-Qurʾān* (Beirut: Dār al-Kutub al-ʿIlmiyya, 1988), XVII, 169.

18 Abū Ḥayyān Muḥammad ibn ʿAlī ibn Yūsuf al-Andalusī, *al-Baḥr al-muḥīṭ fī l-tafsīr* (ed. Ṣidqī Muḥammad Jamīl; Beirut: Dār al-Fikr, 2005), VIII, 296.

19 Abū l-Saʿādāt Majd al-Dīn Mubārak ibn Muḥammad Ibn al-Athīr al-Jazarī, *al-Nihāya fī gharīb al-ḥadīth wa-l-athar* (ed. ʿAbd al-Ḥamīd Hindāwī, Sidon & Beirut: al-Maktaba al-ʿAṣriyya li-l-Tawzīʿ wa-l-Nashr, 2008), V, 35.

20 See al-Dārimī, *Naqḍ ʿUthmān ibn Saʿīd ʿalā l-Marīsī al-Jahmī al-ʿanīd fī-mā iftarā ʿalā llāh fī l-tawḥīd* (ed. Manṣūr ibn ʿAbd al-ʿAzīz al-Simārī; Riyadh: Aḍwāʾ al-Salaf, 1999), 57-59, 62, 274-280.

it."[21] In the Qurʾān, *inzāl* is employed for revelation, as well as for concrete objects, such as clothes, iron, and cattle; it seems figuratively justifiable to ascribe to it the meaning "to create and introduce to the utilization of man;" nevertheless, we must remark that the original and historical signification in verses about the descent of revelation is "to send down from heaven."

At this stage, ascription of place to Allah might seem problematic in terms of faith. Nevertheless, this relationship did not constitute a problem for Muḥammad and the generation of Companions; rather, it is disturbing for transcendentalist (*tanzīhī*) kalāmī/theological paradigms with regard to divine attributes in the history of Islamic thought and for those who reject anthropomorphism (*tashbīh*) and corporealism (*tajsīm*). During lifetime of the Prophet, the primary concern among Muslims was not the problem of ascribing place to Allah; rather, the concern was to prevent any dispute regarding His unity (*tawḥīd*) and to negate any kind of polytheism. Therefore, such philosophical and discourse-related problems emerged in the course of a historical process; it would be anachronism to claim that such questions were an issue for the Prophet and his Companions.

Stages of Descent of Revelation

As is known, according to first verse in Sūrat al-Qadr, the Qurʾān was sent down on *Laylat al-qadr* (Night of Power); however, the content and mode of descent are not explained. Due to this vagueness, Islamic tradition has encompassed numerous viewpoints and convictions about how the Qurʾān was revealed. According to common opinion, the Qurʾān was sent down to the sky of the world as a whole on the Night of Power; then, it was gradually revealed to Muḥammad in a series of incidents over the subsequent twenty years.

A second view, related by Muqātil ibn Ḥayyān (d. 150/767), argued that the Qurʾān was sent down to the sky of the world in annual revelations over twenty or twenty-three successive Nights of Power, before the gradual descent of these annual revelations during

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[21] Fakhr al-Dīn al-Rāzī, *al-Tafsīr al-kabīr*, XIV, 42; XXVI, 213; al-Qurṭubī, *al-Jāmiʿ*, VII, 118; XV, 153; Abū Ḥayyān al-Andalusī, *al-Baḥr al-muḥīṭ*, IV, 282-283; Ibn ʿĀdil, *al-Lubāb*, XI, 66; XVI, 474-475; Muḥammad al-Ṭāhir ibn Muḥammad ibn Muḥammad Ibn ʿĀshūr, *Tafsīr al-taḥrīr wa-l-tanwīr* (Tunis: Dār Saḥnūn, 1997), VIII, 73-74; XXIII, 332.

the corresponding year. According to a third approach, narrated by Abū ʿAmr al-Shaʿbī (d. 104/722), the descent of the Qurʾān from *al-Lawḥ al-maḥfūẓ* (Preserved Tablet) down to the sky of the world began on the Night of Power; later, it was gradually revealed in agreement with emerging incidents at various times. The fourth view defended the viewpoint that the Qurʾān was sent down from the Preserved Tablet as a whole; the *ḥafaẓa* angels gradually handed the text to Gabriel on twenty Nights of Power, whereupon Gabriel extended the process over twenty-something years and recited the Qurʾān to Muḥammad.[22]

In all narratives about the aforementioned views and convictions, it is unclear what “sky of the world,” or *Bayt al-ʿizza* (House of Honor), signifies. In other words, the open question of the Qurʾān’s revelation, after descent from the Preserved Tablet and before reaching the Prophet, remains unanswered. Some references claim that Ibn ʿAbbās was the creator of the idea regarding the descent to *Bayt al-ʿizza*. Pursuant to the narrative, Ibn ʿAbbās said, “The Qurʾān was taken from the seat of *dhikr* and placed at *Bayt al-ʿizza* in the sky of the world. Gabriel gradually brought the Qurʾān from *Bayt al-ʿizza* to the Prophet and slowly read it;”[23] however, this narrative or any other report or work provides almost no information about the content of *Bayt al-ʿizza*.

Such vagueness and ambiguity might provide grounds for an assumption: *Bayt al-ʿizza* was generated as a formula to explain the possibility of access to the Qurʾān’s revelation, which is considered eternal in Sunnī tradition, in historical and human contexts. In earlier sources, however, the question “What is the secret behind collective descent of the Qurʾān to the firmament?” was answered with a romantic approach, namely “This is in order to glorify both the Qurʾān and Muḥammad by means of declaring the Qurʾān as the final divine book (revelation) sent down to the inhabitants of the seven heavens and to the last prophet, Muḥammad, the prophet of the most

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[22] Jamāl al-Dīn Abū ʿAbd Allāh Muḥammad ibn Aḥmad ibn Saʿīd Ibn ʿAqīla, *al-Ziyāda wa-l-iḥsān fī ʿulūm al-Qurʾān* (al-Shāriqa: Jāmiʿat al-Shāriqa Markaz al-Buḥūth wa-l-Dirāsāt, 2006), I, 152-153.

[23] Abū Bakr ʿAbd Allāh Muḥammad ibn Ibrāhīm Ibn Abī Shayba al-ʿAbsī, *Kitāb al-muṣannaf fī l-aḥādīth wa l-āthār* (ed. Muṣṭafā Kamāl Ḥūt; Beirut: Maktabat al-Zamān, 1999), VI, 144.

valuable community."[24] In fact, as the phrase "The Qurʾān was placed at *Bayt al-ʿizza* so as to ensure its access to worldly (historical) context"[25] by al-Ḥakīm al-Tirmidhī (d. 320/932) suggests, the generation of the concept of *Bayt al-ʿizza* was probably devised for its entrance into historical context despite its eternal character; this approach might also have been adopted to prevent strengthening the hand of Muʿtazila with regard to *khalq al-Qurʾān.*

Indeed, all views about the descent of the Qurʾān consist of personal convictions, including that narrated via Ibn ʿAbbās. At this point, one might object that Ibn ʿAbbās cannot provide personal opinions about the status of the Qurʾān prior to its being encountered by man, history and society and that he must have obtained such information about *Bayt al-ʿizza* only from the Prophet; nevertheless, countless narratives in exegeses and ḥadīth sources have indicated how the Companions suggested their opinions and personal convictions regarding issues about the unseen. More precisely, as various views of Companions about the issues regarding unseen, such as divine attributes, judgment day, the afterlife conditions, and creation, indicate, notable personalities provided their opinions since the earliest days of Islam.

In brief, considering both the general significance of verses about *inzāl/tanzīl* of the Qurʾān's revelation and the consequence of twenty-three years of revelation, the argument by al-Shaʿbī, namely "Descent of the Qurʾān from the Preserved Tablet to the firmament began on the Night of Power, before it was gradually sent down pursuant to emerging incidents," seems more reasonable. Conversely, the ambiguities and disputes about what occurred during the transition of revelation from the seat of Allah to the Prophet seem ineradicable. Similarly, it remains controversial whether the Qurʾān descended to the Prophet only in meaning or both in meaning and words.

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[24] Abū l-Qāsim Shihāb al-Dīn ʿAbd al-Raḥmān Abū Shāma al-Maqdisī, *al-Murshid al-wajīz ilā ʿulūm tataʿallaq^{u} bi-l-Kitāb al-ʿazīz* (ed. Tayyar Altıkulaç; Ankara: Türkiye Diyanet Vakfı Yayınları, 1986), 24; Abū ʿAbd Allāh Badr al-Dīn Muḥammad al-Zarkashī, *al-Burhān fī ʿulūm al-Qurʾān* (ed. Muḥammad Abū l-Faḍl Ibrāhīm; Sidon & Beirut: al-Maktaba al-ʿAṣriyya, 1972), I, 230.

[25] Al-Suyūṭī, *al-Itqān*, I, 132; Ibn ʿAqīla, *al-Ziyāda wa-l-iḥsān*, I, 156.

Pursuant to the dominant conception and conviction, the revelation of the Qurʾān belongs to Allah in terms of both wording and meaning. Gabriel memorized the Qurʾān's revelation from the Preserved Tablet and thus sent it down to the Prophet. According to another, allegedly marginal approach, Gabriel provided the Qurʾān only in meaning, and later, the Prophet formulated the text in Arabic words. A third view defends the idea that Qurʾān was communicated to and inspired in Gabriel in meaning, whereupon the angel translated it into Arabic words and gave it to the Prophet.[26]

Al-Imām al-Māturīdī (d. 333/944) ascribed the second argument to Bāṭinī circles, which most probably included certain philosophers as well. Al-Māturīdī cited the Bāṭinī view precisely: "The Qurʾān was sent down to the Prophet not in the form of text, but as a type of inspiration to his heart; then, the Prophet expressed it with Arabic wording for concretization," pursuant to Q 2:97; al-Māturīdī criticized this argument because the Qurʾān provides very strong evidence of its miraculous character. In addition, Bāṭiniyya adopts the approach that "The Qurʾān was sent down to the Prophet in a form without any linguistic character – just like a dream; the Prophet put it in Arabic form through his language" with reference to Q 26:192-195; however, grounded on Q 12:2 – "*Indeed, We have sent it down as an Arabic Qurʾān that you might understand*" – al-Māturīdī rejected the foregoing Bāṭinī assumption.[27]

Ahl al-sunna traditionally refused the claim that revelation was sent to the Prophet in the form of pure meaning and called such allegations heresy. The Sunnī view thus intends to refute the Muʿtazilī view of createdness of the Qurʾān and to develop a theory of the miraculous nature of the Qurʾān by describing it as a linguistic miracle in literary terms. The purpose of the latter assumption is to describe the Qurʾān in terms of both meaning and wording and to generate a jurisprudent and faith-related doctrine that Arabic should necessarily be the language of worship in Islam. Nevertheless, our opinion about the content and form of the descent of revelation is

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[26] Al-Zarkashī, *al-Burhān*, I, 229-230; al-Suyūṭī, *al-Itqān*, I, 139.

[27] Abū Manṣūr Muḥammad ibn Muḥammad ibn Maḥmūd al-Māturīdī, *Taʾwīlāt Ahl al-sunna: Tafsīr al-Māturīdī* (ed. Majdī Bāsallūm; Beirut: Dār al-Kutub al-ʿIlmiyya, 2005), I, 517-518; VIII, 85.

closer to that of the philosophers who are categorized as "Bāṭiniyya" by al-Māturīdī, rather than the dominant approach.[28]

The ambiguity and gaps regarding the content and form of the descent of the revelation are also present with regard to issues such as which chapters were revealed in Mecca or Medina, as well as the inner organization and composition of the text of the Qurʾān. Over the twenty years of the revelation process, verses revealed in first decade are called Makkī (from Mecca), while those in the following thirteen years are known as Madanī (from Medina). Nevertheless, there are many disputes regarding how to determine Makkī and Madanī chapters. According to a narrative of Ubayy ibn Kaʿb, 27 chapters are Madanī, whereas 87 are Makkī. According to Abū l-Fatḥ Ibn Shīṭā (d. 450/1059), 29 chapters are Madanī, while 85 are Makkī[29]; nevertheless, it is arguable whether the chapters al-Qamar, al-Raḥmān, al-Ikhlāṣ, al-Falaq and al-Nās are Makkī or not. According to Abū l-Ḥasan ibn al-Haṣṣār (d. 611/1215), 82 chapters are undoubtedly Makkī, and 20 are undoubtedly Madanī, whereas the remaining 12 are disputable.[30]

Such disputes arose due to a lack of interest of the Prophet and Companions in technical issues such as the Makkī or Madanī character of the chapters; accordingly, they arose from a lack of explicit information from him and his Companions. As al-Bāqillānī (d. 403/1013) clearly asserted, the Prophet never said a word about the issue of Makkī-Madanī; moreover, there are no narratives indicating that he ever classified Qur'ān chapters in this regard or told his Companions "Mind that these chapters were sent down to me in Mecca, and those were sent to me in Medina."[31] This lack of direction exists because the Prophet and the Companions conceived the Qurʾān's revelation not as a text to be recorded in terms of time and

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[28] Our views and opinions about the content of revelation will be extensively treated in our books about the history of the textualization of the Qurʾān and relevant problems of historicalness/historicity.

[29] Ibn al-Jawzī, *Funūn al-afnān fī ʿuyūn ʿulūm al-Qurʾān* (ed. Ṣalāḥ ibn Fatḥī Halal; Beirut: Muʾassasat al-Kutub al-Thaqāfiyya, 2001), 160.

[30] Al-Suyūṭī, *al-Itqān*, I, 33; Ibn ʿAqīla, *al-Ziyāda wa-l-iḥsān*, I, 206.

[31] Abū Bakr Muḥammad ibn al-Ṭayyib al-Bāqillānī, *al-Intiṣār li-l-Qurʾān* (ed. Muḥammad ʿIsām Mufliḥ al-Quḍāt; Amman & Beirut: Dār al-Fatḥ li-l-Nashr wa-l-Tawzīʿ & Dār Ibn Ḥazm, 2001), I, 247.

place of descent but as a divine guide within their life experiences and struggles against opponents of the invitation to Islam; consequently, the statements/orders in this guide were understood spontaneously and implemented in life practice as natural attitudes and behaviors.

Arrangement of the Qurʾān Text and the Question of Presentation (*ʿArḍa*)

As is known, the arrangement of chapters within the Qurʾān text from cover to cover is now called the "*Muṣḥaf* arrangement;" in general, the arrangement is attributed to the commission of copiers established under leadership of ʿUthmān. Suitably, it is widely accepted that the arrangement of verses within chapters was undertaken at the discretion of the Prophet and that he established the arrangement at the behest of Gabriel,[32] pursuant to several narratives. Therefore, the arrangement of the verses is made according to divine ordinance (*tawqīfī*). The narratives about presentation (*ʿarḍa*), which indicates mutual recitations by Muḥammad and Gabriel during Ramaḍān of verses and chapters sent down in the relevant year,[33] are used as proof of this general acceptance.

Nevertheless, these narratives, regardless of questions about their authenticity, provide no significant information about the content of *ʿarḍa* (mutual lecture and presentation); instead, they discuss presentation as a very mysterious phenomenon. It is likely that the narratives about presentation were fabricated to fill the gaps with regard to the textualization process of the Qurʾān. Indeed, these narratives include no explanatory information about when the presentation began, how many times it actually occurred over the twenty-three years of descent, who read the Qurʾān during the presentation, how and in which appearance Gabriel participated in the presentation, whether the Companions were present at these sessions or whether Companions such as Ibn Masʿūd and Zayd ibn

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[32] Aḥmad ibn Ḥanbal, *al-Musnad*, I, 57; IV, 218.

[33] See al-Bukhārī, "Badʾ al-waḥy," 5; "Faḍāʾil al-Qurʾān," 7; "Badʾ al-khalq," 6; Muslim, "Faḍāʾil al-ṣaḥāba," 98-99.

Thābit, who – according to some narratives – participated in the presentation, saw Gabriel in person.[34]

Grounded on Companions such as ʿĀʾisha and Ibn ʿAbbās, ḥadīth sources relate that the presentation occurred once yearly during Ramaḍān and twice in the final Ramaḍān of Muḥammad; according to the narrative via Abū Hurayra, the Prophet used to confine himself in a mosque (*iʿtikāf*) for ten days every year, but he stayed in the mosque for twenty days in the year of his death.[35]

Muḥammad Ḥamīd Allāh claimed that the practice of presentation might have begun after the assignment of Ramaḍān as the month of fasting during the Medina period;[36] some researchers, however, have interestingly argued that "the mentioned month was already called Ramaḍān before fasting became an obligation. The month was not called Ramaḍān because of fasting; on the contrary, the fast was rendered an obligation in this month because the latter was already considered sacred."[37]

Prior to Islam, the four months, namely, Dhū l-qaʿda, Dhū l-ḥijja, Muḥarram, and Rajab, were known as "forbidden (*ḥarām*) months" and were considered holy; however, we have no historical data regarding whether Ramaḍān had such a status. Indeed, the importance of Ramaḍān emerged upon the revelation of Q 2:183 and subsequent verses, which designated fasting as a religious obligation. Fasting was made an obligation (*farḍ*) in 2 AH.

In his *Laṭāʾif al-maʿārif*, Ibn Rajab (d. 795/1393) treated the obligatory or preferable worships and remembrances (*adhkār* [pl. of *dhikr*]) for each month as those of Muḥarram; about Ramaḍān, his writings consisted significantly of rituals such as fasting, Qurʾān

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[34] For comprehensive information and assessment, see Ziya Şen, "Arza ve Mahiyeti," *Dokuz Eylül Üniversitesi İlahiyat Fakültesi Dergisi* 42 (2015), 43-64.

[35] Al-Bukhārī, "Faḍāʾil al-Qurʾān," 7; Abū l-Faḍl Shihāb al-Dīn Aḥmad ibn ʿAlī Ibn Ḥajar al-ʿAsqalānī, *Fatḥ al-bārī sharḥ Ṣaḥīḥ al-Bukhārī* (eds. ʿAbd al-ʿAzīz ibn ʿAbd Allāh Ibn Bāz, ʿAlī ibn ʿAbd al-ʿAzīz al-Shibk, and Muḥammad Fuʾād ʿAbd al-Bāqī; Riyadh: Dār al-Salām, 2000), IX, 54-55.

[36] Muḥammad Ḥamīd Allāh [as Muhammed Hamidullah], *İslâm Peygamberi* (translated into Turkish by Salih Tuğ; Ankara: İmaj İç ve Dış Ticaret, 2003), II, 700.

[37] Ziya Şen, *Kur'an'ın Metinleşme Süreci* (Istanbul: Ensar Neşriyat, 2007), 120; Muhsin Demirci, *Kur'ân Tarihi* (Istanbul: Ensar Neşriyat, 2005), 114-115.

chanting, confinement, and worshipping on Night of Power.[38] In contrast to Ramaḍān, the months of Muḥarram and Rajab were considered important and holy as in the Days of Ignorance. Indeed, the history of traditions, such as the fast of ʿĀshūrāʾ and the sacrifice of Rajab, dates from the pre-Islamic era.

In the Days of Ignorance, Ramaḍān was classified among the usual or ordinary months, including Shaʿbān and Shawwāl. Conversely, Arabs in the Days of Ignorance had the tradition of *taḥannuth* in Ramaḍān, as the reclusion of Muḥammad to the Cave of Ḥirāʾ in the same month shows.

Taḥannuth is unclear in terms of significance and concept; many Muslim scholars have explained it as worship (*taʿabbud*) and self-justification (*tabarrur*).[39] According to a narrative related by Ibn Rāhawayh (d. 238/853) and Abū Nuʿaym al-Iṣfahānī (d. 430/1038) through ʿĀʾisha, the Prophet's experience of *taḥannuth* in the Cave of Ḥirāʾ during Ramaḍān is explicitly described as *iʿtikāf* (*anna Rasūl Allāh nadhara an yaʿtakifa shahr*[an] *bi-Ḥirāʾ*).[40]

Pursuant to a citation by Abū l-Faraj al-Halabī (d. 1044/1635) from ʿUbayd ibn ʿUmayr, the Prophet used to stay in the Cave of Ḥirāʾ for approximation one month every year. This ritual was a type of continuation of *taḥannuth* practiced by devout Qurayshites during the Days of Ignorance. The Prophet's first retreat to Ḥirāʾ coincided with the times of his marriage to Khadīja. In those days, like his grandfather ʿAbd al-Muṭṭalib, he used to be engaged in charities, such as providing food for the poor. During the Days of Ignorance, Ḥirāʾ

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[38] See Abū l-Faraj Zayn al-Dīn ʿAbd al-Raḥmān ibn Aḥmad Ibn Rajab al-Ḥanbalī, *Laṭāʾif al-maʿārif fī-mā li-mawāsim al-ʿām min al-waẓāʾif* (ed. Yāsīn Muḥammad al-Sawwās; 5th edn., Damascus & Beirut: Dār Ibn Kathīr, 1999), 283-388.

[39] For further information see M. J. Kister, "et-Tehannüs: Kelime Anlamı Üzerine Bir Araştırma" (translated into Turkish by Ali Aksu), *Tasavvuf: İlmî ve Akademik Araştırma Dergisi* 2/4 (2000), 215-230.

[40] Abū Yaʿqūb Isḥāq ibn Ibrāhīm ibn Makhlad Ibn Rāhawayh, *Musnad Isḥāq ibn Rāhawayh* (ed. ʿAbd al-Ghafūr ibn ʿAbd al-Ḥaqq Ḥusayn Burr al-Balūshī; Medina: Maktabat al-Īmān, 1990-1991), III, 970-971; Abū Nuʿaym Aḥmad ibn ʿAbd Allāh ibn Isḥāq al-Iṣfahānī, *Dalāʾil al-nubuwwa* (eds. Muḥammad Rawwās Qalʿajī and ʿAbd al-Barr ʿAbbās; 2nd edn., Beirut: Dār al-Nafāʾis, 1986), I, 215.

was known as a type of hermitage and place of worship for charitable persons; consequently, it had established place for the poor.[41]

Pursuant to these data, the Prophet's self-confinement during Ramaḍān never had a technical purpose, such as reviewing of the Qurʾān's text or, as claimed in several sources, elimination of invalid verses; instead, he retreated to be alone with Allah and to surrender to Him so as to fill himself with spiritual power. Muḥammad must have contemplated and questioned himself about the heavy responsibilities the Qurʾān placed on him; indeed, these facts are emphasized in Q 73:1-10.

