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Salafī Challenge and Māturīdī Response: Contemporary Disputes over the Legitimacy of Māturīdī *kalām*

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Abstract

Salafī refutations of Sunnī *kalām* have long been focused almost exclusively on the Ashʿariyya. In recent decades, however, Salafī authors and activists have also turned their attention towards the Māturīdī current, which has been historically predominant in those parts of the Muslim world dominated by the Ḥanafī *madhhab*. In the present article, the characteristics of the Salafī challenge to the Māturīdiyya are presented and the main factors behind its emergence and dissemination are traced. It is shown that the recent growing awareness of the Māturīdiyya as a theological other among adherents of Salafī Islam owes much to the efforts of the Pakistani scholar Shams al-Dīn al-Salafī al-Afghānī, a graduate of the Islamic University of Medina. It is argued that his work, which was influenced both by his specific South Asian background and by his exposure to established forms of Salafī education and *daʿwa* in Medina, was instrumental in raising the spectre of a "modern Māturīdiyya" as a serious doctrinal challenger and impediment to Salafī expansion in South Asia and elsewhere. Hereby it was specifically the late Ottoman scholar Muḥammad Zāhid al-Kawtharī and his followers, as well as the South Asian Deobandī and Barelvī (i.e., *Ahl-i Sunnat*) *masālik*, which were identified as prime representatives of the contemporary Māturīdiyya. Finally, it is shown that the Salafī assault on the Māturīdiyya seems to have resulted in a revival of theological *madhhab*-consciousness, as well as in growing cooperation between Ḥanafī scholars in different parts of the Muslim world.

Keywords

Salafī Islam – Salafism – Māturīdiyya – *kalām* – Ḥanafiyya – Deoband – Islamic University of Medina – al-Kawtharī – Ibn Taymiyya – al-Ṭaḥāwī

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The Imams of the Sunna have related that responding to the people of innovation in the religion of Allāh is among the noblest forms of jihād.[1]

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Introduction

Despite their marked internal diversity and disunity, the different orientations of Salafī Islam exhibit a widely shared outlook as far as denunciations of various widespread religious practices, doctrines and intellectual traditions within mainstream Sunnī Islam are concerned. In this respect, Salafī attacks on key ritual practices, such as *mawlid* celebrations, are most widely acknowledged. Just as fundamental for the non-Salafī Sunnī mainstream, however, is the fact that the adherence to particular schools of Sunnī law and theology is the subject of Salafī criticism and charges of "reprehensible innovation" (*bidʿa*). Whereas most scholarly attention has so far been focused on the debates surrounding the legitimacy of the four Sunnī schools of law, the present study will contrarily concentrate on Salafī attacks on the Sunnī schools of scholastic theology, and on the Māturīdiyya in particular. The latter *madhhab* took shape in Transoxiana in the eleventh and twelfth centuries CE through the systematization of the theological teachings of its eponym, Abū Manṣūr al-Māturīdī (d. 333/944), by local Ḥanafī scholars.[2] As such, the theological orientation which eventually came to be known as the Māturīdiyya, has always been closely tied to the Ḥanafī school, and its teachings are also reflected in the works of *uṣūl al-fiqh* and *tafsīr* of major Transoxianian Ḥanafī scholars of the eleventh to fourteenth centuries CE, which became widely used as standard texts in the Ottoman and Mughal empires.[3]

1 Shams al-Salafī al-Afghānī, *ʿAdāʾ al-Māturīdiyya li-l-ʿaqīda al-salafiyya*, 3 vols. (al-Ṭāʾif: al-Ṣaʿīq, 1419/1998), I: 39.

2 See Ulrich Rudolph, *al-Māturīdī und die sunnitische Theologie in Samarkand* (Leiden et al.: Brill, 1997); Angelika Brodersen, *Der unbekannte* kalām*: Theologische Positionen der frühen* Māturīdīya *am Beispiel der Attributenlehre* (Münster: LIT Verlag, 2014).

3 See Wilferd Madelung, "The Spread of Māturīdism and the Turks", in idem, *Religious Schools and Sects in Medieval Islam* (London: Variorum Reprints, 1985), 109-68 (no. II); "The Spread and Persistence of Māturīdī Kalām and Underlying Dynamics", *Iran and the Caucasus* 13:1 (2009), 29-52.

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Despite this close association between the Ḥanafiyya and the Māturīdiyya, and the fact that the tradition derived from al-Māturīdī had early on differentiated itself explicitly from the teachings of the followers of Abū l-Ḥasan al-Ashʿarī (d. 324/936), who came to form the dominant strand of Sunnī theology, the lasting success of the philosophical turn in *kalām*, heralded by Ashʿarī scholars such as Fakhr al-Dīn al-Rāzī (d. 606/1209) and ʿAḍud al-Dīn al-Ījī (d. 756/1355), served to greatly diminish the relevance of Māturīdī *kalām* also in Ottoman and Mughal lands. From the sixteenth century onwards, however, a distinct Ḥanafī-Māturīdī theology began to develop, not least through its clear demarcation from the Ashʿariyya by way of an extensive primarily Ottoman literature on Māturīdī-Ashʿarī points of divergence (*ikhtilāf*). These include most prominently the Māturīdī doctrines of the rational necessity of knowledge of Allāh, the possibility of rational recognition of good and evil, the affirmation of human free choice (*ikhtiyār*), the rejection of *taklīf bi-mā yuṭāq* (prescribing something beyond human capacity), the existence of the eternal divine attribute of *takwīn* (bringing into existence, or existentiation), and the related differentiation between existentiation and the existentiated (*mukawwan*). The main figures in this shift towards a more recognizable Māturīdī identity, which became particularly obvious in the eighteenth century, were Muḥammad b. Pīr ʿAlī al-Birkawī (d. 981/1573) and Kamāl al-Dīn al-Bayāḍī (d. 1098/1687).[4]

Yet, South Asia also witnessed the emergence of its own highly influential major proponent of reassertive Māturīdī doctrine, in the figure of Aḥmad Sirhindī (d. 1034/1624), the founder of the Naqshbandiyya-Mujaddidiyya.[5] Even though no comparable major pro-Māturīdī *ikhtilāf* literature arose in South Asia, there is evidence for a reaffirmation of a distinctive Māturīdī identity in the subcontinent in the wake of Sirhindī. For instance, even the *kalām*-critical eighteenth-century reformer Shāh Valiyallāh b. ʿAbd al-Raḥīm Dihlavī

4 See Edward Badeen, *Sunnitische Theologie in osmanischer Zeit* (Würzburg: Ergon, 2008); Yahya Raad Haidar, *The Debates between Ashʿarism and Māturīdism in Ottoman Religious Scholarship: A Historical and Biographical Study* (unpublished PhD. thesis, Australian National University, 2016); Mehmet Kalaycı, *18. Yüzyıl Osmanlı Dinî Düşüncesinde Mâturîdîlik Vurgusu: Hanefîlikten Mâturîdîliğe Giden Sürece Dair Bir Tahlil* (Sahn-ı Semân'dan Dârülfünûn'a Osmanlı'da İlim ve Fikir Dünyası Alimler, Müesseseler ve Fikri Eserler XVIII. Yüzyıl, II, 2018); 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), stable URL: <https://journals.openedition.org/ejts/4601>.

5 See Bruckmayr, "Spread and Persistence", 77-81; idem, "Past and Present Aspects of Māturīdism in South and Southeast Asia", in *Uluğ Bir Çinar İmâm Mâturîdî Uluslararası Sempozyum Tebliğler Kitabı*, ed. Ahmet Kartal (Istanbul: Ofis Yayın Matbaacılık, 2014), 123-31, here 125.

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(d. 1176/1763) explicitly recognized the latter's pronounced Māturīdī leanings by appending the *nisba* "al-Māturīdī" to the author's name in the preface to his Arabic translation of Sirhindī's Persian *Radd al-ravāfiẓ*.[6] Shāh Valiyallāh's illustrious student Murtaḍā al-Zabīdī (d. 1205/1791) is in turn the prime South Asian scholar fully espousing the Ottoman pro-Māturīdī *ikhtilāf* literature.[7] In the second half of the nineteenth century, Sunnī Islam in (northern) India finally embarked on its path of differentiation into three major orientations (sg. *maslak*). Whereas the *Ahl-i Ḥadīṯ* dissociated themselves from Ḥanafī-Māturīdī tradition, the contending Deobandīs and *Ahl-i Sunnat* (i.e., the orientation commonly referred to as "Barelvī" by outsiders) retained it, albeit with differing emphases. It is here noteworthy that Aḥmad Riẓā Khān of Baraylī (d. 1340/1921), the founder of the *Ahl-i Sunnat*, had linkages to decidedly Māturīdī theologians of the scholarly centres of Bada'ūn and, to a lesser degree, Khayrābād. Similarly, key Māturīdī doctrines were maintained, though more cautiously, among the Deobandīs.[8] Thus, on the eve of late nineteenth-century Islamic reform, Māturīdī theology was firmly entrenched, though perhaps not of utmost relevance to local scholarly pursuits, in those parts of the Muslim world dominated by the Ḥanafiyya.

As Salafī critique of *kalām* has long been focused on the Ashʿariyya, Western scholarship has commonly arrived at the conclusion that "Salafi polemics are first and foremost directed against Ashʿarism without paying much attention to the differences between Māturīdism and the latter".[9] While this certainly holds true for earlier periods, the situation has markedly changed since the 1980s. Since then, numerous Salafī refutations of the Māturīdiyya have been written, and Māturīdī authors and views have been dealt with in a number of more general Salafī works on Islamic sects and Muslim sociopolitical affairs. Nowadays even the Islamic State conventionally includes the Māturīdiyya in its rundown of the "most deviant and widespread historical sects".[10]

6 See Shāh Walīyallāh b. ʿAbd al-Raḥīm al-Dihlawī, *al-Muqaddima al-saniyya fī l-intiṣār li-l-firqa al-sunniyya*, MS British Library London, Delhi Arabic 939a, fol. 2a.

7 See Bruckmayr, "Past and Present Aspects", 126; Haidar, *Debates*, 196f. On al-Zabīdī, see Stefan Reichmuth, *The World of Murtaḍā al-Zabīdī (1732-91): Life, Networks and Writings* (London: Gibb Memorial Trust, 2009).

8 See Bruckmayr, "Past and Present Aspects", 127f.

9 Frank Griffel, "What Do We Mean By 'Salafī'? Connecting Muḥammad ʿAbduh with Egypt's Nūr Party in Islam's Contemporary Intellectual History", *WI* 55:2 (2015), 186-220, here 203 n.59. In harmony with the introduction to this thematic issue, this contribution differentiates – where pertinent – between the broader reservoire of "Salafī Islam" and "Salafism" as a political ideology, with subdivisions depending on the forms and degree of engagement with political power structures. Representatives of the latter are accordingly labelled as "Salafists".

10 "The Murtadd Brotherhood", *Dabiq* 14 (Rajab 1437h), 28-43, here 28.

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Accordingly, the present contribution provides insights into the so far mostly overlooked sphere of Salafī polemics against the Māturīdiyya. After providing an overview of the main Salafī critiques of Māturīdī doctrine, it will be argued that a key aspect of these critiques is represented by the way in which Ibn Taymiyya's writings against the Ashʿariyya have been appropriated to apply them to the Māturīdīs. Subsequently, the Pashtun scholar Shams al-Dīn al-Salafī al-Afghānī, a graduate of the Islamic University of Medina (IUM), will be identified as a central figure in this development through his major refutation of the Māturīdiyya, *ʿAdāʾ al-Māturīdiyya li-l-ʿaqīda al-salafiyya*. It will be demonstrated that al-Afghānī, not least due to his origins in a region of the Muslim world dominated by Ḥanafī-Māturīdī tradition, was instrumental in raising the spectre of a "modern Māturīdiyya" as a serious doctrinal challenger and impediment to Salafī expansion in South Asia and elsewhere. For al-Afghānī, the prime representatives of this modern Māturīdiyya are the late Ottoman scholar Muḥammad Zāhid al-Kawtharī (d. 1371/1951) and major South Asian currents such as the Deobandīs and Barelvīs, and even minor local groups otherwise perceived as decidedly Salafī. As will be shown, most subsequent authors would follow the scheme outlined in *ʿAdāʾ al-Māturīdiyya* regarding the "modern Māturīdiyya" and its subgroups. Due to its pioneering character and major influence, this work will also function as the prime source for the more general discussions of Salafī anti-Māturīdī thought throughout this study.

al-Afghānī, however, not only brought his own distinctively South Asian experience with him to Medina but was also shaped by the established patterns of education in the field of theology at IUM. It will therefore be highlighted how Salafīs at IUM and beyond have employed two texts of Ḥanafī tradition, *al-ʿAqīdat al-Ṭaḥāwiyya* and a specific commentary to it, to refute Māturīdī doctrine. Whereas much of Ibn Taymiyya's oeuvre was concerned with challenging well-established non-Muʿtazilī *kalām*, particularly in its Razian Ashʿarī form, al-Ṭaḥāwī (d. 321/933), as a contemporary of the school eponyms al-Ashʿarī and al-Māturīdī belonged to an era predating the formation of the Sunnī schools of *kalām*. As a highly respected Ḥanafī scholar, he is, unlike Ibn Taymiyya, not tainted as an anti-*kalām* polemicist among present-day Māturīdīs. In this respect, the *ʿAqīda al-Ṭaḥāwiyya* is clearly put to different use in the Salafī propaganda against the Māturīdiyya than Ibn Taymiyya's works. Thus, it will be discussed separately.