In light of the foregoing assessments, narratives about the presentation might be fabricated so as provide ground for the authenticity of the Qurʾān's text and the prescription of its arrangement according to divine ordinance (*tawqīfī*) under the inspiration of the self-confinement (*iʿtikāf*) ritual during Ramaḍān. Self-confinement definitely includes a soft of review; nevertheless, despite the narratives about the presentation, this review is not about correction, redaction or proofreading of the Qurʾān's text but about revision by Muḥammad of his responsibilities as prophet and messenger.

As a narrative from Zayd ibn Thābit, the best known and reliable *riwāya* about the textualization process of the Qurʾān, clearly asserts, Muḥammad never conceived the Qurʾān as a text to legislate for future Muslims. Otherwise, it would be impossible to explain the following response by Abū Bakr upon ʿUmar's suggestion to collect the Qurʾān: "How can I carry out an affair that Rasūl Allāh did not?!" This is why al-Zarkashī (d. 794/1392) made the following remark: the Qurʾān's verses were not transformed into a collection of sheets between two covers (*muṣḥaf*) during the lifetime of Muḥammad. Because such a process would require continuous changes in the arrangement of the text, the collection of the Qurʾān as a written text was delayed until the end of the descent period. Following the death of the Prophet, the collection and reproduction were performed by

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[41] Abū l-Faraj Nūr al-Dīn ʿAlī ibn Burhān al-Dīn ibn Ibrāhīm ibn Aḥmad al-Ḥalabī, *Insān al-ʿuyūn fī sīrat al-Amīn al-Maʾmūn* (*al-Sīra al-Ḥalabiyya*), (3rd edn., Cairo: al-Maṭbaʿa al-Azhariyya, 1932), I, 271-272.

Companions such as Abū Bakr and ʿUthmān.[42]

During the thirteen-year Mecca period, there was no solid information about when and how the Qurʾān was first textualized, let alone whether the presentation actually occurred between the Prophet and Gabriel every Ramaḍān. Apparently, Muslim scholars constructed a retrospective history to prove the traditional conviction that not a single word in the Qurʾān changed until our day; thus, they opted for a history of the Qurʾān without allowing for any gaps or obscurities.

For us, the arrangement of verses into smaller chapters, mostly descended in Mecca, was made according to divine ordinance (*tawqīfī)* as the interval letters (*fāṣila*) and rhymes (*sajʿ*) show. Moreover, the Qurʾān is a text said during prayers such as *ṣalāt* since the very beginning. Therefore, many chapters and verses must be said in a certain order at least. Accordingly, the verses and/or verse groups in more voluminous chapters about multiple, extended incidents, such as al-Baqara, Āl ʿImrān, and al-Nisāʾ, were probably arranged in an *ijtihādī* (through independent reasoning) manner, in other words, at the discretion of the copiers.

This argument seems even stronger because many verses in longer chapters, such as al-Baqara, Āl ʿImrān, al-Nisāʾ, and al-Māʾida, for example, Q 2:238-239 have a wording and meaning structure unsuitable for establishing a connection via priority-subsequence. The same possibility includes disputes during the collection and reproduction of the Qurʾān regarding the determination of the places of verses, such as Q 33:23 and/or Q 9:128-129, which are subsequently noticed or uttered near a single Companion, or questions about the probability of arranging such verses as a separate chapter.[43]

Various narratives through the Companions have indicated that the Qurʾān was generally revealed in groups of four or five verses and passages. According to hundreds of narratives about the reasons for its descent, the verses were sent down in separate passages, in

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[42] Al-Zarkashī, *al-Burhān*, I, 262.

[43] See al-Ṭabarī, *Tafsīr al-Ṭabarī*, I, 49; Abū Bakr ʿAbd Allāh ibn Sulaymān ibn al-Ashʿath Ibn Abī Dāwūd, *Kitāb al-maṣāḥif* (ed. Arthur Jeffery; Leiden: E. J. Brill, 1937), 30-31.

connection with incidents during the revelation period. Therefore, the arrangement of verses in voluminous chapters such as al-Baqara and Āl ʿImrān might have been established by bringing together various passages about a main theme as much as possible. For example, it is well known that first 100 verses in al-Baqara are about the Jews of Medina, while the first 80 verses in Āl ʿImrān treat the Christians of Najrān.[44] Thus, verses in the aforementioned sections of al-Baqara and Āl ʿImrān might, at first glance, address different themes; nevertheless, because the main theme and addressees are the same, it was considered reasonable to arrange them with a type of interior integrity, and the organization must have been realized in this manner.

This evaluation also applies for several voluminous Madanī chapters, such as al-Nisāʾ, al-Māʾida, al-Nūr, al-Aḥzāb, and others. For instance, chapter al-Aḥzāb was sent down in various passages coincident with numerous incidents over a couple of months: it covers the smear campaign by polytheists, hypocrites, and the Jews of Medina against Muḥammad and believers at the time of Battle of the Trench (*Ghazwat al-khandaq*), also known as the Battle of Confederates (*Ghazwat al-aḥzāb*), which began on 7 Shawwāl 5 AH (1 March 627) and ended on 1 Dhū l-Qaʿda 5 AH (24 March 627). Although the chapter is primarily about the Battle of the Trench, it also treats, as its name suggests, in various verse groups (between, for example, 30 and 34 and between 5 and 62), the marriage of the Prophet to Zaynab bint Jaḥsh, the Battle of Banū l-Muṣṭaliq (2 Shaʿbān 5 AH/27 December 626 - 1 Ramaḍān 5 AH/24 January 627), and the disturbance due to the *Ifk* incident.

Reports of the determination by Muḥammad of the exact place of verses in relevant chapters are also controversial and require a cautious approach. Hence, it does not seem reasonable to rely on narratives such as "Whenever several verses were revealed to Rasūl Allāh, he called one of the revelation clerks and told them, 'Place these verses in that part of the chapter with so-and-so theme'"[45] or "Rasūl Allāh said: 'Gabriel came to me and ordered me to place a

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[44] Abū Muḥammad Jamāl al-Dīn ʿAbd al-Malik Ibn Hishām, *al-Sīra al-nabawiyya* (eds. Muṣṭafā al-Saqqā, Ibrāhīm al-Abyārī, and ʿAbd al-Ḥafīẓ Shalabī; Beirut: Dār al-Khayr, 2004), II, 131; al-Ṭabarī, *Tafsīr al-Ṭabarī*, III, 162.

[45] Ibn Ḥajar al-ʿAsqalānī, *Fatḥ al-bārī*, IX, 29, 52.

verse into that part of so-and-so chapter'"[46] to claim that the Prophet personally established the arrangement of all of the verses, on the one hand, while arguing that, during the collection process in the time of Abū Bakr, ʿUmar and Zayd ibn Thābit went to the mosque and said, "Whoever has a written verse with him should bring them to us together with two witnesses," on the other hand, does not seem reasonable.

If the Prophet, in person, determined the place of each verse of the Qurʾān in the relevant chapter, the arrangement of the Qurʾān should have been arranged at the time of revelation, and the Qurʾān would have been an organized text as early as during Muḥammad's lifetime. Nevertheless, the collection process, which began with the suggestion by ʿUmar and with the initially hesitative but later convicted attitude of Abū Bakr, shows that this was not the case.

Consequently, we believe that the conventional opinions and general acceptance about arrangement were only determined afterward. Moreover, according to some narratives, ʿUmar and Zayd ibn Thābit collected Qurʾān verses from palm branches, fine stones, and memories of people on the condition of the testimony of two men, while according to others, Abū Bakr assigned twenty-five men from Quraysh and fifty among Anṣār and ordered them, "Put the Qurʾān on paper and submit it to Saʿīd ibn al-ʿĀṣ, for he is fluent in Arabic."[47]

In contrast, some other narratives indicate that the verses were arranged in *ijtihādī* and not *tawqīfī* manner. For example, one narrative reads that Khuzayma ibn Thābit or Abū Khuzayma al-Anṣārī brought two verses, whereupon ʿUmar said, "If there were three of these verses, I would turn them into a new chapter; search for a (suitable) chapter in the Qurʾān and place these two verses in it." Ibn Ḥajar al-ʿAsqalānī (d. 852/1449) offered the following assessment: "As this narrative apparently puts forth, the Companions arranged/amended verses in chapters pursuant to their own conceptions. However, other narratives show that the Companions

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[46] Aḥmad ibn Ḥanbal, *al-Musnad*, IV, 218.

[47] Abū l-ʿAbbās Aḥmad ibn Abī Yaʿqūb ibn Jaʿfar ibn Wahb al-Yaʿqūbī, *Tārīkh al-Yaʿqūbī* (ed. ʿAbd al-Amīr ʿAlī Mahnā; Beirut: Sharikat al-Aʿlamī li-l-Maṭbūʿāt, 2010), II, 22.

had no discretion about the arrangement of verses except for divine ordinance (*tawqīf*)."[48]

Another narrative relates that Zayd ibn Thābit undertook a lengthy search for Q 33:23 and finally found it from Khuzayma;[49] yet another narrative allows for the following indications by Yūsuf ibn Māhak: "I was with ʿĀʾisha, the mother of believers. Then a man from Iraq appeared and said, 'O, the mother of believers! Show me your own *muṣḥaf*. ʿĀʾisha asked why, whereupon the ʿIrāqī responded, 'I must compile/arrange the Qurʾān pursuant to your *muṣḥaf* because the Qurʾān is read without proper arrangement and order.' ʿĀʾisha gave the following answer: 'You can read or recite regardless of which chapter (*sūra*, passage) in the Qurʾān preceded it; that is all right.'"[50]

For Ibn Ḥajar, the question by the ʿIrāqī to ʿĀʾisha is about the arrangement of chapters, before adding that it might also be about the individual determination of verses in each chapter, based on the phrase "ʿĀʾisha had him write verses in chapters (*fa-amlat ʿalayhi āy al-suwar*)" in the ḥadīth.[51]

Narratives about the *tawqīfī* character of arrangement of verses are authentic in terms of certitude; however, they might be specifically about the arrangement of several passages or verse groups within voluminous chapters. Indeed, it seems neither realistic nor persuasive that Muḥammad ordered individual assignments for each verse in chapters as voluminous as al-Baqara, Āl ʿImrān, al-Nisāʾ, al-Māʾida, al-Tawba, etc., which were sent down at various times during ten-year Medina period, even before their completion.

The view on the *ijtihādī* arrangement of verse groups in larger chapters can also be refuted, based on the Prophet having been used to reciting the Qurʾān in prayers and that he could not have done so if the verses were not in a certain order. Nonetheless, remember that these chapters were not sent down at once; therefore, neither the Prophet nor the Companions recited them as a whole from the very beginning. In addition, Muḥammad reportedly advised keeping recital during prayers as short as possible; accordingly, he most

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[48] Ibn Ḥajar al-ʿAsqalānī, *Fatḥ al-bārī*, IX, 20.

[49] Al-Bukhārī, "Faḍāʾil al-Qurʾān," 3.

[50] Al-Bukhārī, "Faḍāʾil al-Qurʾān," 6.

[51] Ibn Ḥajar al-ʿAsqalānī, *Fatḥ al-bārī*, IX, 50.

probably did not recite chapters of dozens of pages, such as al-Baqara, Āl ʿImrān, al-Nisāʾ, and al-Māʾida, during *ṣalāt*, especially with the community.

Regarding the arrangement of verses, in agreement with the opinions of most scholars, *Muṣḥaf*, which begins with al-Fātiḥa and ends with al-Nās, was arranged through *ijtihād* by the Companions.[52] Under this arrangement, al-Fātiḥa is placed in the beginning like a soft of preface, while the subsequent 113 chapters, we can say, are ordered from longer to shorter or larger to smaller. Nonetheless, some scholars have defended that the arrangement of chapters is not *ijtihādī* but *tawqīfī*. The narratives, which include the information that the Prophet classified chapters as *al-sabʿ al-ṭiwāl* (seven long chapters), *miʾūn* (those with approximately one hundred verses), and *mathānī* (with fewer than a hundred verses)[53] seem to support the *tawqīfī* argument; nevertheless, such narratives should also be cautiously treated. If the organization of chapters depended on the notification and determination by Muḥammad, asked about placing the chapter al-Anfāl in the eighth position although it is shorter and smaller than al-Tawba, as well as the lack of Basmala in the beginning of the latter, ʿUthmān would not have given the following answer reported by al-Bāqillānī:

> Because the chapters al-Anfāl and al-Tawba are similar in terms of content (theme and expression), I considered al-Tawba to be a continuation of al-Anfāl; Rasūl Allāh passed away before giving us any explanations about these chapters. Therefore, I placed the two consecutively in *muṣḥaf* but did not separate them with Basmala.[54]

Conversely, there are several narratives about disputes over some verses, such as Q 33:23 and Q 9:128-129, during the activities of the copying committee under the presidency of Zayd ibn Thābit; some of these narratives are given in *al-Jāmīʿ al-ṣaḥīḥ* by al-Bukhārī (d. 256/870) and Muslim (d. 261/875), which are considered authentic

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[52] Abū Jaʿfar Aḥmad ibn Ibrāhīm Ibn al-Zubayr al-Gharnāṭī, *al-Burhān fī tartīb suwar al-Qurʾān* (ed. Muḥammad Shaʿbanī; n.p.: al-Mamlaka al-Maghribiyya Wizārat al-Awqāf wa-l-Shuʾūn al-Islāmiyya, 1990), 182; al-Suyūṭī, *al-Itqān*, I, 194.

[53] Abū ʿUbayd al-Qāsim ibn Sallām, *Faḍāʾil al-Qurʾān wa-maʿālimuh*[ū] *wa-ādābuh*[ū] (ed. Aḥmad ibn ʿAbd al-Wāḥid al-Khayyāṭī; n.p.: al-Mamlaka al-Maghribiyya Wizārat al-Awqāf wa-l-Shuʾūn al-Islāmiyya, 1995), II, 29.

[54] Al-Bāqillānī, *al-Intiṣār*, I, 281-282.

and prestigious works in the Sunnī tradition. In addition, there are reportedly authentic/reliable narratives about the presence of the "*rajm* verse" and some texts that are allegedly verses. Accordingly, it is known that the private *muṣḥaf* of Ibn Masʿūd, the famous Companion, did not include the chapters of al-Fātiḥa and al-Muʿawwidhatayn (al-Falaq and al-Nās), while in the private *muṣḥaf* of Ubayy ibn Kaʿb, there are Qunūt prayers, as well as two other chapters, called al-Khalʿ and al-Ḥafd, in addition to 114 chapters. Moreover, it is controversial whether al-Fīl and Quraysh, al-Ḍuḥā and al-Inshirāḥ collectively constitute one chapter or are individual chapters.[55]

In addition, the position of Basmala in *muṣḥaf* and the lack of Basmala at the beginning of al-Tawba have always been controversial issues. Moreover, there have been disputes about the number of verses in the Qurʾān and in individual chapters. According to relevant sources, the Qurʾān consists of 6000, 6204 (counted by experts in al-Baṣra), 6210 (counted by experts in Mecca, via Ubayy ibn Kaʿb), 6214 (final count by experts in Medina), 6216 (via Ibn ʿAbbās), 6217 (first count by experts in Medina), 6219, 6225, 6226 (counted by experts in Damascus), and 6236 (counted by experts in al-Kūfa) verses.[56]

For al-Suyūṭī, the number of verses in all of the chapters is controversial pursuant to different counts by experts in Mecca, Medina, Damascus, al-Baṣra, and al-Kūfa, except for forty chapters, so much so that there are two different enumerations in Medina, based on Abū Jaʿfar Yazīd ibn al-Qaʿqāʾ (d. 130/748) and Ismāʿīl ibn Jaʿfar Ibn Abī Kathīr (d. 180/797), respectively. The former is called the "first enumeration by experts in Medina (*ʿadad ahl al-Madīna al-awwal*)," while the latter is known as the "final/later enumeration by experts in Medina (*ʿadad ahl al-Madīna al-akhīr*)." According to the chain of narratives, the enumeration by experts in Mecca is attributed to the Companion Ubayy ibn Kaʿb, the enumeration in Damascus is attributed to Abū l-Dardāʾ, the enumeration in al-Kūfa is attributed to ʿAlī ibn Abī Ṭālib, and the enumeration in al-Baṣra is attributed to the

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55 Al-Zarkashī, *al-Burhān*, I, 251; al-Suyūṭī, *al-Itqān*, I, 204-217.

56 Abū ʿAmr ʿUthmān ibn Saʿīd al-Dānī, *al-Bayān fī ʿadd āy al-Qurʾān* (ed. Ghānim Qaddūrī al-Ḥamad; Kuwait: Manshūrat Markaz al-Makhṭūṭāt wa-l-Turāth wa-l-Wathāʾiq, 1994), 79-82; al-Zarkashī, *al-Burhān*, I, 249.

follower (*tābiʿī*) Abū l-Mushajjar ʿĀṣim al-Juḥdarī (d. 128/746).[57] In the light of all these data, the number of verses in chapters is controversial even among the Companions.

Although the Qurʾān's verses reportedly descended at different times for different reasons, and many verse groups, particularly in longer chapters, are disconnected in terms of expression and relation, some exegetes, such as Fakhr al-Dīn al-Rāzī (d. 606/1210) and al-Biqāʿī (d. 885/1480) in the classical period and Amīn Aḥsan Iṣlāḥī (d. 1997) in the modern era, have asserted that each verse has a strict relationship with another verse or group of verses, and each chapter has a strict bond to another chapter or chapters pursuant to literal *iʿjāz,* which we consider to be an exaggerated approach; these exegetes have even developed a sub-discipline called *al-tanāsub bayna l-āyāt wa-l-suwar* or *tanāsub al-āy wa-l-suwar* (harmony among the verses and chapters of the Qurʾān) within the scope of sciences of the Qurʾān (*ʿulūm al-Qurʾān*). In return, al-Shawkānī (d. 1250/1834) and some other exegetes have considered these efforts, such as comprehensive studies about *tanāsub* by al-Biqāʿī, to be useless preoccupations, indicating that they are "unacceptable views about the book of Allah."

Following the anecdote about Adam and heaven in Q 2:30-39, verse 40 begins to treat the story of Moses and the Israelites; al-Shawkānī extensively analyzed the relationship between these two groups of verses. According to him, the Qurʾān's verses, which were sent down for twenty-years with regard to countless incidents, naturally comprise controversies rather than connections between them. Different verses might declare the same thing to be *ḥarām* and *ḥalāl* in different periods; some verses are about believers, while some are about disbelievers, past communities, or people and groups at the time of revelation; some verses treat worship, whereas some deal with practical issues; some are about incentives while some seek to frighten, and some treat torment and reward. Al-Shawkānī argued that not only the longer and voluminous chapters but also the medium-sized chapters were sent down upon various incidents pursuant to historical context.

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[57] Al-Dānī, *al-Bayān*, 67-71; al-Suyūṭī, *al-Itqān*, I, 211. Abū ʿAmr al- Dānī (d. 444/1053) also mentions a seventh enumeration extracted from Khālid ibn Maʿdān (d. 103/721) the famous *tābiʿī* from Homs. See al-Dānī, *al-Bayān*, 70.

According to al-Shawkānī, the search for a relationship between verses or chapters is based on the assumption that the revelation of the Qurʾān follows a path in parallel with the *muṣḥaf* arrangement. However, anyone more or less interested in and informed about the Qurʾān knows that this is not the case. Chapters like al-ʿAlaq, al-Muddaththir and al-Muzzammil are reportedly among the earliest to descend; they are, however, located in the latter parts of the *muṣḥaf*.

It is well known that al-ʿAlaq, al-Muddaththir and al-Muzzammil were the first revealed chapters; they are, however, located in the latter parts of the book. Therefore, the search for relationships between verses and chapters is based not on the revelation order of the Qurʾān but on the order established by the Companions during the activities of collection and dictation. Consequently, it is useless and barren to preoccupy oneself with the problem of *tanāsub al-āy wa-l-suwar*. Allah characterized the Qurʾān in Arabic and sent his *kalām* in line with the linguistic traditions of Arabs. For instance, an Arabian speaker touches upon various subjects during a speech. The modes of address, expression, and style in the Qurʾān are similar.[58]

The Qurʾān, as a whole, is evidently a consistent and related text in itself. Indeed, the greatest objective and cause for the Qurʾān are unity and justice, while it essentially seeks to abolish polytheism and cruelty. The Qurʾān is related to these two themes from beginning to the end. Nevertheless, the relationship indicated in *ʿulūm al-Qurʾān* literature regards the semantic connection between the passages of a text written at a desk. Such connections can be established between many verses and even successive chapters. However, there is no such necessity within the arrangement of the book; in addition, connections discovered through reasonable deductions are not necessarily signs of literal inimitability (*iʿjāz*).

Question of *Nuzūl* Order

Despite all of the disputes over the collection of the Qurʾān, it is beyond any doubt that the *muṣḥaf* was arranged at the time of ʿUthmān, and since then, this arrangement has been conveyed successively through recital and writing. In contrast, it is impossible

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58 Abū ʿAbd Allāh Muḥammad ibn ʿAlī ibn Muḥammad al-Shawkānī, *Fatḥ al-qadīr al-jāmiʿ bayna fannay al-riwāya wa-l-dirāya min ʿilm al-tafsīr* (Beirut: ʿĀlam al-Kutub, n.d.), I, 72-73.

to say the same thing about the revelation order of the Qurʾān. Relevant references provide various revelation orders attributed to Companions, Followers or subsequent scholars, such as ʿAlī ibn Abī Ṭālib, ʿAbd Allāh ibn ʿAbbās and Nuʿmān ibn Bashīr, or even to Jābir ibn Zayd (d. 93/712), al-Ḥasan al-Baṣrī (d. 110/728), Ibn Shihāb al-Zuhrī (d. 124/742), Jaʿfar al-Ṣādiq (d. 148/765), or al-Wāqidī (d. 159/776 ?).[59] Some recent studies have discussed a revelation order attributed to ʿUthmān; nevertheless, no references have been provided for such arrangement.[60]

Interestingly enough, the arrangement order attributed to ʿUthmān is identical to the arrangement that constitutes the basis of *al-Tafsīr al-ḥadīth* by ʿIzzat Darwaza. Darwaza, however, does not attribute this arrangement to ʿUthmān; instead, he provides notes of information on the chapters with regard to time and place of revelation in the *muṣḥaf* written by the calligrapher Muṣṭafā Naẓīf Kadırgalī and published by ʿAbd al-Ḥamīd Aḥmad Ḥanafī, together with a statement by the Egyptian Ministry of the Interior and approval of Egyptian Qurʾān scholars.

This *muṣḥaf* was also published a few times in Istanbul before and after the rule of Sultan ʿAbd al-Ḥamīd II, before becoming popular

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59 See Abū ʿAbd Allāh Muḥammad ibn Ayyūb Ibn al-Ḍurays, *Faḍāʾil al-Qurʾān wa-mā unzila min al-Qurʾān bi-Makka wa-mā unzila bi-l-Madīna* (ed. ʿUrwa Badīr; Damascus: Dār al-Fikr, 1987), 33-34; Abū l-Faraj Muḥammad ibn Isḥāq Ibn al-Nadīm, *al-Fihrist* (ed. Ibrāhīm Ramaḍān; 2nd edn., Beirut: Dār al-Maʿrifa, 1997), 42-43; Abū l-Qāsim al-Ḥasan ibn Muḥammad ibn Ḥabīb al-Nisābūrī, *Kitāb al-tanbīh ʿalā faḍl ʿulūm al-Qurʾān* (ed. Muḥammad ʿAbd al-Karīm Kāẓim al-Rāḍī), *al-Mawrid: Majalla Turāthiyya Faṣliyya* 17/4 (1988), 307; Abū Bakr Aḥmad ibn al-Ḥusayn ibn ʿAlī al-Bayhaqī, *Dalāʾil al-nubuwwa wa-maʿrifat aḥwāl ṣāḥib al-sharīʿa* (ed. ʿAbd al-Muʿṭī Amīn Qalʿajī; Beirut: Dār al-Kutub al-ʿIlmiyya, 1988), VII, 142-144; al-Dānī, *al-Bayān*, 135; Abū ʿAlī al-Faḍl ibn al-Ḥasan al-Ṭabarsī, *Majmaʿ al-bayān fī tafsīr al-Qurʾān* (Beirut: Dār al-Kutub al-ʿIlmiyya, 1997), X, 164-165; Abū l-Fatḥ Tāj al-Dīn Muḥammad ibn ʿAbd al-Karīm al-Shahrastānī, *Mafātīḥ al-asrār wa-maṣābīḥ al-abrār* (ed. Muḥammad Ādharshab; Tehran: Mīrāth Maktūb, 2008), I, 19-13; al-Zarkashī, *al-Burhān*, I, 193; al-Suyūṭī, *al-Itqān*, I, 81-83; Arthur Jeffery (ed.), *Muqaddimatān fī ʿulūm al-Qurʾān: wa-humā muqaddimat Kitāb al-mabānī wa-muqaddimat Ibn ʿAṭiyya* (Cairo: Maktabat al-Khānjī, 1954), 8-13; Ḥātim Ṣāliḥ Ḍāmin, *Nuṣūṣ muḥaqqaqa fī ʿulūm al-Qurʾān al-karīm* (Baghdad: Markaz Jamāʿat Mājid li-l-Thaqāfa, 1991), 88-93.

60 İsmail Cerrahoğlu, *Tefsîr Usûlü* (Ankara: Türkiye Diyanet Vakfı, 1983), 86-87.

across the entire Muslim world. The same *muṣḥaf* was published several times in Egypt. Darwaza explained why he based the arrangement of descent on this version as follows: “In this *Muṣḥaf*, the indications of the succession of a certain chapter after another prove that the committee of scholars who examined and approved the version have assessed various narratives and determined preferences among them before deciding on the order of revelation.” [61] He also emphasized that some chapters are contradictory to the mentioned arrangement with regard to the time of revelation.

The rough uniformity of various revelation arrangements in *ʿulūm al-Qurʾān*, exegeses and history books could be considered evidence for the sameness of their sources. Most probably, this source is Ibn ʿAbbās. Indeed, various works have attributed different arrangements of revelation to Ibn ʿAbbās. The arrangements attributed to Jābir ibn Zayd and Abū Ṣāliḥ also likely belong to Ibn ʿAbbās because Jābir ibn Zayd was a disciple of Ibn ʿAbbās who praised him, saying “Once you have Jābir with you, why do you come to me to ask questions?”[62] Regarding Abū Ṣāliḥ ʿAbd Allāh ibn Ṣāliḥ, he was the most reliable narrator of several narratives about exegesis that are attributed to Ibn ʿAbbās.

It is difficult to rely on the accuracy and validity of the revelation order in classical sources. As Darwaza indicated, there is no revelation order that extends over the lifetime of the Prophet. In addition, information in narratives makes contradictory statements about the Makkī or Madanī character of several chapters. According to some narratives, al-Raʿd, al-Ḥajj, al-Raḥmān, al-Insān, al-Zalzala, al-Falaq, al-Nās, al-Ikhlāṣ, al-Kawthar, Quraysh, al-ʿAṣr, al-ʿĀdiyāt, al-Qadr, al-Muṭaffifīn and al-Fātiḥa are classified as Makkī, while some others considered them Madanī.[63]

Such disputes arise from the insufficiency of information about when and upon which incident the chapters and verse groups were

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[61] Muḥammad ʿIzzat Darwaza, *al-Tafsīr al-ḥadīth* (Tunis: Dār al-Gharb al-Islāmī, 2008), I, 12-14, 17.

[62] Abū ʿAbd Allāh Shams al-Dīn Muḥammad ibn Aḥmad ibn ʿUthmān al-Dhahabī, *Siyar aʿlām al-nubalāʾ* (eds. Bashshār ʿAwwād Maʿrūf et al.; 2nd edn., Beirut: Muʾassasat al-Risāla, 1981-1988), IV, 482.

[63] Darwaza, *al-Tafsīr al-ḥadīth*, I, 125.

sent down. Moreover, not all of the verses of the Qurʾān were sent for definite reasons. Pursuant to the findings of scholars, only approximately 500 verses descended due to a particular reason for revelation. For Shāh Walī Allāh al-Dihlawī (d. 1176/1762) and certain other scholars, a large number of narratives that relate motives of revelation in exegesis do not provide the actual reason for the revelation; instead, they are exegesis-related narratives to establish connections between verses and subsequent incidents or to interpret such incidents in light of the verses.[64]

Commentaries and Islamic biographies provide very little information about the incidents that led to the revelation of particularly the Makkī chapters and verses or the historical environments around these incidents because, during his thirteen years in Mecca, Muḥammad struggled for survival against polytheists and thus considered the Qurʾān as divine guidance to transform man and society in daily life, rather than a text to be legislated for future Muslim generations. The same interpretation also pertains to his Companions. Moreover, the generation of Companions never construed the Qurʾān's revelation to be a text independent from the Prophet and his Sunna.

Muḥammad did not consider the Qurʾān to be a text to be collected into a book and legislated for posterity in this format. One of the strongest pieces of evidence for this fact is the famous narrative of Zayd ibn Thābit, which tells how the activity of the collection of the Qurʾān began during the caliphate of Abū Bakr. According to the narrative, because a great number of ḥāfiẓ Companions were martyred during the Battle of al-Yamāma and other wars, ʿUmar feared that the Qurʾān might disappear from public memory, whereupon he offered to Caliph Abū Bakr to collect the Qurʾān as a written text. Abū Bakr was, however, initially hesitant regarding such an activity, asking "How could I do something that Rasūl Allāh did not?"[65]

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[64] Abū ʿAbd al-ʿAzīz Quṭb al-Dīn Shāh Walī Allāh Aḥmad ibn ʿAbd al-Raḥīm al-Dihlawī, *al-Fawz al-kabīr fī uṣūl al-tafsīr* (Damascus: Dār al-Ghawthānī li-l-Dirāsāt al-Qurʾāniyya, 2008), 69-70.

[65] Al-Bukhārī, "Faḍāʾil al-Qurʾān," 3.

Regarding the arrangement of revelation, we must be doubtful about the soundness of different revelation arrangements, which, in particular, belong to Ibn ʿAbbās. As is known, commentaries that based on narratives provide many incompatible reasons from Ibn ʿAbbās for revelations about the same verse; similarly, there are many controversial explanations for numerous verses and wordings. Narratives including that of Ibn ʿAbbās have created significant confusion in exegeses of the Qurʾān because they relate several explanations for the interpretation of almost every verse; accordingly, al-Imām al-Shāfiʿī (d. 204/820) had to indicate that, among the information from Ibn ʿAbbās, nothing is solid but for approximately a hundred news (*khabar*).[66] Consequently, although critics of ḥadīth and narratives attempted to evaluate, in terms of documentation/authenticity, exegetic lines attributed to Ibn ʿAbbās, such studies could not eliminate the aforementioned confusion.[67]

Indeed, it is unclear whether Ibn ʿAbbās obtained information about the revelation order of the Qurʾān's chapters from the Prophet or from a Companion such as ʿAlī or whether he established the arrangement personally based on his own knowledge and competence. If the revelation arrangements provided by Ibn ʿAbbās were based on his personal ideas and convictions, they would be, as Muḥammad Ḥusayn Ṭabāṭabāʾī (d. 1981) noted, valuable arrangements but reliable only in a self-proclaimed manner.[68] In contrast, considering that Ibn ʿAbbās was born three years prior to the Hegira and was a 12-to 13-year-old boy at the time of the death of Muḥammad, he is unlikely to have witnessed the times or circumstances of the revelation of the Qurʾān's chapters.

In brief, various revelation arrangements indicated in classical sources cannot provide precise or final information about the chronology of the descent of chapters. At this point, one can only provide rough and general information about whether a chapter is Makkī or Madanī. However, for such a categorization, it is necessary not to based it on individual narratives but to attempt to establish a

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[66] Al-Suyūṭī, *al-Itqān*, II, 1233.

[67] See Muḥammad Ḥusayn al-Dhahabī, *al-Tafsīr wa-l-mufassirūn* (Beirut: Dār al-Arqam, n.d.), I, 53-56.

[68] Muḥammad Ḥusayn Ṭabāṭabāʾī, *İslam'da Kur'an* (translated into Turkish by Ahmed Erdinç; Istanbul: Bir Yayıncılık, 1988), 129.

relationship between the information in relevant narratives, social circumstances during the Mecca and Medina periods, and the content of chapters; accordingly, one should search and scan earlier biographies and battle histories.

Conversely, the revelation arrangement of many, particularly Madanī, chapters includes interpenetration. For instance, several references have indicated al-Baqara to be the first chapter to be sent down in Medina. In contrast, some narratives have indicated verses 278, 281, and 282 of al-Baqara to be the last verses revealed.[69] Therefore, al-Baqara was sent down in passages over ten-year period in Medina; in the process, the revelation of chapters such as Āl ʿImrān, al-Nisāʾ, al-Māʾida, al-Anfāl, and al-Tawba also continued in a similar manner.

Moreover, during the first years after the Hegira, many significant incidents, such as the change of Qibla (2 AH), the command of fasting during Ramaḍān (2 AH), Expeditionary force (*sariyya*) of Baṭn al-nakhla (2 AH), Patrol of al-Abwāʾ (2 AH), Patrol of Buwāṭ (2 AH), Patrol of Dhū l-ʿUshayra (2 AH), Expulsion of Banū Qaynuqāʿ (2 AH), Battle of al-Sawīq (2 AH), Battle against Banū Ghaṭafān (3 AH), Battle of Banū Sulaym (3 AH), Battle of Uḥud (3 AH), Battle of Ḥamrāʾ al-asad (3 AH), Expedition of al-Rajīʿ (4 AH), Expedition of Biʾr Maʿūna (4 AH), and Siege of Banū Naḍīr (4 AH), occurred, and verses about some of these events are scattered over various chapters, such as al-Baqara, Āl ʿImrān, al-Anfāl, and al-Ḥashr.

For a complete and flawless revelation order, verses and various verse groups about foregoing incidents should be chronologically sorted; however, we lack sufficient and satisfactory information to provide such an arrangement. In addition, it is arguable how useful it would be to arrange a Qurʾān text without integrity, in contrast to the current *muṣḥaf* organization. In brief, the conventional arrangements, which position al-Baqara first among the Madanī chapters, are mostly arbitrary and have no function other than providing a rough idea about the revelation process of the Qurʾān.

For us, it is vital to know deeply the attitudes of the Prophet for better understanding of transformative messages for individuals and the community in the Qurʾān, as well as to analyze the Book in this

[69] See al-Suyūṭī, *al-Itqān*, I, 86-87; Ibn ʿAqīla, *al-Ziyāda wa-l-iḥsān*, I, 180.

regard, because the message of the Qurʾān is interpenetrated with the life experiences of Muḥammad and his Companions. Therefore, knowledge about the true stories of addressees in the beginning is very important for a better understanding of the Qurʾān's messages for humanity and for a higher sense of what the Qurʾān wants us to feel. However, such understanding and conception cannot be obtained through rough arrangements about revelation; therefore, it is impossible to achieve such an understanding through the reading of translations prepared pursuant to such a revelation order. For this purpose, a scientific exegesis, which emphasizes the attitude of the Prophet and incidents in his lifetime, seems necessary.

History of Studies on the *Nuzūl* Order

There are multiple revelation arrangements in the tafsīr and *ʿulūm al-Qurʾān* literature; in the classical era, this variety was overlooked and considered unnecessary, and the *muṣḥaf* arrangement was used as a basis. Nevertheless, the introduction to exegeses of chapters included brief references regarding whether the relevant chapter is Makkī or Madanī. Connections with the non-textual context of the Qurʾān were mostly established through narratives about issues such as *asbāb al-nuzūl* and *nāsikh-mansūkh*; passages lacking any narrative about the reason for their descent were generally interpreted in consideration of history and articulation.

Obedience to the *muṣḥaf* arrangement in the classical exegetic tradition might have been due to the holiness attributed to the *muṣḥaf* arrangement in a sense and acceptance of this arrangement as a type of miracle pursuant to relevant indications in the *ʿulūm al-Qurʾān* literature; in contrast, it might be in line with the principle in tafsīr and *fiqh* that "reliance is based not on the particularity of cause but on the universality of wording."

Recently, the process and order of *nuzūl* of the Qurʾān have become a popular and interesting subject in the Muslim world. One of the probable factors underlying this tendency might be the influence of Orientalist approaches on Qurʾānic studies as a reflection of the multidimensional defeat of the Muslim world by the West. Orientalist works by, for example, Gustav Weil (d. 1889), William Muir (d. 1905), Theodor Nöldeke (d. 1930), Hartwig Hirschfeld (d. 1934), Richard Bell (d. 1952), and Régis Blachère (d. 1973), have mostly considered the Qurʾān as a text generated by Muḥammad; accordingly, they have attempted to read and understand the Qurʾān

as an autobiography of Muḥammad. Consequently, the Qurʾān text has been regarded as significant evidence about the life experience and psychology of Muḥammad.

The division of the Qurʾān text with regard to revelation as a historical document intends to analyze the psychology of Muḥammad, on the one hand, and to follow the progress of Islam, on the other hand. Nevertheless, the conventional *muṣḥaf* arrangement does not actually serve the use of the Qurʾān as a historical reference because it includes neither a thematic nor chronological composition. For the utilization of the Qurʾān text as a historical document, the chapters and verse groups should be appropriately dated to establish a chronological order of revelation.[70]

Modern translations and exegetic works based on revelation order have primarily emerged from India and Egypt; this fact might be shown as proof for the influence and inspiration of the Orientalist tradition. Certainly, India and Egypt are Muslim regions that have been subjected to Western invasions. In his English translation of the Qurʾān first published in 1911 on the Indian subcontinent, Mīrzā Abū l-Faḍl (d. 1956) arranged the chapters pursuant to their order of revelation grounded on Nöldeke's arrangement, except for two chapters. Then again, Mawlānā Muḥammad ʿAlī (d. 1951), the leader of the Qādiyānīs in Lahore, on the Indian subcontinent, attempted to date chapters of the Qurʾān. First, in the prologue of his *The Holy Qurʾān with English Translation and Commentary* in 1917, there was a title entitled "Makkī and Madanī Chapters," in which he divided the Makkī chapters into three sub-periods and the Madanī chapters into four sub-periods.

Mawlānā Yaʿqūb Ḥasan Saʿīd (d. 1940) was another personality to have published a similar translation-exegesis in India. Yaʿqūb, who was imprisoned by the invading British and remained in jail between 1921 and 1923, studied the Qurʾān in the process and finally published two works, *Kitāb al-hudā* and *Kashf al-hudā*. These works, which included exegeses of verses on several themes, considered the revelation process.

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70 For further information see Hadiye Ünsal, *Erken Dönem Mekki Surelerin Tahlili* (Ankara: Ankara Okulu Yayınları, 2015), 98-119; Ömer Özsoy, *Kur'an ve Tarihsellik Yazıları* (Ankara: Kitâbiyât Yayınları, 2004), 151-164.

Many Egyptian Muslim scholars and researchers were also interested in the arrangement and exegesis of the Qurʾān pursuant to the chronology of revelation. For instance, Yūsuf Rashīd wrote an article in the 1950s about the necessity to arrange the Qurʾān pursuant to the chronology of revelation. Muḥammad ʿAbd Allāh Drāz (d. 1958) wrote another paper to criticize the aforementioned article, defending the necessity of obedience to the *muṣḥaf* arrangement.[71] Due to concerns emphasized by such and similar debates, Muḥammad ʿIzzat Darwaza opted to obtain a *fatwā* from Abū l-Yusr ʿĀbidīn and al-Sheikh ʿAbd al-Fattāḥ Abū Ghudda on the admissibility of exegetic writing pursuant to revelation order before beginning to write his exegesis entitled *al-Tafsīr al-ḥadīth* (Damascus 1961-1963), which was based on revelation order.

Apart from Darwaza, the ʿIrāqī ʿAbd al-Qādir Mullā Ḥuwaysh (d. 1980) also realized an exegesis pursuant to the revelation order of the Qurʾān and published it under the title of *Bayān al-maʿānī* (Damascus 1962-1968) in six volumes. The fifteen-volume *Maʿārij al-tafakkur wa-daqāʾiq al-tadabbur* by the Syrian ʿAbd al-Raḥmān Ḥabannaka al-Maydānī (d. 2004) is a similar work. Al-Maydānī completed the exegesis of the Makkī chapters; nevertheless, he did not live long enough to write exegeses of the Madanī chapters. Asʿad Aḥmad ʿAlī, born in Latakia, Syria, in 1937, also organized his *Tafsīr al-Qurʾān al-murattab* pursuant to the revelation order.[72]

Muḥammad ʿĀbid al-Jābirī was another modern Muslim academician who prepared an exegesis in line with the revelation order. In his three-volume commentary, entitled *Fahm al-Qurʾān al-ḥakīm*, al-Jābirī followed the principle of explaining and commenting on the Qurʾān in line with opinions. His work comprised genuine and accurate findings and determinations; nevertheless, his mind-blowing interpretations, such as "carrying on with a partner prior to sexual intercourse and stroking the skin of the woman gently in

[71] See Muhammed Abdullah Draz, "Kur'ân-ı Kerîm'in Nüzûl Sırasına Göre Tertîb Edilmesi Teklifine Edebî Eleştiri" (translated into Turkish by Ahmed Nedim Serinsu), *Kur'an Mesajı: İlmi Araştırmalar Dergisi* 2/19-20-21 (1999), 191-209.

[72] For comprehensive information and assessment about these works, see Ṭāhā Muḥammad Fāris, *Tafāsīr al-Qurʾān al-karīm ḥasaba tartīb al-nuzūl* (Amman: Dār al-Fatḥ, 2011), 423-922.

preparation for sexual intercourse" for the word *ḍaraba*[73] in the section about the expression *wa-ḍribūhunna* in Q 3:34, overshadowed the scientific worth of the work.

Similar studies were conducted in Turkey during the Republican Era. One of them was entitled *Beyânu'l-Hak: Kur'an-ı Kerim'in Nüzul Sırasına Göre Tefsiri* by the late M. Zeki Duman. *Kur'an Yolu İniş Sırasına Göre Anlam ve Tefsiri* by Şâban Piriş and the eleven-volume *Nüzul Sırasına Göre Tebyînu'l-Kur'an İşte Kur'an* (Istanbul 2008-2010) by Hakkı Yılmaz can be mentioned in the same category. In addition to the foregoing, many Turkish translations have been published in line with the revelation order.

One of the main factors underlying all of these works is the modern Muslim view that the Qurʾān is a self-sufficient source, as well as the formation of a serious awareness of the distance among Sunna, ḥadīth, and tradition. In this regard, it is ironic that the problem of translation and exegesis according to revelation order, which necessarily requires the consideration of the Prophet and his attitudes, is popular especially in circles adopting a Qurʾān-based approach to Islam.

Most probably, the tendency among advocates of Qurʾān-based Islam toward exegesis pursuant to revelation order is about exploring a new field as a palliative approach to the problems of stringency and restrictedness due to countless repetitive lectures on the Qurʾān in the *muṣḥaf* arrangement and lack of other satisfactory religious references. Otherwise, it is not explicable to omit any reference except for the Qurʾān as the source of religion and religious provisions, on the one hand, while planning to read it pursuant to its own history of revelation and attitudes, on the other.

In Lieu of a Conclusion

We can hardly discuss unanimously accepted revelation order or the arrangement of the Qurʾān. Moreover, it does not seem possible to establish such an arrangement in the light of the extant data. Above all, we lack sufficient information and knowledge about when every

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[73] See Muḥammad ʿĀbid al-Jābirī, *Fahm al-Qurʾān al-ḥakīm: al-Tafsīr al-wāḍiḥ ḥasaba tartīb al-nuzūl* (Beirut: Markaz Dirāsāt al-Waḥda al-ʿArabiyya, 2009), III, 222, 251-252.

Qurʾān verse and chapter were transmitted. The reliability of the present data is contestable. Indeed, various revelation arrangements, provided by Companions and Followers, display significant differences; moreover, they are problematic in terms of documentation/certitude.