Finally, as the Salafī challenge to the Sunnī schools of *kalām* – and the Māturīdiyya in particular – has in many places resulted in a backlash represented, inter alia, by greater theological *madhhab* consciousness and pronounced affirmation, selected Māturīdī responses, mostly representative of

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transnational linkages, will be presented. As far as the wider framework of "global Salafism" and the discussions about the part played in it by Saudi Arabia are concerned, it will be argued that the country has continuously served as a locus for the dissemination of Salafī attacks against local contenders in different parts of the Muslim world. Hereby, it has most commonly relied on foreign scholars bringing their specific local expertise and cleavages with them. As such, Saudi Arabia can hardly be seen as the master architect of these ventures. Rather, its institutions and scholars serve as nodes and operational bases to further shared agendas, whereby the initial initiative often originates in local conflicts outside of the Arab Peninsula, and the resulting texts are shaped by both local and Saudi Arabian contexts and ambitions.

The Salafī Critique of the Māturīdiyya

It is perhaps in order to initially make a few general comments on the Salafī critique of the Māturīdī tradition, which can be said to operate on five different levels. First, on the most general plane, the Māturīdiyya is denounced as a doctrinal orientation within the science of *kalām* or dialectic theology, which endeavours to delineate and rationally defend religious doctrines concerning the nature of the divine, creation, Islam and belief. It is hereby plainly the fact that *kalām* is a science only developed after the days of the pious elders (*al-salaf al-ṣāliḥ*), which makes it warrant the label *bidʿa* from the Salafī viewpoint, in addition to its purported debt to (Greek) philosophy.[11] Whereas studying the foundations of religion (*uṣūl al-dīn*) is accepted and deemed crucial for the believer, *kalām* is rejected as a whole. Moreover, Māturīdīs (and Ashʿarīs) are charged with conflating the two.[12]

11 On Greek philosophy as a cause for Māturīdī deviance in doctrine and even *shirk* in practice see, for instance, Khālid b. ʿAlī al-Marḍī al-Ghāmidī, *Naqḍ ʿaqāʾid al-Ashāʿira wa-l-Māturīdiyya* (Riyadh: Dār Aṭlas al-Khaḍrāʾ, 1429/2008), 240f.

12 See for example the discussion of the issue by Ṣāliḥ b. ʿAbd al-ʿAzīz Āl al-Shaykh in Maḥmūd ʿAlī ʿAbd al-Raḥmān (ed.), *Sharḥ al-ʿAqīda al-Ṭaḥāwiyya. Sharḥ al-sādat al-ʿulamāʾ*, 2 vols. (n.p.: Dār ʿĀlim al-Fawāʾid, n.d.), 1: 17f. On the divergent understandings of *uṣūl al-dīn* separating Ibn Taymiyya and the contemporary Ashʿaris see M. Sait Özervarli, "The Qurʾānic Rational Theology of Ibn Taymiyya and his Criticism of the *Mutakallimūn*", in *Ibn Taymiyya and His Times*, ed. Yossef Rapoport and Shahab Ahmed (Karachi: Oxford University Press, 2010), 78-100, here 79f.; Jon Hoover with Marwan Abu Ghazaleh Mahajneh, "Theology as Translation: Ibn Taymiyya's Fatwa permitting Theology and its Reception into his *Averting the Conflict between Reason and Revealed Tradition* (Darʾ Taʿāruḍ al-ʿAql wa l-Naql)", *MW* 108:1 (2018), 40-86.

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Second, on the next level, the Māturīdiyya is rejected for representing a specific *madhhab* or school of thought. As the emergence of *madhhab*s is similarly regarded as an innovation of later Islam, the Māturīdiyya and any notion of complying with established school opinion (*taqlīd*) is rejected as such, together with the four Sunnī schools of law and the Ashʿariyya, as the second major Sunnī school of theology. As has been frequently noted, the issue of the legitimacy of the institution of the *madhhab* and the practice of *taqlīd* represents – in contrast to theological thought – a main point of internal differentiation within the Salafī movement, separating the traditional Wahhābīs, who are commonly followers of the Ḥanbaliyya, from what Haykel and Griffel have dubbed the "*ijtihād*-minded Salafis" or the "*lā-madhhabiyya*", respectively.[13] It must be noted in this regard that the Salafī critics of the *madhāhib* – be they legal or theological schools – denounce them not only for representing innovations but also for causing factionalism (*taʿaṣṣub*), and thus weakening Islam.[14] Additionally, their teachings are routinely presented as departing from the original legal and theological thought of their eponymous founders, who are commonly absolved from the failings of their latter-day followers. As far as the Māturīdiyya is concerned, which is often described by its adherents as representing nothing less than the teachings of Abū Ḥanīfa – something most forcefully argued in later times by Kamāl al-Dīn al-Bayāḍī and Muḥammad Zāhid al-Kawtharī[15] – Salafī detractors claim that its doctrine actually differs from that of Abū Ḥanīfa.[16] al-Afghānī specifically puts forward three main reasons for this Ḥanafī-Māturīdī departure from the creed of Abū Ḥanīfa, who is heralded – together with his immediate disciples – as an early representative of the *ahl al-sunna*: (1) the view of Abū Ḥanīfa as a towering figure engaging in *kalām*; (2) the fact that many Ḥanafīs had been among the leaders of the

13 See Bernard Haykel, "On the Nature of Salafī Thought and Action", in Meijer (ed.), *Global Salafism*, 33-57, here 42; Griffel, "What Do We Mean", 205-20.

14 Shams al-Dīn al-Salafī al-Afghānī, *ʾAdāʾ al-Māturīdiyya*, 1: 37, for example, one of the key authors to be discussed below, speaks of the "spitefulness of the grave-worshippers and extremist factionalist imitating school followers" (*khubth al-qubūriyya wa-l-ghulāt al-muqallida al-mutaʿaṣṣiba al-madhhabiyya*).

15 See Kamāl al-Dīn al-Bayāḍī, *Ishārāt al-marām min ʿibarāt al-imām Abī Ḥanifa al-Nuʿmān fī uṣūl al-dīn* (Beirut: Dār al-Kutub al-ʿIlmiyya, 2007); Muḥammad Zāhid al-Kawtharī, "Kalima ʿan kitāb *Ishārāt al-marām min ʿibarāt al-imām* li-l-ʿAllāma al-Bayāḍī", in idem, *Muqaddimāt al-Imām al-Kawtharī* (Cairo: Maktabat al-Azhariyya li-l-Turāth, 1434/2013), 171-81, here 175-81. This view was, however, also held by early Māturīdī scholars such as Abū l-Yusr al-Pazdawī (d. 493/1100) and Abū l-Muʿīn al-Nasafī (d. 508/1114). See Rudolph, *al-Māturīdī*, 4-7.

16 See al-Afghānī, *ʾAdāʾ al-Māturīdiyya*, 1: 11 and 193-200.

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allegedly heretical Jahmiyya and Muʿtazila before the emergence of the Māturīdiyya; and (3) the fact that – then and now – the majority of Ḥanafīs had supposedly only rarely immersed themselves in the sciences of *ḥadīth*.[17] It is hereby important to note that the latter two points of criticism are specific to Salafī attacks on the Māturīdiyya and are not replicated in refutations of the Ashʿariyya.

Third, and closely related to the first two points, fundamental assumptions and methods of reasoning and demonstration attributed to the Māturīdīs (and the *mutakallimūn* as a whole) – such as interpretation (*taʾwīl*), abstraction (*tanzīh*) and delegation (*tafwīḍ*, i.e., leaving knowledge of the actual meaning of the anthropomorphic expressions or *mutashābihāt* in the Qurʾān to Allāh, while at the same time rejecting their literal meaning) – are criticized as deficient and dismissed as both unsound as well as insufficiently derived from authoritative texts (i.e., from the Qurʾān and canonical *ḥadīth*).[18]

Fourth, the Māturīdiyya finds itself denounced on the grounds of certain of its specific doctrines and approaches, including its teachings about the ontological structures of the world, the divine attributes (*al-ṣifāt*), the anthropomorphic depictions of Allāh in the Qurʾān, human agency, the nature of belief, and eschatology. In the briefest of treatments, these points of doctrinal conflict are broken down to three general issues, *tawḥīd*, *ṣifāt* and *īmān*.[19] For Salafīs, seemingly the most disturbing Māturīdī doctrines are hereby those concerning the divine names and attributes and the nature of belief, which accordingly also take up the greater part of Salafī refutations of Māturīdī thought. Thus, the most elaborate Salafī anti-Māturīdī text to date is concerned, above all, with the Māturīdiyya's allegedly deviant teachings on the oneness of the names and attributes (*tawḥīd al-asmāʾ wa-l-ṣifāt*).[20] Similarly, the longest chapters in an earlier Salafī work on the Māturīdī school, as well as in a recent refutation of both the Ashʿariyya and the Māturīdiyya, are the ones on the attributes.[21] It has been noted in this regard that the overall growing Salafī preoccupation with

17 See ibid., I: 199f.

18 See Aḥmad b. ʿAwaḍ Allāh b. Dākhil al-Luhaybī al-Ḥarbī, *al-Māturīdiyya. Dirāsatan wa-taqwīman* (Riyadh: Dār al-ʿĀsima, 1413h), p. 133-85; al-Afghānī, *ʿAdāʾ al-Māturīdiyya*, I: 501-82 and II: 5-401; al-Ghāmidī, *Naqḍ*, 137-80.

19 See Ibn ʿAbd al-Raḥmān Muḥammad Āl al-Khamīs, "al-Māturīdiyya rabībat al-Kullābiyya", in *Ḥiwār maʿa Ashʿarī* (Riyadh: Maktabat al-Maʿārif li-l-Nashr wa-l-Tawzīʿ, 1426/2005), 161-64.

20 See al-Afghānī, *ʿAdāʾ al-Māturīdiyya*, II: 407-654 and III: 7-250.

21 See al-Ḥarbī, *al-Māturīdiyya*, 217-375; al-Ghāmidī, *Naqḍ*, 263-364.

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tawḥīd al-asmāʾ wa-l-ṣifāt owed much to the increasing engagement with competing schools of thought, such as the Ashʿarīs and Māturīdīs.[22]

Discussions of the nature of belief, however, figure almost as prominently in Salafī critiques of the Māturīdiyya. Revolving mainly around the crucial questions whether works form part of belief and whether belief is accordingly subject to increase or decrease as a result of one's behaviour, the respective sections are evidently more concise, but nevertheless deemed to be of central importance by the authors.[23] Indeed, the former Saudi minister of Islamic Affairs, Ṣāliḥ b. ʿAbd al-ʿAzīz Āl al-Shaykh (b. 1378/1959), for instance, bases his swift exclusion of the Māturīdīs from the ranks of the *ahl al-sunna wa-l-jamāʿa* on their *murjiʾī* definition of faith as consisting only of pronouncement through the tongue and affirmation through the heart.[24] From the other end of the Saudi spectrum, the oppositional theologian Safar al-Ḥawālī (b. 1375/1955) likewise rejects Māturīdī doctrine as *murjiʾī* and links this denunciation to his larger politico-religious agenda, including his collective labelling of Muslims, who accept being subjected to regimes not based on Islamic law, as Murjiʾīs.[25]

Finally, the Māturīdiyya is – as a living tradition – at times summarily attacked for its perceived association with Sufism and shrines, and for the deviant behaviour and superstitions Salafism routinely attributes to it. It is noteworthy that the Salafī critiques of Ṣūfī practices inserted into refutations of the Māturīdiyya are not only expressed in general theological terms. Indeed, they explicitly identify adherence to the Māturīdī creed, among other things, as a major reason for the emergence and persistence of practices and religious ideas – ranging from the building of domes and mosques over graves, to their visitation (*ziyāra*) and related notions of intercession (*tawassul* or *shafāʿa*) – that amount to *bidʿa*, heresy and even polytheism (*shirk*). Indeed, *shirk* is the

22 See Mohammad Gharaibeh, *Zur Attributenlehre der Wahhābīya unter besonderer Berücksichtigung der Schriften Ibn ʿUṯaimīns (1929-2001)* (Berlin: EBV, 2012), 21-23.

23 See al-Ghāmidī, *Naqḍ*, 367-414; al-Ḥarbī, *al-Māturīdiyya*, 451-84; Āl al-Khamīs, *al-Māturīdiyya*, 163f.

24 See ʿAbd al-Raḥmān, *Sharḥ*, 17.

25 See Safar b. ʿAbd al-Raḥmān al-Ḥawālī, *Ẓāhirat al-irjāʾ fī l-fikr al-islāmī* (n.p.: Dār al-Kalima, 1420/1999), esp. 249-522; also Daniel Lav, *Radical Islam and the Revival of Medieval Theology* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2012), 86-119, esp. 99-107. al-Ḥawālī is, besides Salmān al-ʿAwda (b. 1376/1956), one of the leaders of the *Ṣaḥwa* trend within Saudi Arabian Salafism, which is characterized by its criticism of the Saudi regime. See Madawi Al-Rasheed, *Contesting the Saudi State: Islamic Voices from a New Generation* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2007), 59-101; Stéphane Lacroix, *Awakening Islam: The Politics of Religious Dissent in Contemporary Saudi Arabia*, trans. George Holoch (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2011). Both *Ṣaḥwa* leaders are under arrest in Saudi Arabia at the time of writing (June 2019).