This being the case, we have observed an increasing tendency for understanding and interpreting the Qurʾān pursuant to the chronology of revelation. Regarding translations and exegeses, the preparation of or a lecture about a translation or exegesis pursuant to the revelation order does not provide the expected advantage or efficacy; furthermore, the intention for reading a translation undertaken in agreement with the revelation order remains unclear for us.

In case such a reading aims at obtaining a grasp of messages in the Qurʾān about humanity, the same can definitely be obtained through a *muṣḥaf*-based arrangement. In case the objective is to learn better the experiences and struggles of Muḥammad as a prophet, one must refer to exegeses, ḥadīth sources, biographies, and history books for that purpose.

Lists of the *nuzūl* order are available in various sources; nevertheless, they have no greater function than providing restricted information and a rough idea about the time of the revelation of chapters. In fact, such lists might be helpful for an exegesis that seeks to understand and explain the Qurʾān within its peculiar context of descent and to interpret it for modern humanity. Arrangements in such a study might indeed be functional for determining the semantic restrictions and extension of the meaning of wordings in the Qurʾān and significant themes and key concepts, as well as for monitoring the progression of suspended judgments. In contrast, a translation or exegesis prepared pursuant to a self-proclaimed *nuzūl* order cannot provide even such secondary advantages.

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MUSLIM RESPONSES TO THE CRUSADES
– An Analysis of the Muslim Ideological, Military, and Diplomatic Responses to the Medieval Christian Crusades –

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Abstract

Muslim responses to the Crusades have been a focus of modern scholarship in both Crusades studies and medieval Islamic history over the last decade or so. This important aspect of the Crusades had been largely, if not entirely, ignored by Western scholars owing to their particular Western academic environment. One of the common misconceptions about the Muslim understanding of and response to the Crusaders is the view that the Muslims knew little, if anything, about them and were confused about the difference between the Byzantines and the Franks (Crusaders). Consequently, it took the Muslims approximately a half century to organize a unified Muslim front to fight against the Crusaders. Despite this view, Muslim sources reveal that Muslim intellectuals and religious figures closely observed the Crusaders' actions and motives, and they did, in various ways, respond to this hitherto unimagined flood of people from the West. This paper attempts to highlight and explore the Muslim ideological, religious, military, and diplomatic responses to the Crusaders.

Key Words: Muslim response, Crusades, crusaders, *jihād*, al-Sulamī

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Introduction

What happened when the Islamic world was being invaded by an external enemy, the Latins (Crusaders), near the end of the eleventh century? Were the Muslims so preoccupied and obsessed with their internal problems that they did not think to resist the invaders? The answer would be no! Muslims responded to this wave of Christians. First and foremost, Muslim religious and intellectual elites and those who had a direct confrontation with the Franks, as in the case of Anatolia, resisted to the best of their ability. Carole Hillenbrand, in her groundbreaking *The Crusades: Islamic Perspective*, concedes that "it would be wrong to assume that there were no stirrings of *jihād* feelings" [1] among the Muslims especially after the Franks took Jerusalem in 1099. The Muslim calls to military *jihād* even predate the fall of Jerusalem; quoting Ibn al-Jawzī's record for the year 1097-1098, Hillenbrand writes, "There were many calls to go out and fight against the Franks and complaints multiplied in every place." [2] However, it is wrong to assume that Muslims were completely indifferent to practicing the doctrine of *jihād* and did not resist the Frankish invasion from the beginning. To make things much easier to understand, we would like to divide the Muslim response into three broad categories: the ideological/intellectual/religious, the military, and the diplomatic.

The Ideological/Intellectual/Religious Response

The fall of Jerusalem was a disastrous event recorded with great sadness and pain. Al-Masjid al-aqṣā and the Dome of the Rock have always been a glorious sight and potent symbol of the Islamic faith. The Frankish occupation of Jerusalem, which housed both of those buildings, was an act of grave desecration in Muslim eyes. Moreover, symbols of pollution and purity abound in the Muslim portrayal of the Franks. Muslims often recalled, "If Mecca was the body of faith, then Medina was one wing and Jerusalem was the other." Therefore, the implication was clear, writes Michael Foss, that "For the progress of the whole faith both wings were needed. After the fall of Jerusalem, there was an expectation within Islam that the disaster

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1 Carole Hillenbrand, *The Crusades: Islamic Perspective* (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 1999), 104.

2 *Ibid.*, 78.

would be soon reversed."[3] The Muslim problem, however, was that of the internal discord, especially strife among the rulers. In such a milieu, the first focus for any call to *jihād* or resistance against the enemy rested with the Sunnī caliph in Baghdad, al-Mustaẓhir (d. 512/1118). It was certainly he who was expected to take responsibility for the promotion of a *jihād* in the defense of Islam, the Muslim heartlands and the people.

Thus, the chief *qāḍī* (or Muslim religious leader), Abū Ṣaʿd al-Harawī (d. ca. 500/1106), of Damascus in Syria led a delegation to the Caliph in Baghdad, and on a Friday in August 1099 C.E. he preached a sermon that brought tears to every eye present in the Great Masjid of Baghdad. He wanted help in encouraging the fight against the "Frankish" armies of the First Crusade.[4]

Muslim preachers travelled throughout the ʿAbbāsid caliphate proclaiming the tragedy and rousing men to recover al-Masjid al-aqṣā, which Muslims believed to be the place of the Prophet Muḥammad's heavenly ascension, from infidel hands. However, the Caliph, al-Mustaẓhir, could not provide enough help to be of use, and thus al-Harawī returned in failure. Only a handful of Muslim scholars and intellectuals, including some prominent poets, could stir passions in the manner that Sir Muḥammad Iqbāl was able to do in the twentieth century, another time of despair for the Muslim community, writes M. J. Akbar.[5] Famous poets often raised their voices, fiercely reminding Muslim rulers, preoccupied with internal discord and negligence, of their duty. Abū l-Muẓaffar al-Abīwardī was living in Baghdad when al-Qāḍī al-Harawī sought the Caliph's help.[6]

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[3] Michael Foss, *People of the First Crusade: The Truth about the Christian-Muslim War Revealed* (New York: Arcade Publishing, 1997), 182.

[4] Abū l-Ḥasan ʿIzz al-Dīn ʿAlī ibn Muḥammad ibn Muḥammad Ibn al-Athīr al-Shaybānī al-Jazarī, *The Chronicle of Ibn Al-Athīr for the Crusading Period from* al-Kamil fi'l-Ta'rīkh, *Part I: The Years 491-541/1097-1146: The Coming of the Franks and the Muslim Response* (translated by D. S. Richards; Farnham, England: Ashgate, 2010), 22.

[5] M. J. Akbar, *The Shade of Swords: Jihad and the Conflict between Islam and Christianity* (London & New York: Routledge, 2002), 71.

[6] Ibn al-Athīr quotes the lament of the Iraqi poet, al-Abīwardī, who composed several poems on this subject. In one of these he says:
Sons of Islām, behind you are battles in which heads rolled at your feet.

This is an indication of the fact that even after the capture of and massacre in Jerusalem by the Franks, Muslim intellectuals continued to arouse the spirit of *jihād* among the people. This is evident in the production of a number of genres, particularly *jihād* (including poetry) and *faḍāʾil* (merits) literature, which attained special attention and attraction but have often been ignored by contemporary historians[7] of the Crusades. This literature does provide us a vivid and wider picture of the Muslim interpretation of and response to the Crusades in the twelfth and thirteenth centuries.[8]

Al-Sulamī's Response to Crusades (Muslim Reformation and *Jihād* Literature)

As we have observed, Abū l-Ḥasan ʿAlī ibn Ṭāhir al-Sulamī (1039/1040-1106) was probably the first Muslim intellectual and jurist who had a broader understanding and was aware of the goals of the Frankish incursion into Muslim lands; he was the first who rose to call Muslims to action, much as the Caliph did, to fight the enemy and to

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Dare you slumber in the blessed shade of safety, where life is as soft as an orchard flower?
Must the foreigners feed on our ignominy, while you trail behind you the train of a pleasant life, like men whose world is at peace?
When the white swords' points are red with blood, and the iron of the brown lances is stained with gore!
This is war, and the man who shuns the whirlpool to save his life shall grind his teeth in penitence.
This is war, and the infidel's sword is naked in his hand, ready to be sheathed again in men's necks and skulls.
See Ibn al-Athīr, *al-Kāmil fī l-tārīkh* (ed. C. J. Tornberg; Beirut: Dār Ṣādir, 1965-67), X, 283-284; Francesco Gabrieli, *The Arab Historians of the Crusades* (translated from Italian into English by E. J. Costello; Abingdon & New York: Routledge, 2010), 7.

7 Except Emmanuel Sivan's *L'Islam et la croisa de: Idéologie et propaganda dans les reactions musulmanes aux croisades* (Paris: Librairie d'Amérique et d'Orient, 1968) – a book widely quoted by crusade historians, which give a detailed study of *faḍāʾil* (merits) literature.

8 Hadia Dajani-Shakeel, "A Reassessment of Some Medieval and Modern Perceptions of the Counter-Crusade," in Hadia Dajani-Shakeel and Ronald A. Messier (eds.), *The Jihād and Its Times: Dedicated to Andrew Stefan Ehrenkreutz* (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan, Center for Near Eastern and North African Studies, 1991), 49 (hereafter cited as "Perceptions of the Counter-Crusade").

defend the Muslims and their territories against the foreign onslaught of the Franks. Al-Sulamī, just a few years after the fall of Jerusalem to the Franks, took to the pulpit in the Masjid of Bayt Lihya in the *ghūṭa* area on the outskirts of Damascus to preach *jihād*. In this way, over the course of the year 1105, he publicly dictated a treatise entitled *Kitāb al-jihād* (Book of *jihād*), which continued to be read in Damascus after his death in 1106.[9] He was preaching and reviving the spirit of *jihād* in a myriad of new contexts among the followers of Islam as they were experiencing, for the first time, a new situation in which their lands were being attacked by an external, non-Muslim enemy; it was quite a different context from that of earlier Muslims who used to fight in the territory of non-Muslim enemies. Al-Sulamī in particular preached during a period of extreme urgency and deep crisis: The Crusades.

In his *Kitāb al-jihād*, al-Sulamī perceived the First Crusade within a divine framework, describing it as one of the greatest disasters that had befallen Islam and as an admonition from God to the Muslims that tested their dedication to Him and their obedience by following the true message of Islam, which included the *jihād*. Al-Sulamī argues that the obligation of *jihād* was smoothly and continuously established and practiced from the time of the Prophet Muḥammad through to a certain (unnamed) caliph, he writes:

> After (the death of) the Prophet [Muḥammad] (God bless him) the four caliphs and all the Companions (of the Prophet) [enthusiastically practiced] it [*jihād*] during his caliphate, and those who were appointed as successors afterwards and ruled in their own time, one after another, followed them in that, the ruler carrying out an expedition himself every year, or sending someone out from his deputies on his behalf. It did not cease to be that way until the time in which one of the caliphs (unnamed in the text) left off (doing) it because of his weakness and negligence. Others followed him in this for the reason mentioned, or a similar one. His stopping this ... made it necessary that God dispersed their unity, split up their togetherness,

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9 For a brief biography of al-Sulamī, see David Thomas and Alex Mallet (eds.), *Christian-Muslim Relations: A Bibliographical History, 1050-1200* (Leiden: Brill, 2011), III, 307-308; also more details about his book (*Kitāb al-jihād*) and preaching the *jihād* can be found in Suleiman A. Mourad and James E. Lindsay (eds.), *The Intensification and Reorientation of Sunni Jihad Ideology in the Crusader Period* 3 (Leiden: Brill, 2013), 33-36.

> threw enmity and hatred between them, and tempted their enemies to snatch their country from their grasp and (so) cure their hearts of them.[10]

Al-Sulamī believed that once the Muslims were ready to abide by God's commands, He would help them against the enemy. As such, the attack of Franks into Islamic territory was but a punishment of God for not executing and upholding the *jihād*. How should the Muslims now confront the ruthless Crusaders (Franks) who had already taken Jerusalem and other major portions of the Levant? According to al-Sulamī, writing in such a distinct situation would affect how Muslims would construe the obligation to struggle for justice. Al-Sulamī, citing the famous legalist al-Shāfiʿī (d. 206/820), notes that the imām (the leader of the Muslim community, or the Caliph) was responsible for raising an army to undertake expeditions into enemy territory at least once a year.[11] The minimum responsibility placed on an imām was to lead the army either personally or through a deputy. If he did not send enough troops to fight, then it became the duty of those "in the rear" to go out and fulfill God's command; in the case of urgency or necessity, the obligation of fighting (*ghazwa*) was incumbent (*farḍ ʿayn*) upon all the members of the community.[12] The current situation, al-Sulamī believed, was one such instance because enemy armies were making inroads into Muslim territory. Dajani-Shakeel, however, observes, "the twelfth-century interpretation of the doctrine of *jihād* [as the treatise of al-Sulamī] departed, to some extent, from the classical interpretation of the doctrine, due to circumstantial differences as well as to the nature of the enemy."[13] Al-Sulamī further cites the views of the twelfth century's greatest theologian and philosopher, Abū Ḥāmid Muḥammad al-Ghazālī (d. 505/1111), on the *jihād*. According to al-Ghazālī, *jihād* was a duty of every free, able Muslim, and its aim

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[10] Niall Christie, *The Book of the Jihad of ʿAli ibn Tahir al-Sulami (d. 1106): Text, Translation and Commentary* (Farnham, England: Ashgate Publishing, 2015), 206 (hereafter referred as *Book of the Jihad*).

[11] The aim of such yearly undertaking was to defend Muslim territory and gather intelligence information about any military movements of the enemy.

[12] Christie, *Book of the Jihad*, 207; Dajani-Shakeel, "Perceptions of the Counter-Crusade," 52-53; John Kelsay, *Arguing the Just War in Islam* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2007), 116.

[13] Dajani-Shakeel, "Perceptions of the Counter-Crusade," 52-53.

was to try "to exalt the word of God (who is praised), to demonstrate his religion, to suppress by it his enemies the polytheists, to achieve the reward which God (who is praised) and His Prophet promised him from (fighting) the *jihād* in His cause." He makes clear, according to Christie, that the *jihād*, however, is an obligation of sufficiency; as al-Ghazālī puts it:

> If the group which was facing the enemy had enough people in it, then it would be possible for them (the group) to fight hard against them (the enemy) (by) themselves, and to remove their evil separately from others. Yet if the group was weak, and was not able to be sufficient (to face) the enemy and to defeat their evil, then the obligation (to help) is imposed on the people of the nearby countries.[14]

Al-Ghazālī was certain to mention, Christie further observes, that the *jihād* was defensive in nature in terms of the Muslim response to the First Crusade. Taking *al-Shām* (Syria) as an example, al-Ghazālī says:

> If the enemy attacks one of its [Syrian Muslim] cities, and there are not enough people in it to fight and defeat them, it is obligatory on all the cities belonging to Syria to send people to it to fight until there are sufficient (people). At that time the obligation falls from the others because the lands of Syria are like one town. If those who are able from them come to fight the enemy and not enough undertake (the fighting of) them, coming to fight them and joining battle with them is also obligatory for those who are near Syria, until there are enough. At that time the obligation also falls from the others. If the enemy surrounds one town, the obligation of the *jihād* likewise becomes incumbent on all who are there, whatever befalls its location.[15]

Dajani-Shakeel argues that al-Sulamī, worried by the advance of the early Crusaders in Syria, was more moving than al-Ghazālī in defining the *jihād* because he was trying to inspire enthusiasm among the Damascenes. He was preaching to them amidst the danger of their city's fall to the Crusaders and was trying to rouse them to action. Therefore, al-Sulamī notes that all the instructions mentioned by the early jurists' in regard to the *jihād* and its rules and regulations actually aimed at:

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[14] Christie, *Book of the Jihad*, 208.

[15] *Ibid.*

> Carrying it (*jihād*) into enemy territory, be they near or far. However, if the enemy raids Muslim lands and attacks their country, such as these forsaken (the Crusaders) did, then we are obliged to go to fight them and seek them out in the country that they usurped from the Muslims, which is a war of resistance, aimed at defending ourselves, children, and property, and at safeguarding lands that are still under Muslim control.[16]

With a different interpretation from the earlier juristic views, he further adds, "Had it not been for the purpose of uprooting them (the Crusaders), and recovering the territories, then, marching against them, in such a situation, could neither be labeled as *jihād* nor as *ghazwa* (expedition)."[17] For this reason, he again reiterates that *jihād* is obligatory "on each person who is able, with no impediment of blindness, serious illness or excessive age, which makes it impossible to move, to prevent him from it [*jihād*]."[18]

Al-Sulamī's call for *jihād* as a defensive matter was not only trying to boost and arouse morale among the ordinary people but also trying to mobilize the rulers of the Muslims (the Sultan or the Caliph in Baghdad) because they were more responsible for upholding and continuing the *jihād*. He called upon the sultan to act immediately in what God had made "a duty to him of guarding the religion [Islam], guiding the Muslims and defense of himself, his army and them (the Muslims)."[19] Admonishing him (the Sultan), he says: "if the authorities do not pay any heed to the duty, then they should remember the Prophet Muḥammad's saying, 'Whoever looks after a group of subjects, and does not give them good advice [*naṣīḥa*], God has forbidden him Paradise'." Further explaining the term advice (*naṣīḥa*), al-Sulamī says that it also means, "watching over his subjects, protecting them and driving the harmful enemies from them." Supporting and extending his argument with additional *sharīʿa* references, he quotes another ḥadīth, which says, "All of you are guardians, and all of you are responsible for His subjects."[20]

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16 *Ibid*, 233; see also Dajani-Shakeel, "Perceptions of the Counter-Crusade," 53-54.

17 Christie, *Book of the Jihad*, 233.

18 *Ibid*., 232; see also Dajani-Shakeel, "Perceptions of the Counter-Crusade," 53-54; Kelsay, *Arguing the Just War in Islam*, 117.

19 Christie, *Book of the Jihad*, 233.

20 *Ibid*., 234; Dajani-Shakeel, "Perceptions of the Counter-Crusade," 54; See al-Imām

Al-Sulamī declared that the key to *jihād*, which is a religious duty, lies in the greater *jihād* (*al-jihād al-akbar*): resisting and fighting the evil impulses of the soul and following the ethical code of Islam. This, considered by many Muslims as the real *jihād*, is a spiritual *jihād*. He called upon the Muslim Caliph and all other rulers of *al-Shām, al-Jazīra*, and Egypt to shun their ideological differences and to unite at this critical time (i.e., the Crusades). In addition, al-Sulamī reiterated, "in severity, hatreds go", for he recounted that even early Arab adversaries used to unite in times of crisis or against a universal enemy, and when the crisis ended, they would either remain as allies or divide again as they had been before. Thus, he preached that Muslims should follow the example of their predecessors and foster amiable and friendly relationships with each other in a critical situation such as the Crusades.[21]

It is important to remember that al-Sulamī was preaching at the time of an almost complete power vacuum in the Muslim world. As Dajani-Shakeel wrote, "there were leaders who lacked both the moral qualities and the will to fight against the invaders."[22] Therefore, al-Sulamī tried to remedy this vacuum through two important developments: first, the mobilization of fighting scholars and intellectuals; and second, the rise to power of ghāzī-caliphs, or rather, in these circumstances, ghāzī-sultans who would be stirred by the pain of the Muslim community. His treatise on *jihād*, surprisingly, traced the broad outline of what actually happened subsequently. This helped to develop the long process of what later came to be known as the Counter-Crusade (a misnomer).[23]

As for the first remedy, al-Sulamī did help to mobilize religious scholars and he himself emerged from the political chaos just after the

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Abū ʿAbd Allāh Muḥammad ibn Ismāʿīl al-Bukhārī, *Ṣaḥīḥ al-Bukhārī* (translated into English by. Muḥammad Muḥsin Khān; Riyadh: Dār al-Salām, 1997), "al-Nikāḥ," vol. 7, ḥadīth 5188.

21 Christie, *Book of the Jihad*, 234; Dajani-Shakeel, "Perceptions of the Counter-Crusade," 54.

22 Dajani-Shakeel, "Perceptions of the Counter-Crusade," 55.

23 Michael Bonner, *Jihād in Islamic History: Doctrines and Practices* (Princeton & Oxford: Princeton University Press, 2006), 139-140 (hereafter cited as *Jihād in Islamic History*).

First Crusade actually taking up arms against the Crusaders.[24] Counting the role of these fighting scholars, Michael Bonner in his *Jihād in Islamic History: Doctrines and Practice*, adds, "From a strictly military point of view, their contribution may have been negligible, but from a broader political point of view, it mattered considerably. In particular, legal and religious scholars had a visible role in the first major Muslim victory over the Crusaders at Balat in 1119."[25] During the second mobilization, ghāzī-sultans took longer to come forward and to reconstitute their own forces, but as we know, this issue eventually dominated the Muslim political scene. The leadership vacuum that had been created was later filled primarily by three charismatic leaders of *jihād*: ʿImād al-Dīn Zangī (d. 541/1146), his son Nūr al-Dīn Maḥmūd Zangī (d. 570/1174) and Ṣalāḥ al-Dīn (d. 589/1193). They each contributed to the task (the military response, as will be explored and explained shortly) that ultimately liberated the whole Levant from the Crusaders.[26] They revived the spirit of *jihād* and unity among the Muslims.

In defense of the Islamic heartlands and to continue to inspire among Muslims the spirit of fulfillment of God's duty, new works on the *jihād*, such as al-Sulamī's, were recited on public occasions, together with older ones, such as the *Book of jihād* (a work of ḥadīth) by the Iranian ʿAbd Allāh ibn al-Mubārak (d. 181/797).[27] However, this was only one aspect of the works of *jihād* – those devoted to the theoretical aspects of its doctrine, says Atiya. The other aspect, he adds, is even more extensively examined by writers. He remarks:

> In fact, a whole literature arose to deal with the practical issues of the Eastern art of war, more particularly in the later Middle Ages. Treatises on equestrian art and chivalry, on armor and the proper manipulation of each weapon, the technique of fighting, tactics, and the order of battle were compiled by warriors and generals of proven experience and accurate knowledge of military science. The vast output of

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[24] See Hillenbrand, *Crusades: Islamic Perspective*, 26.