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label that is most commonly applied in this context by Salafī critics. Its usage for the religious phenomena in question is hereby at times legitimized with reference to history, for example by stressing the fact that also in Noah's (Nūḥ) time, it had been the veneration of righteous ancestors which gave way to *shirk*.[26] Moreover, in line with Muḥammad b. ʿAbd al-Wahhāb's approach to saint worship,[27] it is emphasized that *shirk* most frequently involved the worshipping of angels, prophets, saints (*awliyāʾ*), righteous people (*ṣāliḥūn*), jinn and the stars rather than stones, trees and actual idols.[28] It is the Māturīdīs' perceived lack of understanding of *tawḥīd al-ulūhiyya* (i.e., the oneness of the worship of Allāh), which – according to their Salafī critics – lies at the root of all the deviant (or better still, *shirkī*) practices ascribed to them.[29] Far from being a primarily historical discussion for the Salafīs, however, they pay a significant amount of attention to modern currents of so-called "grave-worshippers" (*qubūriyya*) within the Māturīdiyya – namely, the followers of al-Kawtharī and the Barelvīs, as well as the Tablīghīs and other parts of the Deobandī orientation (*maslak*).[30]

The Decisive Word of Ibn Taymiyya

As far as precursors are concerned, it has to be emphasized that modern Salafī criticism of *kalām* and the Māturīdīs is to a significant degree informed by the thought of Ibn Taymiyya (d. 728/1328), a comparatively marginal figure during

26 See al-Afghānī, *ʿAdāʾ al-Māturīdiyya*, III: 255f.

27 See Patricia Crone, "The Religion of the Qurʾānic Pagans: God and the Lesser Deities", *Arabica* 57:2-3 (2010), 151-200, here 177.

28 See al-Afghānī, *ʿAdāʾ al-Māturīdiyya*, III: 257f.

29 See ibid., III: 251-304; al-Ghāmidī, *Naqḍ*, 191-243.

30 See al-Afghānī, *ʿAdāʾ al-Māturīdiyya*, I: 198; al-Ghāmidī, *Naqḍ*, 202-08. Exhibiting a broad perspective, al-Ghāmidī (ibid., 208), for example, also includes Hüseyn Hilmi Işık (d. 2001), the Turkish publisher and editor of – particularly Naqshbandī – Ṣūfī texts, who was a fervent opponent of modern Islamism, Salafī Islam and Salafism, as well as of modernist thinkers such as Muḥammad ʿAbduh (d. 1323/1905), in this category. See Hüseyn Hilmi Işık (ed.), *The Annotated Translation of I'tiqâd-nâma by Mawlânâ Diyâ' ad-Dîn Khâlid al-Baghdâdî* (Istanbul: Ihlâs Vakfı, 1976), 48-50. For the development of the Barelvī and Deobandī *masālik* see Usha Sanyal, *Devotional Islam and Politics in British India: Ahmad Riza Khan Barelwi and His Movement, 1870-1920* (Delhi: Oxford University Press, 1996); Barbara D. Metcalf, *Islamic Revival in British India: Deoband, 1860-1900* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1982); Jan-Peter Hartung, "The Praiseworthiness of Divine Beauty – The "Shaykh al-Hind" Maḥmūd al-Ḥasan, Social Justice, and Deobandiyyat", *South Asian History and Culture* 7:4 (2016), 346-69.

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his day, but a towering giant in present Islamic thought.[31] Ibn Taymiyya routinely denounced the Ashʿarīs, who always constituted his main target among the accepted Sunnī schools of theology, as Jahmīs, after Jahm b. Ṣafwān (d. c. 128/745) and his followers, hence the title of his massive refutation *Bayān talbīs al-jahmiyya fī taʾsīs bidaʿihim al-kalāmiyya*.[32] He charged them, inter alia, with obscuring and misrepresenting the divine attributes and the ontological structures of existence, and of subscribing to the *jahmī* definition of belief, which is – in basing belief solely on affirmation in the heart – even more reductive than the *murjiʾī* one.[33] In all three cases Ibn Taymiyya's pejorative *jahmī* label must be regarded as implicitly also extending to the Māturīdīs, who have of course actually commonly refuted Jahmī teachings in their writings. Accordingly, present Salafī authors are likewise keen to emphasize that Ashʿarīs and Māturīdīs, despite their many differences, actually represent just one group (*firqa*),[34] or two sides of the same coin, rather than different phenomena.

Even though Ibn Taymiyya was apparently one of the first scholars to exhibit an awareness of a specific school of thought derived from al-Māturīdī,[35] it must be emphasized that his extant works are largely characterized by an overall neglect of the Māturīdiyya and its exponents. *Bayān talbīs al-jahmiyya*, for instance, in which the author's prime interlocutor is clearly the Ashʿarī lu-

31 See Yossef Rapoport and Shahab Ahmed (eds.), *Ibn Taymiyya and His Times* (Karachi: Oxford University Press, 2010). As suggested also by Haidar, *Debates*, 57f., it is very likely that the *Nūniyya* of Tāj al-Dīn al-Subkī (d. 771/1370), the first specimen of works comparing the teachings of the Ashʿariyya and the Māturīdiyya with the aim of demonstrating the harmonious coexistence of the two schools, was a response to the challenge of Ibn Taymiyya and his student Ibn al-Qayyim (author of, inter alia, a polemical *al-Qaṣīdat al-Nūniyya* directed against the science of *kalām* and its exponents) and Shams al-Dīn al-Dhahabī (d. 748/1348), one of al-Subkī's teachers, to the Ashʿarīs. Indeed, this type of *ikhtilāf* literature became popular only from the sixteenth century onwards, with no known specimens between al-Subkī's work and the first known Ottoman one by Kamālpāşāzādeh (d. 940/1534). See Tāj al-Dīn al-Subkī, "Nūniyyat al-Subkī", ed. Edward Badeen, in idem, *Sunnitische Theologie*, 1-18 (Arabic part). Moreover, Tāj al-Dīn's father, Taqī al-Dīn al-Subkī (d. 756/1355), had already engaged in fierce debates over theological issues with Ibn al-Qayyim al-Jawziyya. See Caterina Bori and Livnat Holtzman, "A Scholar in the Shadow", *OM* 90:1 (2010), 13-44, here 22-26.

32 Aḥmad b. ʿAbd al-Ḥalīm b. Taymiyya, *Bayān talbīs al-jahmiyya fī taʾsīs bidaʿihim al-kalāmiyya*, 10 vols. (Medina: Majmaʿ al-Malik Fahd li-Ṭibāʿat al-Muṣḥaf al-Sharīf, 1426/2005).

33 See Abū l-Fatḥ Muḥammad b. ʿAbd al-Karīm al-Shahrastānī, *al-Milal wa-l-niḥal*, 2 vols. (Beirut: al-Maktaba al-ʿAṣriyya, 1426/2006), 1: 69.

34 al-Ghāmidī, *Naqd*, 99. In this respect, al-Ghāmidī also invokes Saʿd al-Dīn al-Taftāzānī's (d. 792/1390) frequent straddling of the lines between the two theological currents.

35 Two of his students even attribute a (now lost) *Risāla fī ʿaqīdat al-Ashʿariyya wa-ʿaqīdat al-Māturīdī wa-ghayrihi min al-Ḥanafiyya* to him. See Haidar, *Debates*, 56.

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minary al-Rāzī, never refers to any Māturīdī work.[36] Also the *Fiqh al-akbar*, one of the foundational texts of Ḥanafī theology, commonly but erroneously attributed to Abū Ḥanīfa, is only mentioned once, in connection with the critical issue of the transmitted attribute (*ṣifat al-khabariyya*) of Allāh's seating on the throne (*istiwā'*).[37] Salafī-Māturīdī discord on the matter revolves around the Māturīdīs' understanding of *istiwā'* as an action and not as a divine attribute. Following Ibn Taymiyya, the Māturīdiyya is therefore charged by modern authors such as Shams al-Dīn (al-Salafī) al-Afghānī with *taʿṭīl* or divesting the divine of his attributes – another feature associated with the Jahmiyya – as well as with engaging in anthropomorphism, whereby the Māturīdī position is also linked to their doctrine of the attribute of bringing into existence (*takwīn*).[38]

So far, I have only been able to locate a handful of references to al-Māturīdī in the vast opus of Ibn Taymiyya. Some of these, however, explicitly associate him with the Jahmiyya. Thus, al-Māturīdī and his follower Nūr al-Dīn al-Ṣābūnī (d. 580/1184), about whom the author had probably become aware due to the latter's debates with Fakhr al-Dīn al-Rāzī, are listed among a number of scholars from among the later followers of the four schools of law, whom he regards as having followed the Jahmiyya and the Muʿtazila in their teaching on the temporal origination of accidents and bodies,[39] a doctrine which he employs in different contexts as a showcase for the methodological fallacies of the *mutakallimūn*.[40] Other rare references to al-Māturīdī appear in the context of

36 See the index of books in Ibn Taymiyya, *Bayān*, x: 241-62.

37 Ibid., i: 193. Ibn Taymiyya gives Abū Muṭīʿ al-Balkhī as the transmitter of the text. In another work he quotes from *Sharḥ al-fiqh al-akbar*, whose authorship remains unknown, but which was in later times erroneously attributed to al-Māturīdī. Ibn Taymiyya, *Darʾ taʿāruḍ al-ʿaql wa-l-naql*, ed. Muḥammad Rashād Sālim, 11 vols. (Riyadh: Jāmiʿat al-Imām Muḥammad b. Saʿūd al-Islāmiyya, 1411/1991), vii: 441f. As far as the authorship of the original text is concerned, Rudolph has convincingly shown that al-Balkhī should be regarded not merely as the transmitter but as the actual author of the text first known as *al-Fiqh al-akbar* and then as *al-Fiqh al-absaṭ*. He likewise provides firm evidence for a late eleventh-century CE dating of the commentary to it. Rudolph, *al-Māturīdī*, 57-77 and 361-65.

38 See al-Afghānī, *ʿAdāʾ al-Māturīdiyya*, iii: 7-31. On the general debate see Ibn Taymiyya, *Bayān*, i: 154-218; idem, *Majmūʿ fatāwā Shaykh al-Islām Aḥmad b. Taymiyya*, 37 vols. (Medina: Majmaʿ al-Malik Fahd li-Ṭibāʿat al-Muṣḥaf al-Sharīf, 1425/2004), v: 365-96.

39 Ibid., xvi: 268f.; compare al-Ghāmidī, *Naqḍ*, 254f.

40 This concerns, among others, his rejection of any conflict between reason and revelation (*naql* or *sharʿ*), as well as debates about the divine voluntary attributes. The former is dealt with in the mentioned passage and, more extensively, in his *fatwā* on the permissibility of theology (*uṣūl al-dīn*). See Ibn Taymiyya, *Majmūʿ fatāwā*, iii: 303-305. For an example of the latter see Id., *Minhāj al-sunna al-nabawiyya fī naqḍ kalām al-Shīʿa al-Qadariyya,* 9 vols. (Riyadh: Jāmiʿat al-Imām Muḥammad b. Saʿūd al-Islāmiyya, 1406/

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discussions about the nature of divine speech.[41] In one of these, al-Māturīdī and another luminary of the Māturīdiyya, Abū l-Muʿīn al-Nasafī (d. 508/1114), are enumerated in a very similar list of deviant scholars from all four *madhāhib*.[42] It is thus sufficiently clear that Ibn Taymiyya, despite his heavy focus on the Ashʿarīs, not only considered al-Māturīdī to have been the foremost (non-Muʿtazilī) Ḥanafī *mutakallim* but was also aware of the existence of a school of thought deriving from him. Accordingly, al-Māturīdī is the only representative of the "theologians from among the followers of Abū Ḥanīfa", whom he mentions by name after giving a longer list of Ashʿarī scholars in a brief overview of non-Muʿtazilī *kalām*.[43] Additionally, as Ibn Taymiyya notes that it has been transmitted from Abū Ḥanīfa, that belief is necessitated by reason, which represents one of the key differences between the Māturīdiyya and the Ashʿariyya, al-Māturīdī is again the only explicitly mentioned scholar.[44] Another such key difference in connection with which al-Māturīdī is briefly mentioned is *istithnāʾ* in belief (i.e., adding the words "if Allāh wills" to the statement "I am a believer").[45]

Present Salafī appropriation of the legacy of Ibn Taymiyya as a major critic of the Ashʿariyya and the Māturīdiyya can be said to be of two kinds. Certain currents within Salafī Islam and Salafism have at times generally deemed engagement in debates with the adherents of the Sunnī schools of theology as futile, by virtue of their conviction that Ibn Taymiyya has already decisively and definitively refuted their teachings.[46] On the other hand, contemporary Salafī authors of works directed against the Māturīdiyya have evidently fully endorsed his ideas, discourse and categories, and have built upon them to also address doctrinal developments among later Māturīdī scholars, as well as to address the positions defended by present adherents of the school. One most obvious element of this endorsement is the common usage of the derogatory *murjiʾī* and, particularly, *jahmī* labels in reference to the Māturīdiyya, which pervades the entirety of texts perused for this study.[47] Whereas al-Ḥawālī re-

1986), I: 309-12. The "uṣūl al-dīn"-*fatwā* is now discussed and translated in Hoover, with Mahajneh, "Theology as Translation".