[25] Ibid.

[26] Dajani-Shakeel, "Perceptions of the Counter-Crusade," 55; see also Bonner, *Jihād in Islamic History*, 140.

[27] Bonner, *Jihād in Islamic History*, 100, 140.

> Muslim writers in this important field more than justifies a monumental study on the history of the Eastern art of war...[28]

Equally important was the emergence of a particular genre of literature – *faḍāʾil* (merits or eulogies or in-praise) literature; new books on particular cities, including Mecca, Medina, Damascus, and Jerusalem, were passionately written by Muslim scholars and preachers symbolizing the importance and status of these cities in Islam. Above all, Jerusalem received particular attention with a large number of books and treatises flourishing during the Crusade period. Jerusalem is the third holiest site in Islam, after Mecca and Medina in Saudi Arabia, and though it enjoyed an important place in Islam through its history, it attained symbolic importance for the Muslim campaign partly in response to the Crusaders' searing passion for that city, which they invaded and captured during the first Crusades in 1099. The *faḍāʾil al-Quds* (eulogies of Jerusalem) literature also characterizes the intellectual response to the Crusades and needs to be explored.

Faḍāʾil al-Quds Literature

The centrality of Jerusalem (in Arabic "*al-Quds*," or "*Bayt al-muqaddas*," or "*Bayt al- maqdis*" [House of Holiness]) in Islam played an influential role in the Muslim response to Crusades because the various elements involved in the process of Jerusalem's elevation in sanctity during the crusades were not new. These traditions (of Jerusalem's holiness) developed during the early Middle Ages and appeared in the extant sacred and primary Islamic sources – the Qurʾān and the Prophetic traditions; an analysis of the rich Arabic and Islamic literature on Jerusalem reveals an increasing general Islamic awareness of *al-Aqṣā*'s[29] and *al-Quds*' sacred status. Therefore, it

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28 Azīz Suryal Atiya, *Crusade, Commerce, and Culture* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1962), 136.

29 Al-Masjid al-Aqṣā or "the farthest place of prayer," also commonly identified as *bayt al-muqaddas* or *maqdis*, is unanimously regarded as the third holiest site in Islam, and is located on the eastern edge of the Old City of Jerusalem (*al-Quds*). More precisely al-Aqṣā is a compound that houses the complex of buildings and monuments in what is called in Islam *al-ḥaram al-sharīf* (The Noble Sanctuary). As for al-Aqṣā Masjid, *al-ḥarām* refers to the whole area inside the walls, including the main building of the Masjid, the *marwānī muṣallā* (*muṣallā* is a small prayer place, smaller than, or a part of, a masjid), the Dome of the Rock

seems appropriate to examine the status of Jerusalem as envisioned in Islamic traditions before we proceed and discuss the *faḍāʾil* literature.

In the Qurʾān, the land of Jerusalem/Palestine is mentioned as "*al-arḍ al-muqaddasa*"[30] or "the sanctified land" and all of Syria is generally believed to be the blessed land.[31] Jerusalem's importance in general and al-Masjid al-aqṣā's (the Farthest Masjid) in particular to the Muslims is obvious from the fact that the name of the Masjid itself is indicated in the seventeenth *sūra* (chapter) of the Qurʾān. According to the Qurʾānic reference, the Prophet Muḥammad was taken on a miraculous Night Journey from Mecca to the place (in Jerusalem) called al-Masjid al-Aqṣā; the Qurʾān says: "*Glory be to him Who carried His Servant (Muḥammad by night, from the sacred place of prayer (al-Masjid al-ḥarām) to the farthest place of prayer (al-Masjid al-Aqṣā), The precincts of which We have blessed, that We might show him some of Our signs. He is the All-Hearing, the All-Seeing.*"[32] The Prophetic tradition further explains and continues *al-isrāʾ* "the Night Journey" verse by reporting that it is from this Masjid that the Prophet Muḥammad, who was riding on a heavenly creature (a white animal) called *al-Burāq* to the Farthest Masjid, ascended to heaven (*al-miʿrāj*).[33] Since then, Muslims have called the city "the gate to the heavens." In this journey, it is reported that the Prophet Muḥammad led all the prophets in a nightly congregation prayer in *Bayt al maqdis.*[34] Moreover, a number of prophetic traditions further

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(*Qubbat al- ṣakhra*) and the grounds that connect all of them inside the walls. The whole area of the masjid is 14 hectares, about 15 percent of the area of the Old City (the Old City's area is 1 square kilometer). The main building of al-Aqṣā Masjid rests on the southern part of *al-Ḥaram al-sharīf* and its interior is 75 meters long and 55 meters wide. It has no minaret but a dome in the center of the ceiling covered by silver.

30 Q 5:21.

31 Q 21:71; 21:81.

32 Q 17:1.

33 See al-Bukhārī, "Badʾ al-khalq," vol. 4, ḥadīth 3207; Abū l-Ḥusayn Muslim ibn al-Ḥajjāj al-Qushayrī, *Ṣaḥīḥ Muslim* (translated into English by Naṣīr al-Dīn al-Khaṭṭāb (Riyadh: Dār al-Salām, 2007), "Īmān," vol. 1, ḥadīth. 162.

34 Ibn Kathīr, *Tafsīr Ibn Kathīr – Abridged Volume 5, Surah Hud to Surat Al-Isra', Verse 38* (3rd edn., Riyadh, Houston, New York & Lahore: Darussalam Publishers, 2003), 556.

raise the status of al-Aqṣā for the Muslims. Because it was the *ūlā l-qiblatayn* (first direction of prayer), the Messenger of Allah prayed in the direction of al-Masjid al-aqṣā for sixteen or seventeen months (a Qurʾānic injunction later commanded the Prophet to direct the prayer toward Mecca).[35] According to another prophetic tradition, Muslims are encouraged to do journey to al-Aqṣā Masjid[36] because a single prayer at al-Aqṣā is regarded as the equivalent of 500 prayers at other masjids and inferior in value only to prayer at al-Masjid al-ḥarām in Mecca and at the Prophet's Masjid in Medina.[37] It is also reported that when the Prophet Muḥammad was asked about the first mosque built on earth for mankind he replied that it was al-Masjid al-harām in Mecca; when he was subsequently asked about the second, he is reported to have replied, "al-Masjid al-aqṣā with forty years between them."[38]

Given that, there was an extensive effort to explain and exalt Jerusalem's status through a genre of literature termed *faḍāʾil al-Quds* or *faḍāʾil Bayt al-maqdis*, an effort that would be revived after the Frankish Christians had taken the Jerusalem.

One of the most influential texts of this type was the *Faḍāʾil al-Bayt al-Muqaddas*[39] (Merits of Jerusalem) of al-Wāsiṭī (fl. ca. 410/1019), the preacher (*al-khaṭīb*). It is a compilation of over 500 prophetic ḥadīth illustrating the merits of Jerusalem (*al-Quds*). His work was copied, quoted from, and summarized throughout the twelfth and thirteenth centuries. Another important work of this type is the *Faḍāʾil Bayt al-maqdis wa-l-Shām wa-l-Khalīl* of Ibn al-Murajjā al-Maqdisī (fl. ca. 430/1130), which is the largest and most important of the "In-Praise-of-Jerusalem" literature. It is a collection of 594

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[35] See al-Bukhārī, "Ṣalāt," vol. 1, ḥadīth 399; Muslim, "Masājid wa-mawāḍiʿ al-ṣalāt" vol. 2, ḥadīth 525.

[36] See al-Bukhārī, "Faḍl al-ṣalāt fī masjid Makka wa-l-Madīna," vol. 2, ḥadīth 1189; al-Imām al-Ḥāfiẓ Abū ʿĪsā Muḥammad ibn ʿĪsā al-Tirmidhī, *Jāmiʿ Tirmidhī* (translated into English by Abū Khalīl; Riyadh: Dār al-Salām, 2007), "Ṣalāt," vol. 1, ḥadīth 326.

[37] Abū Bakr Aḥmad ibn al-Ḥusayn ibn ʿAlī al-Bayhaqī, *Shuʿab al-īmān* (Riyadh: Maktabat al-Rushd, 2003), "Faḍl al-ḥajj wa l-ʿumra," vol. 6, ḥadīth 3845.

[38] See al-Bukhārī, "Aḥādīth al-anbiyāʾ," vol. 4, ḥadīth 3366.

[39] Abū Bakr Muḥammad ibn Aḥmad al-Wāsiṭī, *Faḍāʾil al-Bayt al-muqaddas* (ed. Isaac Hasson; Jerusalem: Dār Māghnis, 1979).

traditions which, among other things, praises Jerusalem, Syria, and Hebron. The *faḍāʾil* books by Abū Bakr al-Wāṣiṭī and Ibn al-Maqdisī pre-dated the First Crusade, but this type of literature, engendered principally in response to the Crusades, drew the attention of Muslims to Jerusalem and to engage in *jihād* (holy war) to free it and other lands from the Crusaders. The *faḍāʾil* literature is important to understand the Islamic meaning of Jerusalem and al-Masjid al-aqṣā.[40] ʿAbd al-Salām al-Rumaylī (d. 492/1099) was a pupil of al-Maqdisī and was also reported to have written a treatise on Jerusalem in which he collected *faḍāʾil* traditions. Al-Rumaylī was killed by the Crusaders at the time of the invasion in the First Crusade. We are told that he was stoned while in captivity near Beirut on 12 Shawwāl 492 AH or 1 December 1099 AD.[41]

In the 1160s C.E., this genre of literature reappeared after a short period of silence. Ibn ʿAsākir al-Dimashqī al-Shāfiʿī al-Ashʿarī (499-571/1106-1176) – an imām (authority) of ḥadīth, a great historian, and a prolific writer who authored over a hundred books and epistles in his time in Damascus and was the friend of Nūr al-Dīn – also produced a treatise on the merits of Mecca, Medina, and Jerusalem (*Faḍāʾil Makka, Faḍāʾil al-Madīna, Faḍāʾil al-Bayt al-muqaddas*). His *Tārīkh Madīnat Dimashq* (History of Damascus City),[42] published in eighty volumes, extensively addressed the history, geography, and society of Damascus. He was also said to have written a treatise on *jihād*.[43] We also have another work, *Faḍāʾil al-Quds al-sharīf* by Ibn al-Jawzī (d. 597/1201); and it also contains traditions about Jerusalem and the "holy land" (*al-arḍ al-muqaddas*), its foundational *ṣakhra*

[40] Yitzhak Reiter and Marwān Abū Khalaf, "Jerusalem's Religious Significance: Jerusalem in the Faiths of Judaism, Christianity, and Islam," *Palestine-Israel Journal* 8/1 (2001), available at http://www.pij.org/details.php?id=169; see also Amikam Elad, *Medieval Jerusalem and Islamic Worship: Holy Places, Ceremonies, Pilgrimage* (2nd edn., Leiden: Brill, 1999), 14 (hereafter cited as *Medieval Jerusalem*); Moshe Gil, *A History of Palestine: 634-1099* (Cambridge & New York: Cambridge University Press, 1992), 98.

[41] On this, see Gil, *A History of Palestine*, 422-424; see also Hillenbrand, *Crusades: Islamic Perspective*, 66, 163.

[42] Abū l-Qāsim ʿAlī ibn al-Ḥasan Ibn ʿAsākir, *Tarīkh Madīnat Dimashq* (ed. ʿUmar ibn Gharāma al-ʿAmrawī and ʿAlī Shīrī; Beirut: Dār al-Fikr, 1995-2001).

[43] Hillenbrand, *Crusades: Islamic Perspective*, 164.

("rock") and, among other things, its association with the Prophet Muḥammad during his *miʿrāj*.

The production of *faḍāʾil* literature obviously could have enhanced the desire on the part of Muslims to reconquer Jerusalem. Equally important is that Ibn ʿAsākir's work glorifying Jerusalem was read publicly to large audiences in Damascus from the AD 1160s, onwards. Consequently, such mass gatherings and preaching could have reawakened and strengthened the sanctity of Jerusalem in the popular consciousness and built up the expectation that the Holy city would be recaptured. [44] Although the Crusades added a new dimension to the significance of Jerusalem, it was the great sanctity and status that the city enjoyed long before the Crusades, as we mentioned, that made it the symbol of the *jihād* against the Franks.[45] Aziz S. Atiya has aptly remarked, "the Muslim was bound by his religion not only to visit those places but also to preserve them within the pale of the Islamic Empire and defend them against the Crusader."[46] One should, however, note that all of the Jerusalem "Praise-in-Literature" did not aspire to make it a pilgrimage destination in rivalry with Mecca. Rather all the particular genres – *jihād*, including *jihād* poetry, *faḍāʾil al-Quds* – intended to revive the spirit of *jihād* among the Muslims who were confounded by internal discord; indeed, it helped to foster Muslim unity, a prerequisite to fight their common enemy; however, it took a longtime to organize a

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[44] *Ibid.*, 164-165.

[45] Western historians often contend, out of their stereotypical, inimical and biased approach toward Islamic texts, that after the fall of Jerusalem to the Franks, Muslim jurists and religious scholars engendered and orchestrated on their own, with no reference to Islam, the status of Jerusalem, which they then exploited to the fullest possible extent in a propaganda campaign to garner support for their personal political ambitions, if not for the real *jihād*. On the contrary, as we have pointed out, Jerusalem enjoys a special place in Islam and will continue to do so; it was not just for mere political reasons that Muslim rulers strongly yearned to recapture of Jerusalem, and they did so out of their religious conviction. Equally important is that they were fighting the real enemy, the Crusaders. Western scholars' bewilderment is that they often see the Muslim world through a Western perception even after they have great expertise in the Arabic language; for more details, see for example, Elad, *Medieval Jerusalem*, especially 1-50; Hillenbrand, *Crusades: Islamic Perspective*, 141-167.

[46] Atiya, *Crusade, Commerce, and Culture*, 133.

strong unified resistance until Nūr al-Dīn came to the scene. In fact, his father ʿImād al-Dīn took the initiative in the truest sense, which later his son astutely imitated, followed by the great Ṣalāḥ al-Dīn of Ayyūbid dynasty who actually did help Muslim to realize the success.

Military Response to the Crusades

The Muslim military response to the Crusades, as we have already mentioned, was not unified or organized at first. It took time for Muslim intellectuals and rulers to convert the theory of *jihād* into practice following the continuous calls for *jihād* against the Franks, which reverberated everywhere.

Nevertheless, the first physical encounter that took place between the Seljuk sultan of Rūm, Qilij Arslān I (r. 1092-1107) and the Crusaders occurred when the first wave of the First Crusade (the People's or peasants' Crusade) tried to intrude into the Seljuk territory in the autumn of 1096. However, the people's Crusade totally failed to advance and a majority of them were killed. However, after this initial Muslim success, Crusaders managed to sweep across Asia Minor until they succeeded in establishing the four major Crusader-States in the Levant, including Jerusalem. Muslims were struck with shock and outrage, and poets and preachers reiterated calls to both the local rulers in the Levant and the Great Seljuk sultan in the east for *jihād* and aid in defending the Muslim lands against the Frankish invasion. Thus, after the fall of Tripoli in 1109 to the Franks, the Great Seljuk sultan Muḥammad (r. 1105-18) moved to act and launched a number of expeditions against the Franks, but again internal discord became a hurdle. Like the Fāṭimids of Egypt, the local rulers of the Levant had made alliances with the Franks, and thus the sultan had to abandon the expedition without any major success.[47]

Despite the failures, the spirit of *jihād* remained alive; there was a strong local reaction amongst religious scholars, but it had yet to be harnessed into a full-scale military campaign because it was not backed up by the rulers or political authorities in a concerted fashion. It is believed that the first major turning point in Muslim success and the subsequent reawakening of an organized *jihād* came with the fall

[47] Niall Christie, *Muslims and Crusades: Christianity's Wars in the Middle East 1095-1382 From the Islamic Sources* (New York, NY: Routledge, 2014), 19-20 (hereafter cited as *Muslims and Crusades*).

of Edessa in 539/1144. However, the wave was already beginning to turn in the preceding decades; slowly and gradually, the isolated *jihād* campaigns had already begun.[48]

The first tentative turning-point for the Muslims was in the year 1119 when the Turkmen ruler of the Mardin, Ilghāzī (r. 1108-1122), was asked by the citizens of Aleppo, who had sought military help from Baghdad, to take control of their city and defend it against Roger of Antioch. Ilghāzī took over and tried to be an ideal leader of *jihād*. He went on to win the first victory of the Muslim response (or the Counter-Crusade as Western scholars call it) at the battle at Balat; he defeated and killed Roger of Salerno, the regent of Antioch (r. 1113-1119). The Frankish loss and the destruction were so severe that the battle came to be called the Field of Blood. It is reported that a famous Muslim religious figure, al-Qāḍī Abū l-Faḍl ibn al-Khashshāb of Aleppo, was closely involved in running the affairs of Aleppo and took part in the battle of Balat himself. Ilghāzī, however, could not capitalize on his success because he died in 1122, leaving the Aleppans disappointed, if not frightened.[49]

Ilghāzī's nephew, Nūr al-Dawla Balak, also became engaged with the *jihād* against the Franks. It is said that he displayed tremendous vigor in a number of encounters against them, and he is extolled as a Muslim champion in the wars against the Crusaders; but he was killed outside Manbij in 518/1124 and was buried in Aleppo.[50] The political vacuum created was immediately filled by the Zangī dynasty. It was under the leadership of ʿImād al-Dīn Zangī, who became the governor (*atābeg*) of Mosul in 1127 and Aleppo in 1128, that the first organized Islamic military response began to emerge, comprising both religious and political figures in their first key victory against the Franks with the fall of Edessa (*al-Ruhā*) in 1144. With this victory, the good fortune of the Muslim world in its *jihād* campaign against the Franks boosted the spirit of *jihād* and raised their morale; they now began to look toward the conquest of Jerusalem, but it was never accomplished in his lifetime.

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48 Hillenbrand, *Crusades: Islamic Perspective*, 108.

49 *Ibid.*, 109; see also, Jonathan Riley-Smith (ed.), *The Oxford History of the Crusades* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1999), 225.

50 Hillenbrand, *Crusades: Islamic Perspective*, 110.

It was in this atmosphere of turmoil, intimidation, and extreme humiliation of the Muslims that fortune favored the community of monotheists (*al-ḥanīfiyya*) and helped them out of their precarious condition by supporting the believers in their struggle and bringing forth ʿImād al-Dīn Zangī as their leader. Ibn al-Athīr eulogized the Zangī for this great achievement (the capture of Edessa) and for reviving Islamic values (*jihād* and unity); he expresses the achievements of ʿImād al-Dīn Zangī in a panegyrical passage:

> When Almighty God saw the princes of the Islamic lands and the commanders of the Hanafite creed and how unable they were to support the [true] religion and their inability to defend those who believe in the One God and He saw their subjugation by their enemy and the severity of their despotism ... He then wished to set over the Franks someone who could requite the evil of their deeds and to send to the devils of the crosses stones from Him to destroy and annihilate them [the crosses]. He looked at the roster of valiants among His helpers and of those possessed of judgment, support and sagacity amongst His friends and He did not see in it (the roster) anyone more capable of that command, more solid as regards inclination, stronger of purpose and more penetrating than the lord, the martyr (*al-shahīd*) ʿImād al-Dīn [Zangī].[51]

ʿImād al-Dīn Zangī became famous in the Muslim world for his brilliant leadership qualities and his military and political skills. He was even more remembered as a true *mujāhid* (the one who carries out *jihād*), "The adornment of Islam, the king helped by God, the helper of the believers" against the Franks, is thus portrayed as a real hero of Islam. In fact, it was only after the recapture of Edessa that Muslims' call for *jihād* began to receive momentum and that he reunited the Northern Syria. Two of the famous poets of the time, Ibn al-Qaysarānī and Ibn Munīr, as Hillenbrand wrote, "eloquently urged Zangī ... to make the reconquest of the entire Syrian coastline (the *sāḥil*) the principal aim of *jihad*."[52] Zangī is also reported to have patronized and sponsored the foundation of many religious seminaries – *madrasa*s and *khanqāh*s – as "part of a broader movement of moral rearmament, in which both rulers and the

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[51] Ibn al-Athīr, *al-Tārīkh al-bāhir fī l-Dawla al-Atābakiyya bi-l-Mawṣil* (ed. ʿAbd al-Qādir Aḥmad Ṭulaymāt; Cairo: Dār al-Kutub al-Ḥadītha, 1963), 33-34 (hereafter cited as *al-Bāhir*); see also Gabrieli, *The Arab Historians of the Crusades*, 25.

[52] Hillenbrand, *Crusades: Islamic Perspective*, 114.

religious élite devoted themselves to stamping out corruption and heterodoxy in the Muslim community, as part of a grand *jihād* which had much wider aims than merely the removal of the Franks from the coastline of Palestine."[53] However, before he could move to gain more territories, particularly Damascus, from Frankish possession, ʿImād al-Dīn Zangī died in 1146, just two years after his victory over Edessa.

Nūr al-Dīn Zangī (r. 1146-1174) succeeded his father ʿImād al-Dīn in Aleppo, and he brilliantly imitated and continued his father's *jihād* spirit by fighting numerous battles against the Franks to move inexorably towards the acquisition of Damascus and later the reunification of Syria and Egypt under the banner of the Sunnī Caliphate based in Baghdad. He is regarded in the Muslim sources as the real architect of the Muslim response to the Crusades.

In 1147, Nūr al-Dīn helped to relieve the siege[54] of Damascus[55] by the Second Crusade, which was launched in response to the fall of Edessa. Realizing his father's dream in 1154, Nūr al-Dīn made a successful entry into Damascus with the help of an "eager pro-*jihād* faction within the walls of Damascus;" thus, by that year, he had almost united Syria. In the middle of the twelfth century, Muslim sentiments toward Jerusalem and the importance of the *jihād* were increasingly intense, and this popular force had helped surrender Damascus to Nūr al-Dīn because many held him in high esteem and considered him to be the real leader who would reclaim Jerusalem for Muslims.[56] His perseverance in fighting for the recovery of

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[53] Riley-Smith, *The Oxford History of the Crusades*, 226.