41 See Ibn Taymiyya, *Minhāj al-sunna*, II: 362.

42 See idem, *Darʾ*, II: 245.

43 Idem, *Majmūʿ fatāwā*, VIII: 438. A similar passage in which al-Māturīdī is the only explicitly mentioned Ḥanafī among a number of listed scholars is found in ibid., VI: 290.

44 See idem, *Darʾ*, IX: 61f.

45 See idem, *Majmūʿ fatāwā*, VII: 433.

46 See Haykel, "Nature of Salafi Thought", 40.

47 Additionally, the *kullābī* label appears in connection with the Māturīdiyya, though less frequently, hence the title of the work of Muḥammad Āl al-Khamīs, *al-Māturīdiyya rabībat al-kullābiyya*. Its usage seems to owe a lot to Ibn Taymiyya's ambivalent position

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lies on Ibn Taymiyya to also refute later Māturīdīs such as Kamāl al-Dīn b. [al-] Humām (d. 861/1457) and Aḥmad b. Muṣṭafā Ṭāşköprüzādeh (d. 968/1561), the prime objects of Salafī loathing from among the modern Māturīdīs are clearly Muḥammad Zāhid al-Kawtharī, an ardent defender of Ḥanafī-Māturīdī tradition and former adjunct to the last Ottoman *şeyḫ ül-islām* Muṣṭafā Ṣabrī (d. 1373/1954),[48] and certain South Asian Muslim groups. This state of affairs is, however, closely connected to the influential work of one particular South Asian Salafī exponent of anti-Māturīdī thought, who seems to have influenced most, if not all, later Salafī refutations of the Māturīdiyya – Shams al-Dīn al-Salafī al-Afghānī.

Shams al-Dīn al-Salafī al-Afghānī: South Asian Doyen of Anti-Māturīdī Thought

Even though it is Saudi Arabia that is commonly primarily associated with the spread of Salafī Islam in general, and with anti-*kalām* thought and literature in particular, it has to be noted that the most prolific modern writer of Salafī refutations of the Māturīdiyya hails from South Asia, more precisely from the Pashtun-dominated borderlands of Pakistan and Afghanistan. Intriguingly, the scholar in question, Abū ʿAbdallāh Shams al-Dīn b. Ashraf (d. 1420/1999), later known as Shams (al-Dīn) al-Salafī al-Afghānī, received his formative education in a local environment already strongly permeated by an indigenous Pashtun tradition of Salafī Islam. Institutionally chiefly represented by the *Dār al-Qur'ān* madrasa and the *Jamāʿat-i Ishāʿat al-Tawḥīd va l-Sunnah* (JITS, est. 1939) of Panjpīr in the Pakistani province of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa (formerly North-West Frontier Province), both founded by Muḥammad Ṭāhir b. Ghulām-i Nabī Khān (d. 1407/1987), this Pashtun-specific form of Salafī Islam, however, is characterized by its complex relationships to established forms of religious organization in the region, including the locally prevailing Deobandī *maslak* and

towards al-Ashʿari. Whereas he at times refers to the latter in fully positive terms, thereby absolving him from the errors of his later followers, he appears to seek to discredit him at other times through his association with Abū Muḥammad b. Kullāb al-Qaṭṭān (d. 241/855). See Racha el Omari, "Ibn Taymiyya's 'Theology of the Sunna' and his Polemics with the Ash'arites", in Rapoport and Ahmed, *Ibn Taymiyya and His Times*, 101-19, here 102f.

48 Already al-Kawtharī's Naqshbandiyya-Khālidiyya master Aḥmad Ḍiyāʾ al-Dīn al-Kumushkhānawī (Gümüşhanevi, d. 1311/1894) appears to have attached considerable importance to adherence to Māturīdī tradition. See Aḥmad Ḍiyāʾ al-Dīn b. Muṣṭafā al-Kumushkhānawī, *K. Jāmiʿ al-mutūn fī ḥaqq anwāʿ al-ṣifāt al-ilāhīyah wa-l-ʿaqāʾid al-Māturīdiyya wa-alfāẓ al-kufr wa-taṣḥīḥ al-aʿmāl al-ʿajībiyya* ([Istanbul]: no publ., 1273h).

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Naqshbandiyya *ṭarīqa*.[49] Thus, the *Dār al-Qur'ān* and JITS were heirs to local remnants of the early nineteenth-century *Ṭarīqah-yi Muḥammadiyyah* movement – which had combined sober *taṣawwuf* with a "proto-Salafī" persuasion – as well as to the local Deobandī tradition, which, at the fringe of the *maslak*'s geographical outreach, had witnessed a development characterized by increasing independence from the motherhouse at Deoband. Muḥammad Ṭāhir, Shams al-Dīn al-Afghānī's teacher in Panjpīr, developed a reputation as an eminent Qur'ānic scholar whose exegesis rested on a rigid conception of divine unity that canalized into violent vigilance against breaches of *tawḥīd* in the form of shrine-related practices by the JITS. Nevertheless, Muḥammad Ṭāhir and the scholars of the JITS were initiated into regional Naqshbandī-Mujaddidī *silsila*s and continued to rely on some of the Ḥanafī-Māturīdī references of the Deobandī orientation. Apparently, they also gradually came into conflict with the *Ahl-i Ḥadīṯ*, the South Asian Salafī *maslak* with strong links to Saudi Arabia.[50] Shams al-Dīn al-Afghānī, however, took the contending route. He went to continue his studies at the IUM in the 1980s and eventually turned into a vehement critic of the "Panjpīriyya" (i.e., the JITS), describing them as blatantly Ḥanafī-Māturīdī and Naqshbandī-Mujaddidī-Ṣūfī.

In Medina he studied, according to admittedly rather hagiographical accounts, under major Arab and South Asian (*Ahl-i Ḥadīṯ*-linked) scholars such as Ibn Bāz (d. 1420/1999), Muḥammad Nāṣir al-Dīn al-Albānī (d. 1420/1999) and the latter's South Asian successor as chair of *ḥadīth* al-Ḥāfiẓ Muḥammad al-Jūndlawī (Gundlavi).[51] His only firmly attested teacher, however, is Ṣāliḥ b. ʿAbdallāh (Āl) al-ʿAbbūd, who supervised his master's and doctoral theses, and would later serve as president of the IUM (1995-2007).[52] Al-Afghānī authored several treatises directed against the followers of the Ḥanafī and Māturīdī

49 See Hartung's contribution to this volume.

50 On the *Ahl-i Ḥadīṯ* see Claudia Preckel, *Islamische Bildungsnetzwerke und Gelehrtenkultur im Indien des 19. Jahrhunderts: Muḥammad Ṣiddīq Ḥasan Ḫān (st. 1890) und die Entstehung der Ahl-e ḥadīth-Bewegung in Bhopal* (PhD. dissertation, Ruhr-University Bochum, 2005), stable URL: <www-brs.ub.ruhr-uni-bochum.de/neta.html/HSS/ Diss/PreckelClaudia/diss.pdf/>; Martin Riexinger, *Sanā'ullāh Amritsarī (1868-1948) und die Ahl-i-Ḥadīs* [sic] *im Punjab unter britischer Herrschaft* (Würzburg: Ergon, 2004); Yoginder Sikand, "Stroking the Flames: Intra-Muslim Rivalries in India and the Saudi Connection", *Comparative Studies of South Asia, Africa and the Middle East* 27:1 (2007), 95-108.

51 See al-Afghānī, *ʿAdā' al-Māturīdiyya*, I: 173f.; Abū ʿUmar al-Manhajī, "Kunt māturīdiyyan wa-ṣūfiyyan fa-hadānī Allāh ilā l-ʿaqīda al-salafiyya", *Ṣayd al-Fawā'id* website, URL: <http://saaid.net/feraq/el3aedoon/ 13.htm> (accessed 20 July 2014). This link no longer functions.

52 See Michael Farquhar, *Expanding the Wahhabi Mission: Saudi Arabia, the Islamic University of Medina and the Transnational Religious Economy* (unpublished PhD. thesis, London School of Economics, 2013), 126f.

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schools and the JITS of Panjpīr.[53] His two major and by far most widely distributed works, however, are the multi-volume book versions of his theses at the IUM, both published in Saudi Arabia. The first of these, *ʿAdāʾ al-Māturīdiyya li-l-ʿaqīda al-salafiyya*, first published in 1413/1993 but based on his M.A. thesis of 1989, represents the most extensive Salafī refutation of the Māturīdiyya to date.[54] The second, *Juhūd al-ʿulamāʾ al-Ḥanafiyya fī ibṭāl ʿaqāʾid al-qubūriyya*, is concerned primarily with (mis-)conceptions of *tawḥīd* either furthering or preventing shrine-related ritual practices in past and present Ḥanafī contexts,[55] and therefore exhibits many thematic overlaps with the former.

As far as the institutional background of the two works is concerned, a closer look at the composition of the committees of his defences is warranted. Besides al-ʿAbbūd, the committee for *ʿAdāʾ al-Māturīdiyya* included Safar al-Ḥawālī, and that for *Juhūd al-ʿulamāʾ al-Ḥanafiyya* ʿAlī al-Ḥudhayfī (b. 1366/1947) and Ghālib al-ʿAwājī. As noted above, al-Ḥawālī had already dealt with the alleged *murjiʾī* and *jahmī* character of Māturīdī thought – in the doctrinal as well as sociopolitical sphere – in *Ẓāhirat al-Irjāʾ*, his own Ph.D. thesis, written under the supervision of Muḥammad Quṭb (d. 1435/2014). Later on, he taught the course on "contemporary schools of thought" in the creed (*ʿaqīda*) faculty of Umm al-Qurā University in Mecca,[56] and *Ẓāhirat al-irjāʾ* was on the reading list of the IUM course on "sects" (*madhāhib*).[57] Al-Ḥudhayfī, in contrast, even though primarily known as *imām* of the Great Mosques of Mecca and Medina, has been teaching, inter alia, the mentioned *madhāhib* course at IUM.[58] Finally, al-ʿAwājī has authored major works on the Kharijites and on "modern Islamic sects".[59] All these scholars thus had strong expertise and in-

53 See al-Afghānī, *ʿAdāʾ al-Māturīdiyya*, 1: 175-77; al-Manhajī, *Kunt māturīdiyyan*.

54 See al-Afghānī, *ʿAdāʾ al-Māturīdiyya*.

55 Shams al-Dīn al-Salafī al-Afghānī, *Juhūd al-ʿulamāʾ al-Ḥanafiyya fī ibṭāl ʿaqāʾid al-qubūriyya*, 3 vols. (Riyadh: Dār al-Ṣumayʿī 1416/1996).

56 See Lacroix, *Awakening Islam*, 48. Additionally, he would also serve as the faculty's dean. Guido Steinberg, "Saudi-Arabien: Der Salafismus in seinem Mutterland", in *Salafismus: Auf der Suche nach dem wahren Islam*, ed. Behnam T. Said and Hazim Fouad (Freiburg: Herder, 2014), 265-96, here 285.

57 See Michael Farquhar, *Circuits of Faith. Migration, Education, and the Wahhabi Mission* (Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 2017), 135.

58 <https://ar.wikipedia.org/wiki/%D8%B9%D9%84%D9%8A_%D8%A8%D9%86_%D8%B9%D8%A8%D8%A_ %D8%A7%D9%84%D8%B1%D8%AD%D9%85%D9%86_%D8%A7%D9%84%D8%AD%D8%B0%D9%8A%D9%81%D9%8A> (accessed 30 August 2018).

59 See Ghālib b. ʿAlī al-ʿAwājī, *al-Khawārij: tāʾrīkhuhum wa-arāʾuhum al-iʿtiqādiyya wa-mawqif al-islām minhā* (Medina: Damanhūr, 1418/1997); idem, *Firaq muʿāṣira tantasibu ilā al-islām wa-bayan mawqif al-islām minhā*, 3 vols. (Jeddah: al-Maktaba al-ʿAṣriyya al-Dhahabiyya, [1414/1993] 1422/2001, 3rd ed).

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terest in different Islamic schools of thought, including – at least in al-Ḥawālī's case – the Māturīdiyya. It was, however, their student Shams al-Dīn al-Afghānī who brought a specific edge to this field of study and polemics, not least due to his origins in South Asia, the most vibrant site of contemporary Salafī-Māturīdī conflict, and major arena of transregional Māturīdī anti-Salafī networking.

Although similar, more concise works were published by the Saudi scholars Aḥmad b. ʿAwaḍallāh al-Ḥarbī and Muḥammad b. ʿAbd al-Raḥmān Āl al-Khamīs around the same time,[60] *ʿAdāʾ al-Māturīdiyya* arguably represented the first major full-fledged Salafī refutation of *kalām* focused specifically on the Māturīdiyya. Moreover, it was clearly the one to prove most influential in Salafī circles both in Saudi Arabia and on a global scale. Fully appropriating Ibn Taymiyya's line of thought and terminology, he likewise characterizes his opponents the Māturīdīs and Ṣūfīs as Jahmis and "grave worshippers" (*qubūriyya*), respectively. Right from the beginning, he maintains that Ibn Taymiyya and Ibn al-Qayyim al-Jawziyya (d. 751/1350) had both nothing else in mind but the Māturīdiyya and the Ashʿariyya, when they spoke about the Jahmiyya and the *muʿaṭṭila* (i.e., those who divest Allāh of his attributes).[61] Perhaps due to the relative lack of explicit references to al-Māturīdī and his followers in Ibn Taymiyya's works, the author emphasizes that Ibn Taymiyya applied the "Jahmiyya" label to the Ashʿariyya and that – due to their common status as representatives of the *muʿaṭṭila* – it equally applies to the Māturīdīs.[62] This argument is supported with a detailed discussion of perceived cases of Māturīdī *taʿṭīl* regarding the divine attributes of Allāh's elevation (*ʿulūw*), seating on the throne (*isitiwāʾ*), descent (*nuzūl*), hands (*yadayn*) and speech (*kalām*).[63] Hereby it is forcefully claimed that the Māturīdiyya's method of figurative interpretation (*taʾwīl*) of the anthropomorphic expressions in the Qurʾān actually clearly amounts to *taʿṭīl*. Elsewhere, however, he cites Ibn al-Qayyim to argue that – in certain cases – the *taʾwīl* of Māturīdīs and Ashʿarīs would be even worse than plain *taʿṭīl*.[64] After the discussion of the attributes, al-Afghānī turns his attention to the Māturīdiyya's role in furthering deviant Ṣūfī practices and its resulting character as a *qubūriyya* current. Hereby the author establishes a

60 Al-Ḥarbī's work came out in the same year as the first edition of *ʿAdāʾ al-Māturīdiyya*, i.e. 1413/1992-93. Cf. al-Ḥarbī, *al-Māturīdiyya*. The earlier work of Muḥammad Āl al-Khamīs (*Minhāj al-Māturīdiyya fī l-ʿaqīda*) has been inaccessible to me. Yet, it is cited both by al-Afghānī as well as in a later book by the author. al-Afghānī, *ʿAdāʾ al-Māturīdiyya*, I: 11; Āl al-Khamīs, *al-Māturīdiyya*, 168.

61 al-Afghānī, *ʿAdāʾ al-Māturīdiyya*, I: 50 and 97.

62 Ibid., I: 444-46.

63 Ibid., II: 511-654, and III: 7-173.

64 Ibid., I: 41.

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clear correlation between the Māturīdī creed and the emergence of such practices, which for him represent clear breaches of the oneness of the worship of Allāh (*tawḥīd al-ulūhiyya*). It is thus the Māturīdīs' conflation of the oneness of lordship (*tawḥīd al-rubūbiyya*) with *tawḥīd al-ulūhiyya*, and specifically their privileging of the former over the latter, which causes them to fail to direct all worship to Allāh alone.[65]

Despite al-Afghānī's selection of a rare topic (i.e., the Māturīdiyya) and the hitherto unmatched extensiveness of his discussion, it is, however, his treatment of contemporary Māturīdīs which represents his main contribution to Salafī anti-*kalām* literature and polemics. Whereas al-Ḥarbī ended his survey of Māturīdī history with Mullā ʿAlī al-Qārī (d. 1014/1606), it was al-Afghānī who identified a number of Islamic currents – most of them of South Asian origin – as representing "the modern Māturīdiyya [*al-māturīdiyya al-ḥadītha*]".[66] First are the Barelvīs, or more precisely the *Ahl-i Sunnat* movement, which constitutes, besides the Deobandīs and the Salafī *Ahl-i Ḥadīṯ*, one of South Asia's three major Sunnī *masālik* (sects, orientations). Second are the Kawtharīs, the followers of Muḥammad Zāhid al-Kawtharī, among whom he includes the former Syrian Muslim Brotherhood leader ʿAbd al-Fattāḥ Abū Ghudda (d. 1417/1997), as well as the Deobandī scholar Muḥammad Yūsuf al-Binorī (d. 1397/1977), who first popularized al-Kawtharī's works within the *maslak*.[67] Third are the Deobandīs, among whom the *Tablīghī Jamāʿat* and the *Panjpīriyya* (i.e., JITS) are discussed separately.[68] Albeit acknowledging the *Panjpīriyya*'s efforts in curbing deviant shrine-centred practices and spreading Qurʾānic studies, he severely chastizes his former teachers for, inter alia, their alleged outright legal and theological adherence to the Ḥanafī-Māturīdī *madhhab*, their reverence for al-Māturīdī and adoption of some of his interpretations, their association with the Naqshbandiyya, and their enmity towards the *Ahl-i Ḥadīṯ*.[69] Even the failings of the *Panjpīriyya*, however, are to a certain extent seen against the background of the corrupting influence of al-Kawtharī and

65 Ibid., III: 177-346. He would return to this discussion in his Ph.D. thesis, again invoking the Māturīdiyya as a negative example. See al-Afghānī, *Juhūd al-ʿulamāʾ al-Ḥanafiyya*, I: 175-351.

66 See al-Afghānī, *ʿAdāʾ al-Māturīdiyya*, I: 288-93 and III: 308-43.

67 See Bruckmayr, "Past and Present Aspects", 128.

68 Likewise, the stature of the former principal of the Indian *Nadwat al-ʿUlamāʾ*, Abū l-Ḥasan ʿAlī Nadvī (d. 1420/1999), who generally receives a much more positive assessment due to his partial Salafī leanings, is in the author's eyes tarnished by his preference for al-Māturīdī's thought and writings over those of al-Ashʿarī. al-Afghānī, *ʿAdāʾ al-Māturīdiyya*, I: 293. On Nadvī, see Jan-Peter Hartung, *Viele Wege und ein Ziel: Leben und Wirken von Sayyid Abū l-Ḥasan ʿAlī Ḥasanī Nadwī (1914-1999)* (Würzburg: Ergon, 2004).

69 al-Afghānī, *ʿAdāʾ al-Māturīdiyya*, I: 84-184.

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the Deobandīs. Thus, he claims that Muḥammad Ṭāhir "is a partisan Ḥanafī to such an extent as if he were the second [al-]Kawtharī".[70] Moreover, he regards the *Panjpīriyya* as eventually spoiled by the entirely Naqshbandī-infested "Deobandiyya",[71] and ascribes their assertion that there would be no authentic *ḥadīth* on the raising of the hands during prayer (*rafʿ al-yadayn*, which historically had been a major point of contention between the *Ahl-i Ḥadīṯ* and Ḥanafīs in South Asia) to the impact of al-Kawtharī's followers.[72]

Most Salafī refutations of the Māturīdiyya published after al-Afghānī's work were apparently influenced by his heavy focus on al-Kawtharī and the mentioned South Asian groups. A later work by Muḥammad b. ʿAbd al-Raḥmān Āl al-Khamīs, which lists *ʿAdāʾ al-Māturīdiyya* as a chief source, provides information on four "famous men" from among the Māturīdiyya: Abū l-Yusr al-Pazdawī (d. 493/1100), Abū l-Muʿīn al-Nasafī (d. 508/1114), Nūr al-Dīn al-Ṣābūnī (d. 580/1184) and al-Kawtharī. In a brief overview of the evolution of the Māturīdiyya until the present day, he jumps from the fifteenth-century scholar Ibn al-Humām directly to Muḥammad Qāsim of Deoband (i.e., al-Nanawtavī [d. 1297/1877], one of the two founders of the Dār al-ʿUlūm Deoband), Aḥmad Riḍā Khān Barelvī (i.e., the eponym of the Barelvīs) and al-Kawtharī.[73] Khālid al-Ghāmidī, another student of Ibn Bāz writing after al-Afghānī, enumerates sixty-two Māturīdīs, including many Ottoman and South Asian scholars. The list ends with al-Binorī's Deobandī teacher Muḥammad Anvar Shāh al-Kashmīrī (d. 1352/1933) and, unsurprisingly, al-Kawtharī.[74] Moreover, he characterizes the Barelvīs as "one of the major currents of *mushrikūn* of our day".[75]

The influence of al-Afghānī's book, however, extends well beyond the academic and more scholarly spheres of Salafī writing into the militant spectrum, the realm of *fatāwā* by popular internet *muftī*s, and the area of polemics disseminated chiefly via blogs. This is exemplified by the fact that the formerly London-based Palestinian Abū Qatāda al-Filasṭīnī (b. 1379/1960), a central figure in late twentieth-century Salafī *jihād* propaganda in Europe,[76] also referred

70 Idem, *Juhūd al-ʿUlamāʾ al-Ḥanafiyya*, 1: 346 n.1.

71 Ibid., 11: 782.

72 Idem, *ʿAdāʾ al-Māturīdiyya*, 1: 120.

73 See Āl al-Khamīs, *al-Māturīdiyya*, 157 and 164-68.

74 See al-Ghāmidī, *Naqḍ*, 39-44.

75 Ibid., 207.

76 See Thomas Hegghammer, "Jihadi-Salafis or Revolutionaries? On Religion and Politics in the Study of Militant Islamism", in Meijer, *Global Salafism*, 244-66, here 251; Yahya Birt and Sadek Hamid, "Jihadi movements in the United Kingdom", in *Islamic Movements of Europe: Public Religion and Islamophobia in the Modern World*, ed. Frank Peter and Rafael Ortega (London: I.B. Tauris, 2014), 171-73.

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to it in one of his works. Even though Abū Qatāda's unforgiving stance on doctrinal Salafī purity seems to have played an important role in the growing "Salafization" of transnational *jihād* movements,[77] and also brought him into conflict with the more pragmatic Abū Muṣʿab al-Sūrī (b. 1378/1958),[78] the treatise in question intriguingly served to defend the *Ṭālibān* against accusations of unbelief. Indeed, he wrote his *Juʾnat al-muṭayyabīn* as a refutation of an earlier (seemingly lost) tract by the Syrian Bahāʾ Muṣṭafā Jughl (alias ʿAbd al-Ḥamīd), who had pronounced a *takfīr* against the Deobandīs and the *Ṭālibān*. Relying on *ʿAdāʾ al-Māturīdiyya*, Jughl took al-Afghānī's views to extremes or, one may argue, to their logical conclusion. Contrarily, Abū Qatāda asserted – with reference to Ibn Taymiyya's position towards the "Jahmīs" of his day – that Deobandīs and *Ṭālibān*, albeit indeed holding erroneous beliefs amounting to unbelief, did so not deliberately but out of mere ignorance, and therefore did not warrant a *takfīr*.[79] Thus, even though regarded as at times damagingly inflexible by Abū Muṣʿab al-Sūrī, Abū Qatāda and his mentor, Abū Muḥammad al-Maqdisī, who wrote the foreword to the text, did subordinate their quest for doctrinal purity to pragmatic considerations regarding the real-world situation of the Afghan *jihād* on the ground.

A *fatwā* by the director of the extremely popular Salafī website *www.islamqa.info*, Muḥammad Ṣāliḥ al-Munajjid (b. 1380/1961), to the effect that the Deobandīs should be regarded as misguided due to their adherence to the Māturīdiyya, was most probably also informed by al-Afghānī's work, although it is only Ibn Taymiyya who is explicitly cited.[80] The same goes for the section on the Māturīdiyya in the work on "modern sects" by al-ʿAwājī (first published in 2001), who had formed part of the committee at al-Afghānī's Ph.D. defence at IUM, even though it provides no specific examples of modern Māturīdīs.[81] Additionally, the two webpages *www.maturidis.com* and *www.asharis.com*,

77 Arguably, the strong influence of the followers of Sayyid Quṭb on Salafism in Saudi Arabia and beyond has led to what could be described as the "jihadization" of Salafism. The crucial aspect of the influence of Abū Muḥammad al-Maqdisī and of his disciple Abū Qatāda in particular is thus perhaps not so much the creation of new forms of "Salafism" (so-called "Jihādī-Salafism") or "Jihadism" (so-called "Takfīrī-Jihādism") but a stronger emphasis on the ideal of strict doctrinal Salafī purity among proponents of military *jihād*, which, however, at times was subordinated to pragmatic considerations.

78 See Brynjar Lia, "'Destructive Doctrinarians': Abu Musʿab al-Suri's Critique of the Salafis in the Jihadi Current", in Meijer, *Global Salafism*, 281-300, here 289-93.

79 See Lav, *Radical Islam*, 176-81.

80 This *fatwā* has evidently been translated into several languages, including German. www.fataawa.de/ Fatawaas/14.Sonstiges/1.Gruppierung%20&%20Sekten/6.Deobandies/0149.pdf (accessed 15 July 2015). This link no longer works.