[54] All the Muslim historians recorded with great pains the martyrdom of two most influential scholars, the Malikite *faqīh* Yūsuf al-Findalāwī (543/1148) and the devout Sufi scholar ʿAbd al-Raḥmān al-Ḥalḥūlī (543/1148), who were martyred while defending the city against the Crusaders. Both aged men, they were riding horses in the battlefield and fighting the enemy. This explicitly made clear the unified alliance between religious circles and the political leadership against the Crusaders.

[55] At that time, Damascus was ruled by Mujīr al-Dīn Abaq ibn Muḥammad ibn Būrī ibn Ṭughtikin, but he wielded no effective power; the real commander was Muʿīn al-Dīn Unur, one of his grandfather Ṭughtikin's Mamlūks. It was he who had put Mujīr al-Dīn on the throne; for more on this, see Gabrieli, *The Arab Historians of the Crusades*, 36.

[56] Ira M. Lapidus, *A History of Islamic Societies* (2nd edn., Cambridge & New York:

Jerusalem was perhaps best demonstrated when Nūr al-Dīn, while at Aleppo, commissioned a special *minbar*, or pulpit, intended to be placed in the Aqṣā Masjid in Jerusalem in the expectation of that city's imminent re-conquest by his armies.[57] The pulpit was eventually installed by Nur al-Dīn's successor, Ṣalāḥ al-Dīn, in the Aqṣā Masjid in 583/1187, where it remained until 1969 when it was destroyed by Christian fanatics.[58] Hence, it was during Nūr al-Dīn's time that Jerusalem became the focus of the ideological campaign of the Counter-Crusade, and it was from Damascus that this ideological campaign originated.

The Latin kingdom of Jerusalem as the dominant power in *al-Shām* region helped rapprochement among the different Muslim rulers, all of whom were facing a common threat – the Crusaders. However, Muslim rulers often sought help against their rivals by entering into shifting alliances with both the Franks and other Muslims as the circumstances changed. Therefore, before Nūr al-Dīn could embark on his biggest mission – the liberation of Jerusalem from the Crusaders – the political upheavals in the Egypt changed the whole situation. One of the Egyptian ministers (*wazīr*s), al-Ṣāliḥ Ibn-Ruzzīq (d. 556/1160) approached Nūr al-Dīn Zangī – who, according to Dajani-Shakeel, had become the undisputed leader of the *jihād* in Damascus – suggesting that both leaders coordinate their military attacks against the Latin Kingdom of Jerusalem from Egypt and Syria. However, shortly after the wazier's assassination in 1161, there was a power struggle resulting in the weakening of Fāṭimid rule. Meanwhile, a new Crusader ruler, Amalric, had ascended the throne in 1163 in the Latin Kingdom of Jerusalem and, upon learning of the power vacuum in Egypt, made an alliance with Shāwar, one of the rivals of the installed Fāṭimid ruler, Ḍirgām.[59] Shāwar was maneuvering to seize the control of Egypt. Egypt was considered strategically important by both the contending factions – Muslims and Franks – and also had great wealth and boundless resources; thus,

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Cambridge University Press, 2002), 290.

[57] Riley-Smith, *The Oxford History of the Crusades*, 227; on this for more details, see Hillenbrand, *Crusades: Islamic Perspective*, 151-161.

[58] See Dajani-Shakeel, "Perceptions of the Counter-Crusade," 57; Hillenbrand, *Crusades: Islamic Perspective*.

[59] Cf., Ibn al-Athīr describes an agreement between Shāwar and the Franks in 562/1167, see, Ibn al-Athīr, *al-Bāhir*, 134.

unsurprisingly, both began to look at Egypt as a more urgent priority, as Riley-Smith has observed:

> The Fāṭimid caliphs of Egypt had become the impotent pawns of feuding military viziers and ethnically divided regiments. There were some in Egypt in the 1150s and 1160s who favoured coming to terms with the kingdom of Jerusalem in order to secure its assistance in propping up the Fāṭimid regime, while others rather looked to Nūr al-Dīn in Damascus for help in repelling the infidel.[60]

Shāwar sought help from the Franks, and this eventually prompted Nūr al-Dīn, who was fulfilling his family and religious ambition of the reunification of the Islamic territories and the mobilization of the Islamic forces, to send an army under the Kurdish commander Asad al-Dīn Shīrkūh and Shīrkūh's nephew, Ṣalāḥ al-Dīn Ayyūbī, in 1169 to help the weakening Fāṭimid empire against the Franks and their Muslim allies.[61] This war among the three contenders, Franks, Muslims and Fāṭimids, resulted in the rise of Ṣalāḥ al-Dīn's prominence – this battle proved Ṣalāḥ al-Dīn's bravery and strength. Moreover, the histories of Syria and Egypt, in the words of Lapidus, "would be joined until the nineteenth century" as a result.[62]

Nūr al-Dīn Maḥmūd ibn Zangī ibn Āqsunqūr, ruler of Syria, Mesopotamia, and Egypt, died of a heart attack on Wednesday 11 shawwāl 569/15 May 1174 and was buried in the citadel at Damascus but was later transferred to the madrasa that he had founded near the Osier-workers' market (*sūq al-khawāsīn*) in Damascus.[63] Nūr al-Dīn, as a *mujāhid*, earned his reputation as the liberator of Muslim territories, especially Syria, from the Franks, which also led toward the reunification of Syria and Egypt. His admirers often speak of his high morals, piousness, stature as a true Sunnī Muslim and theologian, and rather zealous embrace of *jihād* against the Franks.

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[60] Riley-Smith, *The Oxford History of the Crusades*, 227.

[61] See Abū l-Qāsim Shihāb al-Dīn ʿAbd al-Raḥmān ibn Ismāʿīl Abū Shāma al-Maqdisī, *ʿUyūn al-rawḍatayn fī akhbār al-dawlatayn al-Nūriyya wa-l-Ṣalāḥiyya* (ed. Ibrāhīm al-Zaybaq; Beirut: Muʾassasat al-Risāla, 1997), I, 407-414 (hereafter cited as *ʿUyūn al-rawḍatayn*).

[62] Lapidus, *A History of Islamic Societies*, 290.

[63] Ibn al-Athīr, *al-Kāmil fī l-tārīkh*, IX, 393; see also Gabrieli, *The Arab Historians of the Crusades*, 41-42.

ʿImād al-Dīn al-Iṣfahānī, the littérateur, historian, and administrator, portrays Nūr al-Dīn's role in the *jihād* as:

> The one who reinstalled Islam and the sharīʿa in *al-Shām* (area of Syria recovered from the crusaders), after *kufr* (unbelief) had replaced it. He fortified the borders with the Franks, built schools (religious schools), established *khānqāh*s (a religious building dedicated to Sufis) for the Sufi, restored the walls of the cities ... After all, Nūr al-Dīn was the leader who returned Egypt to Islam (Sunnī) and established a new administration there![64]

Indeed, Nūr al-Dīn fought against a variety of opponents, as Hillenbrand remarks: "his own Sunni Muslim political rivals in Syria, Ismāʿīlī Shīʿite and other factions in Egypt, Byzantine ... and last but not least the Franks." Moreover, "it is he [Nūr al-Dīn], rather than Ṣalāḥ al-Dīn," Hillenbrand adds, "whose reputation was most glorious in the succeeding centuries in the Islamic world."[65] One of the remarkable political achievements of Nūr al-Dīn, according to scholars, was "the overthrow of the Fāṭimid Caliphate in Egypt, and the restoration of Sunnism there" which was successfully accomplished under Ṣalāḥ al-Dīn after the death of the Fāṭimid Caliph, Abū Muḥammad ʿAbd Allāh al-ʿĀḍid li-dīn Allāh, the last of the Egyptian Caliphs, in 565/1171,[66] thus ending more than 200 years of Fāṭimid rule in Egypt. Furthermore, in the words of Lapidus, Nūr al-Dīn's reign ushered in a renaissance of "a new Muslim communal and religious spirit, frankly anti-Christian and opposed to the Crusader presence."[67] Summarizing Nūr al-Dīn's efforts, Elisseef N. discusses four main touchstones on which his system of belief was based: "the revival of *jihād*, the liberation of Jerusalem, the re-

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64 Abū Shāma al-Maqdisī, *ʿUyūn al-rawḍatayn*, I, 50-51.

65 Hillenbrand, *Crusades: Islamic Perspective*, 118.

66 Dajani-Shakeel, "Perceptions of the Counter-Crusade," 58; Hillenbrand, *Crusades: Islamic Perspective*, 118; "Saladin, acting as Nūr al-Dīn's lieutenant, established himself as secular leader, or vizier, in 1169. Two years later, on September 10, 1171, Saladin reestablished Sunnī prayers in Cairo and thus brought the Fāṭimid Caliphate to an end. Syria and Egypt were now united under the theoretical leadership of the ʿAbbāsid caliphs. With Nūr al-Dīn at the military helm, the Turks seemed ready to eliminate the Franks from the Middle East;" on this, see Jay Rubenstein, "Saladin and the Problem of the Counter-Crusade in the Middle Ages," *Historically Speaking* 13 (2012), 2-5.

67 Lapidus, *A History of Islamic Societies*, 290.

establishment of the political unity of Islam, and the diffusion of Sunnī orthodoxy."[68]

Ṣalāḥ al-Dīn Yūsuf ibn Ayyūbī,[69] a Tikrit-born Kurd admired in the West as Saladin, was undoubtedly one of the best Muslim warriors and the first non-Fāṭimid independent ruler in Egypt in almost two centuries. He is known in the annals of the History as the first Sultan of the vast Islamic lands – Egypt and Greater Syria (what is now Syria, Lebanon, and Palestine). He continued the policy of his master, Nūr al-Dīn, of reuniting and consolidating the Muslim territories, developing an Islamic front in preparation for *jihād*. Like his master, Ṣalāḥ al-Dīn and his family enthusiastically participated in the Sunnī Revival across Syria and Egypt. It is often asked why Nūr al-Dīn and Ṣalāḥ al-Dīn attacked and abolished the Fāṭimid Empire. The reasons were probably evident in the fact that the Fāṭimids often made alliances with the Franks against the Sunnī Muslims whom they viewed as the supplanters of the legitimate authority since the early Islamic century. Ṣalāḥ al-Dīn thought it necessary to take hold of the Egypt and build a massive disciplined and skilled army with unwavering devotion to the idea of *jihād* to retake all the lands occupied by the Crusaders, especially Jerusalem.

Like his predecessor, Ṣalāḥ al-Dīn faced various challenges to realizing his long cherished goal, the re-conquest of the Jerusalem. His unwavering devotion to *jihād* and great passion for Jerusalem can be substantiated from his own statement: "And with God's help, we will be able to release, from captivity, the mosque [al-Aqṣā] from

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[68] As quoted in ʿAbd al-Raḥmān Azzām, *Saladin* (Harlow, England & New York: Pearson Longman, 2009), 43.

[69] For the career of Ṣalāḥ al-Dīn, or "Saladin," see among others, H. A. R. Gibb, *The Life of Saladin* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1973); Bahāʾ al-Dīn Yūsuf ibn Rāfiʿ Ibn Shaddād, *The Rare and Excellent History of Saladin or al-Nawādir al-ṣultāniyya wa-l-maḥāsin al-Yūsufiyya by Bahāʾ al-Dīn ibn Shaddād* (translated by D. S. Richards; Aldershot, England & Burlington, VT: Ashgate Publishing, 2002); Stanley Lane-Poole, *Saladin and the Fall of the Kingdom of Jerusalem* (New York & London: G. P. Putman's Sons, 1906); Malcolm Cameron Lyons and D. E. P. Jackson, *Saladin: The Politics of Holy War* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1977); David Nicolle, *Saladin: Leadership, Strategy, Conflict* (Oxford & Long Island City, NY: Osprey Publishing, 2011); P. H. Newby, *Saladin in His Time* (New York: Dorset Press, 1992); Azzām, *Saladin*.

which God has lifted His Messenger to the Heavens."[70] However, he soon became the independent ruler of Egypt but was still a lieutenant of Nūr al-Dīn, and in favor and "recognition of the ʿAbbāsid Caliph as the highest spiritual authority, and as the only symbol of Islamic unity," there emerged many rebellions/plots against him because the ousted Fāṭimids resented him as a foreigner and a usurper of their rights.[71] In Syria, after the death of Nūr al-Dīn in 1174, the situation worsened. The death of a ruler always led to a succession struggle, and this was coupled with attacks from the Crusaders. There were, however, uneasy relations between Nūr al-Dīn and Ṣalāḥ al-Dīn after 1171 when Ṣalāḥ al-Dīn become the ruler of Egypt. However, things changed quickly after Nūr al-Dīn's death in 1174; the situation was so grave that some scholars were compelled to write, "Had Nur al-Din lived then it would be fair to say that Saladin would have been relegated to a footnote in history."[72]

Following Nūr al-Dīn's death, Syria fell into a state of disarray; Franks, steeped in the politics of Syria, immediately captured some territories. Hence, for Ṣalāḥ al-Dīn to launch a massive campaign on both fronts – Syria and Egypt – against the Franks, it was necessary to put down the weak Muslim rulers who had surfaced to try to take power in Syria. It was also necessary to stop the Franks to protect Syria from falling into the hands of the Crusaders. Hence, he remained busy fighting fellow Muslims, though incessant wars against the Franks had to continue in order to keep them from taking further Muslim territories in Syria and Egypt. From 1171-1186, Ṣalāḥ al-Dīn employed a number of military and political measures to achieve his goal. As stated earlier, he restored the ʿAbbāsid Caliph's authority,

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[70] Dajani-Shakeel, "Perceptions of the Counter-Crusade," 58.

[71] On this see, ʿAbd Allāh Nāsiḥ ʿUlwān, *Salah ad-Dīn al-Ayyubi (Saladin): Hero of Battle of Hattin, Liberator of Jerusalem from Crusaders* (translated into English by Khalifa Ezzat Abu Zeid; 2nd edn., Cairo: Dār al-Salām, 2004), 35-39; see also, Gibb, *Life of Saladin*, 8; Azzām, *Saladin*, 122.

[72] Azzām, *Saladin*, 101; the main issue at stake was what to do about Egypt. As mentioned, Egypt was seen as important from a political and economic perspective. Nūr al-Dīn had made Damascus the center for his *jihād* campaign, but Ṣalāḥ al-Dīn wanted to use the resources from Egypt for *jihād*; their strategies might have been different, but the goal was same-conquering the occupied land of the Franks, especially Jerusalem; on this, see also, for example, Nicolle, *Saladin*, 13.

reestablished Sunnī prayers in Cairo, fortified the Egyptian frontier with the Franks, and connected Syria with Egypt thereby making the route safe for Muslim trade and the pilgrimage to Mecca that Franks often attempted to disrupt.[73]

However, Western historians argue that Ṣalāḥ al-Dīn's quest for Jerusalem only emerged when, quoting his biographer Ibn Shaddād, he received a vision following his recovery from illness just two months before his conquest of Jerusalem. Prior to that, his purpose, they argue, was to seize control of as much of Nūr al-Dīn's territories as possible.[74] This underestimates Ṣalāḥ al-Dīn's long years of religious zeal in propagating *jihād* and reuniting the embattled lands and people, part of which was the important recovery of the Latin Kingdom of Jerusalem. Dajani-Shakeel also disagrees with this argument, terming it "a misreading of history." She clarifies and adds that "Interruptions in Salāḥ al-Dīn's progress towards achieving this goal [of capturing Jerusalem]" have led some historians "to minimize his quest for the recovery of the city."[75] Ṣalāḥ al-Dīn's dedication to *jihād* can be judged from the following statement made soon after he established Sunnī authority in Egypt. Following Islamic principles, he led a number of attacks against the Franks and stated:

> If the means for the recovery of Jerusalem are obstructed, and if the will of the Muslims for uprooting the *kufr* is not sheathed, then the roots of *kufr* will expand; its (the *kufr*) menace to the Muslims will increase, and we (the Muslims and their leaders) will be held responsible before God (for failing to check its expansion), and those who fail (to carry on the *jihād*) are sinful.[76]

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[73] "Reynald of Chatillon in the Red Sea, threatening the Holy Cities [Mecca and Madina], prompted Saladin to attack Reynald," see Hillenbrand, *Crusades: Islamic Perspective*, 172; Dajani-Shakeel, "Perceptions of the Counter-Crusade," 61

[74] On this, see Rubenstein, "Saladin and the Problem of the Counter-Crusade in the Middle Ages," 3; Hillenbrand, *Crusades: Islamic Perspective*, 118; Peter Partner, *God of Battles: Holy Wars of Christianity and Islam* (Princeton, New Jersey: Princeton University Press, 1997), 93-94 (hereafter cited as *God of Battles*).

[75] Hadia Dajani-Shakeel, "Some Medieval Accounts of Salah al-Din's Recovery of Jerusalem (al-Quds)," in Hisham Nashab (ed.), *Studia Palaestina: Studies in honour of Constantine K. Zurayk* (Beirut: Beirut Institute for Palestine Studies, 1988); Retrieved from http://legacy.fordham.edu/halsall/med/salahdin.asp (hereafter as Dajani-Shakeel, *al-Quds*).

[76] Dajani-Shakeel, "Perceptions of the Counter-Crusade," 62.

Ṣalāḥ al-Dīn remained continuously committed to his *jihād* passion and harassed the Crusader enemies all along. He is reported to have said:

> We focused on raiding the territories of the infidels (*al-kuffar*). Thus, not one year passed without our conducting a raid (against the Crusaders), by land or sea...until we have afflicted them with killing, capture and enslavement. We recovered some strongholds, which the people of Islam (the Muslims) have hardly frequented, ever since they were usurped from them.... Among these is a fortress in Aiyla, which the enemy had built in the Sea of India (reference to the Gulf of ʿAqaba at the Red Sea), and which leads to the two holy Muslim shrines (in Mecca and Medina), as well as to al-Yaman....[77]

Although it appears that Ṣalāḥ al-Dīn's course of actions were incoherent and lacked a specific goal, an astute observer will appreciate that his strategies followed one another in a systematic and coherent way. Shakeel has broadly classified Ṣalāḥ al-Dīn's actions towards the recovery of Jerusalem: "the military, the demographic, and the ideological."[78] One can easily detect that Ṣalāḥ al-Dīn envisioned a unified front comprising Egypt, Syria, Yemen, the Jazīra (Mesopotamia), and North Africa under his leadership to increase his manpower and, moved by *jihād* enthusiasm, to prepare for the recovery of Jerusalem.

He pursued a two-pronged policy of seeking to subvert Nūr al-Dīn's dominions to subdue them after his death and of prosecuting the holy war against the Franks. He, like other rulers, also made alliances with the Franks to help accomplish his long-term policies. Eventually, in 1174, he took Damascus; in 1183, Aleppo; and in 1186, Mosul. In the following year, he launched a decisive attack and defeated the Franks at the Battle of Ḥaṭṭīn in July 1187, which paved the way for the easy conquest of Jerusalem and thus brought an end to the Latin Kingdom of Jerusalem in October 1187, after ninety years of Christian occupation.[79] From then on, Jerusalem remained under

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77 As quoted in Dajani-Shakeel, "Perceptions of the Counter-Crusade," 60-61.

78 Dajani-Shakeel, *al-Quds*.

79 Partner, *God of Battles*, 93-94: Lapidus, *A History of Islamic Societies*, 194; Hillenbrand, *Crusades: Islamic Perspective*, 127; for Ṣalāḥ al-Dīn's specific steps in his course of actions towards the conquest and recovery of Jerusalem, see, for example, Dajani-Shakeel, *al-Quds*; Lane-Poole, *Saladin and the Fall of the*

Muslim rule until 1917, except for a relatively short period from AD 1229 to 1238 (39). Ṣalāḥ al-Dīn earned the honorific title as the second liberator of Jerusalem after the Second Caliph of Islam, ʿUmar ibn al-Khaṭṭāb. ʿImād al-Dīn al-Iṣfahānī (d. 1201) termed the victory in Jerusalem as the second *hijra* (immigration) of Islam to the "Holy House," accomplished through Ṣalāḥ al-Dīn.[80] This implied the revival of Islam in Jerusalem. Similarly, Bahāʾ al-Dīn ibn Shaddād (d. 632/1234) defined the recovery as the "greatest victory."[81] In the West, Ṣalāḥ al-Dīn is revered for his friendly treatment of Crusader prisoners of war, especially in contrast to what the Franks did to the Muslims during their savage conquest in 1099. Ṣalāḥ al-Dīn, being a "genuine religious leader,"[82] showered gifts and money on the Franks, especially the poor Christian families, for which he is greatly revered as "the flower of chivalry."[83] Such was the charity that Ṣalāḥ al-Dīn bestowed on the poor that Lane-Poole has recorded the long passage of the Christian chronicler Ernoul:

> Then I shall tell you ... of the great courtesy which Saladin showed to the wives and daughters of knights, who had fled to Jerusalem when their lords were killed or made prisoners in battle ... they assembled and went before Saladin crying mercy ... When Saladin saw them weeping, he had great compassion for them, and wept himself for pity ... And he gave them so much that they gave praise to God and publish abroad the kindness and honour which Saladin had done to them.[84]

In all, Gibb attributes Ṣalāḥ al-Dīn's successes not so much to his impressive personal military virtues, but instead states that his victories were due to his "possession of moral qualities which have little in common with those of a great general."[85]

Kingdom of Jerusalem, 230.

80 Dajani-Shakeel, "Perceptions of the Counter-Crusade," 65.

81 Abū Shāma al-Maqdisī, *ʿUyūn al-rawḍatayn*, III, 330.

82 Partner, *God of Battles*, 93-94.

83 Lane-Poole eulogizes Ṣalāḥ al-Dīn with that title in his book. See Lane-Poole, *Saladin and the Fall of the Kingdom of Jerusalem*, 230.

84 *Ibid.*, 232-233.

85 Gibb, *Life of Saladin*, 57.

Diplomatic Relations

Ṣalāḥ al-Dīn's conquest of Jerusalem led Europe to launch one of its greatest Crusades, headed by three influential kings of Germany, France, and England. Richard the Lion-Heart, however, became particularly famous for his exceptional military and diplomatic skills that he ruthlessly exhibited during the crusade. There were many confrontations, directly or indirectly, between Ṣalāḥ al-Dīn and Richard, with the latter trying hard, but in vain, to recover the lost territories. The wave of conquests had thus reversed its course of action. The Muslim religious and ruling classes were now mobilized and unified with great religious zeal to thwart any onslaught from the Franks.