81 See al-ʿAwājī, *Firaq muʿāṣira*, III: 1,227-39.

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both focused on polemics against the Sunnī schools of *kalām*, clearly draw on al-Afghānī's classifications in identifying the Deobandī, Barelvī and Kawtharī schools as the major present-day carriers of the Māturīdiyya.[82]

The Salafī-Ḥanafī Doctrine of al-Ṭaḥāwī and Ibn Abī l-ʿIzz al-Ḥanafī

It must further be noted that Salafī circles also prominently deploy a classical Ḥanafī catechism in their attacks on the Māturīdiyya. Thus, Salafī treatises, forums and blogs on matters of *ʿaqīda* frequently refer to the creed of Abū Jaʿfar al-Ṭaḥāwī (d. 321/933),[83] and particularly to the commentary on it by Ibn Abī l-ʿIzz al-Ḥanafī (d. 792/1390), a student of Ibn Taymiyya's disciple Ibn Kathīr (d. 774/1373). The latter *sharḥ* is regarded by them as free from the deviations and misrepresentations of the numerous Māturīdī commentaries to the work,[84] just as *al-ʿAqīda al-Ṭaḥāwiyya* itself is – in contrast to Māturīdī catechisms – presented as an authentic representation of the true beliefs of the *ahl al-sunna wa-l-jamāʿa*, except, for instance, concerning the definition of belief, where al-Ṭaḥāwī's position fully accords with anathematized Māturīdī teaching.[85] Accordingly, editions, forewords, commentaries and glosses to the original and/or the *sharḥ* of Ibn Abī l-ʿIzz were produced by al-Albānī and major figures of the Saudi Arabian religious establishment such as Ibn Bāz, Ṣāliḥ b. Fawzān al-Fawzān (b. 1352/1933), a well-known Wahhābī scholar and member of the "Permanent Committee for Research and the Issuance of Legal Opinions" (*al-Lajna al-Dāʾima li-l-Buḥūth al-ʿIlmiyya wa-l-Iftāʾ*) in Saudi Arabia, and its former Minister of Islamic Affairs, Ṣāliḥ b. ʿAbd al-ʿAzīz Āl al-Shaykh. Notable examples are the edition of the commentary of Ibn Abī l-ʿIzz produced and introduced with an extensive foreword by al-Albānī, and a more recent edition, which includes glosses by al-Albānī, Ibn Fawzān, Ṣāliḥ Āl al-Shaykh, Ibn Bāz and ʿAbd al-ʿAzīz al-Rājiḥī (b. 1360/1941), who teaches at Imam Muhammad b. Saud Islamic

82 See, for example, <www.asharis.com/creed/articles/mbeif-muhammad-anwar-shah-al-kashmiri-al-deobandi-al-maturidi-on-abu-hanifah-al-bukhar.cfm (accessed 4 June 2019).

83 As far as forums and blogs are concerned see, for example, the entries at <http://salaf-us-saalih.com/?s=tahawiyyah> (accessed 4 June 2019).

84 A popular Māturīdī commentary, incidentally by a fourteenth-century CE author with South Asian origins and recently edited by an Azharī scholar, is Abū Ḥafṣ Sirāj al-Dīn ʿUmar b. Isḥāq al-Ghaznawī al-Hindī, *Sharḥ ʿaqīda al-Imām al-Ṭaḥāwī*, ed. Ḥāzim al-Kaylānī al-Ḥanafī (Cairo: Dār al-Iḥsān 2015). On the author, who held prestigious judgeships and teaching positions in Cairo, see Joseph H. Escovitz, "Patterns of Appointment to the Chief Judgeships of Cairo during the Baḥrī Mamlūk Period", *Arabica* 30:2 (1983), 147-68, here 156.

85 ʿAbd al-Raḥmān, *Sharḥ*, 1: 12f. (from the glosses of Ṣāliḥ Āl al-Shaykh).

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University (ISIU) in Riyadh.[86] Al-Albānī is even credited with having first firmly established the identity of Ibn Abī l-ʿIzz as author of the *sharḥ*.[87]

The great relevance accorded to the commentary of Ibn Abī l-ʿIzz in Salafī circles is also well reflected in Saudi higher religious education. Thus, it features as a standard text in *tawḥīd* at the IUM, and an English translation was published by ISIU.[88] In this respect, the study of the text serves two main functions, especially regarding students coming to study in Saudi Arabia from regions of the Muslim world where the Ḥanafī *madhhab* dominates. First, the main elements of the Salafī creed are elaborated on the basis of a purportedly unbiased text from the Ḥanafī tradition. As a follower of Ibn Taymiyya, already Ibn Abī l-ʿIzz had, for instance, used al-Ṭaḥāwī's statement "We say on the oneness of Allāh that it includes two beliefs: that he is one and that he has no partners" to introduce the tripartite division of *tawḥīd*.[89] Accordingly, al-Rājiḥī, Ṣāliḥ Āl al-Shaykh, Ibn Fawzān, Ibn Bāz and al-Albānī all further elaborate on the *taqsīm al-tawḥīd* and the kinds of *shirk* that flow from disregard for it in their glosses.[90] It is also in his comments to *Sharḥ al-ʿAqīda al-Ṭaḥāwiyya* that Ṣāliḥ Āl al-Shaykh emphasizes, as mentioned above, that the Māturīdīs, due to their definition of belief, are not to be considered as forming part of the *ahl al-sunna wa-l-jamāʿa*.[91] Second, it is deployed to demonstrate that Ḥanafī scholars such as al-Ṭaḥāwī and Ibn Abī l-ʿIzz studied the *uṣūl al-dīn* but did not engage in *kalām*, and were therefore in almost all aspects in agreement with the Salafī creed. It was only the *mutakallimūn*, and particularly also the Māturīdiyya, who departed from this pure creed by, for instance, inventing concepts such as *kasb* (acquisition) by twisting the term's Qurʾānic usage.[92]

86 Muḥammad Nāṣir al-Dīn al-Albānī (ed.), *Sharḥ al-ʿAqīda al-Ṭaḥāwiyya* (Amman: al-Dār al-Islāmī, 1419/1998); ʿAbd al-Raḥmān, *Sharḥ*. A recent major study of this phenomenon, which, however, could not be fully taken into account for the present contribution, is Wasim Shiliwala, "Constructing a Textual Tradition: Salafī Commentaries on *al-ʿAqīdat al-ṭaḥāwiyya*", *WI* 58:4 (2018), 461-503.

87 See Muḥammad b. Ibrāhīm al-Shaybānī, *Ḥayāt al-Albānī wa-āthāruhu wa-thanāʾ al-ʿulamāʾ ʿalayhi*, 2 vols. (Kuwait: Markaz al-Makhṭūṭāt wa-l-Turāth wa-l-Wathāʾiq, 2004), II: 835-37.

88 See Farquhar, *Circuits of Faith*, 139-42.

89 See ʿAbd al-Raḥmān, *Sharḥ*, I: 31.

90 Ibid., I: 37-53.

91 Ibid., I: 17. It must be noted, however, that al-Albānī differs from the other glossators (and Salafī thinkers such as al-Ḥawālī) on this very issue. Indeed, the ire of parts of the Salafī spectrum against al-Albānī appears to stem to an important degree from his "restriction of the practice of *takfīr* to matters of belief, to the exclusion of acts". See Lav, *Radical Islam*, 111.

92 ʿAbd al-Raḥmān, *Sharḥ*, II: 390-92 (from the glosses of Ṣāliḥ Āl al-Shaykh). The chief addressee of critiques of *kasb* were always the Ashʿaris, whose understanding of *kasb* had

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Shams al-Dīn al-Afghānī, who certainly studied *Sharḥ al-ʿAqīda al-Ṭaḥāwiyya* at IUM, presents al-Ṭaḥāwī and Ibn Abī l-ʿIzz – in line with the mentioned Salafī commentators on the *ʿaqīda* – as rare cases of a quasi-Salafī Ḥanafiyya, which is pictured as the only true Ḥanafī tradition,[93] a theme further developed in his *Juhūd al-ʿulamāʾ al-Ḥanafiyya*. His employment of these and other main texts of the IUM curriculum for his extensive refutation of the Māturīdiyya and its modern representatives, not least in his South Asian environment, is indicative of the interaction between the local expertise of individual scholars coming to Saudi Arabia from different parts of the Muslim world and the locally established curricula and modes of relating to non-Salafī theologies.

A natural consequence of these configurations is that Ḥanafīs and Māturīdīs, who generally likewise highly regard al-Ṭaḥāwī's *ʿaqīda*, are found issuing warnings to avoid the commentaries of Ibn Abī l-ʿIzz and al-Albānī.[94] The controversy, however, already dates back to al-Kawtharī's time. The latter disparaged Ibn Abī l-ʿIzz in his biography of al-Ṭaḥāwī by merely noting that "a commentary has been published, authored by an obscure figure misleadingly associated with the Ḥanafī *madhhab* and betraying himself through his work as ignorant of this science and as a closed-minded literalist who has lost direction [*ḥashwī muḥtall al-ʿiyār*]".[95]

Māturīdī Responses to the Salafī Challenge

In general, the Salafī attacks on the Māturīdiyya, and on *kalām* as a whole, have led to a strengthening of theological *madhhab* consciousness, to growing networking and connectivity between Māturīdī scholars (and defenders of the

been rejected as overly deterministic already by Ibn Taymiyya and Ibn al-Qayyim, whose own position left more room for human free will and was therefore closer to Māturīdī doctrine. Enhanced knowledge of Māturīdī teachings has, however, seemingly also heightened awareness of the Māturīdiyya's usage of the concept of the acquisition of acts.

93 See al-Afghānī, *ʿAdāʾ al-Māturīdiyya*, 1: 307f.

94 See, for example, <www.sunniforum.com/forum/showthread.php?3602-Maturidi-Aqeedah-Books>; <www.sunniforum.com/forum/showthread.php?68391-The-relation-between-the-Maturidi-and-Tahawiyyah-Aqeedah-and-the-Hanafi-Madhab> (both accessed 16 July 2015). The *Sunniforum* webpage no longer exists.

95 Muḥammad Zāhid al-Kawtharī, *al-Ḥāwī fī ṣīrat al-Imām Abī Jaʿfar al-Ṭaḥāwī* (n.p.: Maṭbaʿat al-Anwār al-Muḥammadiyya, n.d.), 40 n. 1. It is thus perhaps also not coincidental that the fierce debates between al-Albānī and ʿAbd al-Fattāḥ Abū Ghudda, a scholar labelled as a major Kawtharī (i.e., neo-Māturīdī) by Shams al-Dīn al-Afghānī, were sparked by Abū Ghudda's dismay at al-Albānī's edition of *Sharḥ al-ʿAqīda al-Ṭaḥāwiyya*. On these debates see Emad Hamdeh, "The Role of the 'Ulamā' in the Thoughts of 'Abd al-Fattāḥ Abū Ghudda", *MW* 107:3 (2017), 359-74, here 363-69. Hamdeh seems to suggest that the conflict was started by al-Albānī. The sequence of respective works, however, indicates the opposite.

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Sunnī legal and theological *madhāhib* in general) on a global scale, and to a reconfiguration of structures and modes of organization among its adherents. Beginning already in the first half of the twentieth century with the cooperation of al-Kawtharī and certain Indian Deobandīs, in the face of the Wahhābī and *Ahl-i Ḥadīṯ* challenges in the Middle East and South Asia respectively,[96] this process has gained new momentum from the 1990s onwards. In Egypt, *Maktabat al-Azhariyya li-l-Turāth* embarked in 2011 on a series on the legacy of the Māturīdī school (intriguingly referred to not as a *madhhab* but as a *madrasa*), which initially focused on the publication of rare commentaries to classical Māturīdī catechisms.[97]

In South Asia, the otherwise strongly competing Barelvīs and Deobandīs have both exerted efforts at affirming and re-emphasizing their attachment to Māturīdī tradition and the legitimacy of both Sunnī schools of theology, inter alia by the production of new works of *ʿaqīda* responding to Salafī denunciations and the circulation of brief doctrinal clarifications and lists of Māturīdī books, which commonly also include works of *tafsīr* such as Abū l-Barakāt al-Nasafī's (d. 710/1310) *Madārik al-tanzīl wa-ḥaqāʾiq al-taʾwīl* and Ismāʿīl Ḥaqqī's (d. 1137/1725) *Rūḥ al-bayān*.[98] Similarly, the increased connectivity between these two groups and their counterparts in Turkey and the Arab world, as well as a growing sense of shared intellectual histories, is reflected in a number of endeavours aiming at international audiences. Thus, for instance, we find a bilingual (English translation and Arabic original) version of the comparably rare *Risāla fī l-ikhtilāf bayn al-Ashāʿira wa-l-Māturīdiyya* of Kamālpāşāzādeh (d. 940/1534) on the *Friends of Deoband* website, albeit without acknowledgment of the author.[99] The renewed interest in the Urdu translation of Ismāʿīl

96 See Bruckmayr, "Past and Present Aspects", 128.

97 *Min turāth al-madrasa al-māturīdiyya*: Muḥammad b. Abī Bakr al-Maqdisī, *Ghāyat al-marām fī sharḥ Baḥr al-kalām* (Cairo: Maktabat al-Azhariyya li-l-Turāth, 2011); Abū l-Barakāt ʿAbdallāh b. Aḥmad al-Nasafī, *Sharḥ al-ʿUmda fī ʿaqīdat ahl al-sunna wa-l-jamāʿa* (Cairo: Maktabat al-Azhariyya li-l-Turāth 2012).

98 See, for instance, <https://friendsofdeoband.wordpress.com/2012/11/13/the-ashariyyah-and-maturi diyyah/> (accessed 4 June 2019) and the first blog entry given in n. 94. Shams al-Dīn al-Afghānī also lists Ḥaqqī as a Māturīdī author and characterizes his *tafsīr* as "steeped in superstition, polytheism and the [doctrine of the] unity of being". al-Afghānī, *ʿAdāʾ al-Māturīdiyya*, 1: 307f. On *Madārik al-tanzīl* and *Rūḥ al-bayān* as part of a specifically Māturīdī tradition of *tafsīr* see Philipp Bruckmayr, "Māturīdi Qurʾān Commentaries and their Legacy" (forthcoming).

99 See <https://friendsofdeoband.wordpress.com/2012/05/24/the-differences-between-the-asharis-and-ma turidis/> (accessed 4 June 2019). Compare Ibn Kamāl Bāshā, "Risāla fī l-ikhtilāf bayn al-Ashāʿira wa-l-Māturīdiyya fī ithnatay ʿashrata masʾala", ed. Edward Badeen, in idem, *Sunnitische Theologie*, 19-23 (Arabic part).