The Muslim response to the Third Crusade was also characterized by "diplomacy, negotiations, and flexibility." [86] Despite the West's continued attempts to regain what it had lost, the Third Crusade, in the words of Dajani-Shakeel, "remained confined militarily and geographically."[87] Muslims successfully arrested the further advance of the Franks into their lands and continuously kept them in check. Eventually, to establish peace just a year before his death in 1193, [88] Ṣalāḥ al-Dīn made a truce with Richard that allowed the Crusaders to retain the coastal line along the Mediterranean, and thus, once and for all, the Crusaders abandoned their quest for Jerusalem.[89] Enacting truces and entering into alliances with the Franks were indispensable and a common feature of most of Muslim rulers, including Ṣalāḥ al-Dīn.

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[86] Dajani-Shakeel, "Perceptions of the Counter-Crusade," 66; Dajani-Shakeel has devoted a full chapter to discussing various aspects of the relations between Muslims and Franks during the Crusades; see, Hadia Dajani-Shakeel, "Diplomatic Relations Between Muslim and Frankish Rulers 1097-1153 AD.," in Maya Shatzmiller (ed.), *Crusaders and Muslims in Twelfth-Century Syria* (Leiden & New York: Brill, 1993), 201.

[87] Dajani-Shakeel, "Perceptions of the Counter-Crusade," 66.

[88] "This was the only instance of a King's death that was truly mourned by the people," Gibb, *Life of Saladin*, 76.

[89] On 2 September 1192, a formal three-year peace agreement was established between the Christians and Muslims. Ṣalāḥ al-Dīn agreed to keep the road to Jerusalem open for Christian pilgrims. See Nicolle, *Saladin*, 43.

The politics of alliances and truces had a conspicuous impact on the social and economic lives of the Muslims and Western Christians; intercultural exchanges and social relations developed that remained a somewhat ignored subject of the Crusades and should be highlighted and appreciated: Muslims and Franks engaged in cultural, economic and information exchanges. The Franks were one of the main actors in the Levant with whom the Muslims had trade and commercial links despite the 'official' state of war. This trade would increase whenever peace treaties were enacted, particularly after the famous truce agreement between Richard I and Ṣalāḥ al-Dīn. Diplomatic relations would often foster civilian contacts. This did not mean that such contacts were always genteel, "but it does mean that Frankish-Muslim relations were far richer than the strictly military narrative would allow."[90] The commercial interaction implies cultural interaction, visible in the form of language. Many commercial terms of Arabic origin entered into various Romance languages: words for "custom," such as *douane* and *aduana*, all trace their roots to the Arabic *dīwān*; other examples include the words *cheque* from *sakk* (a letter of credit) and *tariff* from *taʿrīf* (a notification).[91]

Similarly, there was considerable transmission of learning from the Muslims to the Franks. Scientific and religious books were translated from Arabic into Latin, mostly from Spain and Sicily, and these formed the base for later significant developments in European intellectual culture. Muslims in turn also learned some tactics in war technology from the Franks.[92] It is reported that the social interactions between the opposing communities were at the highest level, resulting in the exchange of "physicians, food, gifts and services, as well as the exchange of visits among the commanders."[93]

This relationship continued to flourish alongside the 'state of war' under the Ṣalāḥ al-Dīn's family, the Ayyūbids (who ruled Egypt to 1250 and Syria to 1260). However, the Mamlūks (slave regiments), who overthrew the Ayyūbids, ultimately destroyed the last Crusader state, Acre, in 1291 and brought an end to Crusader Christian

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90 Paul M. Cobb, *The Race for Paradise: An Islamic History of the Crusades* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2014), 170.

91 *Ibid.*, 172-173.

92 Christie, *Muslims and Crusades*, 65-67, 73-76.

93 Dajani-Shakeel, "Perceptions of the Counter-Crusade," 66.

presence in the Levant. Mamlūks, such as Ṣalāḥ al-Dīn, regarded the struggle against the invaders as the most pressing form of *jihād*.[94] Thereby, the Muslim sultans made tangible the dreams of al-Sulamī (who first attempted to mobilize the Muslim rulers with his intellectual capability a century earlier).[95] In this way, al-Sulamī's message of political unity and spiritual purity was translated into a pragmatic reality by practicing the ideal of *jihād* – a touchstone by which Muslim rulers were judged.[96] Jerusalem, in its way, played an important role in this renewal of *jihād* thought.

Conclusion

What emerges from the above discussion is that the Muslim response to the Crusades was initially fragmented and disorganized. Muslim intellectuals and religious figures played an important role in expelling the Franks from the Levant. During the course of action, the *jihād* ideal was aptly exploited to build strong opposition to the enemy. Equally important is the place and role of Jerusalem, which remained a touchstone for any ruler in his *jihād* campaign against the Crusaders. This study analyzed the two significant aspects of the response in the form of the production of a particular genre of literature and the birth of the Muslim-Christian relationship during the Crusades. The paper supported deeper exploration and analysis of the Muslim, particularly through Muslim sources, in order to uncover many fruitful and constructive medieval aspects, especially inter-cultural relationships that will help diminish the East-West discontent, distrust, and alienation.

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[94] Nikolas Jaspert, *The Crusades* (trans. Phyllis G. Jestice; London & New York: Routledge, 2003), 77.

[95] Rubenstein, "Saladin and the Problem of the Counter-Crusade in the Middle Ages," 5.

[96] Partner, *God of Battles*, 93-94.

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BOOK REVIEWS

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LIVING IN THE WEST WHERE ALLAH THE BEAUTIFUL COULD ONLY BE NAMED GOD

Book Review of:

God is Beautiful: The Aesthetic Experience of the Qurʾān, by Nawīd Kirmānī, translated from German into English by Tony Crawford (Cambridge, UK & Malden, MA-USA: Polity Books, 2014), 400 pp., ISBN: 978-0-7456-5167-5, $45.00

Originally written in German:

Gott ist schön: Das ästhetische Erleben des Koran, von Nawīd Kirmānī (München: Verlag C. H. Beck, 1999, 546 pp., ISBN 978-3406687402)

What a sensation before the millennium, in 1999, when the dissertation thesis of orientalist-islamologist Nawīd Kirmānī, delivered in 1997 at Bonn University, was first published in hardcover in Germany: in the heart of secular Europe, a book on the holy Qurʾān with an inclusive approach, written in a highly stylistic manner, reading suspiciously like a poem! This sensation was far from tolerance, however, when a decade later the Cultural Prize of the State of Hessen was revoked upon the claim of Cardinal Lehmann from the Catholic Church that Mr. Kirmānī wrote an essay disparaging the holy cross of Christianity.

Never mind! Of Persian descent, intellectual Nawīd Kirmānī was born in 1967 in Germany, and he finished his doctoral thesis with the same title as the book. The book was well received in Germany and in German-speaking countries, and after the year of, the same 'literary success' shall be granted to him in the much wider English-speaking world.

On the cover of the book, one of the holy names of Allah: السميع (*al-Samīʿ*) is written in Arabic letters. These are called the beautiful names of Allah, hence the title of the book. Mr. Kirmānī desires to stress the aesthetic aspect of the Qurʾān and the aesthetic experience of the believers in the Qurʾān. Nevertheless, this work is surely not a work by a *madrasa*-scholar but rather a product of a Western secular education. This should, however, not cause a misunderstanding or a

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bias toward the book. Indeed, the book deals with German philosophy in addition to the research fields of islamology and related sciences. As Kirmānī indexes Theodor W. Adorno of the Marxist tradition on 17 pages and handles Nietzsche on a highly theoretical level, he thoroughly stresses Qurʾān scholars such as Angelika Neuwirth and John Wansbrough and many *ʿulamāʾ* from Islamic countries.

Thematically, Kirmānī illuminates the aesthetic experience of the Qurʾān by explicating a series of basic tenets under six headings: first receivers, text, sound, wonder (*iʿjāz*), Prophet among poets, and listening of the Sufis. The author formulates his main thesis that for a corresponding assessment of the aesthetic face of the Qurʾān, one must keep in mind the environment in which the revelation took place, namely where the language in general, and the poetry in particular, had an outstanding status because of their supernatural leverage. Nonetheless, his criticism is that the beauty and perfection of the Qurʾān language were not well appreciated in Western islamological circles.

Mr. Kirmānī further explains the basic terminology of his work. Here ‘aesthetic’ refers to both the world of the senses and to “what is artistically perceptible and pleasurable from an objective appearance, in contrast to its discursive content, relying on abstract concepts” (p. 12). The author states that there is no doctrine of beauty in the Qurʾān. His approach here is to be considered quite pluralistic as the same aesthetic dimensions of books of other religions are also hardly or not at all unfolded.

He then addresses a number of issues such as the untranslatability of the Qurʾān, the ambivalent relations of poetry and the Qurʾān and the recitation of the holy text with music or singing. In this sense, in the 9th century, the auditory elements of the recitation were settled as rules and the dogma of the “miracle character of the Qurʾān (*iʿjāz*)” was written down as a kind of “aesthetic proof of God” born in the barrack rooms of the theologians (pp. 72, 241, and 313). Mr. Kirmānī correctly makes use of the argument of the linguistic excellence and of the stylistically unsurpassable character of the Qurʾān; this all makes the recitation a sacramental act.

Despite social problems in the specific environment of German society, his fame and scientific quality and his participation in the very same society led the publishing sector to award him the Peace

Prize of 2015 (*Friedenspreis des* Deutschen *Buchhandels*), to be handed out during the book fair in October 2015. A critical evaluation would note that the negative publicity surrounding the disapproval of the Culture Prize in 2009 is desired to be diminished by awarding the Peace Prize to Mr. Kirmānī. One must say, this decision is not the best solution. Our author is living in the West, where Allah could still solely be named God. However, nobody knows for how long. The socio-linguistic reality of religion is first realized and truly established when the correct terminology begins to be used and is emancipated from nomenclature status. The book *God is Beautiful: The Aesthetic Experience of the Qurʾān* is a first step in this direction.

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The Lineaments of Islam : Studies in Honor of Fred McGraw Donner, edited by Paul M. Cobb (Islamic History and Civilization, Studies and Texts, 95), (Leiden & Boston: Brill, 2012), xviii + 488 pp., ISBN: 978-90-04-21885-7, €168.00 / $234.00 (hb)

Published in honor of Fred M. Donner's long and distinguished career as a leading scholar of early Islam and a professor of Near Eastern History at the University of Chicago, the book encompasses 17 original studies conducted by a number of Donner's students and colleagues. The studies range over a wide array of sub-fields in Islamic history and Islamic studies, including early history, historiography, Islamic law, religious studies, Qurʾānic studies, and Islamic archaeology. The book also includes a bibliography of Donner's works and a biographical sketch of sorts. It is clear that the book was intended as a tribute to Donner's career and his impact on the scholarship in the field. However, while Cobb's introduction serves as a heartfelt tribute to Donner's life and career, it refrains from identifying the academic significance of the collection as a whole to the field of scholarly research.

To aid navigation of the text, the book is divided into four parts, each of which will be reviewed in the following paragraphs: (1) History and Society, (2) Historiography, (3) Qurʾān, Law, and Narrative, and (4) Texts and Artifacts.

The first part of the collection discusses various aspects of early Islamic history and society, particularly focusing on the role of dissent and fringe movements on the development of the Islamic religion. First, Anthony looks at Jewish and Messianist responses to the Islamic conquests of Syria and Mesopotamia, both under Marwānid rule at the time. Then Yücesoy considers the political dissent of the Sufis of the Muʿtazila in the ninth century. Following this, Brown evaluates scholars and charlatans active on the Baghdād-Khurāsān circuit between the ninth and eleventh centuries. Finally, Cook examines the recorded assassinations undertaken by Ismāʿīlī assassins. A common thread in the first section of the collection is that all the essays seek to document the history of fringe movements that affected early Islamic history and society, and in turn, the influence of these movements upon present-day Islam. Cook, Anthony, and

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Yücesoy all note that the movements they studied were largely ignored by contemporary scholars and chroniclers, meaning that the history of such groups remained largely undocumented. For example, Cook explains that descriptions of attacks by the assassins were presented in Arabic sources in such a way as to immortalise their victims as Sunnī martyrs. Because of this, little is known about the ultimate fate of the individual assassins, although it is clear that most attempted to flee rather than commit suicide in the spirit of modern suicide attacks. Similarly, Yücesoy's research on a group of Muʿtazilī ascetics who took a radical stand on the question of legitimate rule during the ninth century reveals that alternative discourses were frequently ignored in Islamic historiography. And in a similar vein, Anthony's study is an attempt to uncover the history of Jewish apocalyptic and messianic movements that emerged in the wake of the Islamic conquests.

Another thread that holds together the first part of Cobb's collection of essays is the fact that all the essays chronicle reactions to the dominant Islamic regime in early Islamic history. For example, Anthony argues that the Islamic conquests inspired "deeply transformative religious dynamism" (p. 21) among Jewish subjects, resulting in apocalyptic speculation and messianic movements. He concludes that these movements had particular relevance because of the upheaval the Jewish communities experienced as a result of the Islamic conquests. Brown shows that the dominant Sunnī Islamic scholars were overwhelmingly popular with the public but were challenged by the charisma of populist preachers. Thus, it was clear that "the Sunnī ʿulamāʾ justified their existence by claiming to be the guides of the masses, but they also served at the masses' pleasure" (p. 94). The first part of the collection reveals that the dominance of the Islamic conquerors often served to stifle the voices of those who challenged their rule.

Part 2 of the collection is more diverse than the first part, covering a period from the origins of Islamic history to the nineteenth century. First, Urban examines the question whether Abū Bakra was the voice of the Prophet or merely a polemical tool. Then, Scheiner considers the writing of the history of the *Futūḥ*, focusing on three particular writers, while Shahin evaluates the treatises and monographs on Muʿāwiya ibn Abī Sufyān that were written from the eighth to the nineteenth centuries. Finally, Schick assesses the role of Umayyads and ʿAbbāsids in Mujīr al-Dīn's fifteenth-century history of Jerusalem

and Hebron. While Scheiner and Schick focus on historical writings, Urban and Shahin investigate the historiography of a particular person. Urban argues that Abū Bakra's story tells scholars a great deal about how Islamic scholars recorded historical events. She challenges the traditional depiction of Abū Bakra, arguing that he was not a *mawlā,* i.e. a kinsman of the Prophet Muḥammad, as the sources say he was. Instead, she claims that Abū Bakra was a slave who had been freed during the 630 siege of al-Ṭāʾif. This event then created a *walāʾ* or kinship bond between Abū Bakra and Muḥammad. As such, Abū Bakra's story provides an informative insight into how personal relationships were understood during the life and times of the Prophet. Similarly, Shahin observes that the writings on Muʿāwiya ibn Abī Sufyān reveal how the monarch's controversial reign was perceived. He notes that each of the Muʿāwiya texts focuses on a certain aspect of his reign instead of presenting a chronological narrative or attempting a full biography. Both of these essays examine how historiography was understood by Islamic scholars and how it differed from Western scholarship. On the other hand, Scheiner looks at how early *Futūḥ* works were written and how they relate to later *Futūḥ*, while Schick examines a fifteenth-century history of Jerusalem. Nonetheless, these two essays share the purpose of the studies focusing on particular individuals: they all seek a better understanding of Islamic scholarship and of the process whereby certain traditions came about.

Part 3 evaluates the nature and role of Qurʾānic law and narrative and their effects on Islamic society. Toward this aim, the first two essays consider the influence of individual narratives presented in the Qurʾān, whereas the third, fourth, and fifth essays explore the role of the Qurʾān in Islamic society throughout the ages. Evaluations of the impact of individual Qurʾānic narratives are undertaken by Kueny, who considers the role of such narratives in the reproduction of power, and Lowin, who looks at narratives of villainy in the Qurʾān, focusing on the stories of Titus, Nebuchadnezzar, and Nimrod. Kueny argues that the Qurʾān presents three major models of how God granted human life: first, by depicting God as using clay to fashion life forms and then breathing life into them; second, through the use of pagan motifs; and third, by drawing on Greek paradigms of fetal development. Studying these aspects of Qurʾānic depiction allows Kueny to analyse how God generates life but requires feminine material to properly give such life. Although the Qurʾān is unclear on

the feminine influence on life, it does claim that God possesses medical wisdom from which individual life springs, indicating that God has profound influence over human life. Lowin examines Muslim reproductions of texts concerning villains who occur in Jewish history. While historians such as David Sidersky have concluded that such reproductions were due to transcription errors, Lowin argues that these texts instead prove that Islamic authors were keen to teach their readers lessons about villainy by emphasising the long history of such villainy. Both essays thus show the important role that God played in Islamic history in giving life and punishing misbehaviour. In the next three essays the role of the Qurʾān in Islamic society is elucidated by De Gifis, who evaluates the role of Qurʾānic rhetoric in ninth-century Muslim-Byzantine diplomacy; Wheeler, who attempts to put Ibāḍī *fiqh* scholarship into context; and Katz, who examines Qurʾānic texts created during the early sixteenth century. Overall, this section sheds light on both the role of God and the impact of the Qurʾān in Islamic society during its long and diverse history.

Finally, the fourth section of the book examines Islamic texts and artifacts. While Sears and Vorderstrasse focus upon textual analysis of certain texts, Hoffman and Eger discuss the significance of particular archaeological remains that have played an important role in Islamic history. Hoffmann attempts to trace what Coptic glazed ware tells scholars about Islamic Ascalon, and Eger evaluates frontier fortifications in the early Islamic period. Hoffman's study is particularly useful, as she uses the archaeological remains of Ascalon to fill in blanks in the written historical record. Sears examines eighth-century Khurāsān through the lens of the revolt of al-Ḥārith ibn Surayj and the countermarking of Umayyad Dirhams, using textual motifs to explore the narrative characteristics of the sources. Similarly, Vorderstrasse considers varying descriptions of the Pharos of Alexandria in Islamic and Chinese sources, comparing Islamic scholarship to what contemporary Chinese sources have to say about similar subjects. While each of these studies is fascinating in its own right, it is hard to overlook the fact that the essays in this last group have very little in common, which makes for a disjointed end to an interesting collection.

Overall, the collection of essays compiled by Cobb shows how Donner's influence has encouraged Western scholarship of Islamic history to develop in diverse directions over the years, reviving

strands of Islamic social history that had previously been forgotten or neglected. It is difficult to review each of these excellent examples of scholarly research in detail due to the wide and complex range of topics under discussion, but a full reading of the volume gives the researcher a new, deep appreciation of the diversity and scope of Islamic history and scholarship. Interestingly, many of the essays hark back to the history shared by Islam and other religious traditions such as Judaism and Christianity. For example, Anthony highlights the messianic and apocalyptic religious movements that arose in Jewish communities following the Islamic conquests, while Lowin shows how Jewish villains were appropriated by Islamic scholars to teach their readers important moral lessons. Cook makes the related point that studying the history of the assassins is particularly relevant today given the present terrorist threat and America's history of designating external threats, as it did with communism during the 1950s. Therefore, the collection emphasises the fact that Western and Eastern history form an integrated whole, rather than being entirely diverse or separate. In conclusion, this collection makes a great contribution to the study of early Islamic religion and history and gives the reader a useful overview of the complex nature of Islamic history and scholarship.

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Islamisation and Its Opponents in Java: A Political, Social, Cultural and Religious History, c. 1930 to the Present, by M. C. Ricklefs, (Singapore: National University of Singapore [NUS] Press, 2012), xxi + 576 pp., ISBN: 978-9971-69-631-3, US$38.00 / S$45.00 (pb)

This hefty tome of more than five hundred pages is the third and longest volume in Merle Ricklefs's trilogy on the history of the Islamization of Java – the most populous island of the world's largest Muslim nation state: Indonesia. It completes a narrative which started with *Mystic Synthesis in Java: A History of Islamisation from the Fourteenth to the Early Nineteenth Centuries* (2006), followed by *Polarising Javanese Society: Islamic and Other Visions* (c. 1830-1930) (2007). It also continues an argument for understanding the Islamization of Java as an open-ended and ongoing process of religious transformation.

Organized in two parts, the first half of the book covers a period of almost sixty years from 1930 until the fall of President Soeharto in 1998, and the subsequent disappearance of his military-dominated regime which had controlled the country for more than thirty years. The second part tells in almost two hundred pages the story of developments since the turn of the century. The book's closing chapter constitutes a third part in which the significance of this Islamization process is assessed in the contexts of the generic field of the history of religions, the contemporary Muslim world, and in relation to an ethical-political agenda for the search of a better life.

Before moving to what Ricklefs calls the 'deeper Islamization' of Java in the course of the twentieth century, the book's opening chapter offers a summary of the two previous volumes. It explains the inherent tensions between making Java Islamic and contextualizing Islam into the Javanese setting through a process of 'mystic synthesis' that lasted for more than half a millennium. This is followed by a century of more forceful intrusions of Islamic ideas and practices which resulted in the polarization of Javanese society, not least because it coincided with increasingly invasive interventions by European colonial powers and Christian missionaries during the age of high imperialism. According to Ricklefs this period is characterized

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by two competing forms of 'globalization and modernization: on the one hand, international Islamic purification movements and, on the other, European colonialism and its attendant baggage of scientific and technological advances' (p. 17). This penultimate timeframe is conveniently marked off by the start of the Java war in 1830 and the onset of the Great Depression after the stock market crash of 1929.

The Dutch East Indies government census of 1930 is used to sketch the demographic and social-political setting of the last one hundred years of Javanese Islamization and present some snapshots of Javanese cultural and religious life as it became 'polarised on the precipice' (p. 56) of the Second World War. Throughout the book, Ricklefs continues to draw extensively on statistical data in order make sense of and accurately interpret the complex dynamics of Islamization amidst the cultural vibrancy of a populous and culturally diverse island like Java. He further unpacks themes which were introduced in the previous volumes, such as the continuing evolution of the 'mystic synthesis' and the increasing tension between practicing pious and 'nominal' Muslims, referred to in Indonesian as *santri* and *abangan* respectively.