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Ḥaqqī's *tafsīr* by the Barelvī scholar Fayẓ Aḥmad Uvaysī (b. 1351/1932)[100] likewise needs to be viewed in this perspective. The same applies – at the other end of the traditional Ḥanafī world – to the publication of a *kalām* gloss by Aḥmad Riẓā Khān, the founder of the Barelvī orientation, in Istanbul in the twenty-first century.[101]

Given al-Afghānī's specific ire towards al-Kawtharī and his followers, the recently resumed publication and/or translation of al-Kawtharī's works in both Egypt and India is naturally of interest. Thus, al-Azhar's *Maktabat al-Azhariyya li-l-Turāth*, which also publishes the mentioned series on the Māturīdī heritage, has so far published over sixty works by/on al-Kawtharī in a special series entitled *Min Turāth al-Kawtharī*. In India, the Deobandī scholar Muḥammad Anwār Khān Bastavī has translated a number of al-Kawtharī's works into Urdu with introductions and comments. These include translations of his treatise *al-Lā-madhhabiyya qanṭarat al-lā-dīniyya*, and his introduction to Ibn ʿAsākir's (d. 571/1176) *Tabyīn kadhib al-muftarī*.[102] In the latter, al-Kawtharī stresses that the *ahl al-sunna wa-l-jamāʿa* consist of the Māturīdiyya and Ashʿariyya, and that the former is the path of the Ḥanafīs in Transoxania, Turkey, Afghanistan, India and China. This is contrasted with the *ḥashwiyya* (i.e., closed-minded literalists/anthropomorphists),[103] a historical heretical group, whom al-Māturīdī charged, inter alia, with considering works as forming part of belief[104] – a position vigorously upheld by Salafī critics of the Māturīdiyya. It is hereby clear

100 Muḥammad Fayẓ Aḥmad Uvaysī (trans.), *Fuyūḍ al-raḥmān: urdū tarjamah-yi Rūḥ al-bayān* (Bahawalpur: Maktabah-yi Uvaysiyyah Riẓviyyah 1983). That Ḥaqqī's *tafsīr* was and still is – especially in South Asia – considered to be of relevance also far beyond the field of Qurʾānic commentary, to the inclusion of matters of *kalām*, can be gleaned from statements to this effect as well as from respective citations in the works of major scholars as diverse as Abū l-Ḥasan ʿAlī Nadvī, Aḥmad Riẓā Khān of Bareilly and Tahir ul-Qadri (see below). Sayyid Abū l-Ḥasan ʿAlī Nadvī, *Purāne Chiragh*, 3 vols. (Lucknow: Maktabah-yi Firdaws, 1414/1994-1419/1998), I: 137f.; Aḥmad Riḍā Khān al-Barīlwī, *al-Mustanad al-muʿtamad*, on the margin of Faḍl-i Rasūl b. Shāh ʿAbd al-Majīd al-Badāyūnī, *al-Muʿtaqad al-muntaqad* (Istanbul: Hakîkat Kitâbevi, 2003), 96; Muḥammad Ṭāhir al-Qādirī, *Kitāb al-tawḥīd* (Lahore: Minhaj-ul-Quran Publications, 2006), 864.

101 al-Barīlwī, *al-Mustanad al-muʿtamad*. On the background and Māturīdī character of this work see Bruckmayr, *Past and Present Aspects*, 127f.

102 Muḥammad Zāhid al-Kawṣarī, *Ghayr-muqallidiyyat: ilḥād kā darwāzah*, trans. Muḥammad Anvār Khān Bastavī (Deoband: Maktabah-yi Ṣawt al-Qurʾān, 1434/2012); idem, *Islāmī firaq ek jāʾizah*, trans. Muḥammad Anvār Khān Bastavī (Deoband: Maktabah-yi Ṣawt al-Qurʾān, 1434/2012).

103 See idem, "Muqaddima kitāb Tabyīn Kadhib al-Muftarī fīmā nusiba ilā al-Imām Abī l-Ḥasan al-Ashʿarī li-l-Ḥāfiẓ al-Muʾarrikh Ibn ʿAsākir", in *Muqaddimāt al-Imām al-Kawtharī* (Cairo: Maktabat al-Azhariyya li-l-Turāth, 1434/2013), 35-54, here 48f.

104 See Abū Manṣūr al-Māturīdī, *Kitāb al-tawḥīd*, ed. Bekir Topaloğlu and Muhammad Aruçi (Ankara: İSAM, 2005), 530. On the *ḥashwiyya* as social and religious group and the his-

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that al-Kawtharī did not merely view the *ḥashwiyya* as a thing of the past. Describing them as "stuck in ignorance and stagnation", he notes that the *ḥashwī* phenomenon "is the same in all times of history".[105] Keeping in mind that he also applied the *ḥashwī* label to Ibn Abī l-ʿIzz, it is easy to guess whom he regarded as the *ḥashwī*s of his day.

Other hallmarks of the contemporary transnational cooperation in the revival of al-Kawtharī as a defender of the legal and theological *madhāhib* on the one hand, and of growing general interest in his legacy on the other, were an "International Conference on al-Kawtharī's Efforts in the Service of Tradition and the Sunni Legal Schools and in the Defence of the Islamic Creed" (*Muʾtamar Muḥammad Zāhid al-Kawtharī al-duwalī: Juhūd al-Shaykh al-Kawtharī fī khidmat al-sunna wa-l-madhāhib al-fiqhiyya al-sunniyya wa-l-difāʿ ʿan al-ʿaqīda al-islāmiyya*), convened in Turkey in 2007, the proceedings of which were published in al-Azhar's *Maktabat al-Azhariyya li-l-Turāth* series,[106] and the publication of his correspondence with his illustrious former student, the Deobandī scholar Muḥammad Yūsuf al-Binorī, in Jordan in 2013.[107] A Qaṭar-based but most probably originally South Asian speaker at the aforementioned conference made it abundantly clear who the shared doctrinal opponent with al-Kawtharī is. Enumerating the foremost reprehensible innovations in *ʿaqīda* of al-Kawtharī's (and his own) day, he mentions anthropomorphism, assigning a direction to Allāh, pronouncing *takfīr* for *tawassul* and the "*takfīr* against the entirety of Muslims, who have not succumbed to the Wahhābiyya-Salafiyya, and their imams".[108]

Needless to say, the specific defence of the Māturīdiyya was hardly al-Kawtharī's priority. Yet, besides the Ḥanafiyya, the Ashʿariyya and *taṣawwuf*, it was nevertheless an inextricable element of the scholarly edifice and tradition he so vehemently sought to defend and resuscitate. Even if he would eventually perhaps edit more classical Ashʿarī than Māturīdī texts, as a staunch Ḥanafī, he evidently felt a particularly strong attachment to Māturīdī tradition.

torical usage of the related derogatory label see A.S. Halkin, "The Ḥashwiyya", *JAOS* 54 (1934), 1-28.

105 al-Kawtharī, "Muqaddimat kitāb Tabyīn", 49.

106 *Juhūd al-Shaykh al-Kawtharī fī khidmat al-sunna wa-l-madhāhib al-fiqhiyya al-sunniyya wa-l-difāʿ ʿan al-ʿaqīda al-islāmiyya* (Cairo: Maktabat al-Azhariyya li-l-Turāth, 1432/2011).

107 Saʿūd b. Ṣāliḥ al-Sarḥān (ed.), *Rasāʾil al-Imām Muḥammad Zāhid al-Kawtharī ilā al-ʿAllāmah Muḥammad Yūsuf al-Binūrī fī al-sanawāt min 1358h ḥattā 1371h* (Amman: Dār al-Fatḥ li-l-Dirāsāt wa-l-Nashr, 2013). Binorī also contributed a foreword to the first edition of a collection of al-Kawtharī's lectures. Muḥammad Yūsuf al-Binūrī, "Muqaddima", in Muḥammad Zāhid al-Kawtharī, *Maqālāt al-Kawtharī* (Cairo: Maṭbaʿat al-Anwār, n.d.), [85-95].

108 Dīn Muḥammad [b.] Muhammad Mīrā Ṣāḥib, "Minhaj al-Imām al-Kawtharī fī muḥārabat al-bidaʿ al-ʿaqadiyya", in *Juhūd al-Shaykh al-Kawtharī*, 193-219, here 198.

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Indeed, he was doubtless one of the main modern propagators of the view that the Māturīdiyya represents the true theological teachings bequeathed by Abū Ḥanīfa. Thus, in connection with his edition of *Ishārāt al-marām* by al-Bayāḍī, an obvious major precursor in this regard, he untiringly reminded al-Binorī of the relevance of this work as far as the Māturīdiyya was concerned. Once published, he sent copies of it to Yūsuf al-Binorī in Pakistan.[109] Through his efforts he still serves as either an important reference or as an arch-nemesis for the defenders and detractors of the Māturīdiyya today.[110]

In this regard, also the efforts at countering the Salafiyya by major scholarly figures of global significance in the USA, Syria and Pakistan must be mentioned. Although himself a Shāfiʿī-Ashʿarī, the major refutations of the Salafīs by the eminent Syrian scholar Muḥammad Saʿīd Ramaḍān al-Būṭī (d. 1434/2013)[111] which were most likely inspired to some degree by the above-mentioned earlier epistle of al-Kawtharī,[112] have also aided the Māturīdīs' cause. Indeed, in his *al-Salafiyya*, al-Būṭī's expositions on the historical emergence and development of the science of *kalām*, which he describes – by quoting from Ibn Khaldūn's (d. 808/1406) *Muqaddima* – as rationally delineating and defending the beliefs of the "schools of thought" of the *salaf* and the *ahl al-sunna*, take *al-Fiqh al-akbar* and *al-ʿĀlim wa-l-mutaʿallim* (both traditionally, but erroneously, attributed to Abū Ḥanīfa) as their starting point, before he moves on to a critique of Ibn Taymiyya's opinions on *kalām*.[113]

Similarly, also the first volume of the *Encyclopedia of Islamic Doctrine* (1998) of Hisham Kabbani (Qabbānī, b. 1364/1945), a Lebanese-American Shāfiʿī scholar and presently the most important Khālidī-Naqshbandī *shaykh* in the

109 The same goes for his editions of the theological texts of/attributed to Abū Ḥanīfa. See al-Sarḥān (ed.), *Rasāʾil al-Imām Muḥammad Zāhid al-Kawtharī*, 165, 168, 177 and 180f.

110 As can be gleaned from al-Kawtharī's writings, lectures and particularly also from his correspondence with al-Binorī as well as from the work of al-Afghānī, the assessment and interpretation of *ḥadīth*s with bearing on matters of *ʿaqīda* were and still are of special relevance to these debates. This is also mirrored in al-Kawtharī's and Abū Ghudda's strong interest in modern South Asian works of *ḥadīth* commentary of either Deobandī or *Ahl-i Ḥadīṯ* bent. This topic will, however, be treated in a separate study.

111 Muḥammad Saʿīd Ramaḍān al-Būṭī, *al-Salafiyya marḥala zamaniyya mubāraka lā madhhab islāmī* (Damascus: Dār al-Fikr [1988] 1431/2010); idem, *al-Lā-madhhabiyya akhṭar bidʿa tuhaddid al-sharīʿa al-islāmiyya* (Damascus: Maktabat al-Fārābī, 1426/2005). In the latter work, al-Būṭī, however, also charges the Cairene reformer Muḥammad ʿAbduh (see above, note 30), who actually held both al-Ashʿarī and al-Māturīdī in high esteem as original thinkers, for his *lā-madhhabiyya* tendencies. See Griffel, "What Do We Mean", 197 and 211.

112 Muḥammad Zāhid al-Kawtharī, "al-Lā-Madhhabiyya: qanṭarat al-lā-dīniyya", in *Maqālāt al-Kawtharī* (Cairo: Maṭbaʿat al-Anwār, n.d.), 129-37.

113 See al-Būṭī, *al-Salafiyya*, 152f. and 159-61. Regarding the question of authorship and analyses of these two texts see Rudolph, *al-Māturīdī*, 45-77.