In the next four chapters, the narrative of the Islamization of Java and Indonesia at large begin to converge and overlap as the colony of the Netherlands East Indies evolves into a federal and then a unitary nation state, bringing together a geographical expanse that encompasses more than sixteen thousand islands and hundreds of ethnic groups. Exploiting the more positive attitude of the Japanese occupiers during World War II towards political Islam, Muslim activists advocated the formation of an Islamic state. Arguing that this was the main unifying factor of Indonesia's multi-ethnic population, this assertiveness required some delicate negotiating and manoeuvring from both Muslim politicians, united in the Masyumi party (in effect an umbrella organization of a plethora of Islamic organizations spanning a spectrum from rural traditionalism to cosmopolitan urban Islamic reformism and modernism, but dominated by the modernist Muhammadiyah), and their political opponents – consisting of secular nationalists; a sizeable communist party; and – after a 1952 breakaway from Masyumi – a party of Islamic traditionalists, called *Nahdatul Ulama* (NU). After the proclamation of independence Masyumi failed not only in establishing an Islamic state, but did not even manage to secure a reference to Islamic law in the country's first constitution. Instead, the

secular nationalist and first president, Soekarno, introduced a so-called Doctrine of 'Five Principles,' the *Pancasila*, which only stipulated a mandatory belief in one God and reduced Islam into one of four officially recognized religious traditions (alongside Catholicism, Protestantism, and Hinduism-Buddhism).

The result was a further sharpening of divisions, leading to what Ricklefs refers to as 'Aliran politics' – the political fragmentation of Indonesian society into separate ideological 'silos' of nationalists, communists, socialists, and an Islamic bloc which was internally divided between Islamists, who continued to campaign for an Islamic state, and Muslim politicians who wished to further Islamize Indonesia through democratic means. Eventually, 'the first freedom experiment' (pp. 80 ff) collapsed as a result of communist opposition to Islamization and the disappointing performance of the Islamic parties in the first elections held in 1955. Failing to retain their preponderance in party politics, the Masyumi party was first sidelined as President Soekarno introduced his 'Guided Democracy' initiative and then effectively dissolved and banned from politics in the wake of a number of regional, Islam-inspired, rebellions and the fateful decision of a number of cornered Masyumi politicians to join a renegade secessionist government.

This chaotic situation with increasingly violent confrontations between rebels and the army, provided the excuse for a military coup in 1965, which led to an orgy of violence against alleged communists by both the regular armed forces and Islamic militias. This not only exacerbated the *santri-abangan* dichotomy, but also inaugurated a period of totalitarian rule by General Soeharto at the head of the so-called 'New Order' Regime. Ricklefs sketches how the general's own spiritual inclinations, which had more affinity with the religious orientation of the *abangan* than the *santri*, where now presented under new categories. Initially a term with recognizable Islamic connotations, *kebatinan*, was used to classify manifestations of Javanese spiritualism, but this was increasingly subsumed as part of a 'broader social category' referred to as *kejawen* or 'Javanism' – 'implying true Javanese identity' (p. 269). *Santri* Muslims felt not only squeezed by this new religious category, but also by other developments. In particular Muslim modernists associated with the still banned Masyumi party were also alarmed by large-scale

conversions to Christianity among the *abangan*, while the traditionalist NU experienced a reversal in its political fortunes. Having managed to retain a working relation with the Soekarno government during the 1950s and early 1960s, under New Order the NU was regarded as a competitor for the loyalty among Java's vast rural population. Consequently, the NU opted for a political role as the regime's opposition, whereas Islamic modernists deployed other strategies. One group of activists, gravitating around a select group of intellectuals and youth activists working through Muslim student unions, adopted an accommodationist attitude and developed a *modus vivendi* with the regime, whereas others – seeing the road to Islamic party politics blocked off – opted for grassroots level *daʿwa* or religious propagation activities, coordinated by an 'Indonesian Islamic Mission Council' (Dewan Daʿwa Islamiyah Indonesia, DDII) for which they had managed to obtain government approval.

Both strategies sorted such effect that – by the 1980s – the New Order Regime felt compelled to navigate between, on the one hand, a re-affirmation of the Pancasila as state doctrine, and, on the other hand, in exchange for their acceptance of Pancasila, overtures towards the Islamic bloc. It resulted not just in a rapprochement between the regime and NU, but also in increasingly overt manifestations of renewed Islamization efforts – not just condoned but often actively supported by the government. Thus emboldened, the DDII and other daʿwa organizations became increasingly assertive and between the mid-1980s and late 1990s a vast array of Islamic NGOs entered the Indonesian public sphere. These concessions on the part of the regime proved too little too late because eventually Soeharto was no longer able to avert his own downfall in 1998.

As the Islamization process comes to its fruition, Ricklefs notes that in the second part of the book, the 'discussion will have only little to say about resistance to Islamisation per se. Rather, the conflicts that we will observe will be contending views of what a more Islamic Java – and, of course, a more Islamic Indonesia – should look like' (p. 256). Continuing his survey into what he calls the 'second freedom experiment' (pp. 261ff) of the post-Soeharto period, Ricklefs describes the sea-change set in motion by New Order's political attitude toward Islam not so much on the level of national governance, but by offering a richly textured narrative of grassroots level developments, paying attention to social, cultural, and artistic

developments, which he describes in minute detail. For this he draws on vast amounts of documentary evidence, interviews with many individuals of both national and of local significance, and observations accrued over many decades of very intensive and intimate scholarly and personal engagement. With that, the second part of the book presents a varied pallet of developments which can only be captured and brought together into engaging accounts by a scholar with such unparalleled erudition and experience, and which are impossible to do justice within the space of a brief book review. For those interested in a comprehensive insight into the religious experience of the Javanese as 'one of the largest ethnic groups in the Islamic world' (back cover), together with the two preceding volumes, this latest book by Merle Ricklefs offers the definitive account of a unique six-century Islamization process.

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Inquisition in Early Islam : The Competition for Political and Religious Authority in the Abbasid Empire, by John P. Turner (Library of Middle East History, 35) (London & New York: I. B. Tauris, 2013), xvi + 228 pp., ISBN: 978-1-78076-164-0, £56.00 (hb)

The dramatic events surrounding the *miḥna* (inquisition) have been the subject of immense academic interest over recent years. It is frequently acknowledged that their historical unfolding represents a key milestone in the history of early Islamic theological thought; and many scholars link the political fortunes of the early ʿAbbāsid empire to the episode. Imposed by the caliph al-Maʾmūn (ruled 198-218/813-833), during the *miḥna* the class of learned scholars was compelled to submit to the doctrine that the Qurʾān was created; it became a salient point of contention in theological discourses with proto-Sunnī orthodoxy defining itself through opposition to the policy. Despite the death of al-Maʾmūn, shortly after its imposition, the policy was continued during the successive caliphates of al-Muʿtaṣim (ruled 218-227/833-842) and al-Wāthiq (ruled 227-232/842-847). Al-Mutawakkil revoked it in 232/847. Challenging some of the commonly held perceptions about the *miḥna*, the book under review sets out to examine its origins and the reasons why it was imposed, gauging its importance within the context of broader historical periods. The book also examines the role of caliphs and the *ʿulamāʾ* as contributors to the synthesis and elaboration of questions of faith and dogma. Critically, the key argument which defines John Turner's study of the *miḥna* is the contention that although within contemporary scholarship there exists a general acceptance that the *miḥna* stands out as an anomaly and watershed event, culminating in the failure of the caliphs to impose their will, there is ample evidence to suggest that this is not the case. Turner argues that the *miḥna* stood out not because it proved to be a decisive turning point in the struggle for religious authority or indeed for its theological distinction as a point of dispute, but due to its being manipulated as an historical narrative by adherents of the Ḥanbalite school. He argues that this was part of their strategy to assert their orthodox credentials and thereby gain legitimacy as a school. They reshaped its narratives and

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topoi, situating Ibn Ḥanbal (d. 241/855) as a staunch defender of orthodoxy and champion of the episode.

Reviewing the events of the *miḥna* within a broader vector of interlinked events, the book's arguments are structured around six chapters. The first of these offers an evaluation of the issues which lay at the core of the *miḥna* and introduces its main protagonists; this includes a synopsis of recent studies on the subject (pp. 14-21). The conclusions reached in many of these studies with regards to the *miḥna* representing a defining moment in early Islamic history are qualified. In the second chapter the focus switches to the 'polemics of naming' and the 'rhetoric of heresy' with the objective of showing that historical paradigms existed for the type of intervention witnessed during the *miḥna* (pp. 29-35); it is reasoned that such instances of intervention were commensurate with the socio-political role of the caliphs. In Chapter Three attention turns to the design of the doxographical works of al-Ashʿarī d. 324/935), al-Baghdādī (d. 429/1037), and al-Shahrastānī (d. 548/1153) and the case is made that the authors of these texts were not furnishing objectively neutral accounts of heresy and heretical movements, but rather seeking to vaunt their own credentials as steadfast representatives of normative orthodoxy (p. 43). The suggestion is that such forms of writing were strategically employing the 'polemics of naming' and the 'rhetoric of heresy' to gain legitimacy and favour. Continuing this focus on the identification of heresy, the chapter offers an examination of the correspondence ascribed to al-Maʾmūn, which it is argued, mirrors the dynamic of the 'rhetoric of heresy' found in the doxographical literature. The underlying assumption is that such materials were aimed at defining the boundaries of orthodoxy (p. 59); significantly, it is posited that apropos the *miḥna*, there is nothing novel in the intervention of al-Maʾmūn in his capacity as Commander of the Faithful, and that both the correspondence attributed to him and the discussions found in the doxographical materials share common goals: the quest to define and appropriate the territory of orthodoxy.

In Chapters Four and Five an examination is provided of the trials of al-Ḥārith ibn Saʿīd (d. 79/698 or 80/699) and Ghaylān al-Dimashqī, who were prosecuted during the rule of the Umayyad caliphs and those of Aḥmad ibn Ḥanbal and Aḥmad ibn Naṣr al-Khuzāʿī (d. 231/846), who were central figures during the period of the *miḥna*. Turner does argue that the accounts of these trials were insidiously

doctored and reworked with the final narratives being manipulated to present an idealised version of events which promoted preconceived ideological perspectives and standpoints (pp. 65-66). With this in mind, it is concluded that the trials share common features in that they provide precedents for the actions of the caliphs, confirming their role as prosecutors of heresy and defenders of faith. In Turner's view this also signals that the acts of intervention by the caliphs were not extraordinary. On this basis it is explained that the events of the *miḥna* should not be viewed as being anomalous in terms of their illustrating the caliph's failure to assert his right to define dogma, nor do they presage a departure in the practices of the ruling elite. Turner reasons that such a state of affairs suggests that notions of orthodoxy were still in a state of flux during these formative periods (p. 116). The arguments and discussions set fourth in the preceding two chapters serve as a prelude to the subjects explored in the final chapter: namely, the *miḥna* and its context, which is predominantly concerned with probing how traditionalist orthodoxy came to be defined through the figure of Ibn Ḥanbal and the role that later Ḥanbalites played in portraying the accounts of the *miḥna*. In the chapter the struggle for authority and legitimacy between the Ḥanbalites and al-Ṭabarī (d. 310/923) is used to highlight the way in which the events of the *miḥna* were recast to weave a narrative which presented its unfolding in a whole new light (p. 119). The crux of Turner's explanation is that the *miḥna* owes its saliency not to the significance of the events which led to its imposition nor indeed the specifics of the dispute, but rather to the reality that its narrative was used with devastating skill by later Ḥanbalite chroniclers and luminaries to create an inflated role for Ibn Ḥanbal as a hero of the episode in order to buttress the emerging school's claim to legitimacy and recognition (pp. 142-145). *Ex hypothesi*, this was pursued in the face of palpable tensions between the Ḥanbalites and al-Ṭabarī's Jarīrī school of *fiqh*. By exaggerating accounts of the episode and the role of Ibn Ḥanbal, the genuine historical import of the *miḥna* was distorted, adversely impinging upon the way secondary scholarship has interpreted the events and even understood the role of caliphs during these formative periods.

The elaborate linkage between key elements of the discussions presented by Turner remains impressive. Still, there are aspects to his arguments and premises with which one could take issue. For example, it is possible to question whether it is appropriate to posit a

correlation between the trials prosecuted by ʿAbd al-Malik (d. 86/705) and Hishām ibn ʿAbd Malik (d. 125/743) and those imposed during the *miḥna*. This equivalence appears to underestimate the scale of the issues at stake during the *miḥna* and their overwhelming impact upon theological discourses in later years; it was this reality that perpetuated its significance as a historical event, generating a profusion of discussions within theological thought. It is certainly apposite for Turner to point out that the doctrine of a created Qurʾān was not exclusive to Muʿtazilite theologians, but it was viewed with suspicion by those who deemed themselves advocates of a traditionalist brand of theology. Wilferd Madelung made the telling point that in the reactionary environment of dialectical debate, scholars were often obliged into adopting counter positions. This is true of the developed notion of the eternity of the Qurʾān, which was a corollary of the desire to deny that it was created.[1] For example, during the *miḥna*, Ibn Kullāb (d. 258/854), who was renowned as the progenitor of Sunnī dialectical discourses, was immensely influential in promulgating the thesis of an eternal Qurʾān, although, he is not mentioned in Turner's discussion, while equally elaborate theories in this regard were refined by al-Qalānisī (flor. 3rd/9th centuries).[2] Ibn Kullāb professed that God's speech does not consist of letters or sounds, nor can it be fragmented, divided, segmented, or parted. It exists as an entity within him, although he does qualify this by stating that the physical trace and impression (script) of the Qurʾān are constituted both in its various letters and consonants and in its very recitation.[3] The reverberation of such ideas was felt in theological literature for centuries, confirming the impact the *miḥna* had on the course of such discussions; its theological cachet was substantial. It

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[1] Wilferd Madelung, "The Origins of the Controversy Concerning the Creation of the Qurʾān," in Félix M. Pareja Casañas (ed.), *Orientalia Hispanica: sive studia FM, Pareja octogenaria dicata* (Leiden: E. J. Brill, 1974), 524-525.

[2] Josef van Ess, *Theologie und Gesellschaft im 2. 3. jahrhundert Hidschra* (Berlin: Walter de Gruyter,1991-1995), IV, 200-202; and his article "Ibn Kullāb und die *Miḥna*," *Oriens* 18-19 (1967), 92-142. Daniel Gimaret, "Cet autre théologien Sunnite: Abū l-ʿAbbās al-Qalānisī," *Journal Asiatique* 277 (1989), 227-261.

[3] Abū l-Ḥasan ʿAlī ibn Ismāʿīl al-Ashʿarī, *Maqālāt al-Islāmiyyīn wa-ikhtilāf al-muṣallīn* (ed. Muḥammad Muḥyī al-Dīn ʿAbd al-Ḥamīd; Cairo: Dār al-Maʿārif, 1987), II, 257 f.

was also more than just a coincidence that the construct of a created Qurʾān was aligned with the Muʿtazilite concept of *tawḥīd*, the theological implications of which were colossal. Notably, this is flagged as a concern in the correspondence of al-Maʾmūn who rails against those who draw an equivalence between God and his revealed scripture.

On the subject of the doxographies selected by Turner to illustrate the 'definition of norms' proposition, his choice of texts is open to question. One wonders whether the *Maqālāt* of al-Ashʿarī really serves as a suitable analogue for his schema or indeed whether the genre to which it belongs lends itself to his thesis (p. 42). For example, the issue of the approach adopted in al-Ashʿarī's *Maqālāt* is the subject of much debate.[4] In the exordium to the text al-Ashʿarī insists that he wanted to provide an objective account of sects and movements, expressly avoiding their denigration purely on the basis of their beliefs. He states that such approaches were reprehensibly evident in the works of his peers, and he distances himself from the raptorial disparagement of adversaries. Turner appears to allude to this but goes on to question whether it is applied by al-Ashʿarī; one notes that there are only select junctures in the text where al-Ashʿarī declares his allegiances (p. 44). A rich repertoire of works was produced within the *maqālāt* and *ṭabaqāt* genres of writing, including texts written by figures such as al-Kaʿbī (d. 319/931), al-Qāḍī ʿAbd al-Jabbār (d. 415/1025), al-Malaṭī (d. 379/987), Ibn Fūrak (d. 406/1015), al-Bāqillānī (d. 403/1013), Ibn Ḥazm (d. 456/1064), Abū l-Muẓaffar al-Isfarāyīnī (d. 471/1078), al-Nawbakhtī (d. c. 300/912), al-Sheikh al-Mufīd (d. 413/1022), and numerous other luminaries, yet each work has its discrete goals, designs and is intended for different audiences. It was in the area of the more focused theological *summae* that scholars could engage their opponents and defend their doctrinal positions. Additionally, Turner's observations about the underlying strategy of al-Shahrastānī's *Kitāb al-milal wa-l-niḥal* are open to question: not only

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[4] Josef van Ess, *Der Eine und das Andere: Beobachtungen an islamischen häresiographischen Texten* (Berlin: De Gruyter, 2010), I, 454 ff.; and Richard Frank, "Elements in the Development of the Teaching of al-Ashʿarī," *Le Muséon: Revue d'Études Orientales* 104 (1991), 141-190. Frank's discussions do explain the significance of the work.

are the author's affiliations the subject of contention, but in certain respects al-Shahrastānī is derivatively revisiting existing discussions; besides, there is nothing calculating about al-Shahrastānī devoting 'approximately half of the discussion of the orthodox' to the Ashʿarites given the prominence of their contribution to rational and dialectical discourses.[5]

Ultimately, Turner does lay great store by the view that the struggle for authority and legitimacy between the Ḥanbalites and al-Ṭabarī provided the backdrop for the realignment of the *miḥna* narratives in order to magnify the role of Ibn Ḥanbal as the emblematic defender of orthodoxy. In this specific context he mentions that al-Ṭabarī was 'vying for adherents, permanency, and orthodox status' with the Ḥanbalites (pp. 145-147). However, such a view runs the serious risk of taking the actual disputes between al-Ṭabarī and his opponents among the Ḥanbalites out of their historical setting. Tensions between al-Ṭabarī and his critics were the result of his unswerving intellectual independence and the integrity of his scholarship which he expressed in the context of legal, exegetical, and, especially, theological discussions. This is evidenced by his disputes with the eponym of the Ẓāhirī school, Dāwūd Ibn Khalaf (d. 270/884), and his son Abū Bakr: against the former he composed the *al-Radd ʿalā dhī'l-asfār*. And in his hostile encounters with Ibn Abī Dāwūd al-Sijistānī (d. 316/929), who was probably behind the accusations of *rafḍ* and *ilḥād* levelled against al-Ṭabarī; the antagonism between the two, which was protracted, provides a critical context for understanding the disputes of the period.[6] With

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[5] See the discussions in Abū l-Fatḥ Tāj al-Dīn Muḥammad ibn ʿAbd al-Karīm al-Shahrastānī, *Struggling with the Philosopher: A Refutation of Avicenna's Metaphysics* -A new Arabic edition and English translation of al-Shahrastānī's *Kitāb al-Muṣāraʿa*- (edited and translated by Wilferd Madelung and Toby Mayer; New York & London: I. B. Tauris, 2001). See the discussion in the introduction.

[6] Mustafa Shah, "Al-Ṭabarī and the Dynamics of *tafsīr*: Theological Dimensions of a Legacy," *Journal of Qur'anic Studies* 15/2 (2013), p. 84 and p. 115. On Ibn Abī Dāwūd, see ʿAbd Allāh Ibn ʿAdī al-Jurjānī, *al-Kāmil fī ḍuʿafāʾ al-rijāl* (Beirut: Dār al-Fikr, 1997), IV, 1577-1578), Cf. with Abū l-Faraj Jamāl al-Dīn Ibn al-Jawzī, *al-Muntaẓam fī tāʾrīkh al-umam wa-l-mulūk* (ed. Muḥammad ʿAbd al-Qādir ʿAṭāʾ and Muṣṭafā ʿAbd al-Qādir ʿAṭāʾ; Beirut: Dār al-Kutub al-ʿIlmiyya, 1992), XIII, 215-217.

regards to the emergence of the Ḥanbalī *madhhab*, Abū Bakr al-Khallāl (d. 311/923) was undeniably instrumental in codifying and promoting Ibn Ḥanbal's legal legacy, but ultimately it was the quality of the constellation of legal materials as preserved in the various collections known as the *masāʾīl* which was prerequisite to the success of this enterprise. Finally, it is an overstatement to describe al-Ashʿarī as being engaged in "a struggle against the Ḥanābila for inclusion" and that he was a claimant to Ibn Ḥanbal's legacy (p. 142).[7] Al-Ashʿarī was not a legal or indeed a *ḥadīth* specialist; and simply used his *al-Ibāna ʿan uṣūl al-diyāna* to express his theological allegiance to Ibn Ḥanbal, although such pronouncements appear to have been nominal as the text itself, together with his oeuvre, shows that his inclinations in theology remained indomitably rationalist and were vehemently disavowed by those of a traditionist bent.

There is certainly much to be admired from Turner's analysis of the *miḥna* and the events surrounding it, especially the originality of his arguments and the clarity with which they are presented. The sheer range of materials and themes covered in the book is highly impressive. His appraisal of the historical narratives connected with the episode is particularly insightful, and shows not only key nuances in their development, but also the integral nature of the relationship between the religious and social roles of the caliphs. With reference to the outcome of the *miḥna*, Turner also convincingly demonstrates that the impression that religion was divorced from politics is shown to be based on a fallacy, as is the idea that an inevitable opposition of sorts developed between the class of religious scholars and the ruling élite. Although one could dispute whether the book fully succeeds in accounting for the prominence of the *miḥna* as an historical event, it does nevertheless form a formidable contribution to its study and one which readers will find engaging.

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[7] Richard Frank also questioned the historicity of the encounter between al-Barbahārī (d. 329/941) and al-Ashʿarī as recounted in Ibn Abī Yaʿlā's *Ṭabaqāt*. See "Elements in the Development of the Teaching of al-Ashʿarī," 171-172. Cf. Abū Jaʿfar Muḥammad ibn Jarīr al-Ṭabarī, *The History of al-Ṭabarī: General Introduction and Translation from the Creation to the Flood* (translated and annotated by Franz Rosenthal; Albany, NY: State University of New York Press, 1989), 72.

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