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USA, represents a major defence of the Sunnī schools of theology and a spirited refutation of its Salafī critics from Ibn Taymiyya down to al-Albānī for the English-speaking world. While his section on al-Māturīdī – albeit placing great stress on the significant role he accords to human reason – is comparably brief, he untiringly emphasizes that he considers the Ashʿarī and Māturīdī *madhāhib* as equally representing true Sunnī *ʿaqīda*.[114]

Whereas blunt counter-attacks against the Salafīs by Māturīdīs routinely return the *jahmī* charge by referring to the former with the derogatory *ḥashwiyya* label, more sophisticated Māturīdī scholarly rebuttals focus systematically on turning their opponents' steady recourse to the Qurʾān, *ḥadīth* and the writings of Ibn Taymiyya against them. A noteworthy case is Tahir-ul-Qadri (Muḥammad Ṭāhir al-Qādirī, b. 1370/1951), a major Barelvī scholar from Pakistan, for whom *pīr* and shrine-centred Ṣūfī religiosity and the notion of intercession are naturally of central importance. In his Urdu *Kitāb al-tawḥīd* (2006), he engages directly with Ibn Taymiyya's works while emphasizing Māturīdī doctrine and citing, among others, the Māturīdī *ʿaqāʾid* and *tafāsīr* of Najm al-Dīn al-Nasafī, Abū l-Barakāt al-Nasafī and Ismāʿīl Ḥaqqī.[115] Kabbani's *Naqshbandi-Haqqani Sufi Order of America* and *As-Sunna Foundation of America*, as well as Tahir ul-Qadri's *Minhāj al-Qurʾān* organization (est. 1981), have also sought to confront Salafī groups by developing organizational structures and modes of operation, including websites and educational schemes, resembling and rivalling those functioning as main conduits for successful Salafī expansion among the young.[116]

Concerning more general and traditional expressions of Muslim culture on the subcontinent, it might be added that even *Bihishtī Zevar*, the work by the famous Ashraf ʿAlī Tʰānavī (d. 1362/1943), which still serves as the traditional wedding gift for brides in the Deobandī spectrum and beyond in South Asia and among the global Deobandī diaspora, has retained and emphasizes a number of key elements of Māturīdī *ʿaqīda*, such as the eternity of all divine attributes, human free will (*ikhtiyār*), and the nature of belief, which are

114 See Shaykh Muhammad Hisham Kabbani, *Encyclopedia of Islamic Doctrine*, 8 vols. (Mountain View, CA.: As-Sunna Foundation of America, 1998), 1: 30-32, 45f. et passim. One of Kabbani's followers, the Lebanese convert Gibril Fouad Haddad (b. 1380/1960), has written a major refutation of al-Albānī and his perceived followers, in which he also makes specific mention of treatises directed against the Māturīdiyya. See Gibril Fouad Haddad, *Albani and his Friends: A Concise Guide to the Salafi Movement* (Birmingham: AQSA Publications, 2009, 2nd ed.), 164 and 181.

115 See al-Qādirī, *Kitāb al-tawḥīd*.

116 See Sadek Hamid, "The Attraction of 'Authentic Islam': Salafīsm and British Muslim Youth", in Meijer, *Global Salafism*, 384-403, here 397.

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reiterated in the opening sections of the book.[117] More elaborate discussions of, and pronounced attachment to, Māturīdī doctrine are found in a 1998 introductory *ʿaqīda* textbook by a Deobandī *muftī* from Lahore, which was subsequently translated into English by Afzal Hoosen Elias, a major South African Deobandī scholar whose influence extends up to Malawi.[118] Given the impression – which still has to withstand the test of scholarly scrutiny – that earlier Deobandī scholarship was, except on issues such as the nature of belief, comparably non-committal in this regard, one wonders whether the growing Salafī challenge in South Asia since the second half of the twentieth century has not effectively led to a pronounced reattachment to Māturīdī tradition in Deobandī circles.

On a side note, it may be mentioned that even in predominantly Shāfiʿī-Ashʿarī Southeast Asia, a notably increased awareness and identification also with the Māturīdiyya as the second school of Sunnī theology is nowadays perceptible among those wary of growing Salafī influence. An extreme case of this development is arguably represented by the Malaysian *Almaturidiah* blog, which features a blacklist of supposedly domestic Salafī opponents of *kalām* and even exposes their occupational details.[119]

Concluding Remarks

Since the late 1980s the Māturīdiyya, as a theological school hitherto largely ignored by Salafī and Salafist thinkers, has drawn an increasing number of refutations, which are readily extending Ibn Taymiyya's critique of the Ashʿariyya also to the Māturīdī school. The expansion of this kind of polemical literature, often appearing in academic garb in the form of dissertations and theses submitted at Saudi Arabian universities, was initially most decisively propelled by the work of the Pakistani author Shams al-Salafī al-Afghānī. As was shown, however, anti-Māturīdī discourse has been taken up by a variety of strands within the contested contemporary field of Salafī Islam. Indeed, as has recently been noted by Griffel with regards to the Ashʿariyya, "the strength of the common doctrinal enemy" seems to play a major role in holding together the

117 See Ḥaẓrat Mawlānā Ashraf ʿAlī Thānavī, *Ishāʿatī Bihishtī zevar: mukammal* (Delhi: Idārah-yi Ishāʿat-i Dīniyyah, n.d.), 44f. and 47.

118 Mufti Abdul Wahid, *Islamic Beliefs*, trans. Afzal Hoosen Elias (n.p.: n.publ., 1423/2003). On Elias see <www.alislam.co.za/about/> (accessed 4 June 2019).

119 See <http://almaturidiah.blogspot.co.at/> (accessed 4 June 2019). On the history of Salafism in the country see Maszlee Malik, "Salafism in Malaysia: Historical Account of its Emergence and Motivations", *Sociology of Islam* 5:4 (2017), 303-33.

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two major trends within present Salafī Islam – the opponents of the *madhāhib* on the one hand and the Wahhābī-Ḥanbalīs on the other – despite their internal competition. In this respect, the different Salafī players appear to have realized that there is not only an "Ashʿarite establishment and its theology" to be fought and dismantled,[120] but likewise, in traditionally Ḥanafī-dominated regions, a Māturīdī one. The vehemence of Salafī attacks on the Māturīdī tradition, and its constant references to individual scholars, schools of thought and Islamic movements as representatives of the modern Māturīdiyya, testify moreover to the fact that it is definitely not merely conceived of as a force of the past. Much to the contrary, the Salafī challenge to the Māturīdī *madhhab* appears to have, despite Salafī Islam's obvious gains – specifically among the young – at the expense of more traditional forms of Islam, indeed resulted in a reflowering of theological *madhhab*-consciousness and in a renewed interest in the history and doctrines of the school, as well as in a certain degree of "lived Māturīdī tradition". Hereby attachment to it – perhaps of little relevance just a few decades ago – again moves more to the forefront of religious identity construction.

The fact that most groups discussed under the label "modern Māturīdiyya" in contemporary Salafī polemical texts are either of South Asian origin or have a strong connection to Muḥammad Zāhid al-Kawtharī, or both, testifies to the important influence of Shams al-Dīn al-Salafī al-Afghānī. It was his M.A. thesis at the IUM which brought Deobandīs, Barelvīs and Kawtharīs into focus as representatives of a modern Māturīdiyya, whereas Māturīdī revivals in Central Asia, Turkey and Tatarstan have apparently so far drawn much less attention. Undoubtedly, his works could never have reached such a wide audience were it not for his education and connections in Saudi Arabia. As such, the IUM has functioned as a site of exchange of different forms of religious knowledge and social capital. Thus, al-Afghānī was given the opportunity to put to use his own experiences in a region that is dominated by Ḥanafī-Māturīdī tradition but which is also heir to a long history of indigenous (proto-)Salafī thought and inter-*maslak* rivalry – including the Salafī *Ahl-i Ḥadīṯ*, as well as Deobandīs and Barelvīs as rival claimants to the Ḥanafī-Māturīdī heritage and its reform – both for his own, perhaps more local, agenda and also for the wider Salafī/Wahhābī one. That these agendas are not in all aspects congruent with each other can be gleaned from the selective reception of al-Afghānī's work. The considerable attention he devoted to his former teachers at the JITS is hardly

120 Griffel, "What Do We Mean", 220.

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reflected in the Arabic and English books and debates influenced by his work.[121] While his supervisors and non-South Asian readership certainly also appreciated his exposure of the wrong beliefs of the JITS, the group as such is, in contrast to Kawtharīs, Deobandīs and Barelvīs, presumably regarded as too marginal to be included in their discussions.

As far as al-Afghānī's role as supplier of local expert knowledge to the Saudi religious establishment is concerned, he falls into a string of similar figures, a number of which also hailed from South Asia or had personal experience in the region. The earliest example of such a configuration is certainly the request of the Najdī scholar Ḥamad b. ʿAtīq (d. 1311/1883) to Ṣiddīq Ḥasan Khān (d. 1307/1890), the founder of the *Ahl-i Ḥadīṯ* in Bhopal, to write a commentary on Ibn al-Qayyim's *Qaṣīda al-nūniyya*.[122] More pertinently, however, the Egyptian Muḥammad b. Khalīl Harrās (d. 1395/1975), an instrumental figure in the Salafī *Anṣār al-Sunna al-Muḥammadiyya*, must be noted as a major precursor, who taught at both ISIU and Umm al-Qurā University. At a time when a sound Salafī creed and expertise on Ashʿarī (and, to a lesser degree, Māturīdī) theology was a rare combination in young Saudi Arabia, Harrās, a graduate of and professor at al-Azhar, with in-depth knowledge of the contemporary Ashʿariyya and the respective Azharī curricula, was invited to the country. Apart from his teaching, particularly his writings on *ʿaqīda* left a lasting mark on Saudi curricula and Salafī refutations of the Ashʿarī and Māturīdī schools. Thus, his commentary on Ibn Taymiyya's *ʿAqīda al-wāsiṭiyya* still figured as a standard text in IUM classes on *tawḥīd* in the 1990s[123] (and most probably continues to do so), and is, together with his commentary on Ibn al-Qayyim's *Qaṣīda al-nūniyya*, cited extensively by al-Afghānī and other Salafī detractors of the Māturīdiyya. Albeit, in line with earlier Salafī literature, disregarding the Māturīdiyya in his writings, Harras undoubtedly influenced al-Afghānī and other authors of

121 Abū Qatāda's contender Bahāʾ Muṣṭafā Jughl, with his explicit *takfīr* of the *Ṭālibān*, is perhaps an exception. As shown in Hartung's contribution, the *Ṭālibān* and the JITS sprung partly from the same environment. Moreover, the charges raised against them from the Salafī side are at times quite similar to those against the JITS. Besides the mentioned treatise of Abū Qatāda, the following defence of the Taliban needs to be mentioned: Yūsuf al-ʿUyayrī, *al-Mīzān li-ḥarakat Ṭālibān* (n.p.: Markaz al-Dirāsāt wa-l-Buḥūth al-Islāmiyya, 1422/2001).

122 See Guido Steinberg, *Religion und Staat in Saudi-Arabien: Die wahhabitischen Gelehrten 1902-1953* (Würzburg: Ergon, 2002), 90f.; Preckel, *Islamische Bildungsnetzwerke*, 221.

123 See Farquhar, *Circuits of Faith*, 142. The first English translation was produced at the *Ahl-i Ḥadīṯ* Jāmiʿah Salafiyyah in Benares (India). See Abdul Malik Mujahid, "Publisher's Note", in *Muhammad Khalil Harras: Sharh Al-Aqeedat-il-Wasitiyah*, trans. Muhammad Rafiq Khan, rev. trans. Hafiz Muhammad Tahir and Abdul-Qaadir Abdul Khaaliq (Riyadh: Dar-us-Salam Publications, 1416/1996), 7f.

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anti-Māturīdī tracts. In contrast, the widely travelled Salafī spearhead Taqī al-Dīn al-Hilālī (d. 1407/1987) brought his experiences in his native Morocco, southern Iraq and India to bear in Saudi Arabia, which greatly enhanced his local prestige. Thus, he played a pivotal role in exposing the fallacies of the *Tijāniyya* (his own former *ṭarīqa*), the Shīʿa and the *Tablīghī Jamāʿat* in Saudi Arabia.[124] Another example is the *Ahl-i Ḥadīṯ* scholar Iḥsān Ilahī Ẓahīr (d. 1407/1987), the son-in-law of al-Afghānī's teacher Gundlavi and the first Pakistani student at IUM. His study-cum-refutation of the Ahmadiyyah movement was published with heavy backing by Ibn Bāz in Saudi Arabia in 1967. Even more influential, however, were his string of books directed against Shīʿī beliefs, which were well received in and disseminated from Saudi Arabia. Moreover, they were instrumental in precipitating a distinct brand of anti-Shīʿī polemics peculiar to the Pakistani context.[125]

Arguably, the cooperation of al-Afghānī and his Saudi mentors was of a similarly Janus-faced kind, speaking both to local cleavages and the more global concerns of the Salafī *daʿwa* and quest for hegemony in local contexts and the wider *umma*. Even the influx of South Asian students to IUM and other Saudi Arabian universities, however, is not an entirely one-sided story. Thus, the influential Salafī scholar Rabīʿ b. Hādī al-Madkhalī (b. 1351/1932), the former head of the Sunna Department in the IUM's Institute of Higher Studies, lamented that Indian Muslims, bringing their attachment to Ḥanafī-Māturīdī tradition to IUM, often failed to correct their views even after completing their studies in Medina.[126] Some of them might as well return home with in-depth knowledge about how, for instance, the local courses on *ʿaqīda*/*tawḥīd* and sects employ texts from Ḥanafī tradition, such as (*Sharḥ*) *al-ʿAqīda al-Ṭaḥāwiyya*, for their own purposes.

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124 See Henri Lauzière, *The Making of Salafism: Islamic Reform in the Twentieth Century* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2016), 76f., 85f. and 212.

125 See Simon Wolfgang Fuchs, "The Long Shadow of the State: The Iranian Revolution, Saudi Influence, and the Shifting Arguments of Anti-Shi'i Sectarianism in Pakistan", in *Pan-Islamic Connections: Transnational Networks between South Asia and the Gulf*, ed. Laurence Louër and Christophe Jaffrelot (London: Hurst, 2017), 217-32 and 290-300, here 217-20.

126 See Farquhar, *Circuits of Faith*, 175. On al-Madkhalī and his followers see the Introduction by Bruckmayr and Hartung, as well as Sunarwoto's contribution to this special theme issue.

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