

Şadr al-Sharī'a's Ta'dīl Attempt and Later Mātūrīdism: Historical Background and General Characteristics

Sadrüşşerīa'nın Ta'dīl Teşebbüsü ve Müteahhir Mātūrīdilik: Tarihsel Arka Plan ve Genel Özellikleri

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ABSTRACT

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In this study, what Sadr al-Sharī'a (d. 747/1346) aimed to achieve with his ta'dīl attempt is examined historically in terms of the relationship between Mātūrīdism and Ash'arism. This relationship concerns the transformation within Ash'arism itself. Ash'arism attained a systematic structure with al-Bāqillanī (d. 403/1013) and Ibn Fūrek (d. 406/1015). Afterward, through the transformations it underwent with al-Juwaynī (d. 478/1085), al-Ghazālī (d. 505/1111), and finally al-Rāzī (d. 606/1210), its engagement with Peripatetic philosophy advanced to a more developed stage. In Mātūrīdism, the process did not take place simultaneously with Ash'arism. In Mātūrīdism, the references to its founding "imām" coincide with about one and a half centuries after the "imām's death". Taking this difference into account, this historical process is analyzed in terms of the relationship between the two schools, and the transformation of Mātūrīdism is linked to Ash'arism through al-Rāzī. With al-Rāzī, a new language of kalām emerged, prompting the Ḥanafīs to adapt to this new discourse. One of the first and highest forms of this language within Mātūrīdism, along with al-Samarqandī (d. 722/1322), was found in Sadr al-Sharī'a. From this point of view, the article builds on Sadr al-Sharī'a's activity, which I conceptualize as a ta'dīl attempt, on the relationship between these two schools historically and between religious and philosophical thought in general. It is argued that Sadr al-Sharī'a's attempt represents the encounter of Mātūrīdism with philosophical issues and language in the case of Avicenna.

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Bu çalışmada, Sadrüşşerīa'nın (öl. 747/1346) ta'dīl girişimiyle neyi amaçladığı, Mātūrīdilik ve Eş'arilik arasındaki ilişki bağlamında tarihsel olarak incelenmektedir. Bu ilişki, Eş'ariliğin kendi içindeki dönüşümüyle yakından ilgilidir. Eş'arilik; Bâkılânî (öl. 403/1013) ve İbn Fūrek (öl. 406/1015) ile sistematik bir yapı kazanmış; ardından Cüveynî (öl. 478/1085), Gazzâlî (öl. 505/1111) ve son olarak Râzî (öl. 606/1210) ile geçirdiği dönüşümler vasıtasıyla Meşşâilik ile olan hesaplaşmasını ileri bir aşamaya taşımıştır. Mātūrīdilikte ise bu süreç Eş'arilik ile eş zamanlı olarak gerçekleşmemiştir. Mātūrīdilikte kurucu imama yapılan atıflar, imamın vefatından yaklaşık bir buçuk asır sonrasına denk gelmektedir. Bu fark göz önünde bulundurularak; söz konusu tarihsel süreç iki ekol arasındaki ilişki üzerinden analiz edilmiş ve Mātūrīdiliğin dönüşümü, Râzî aracılığıyla Eş'ariliğe bağlanmıştır. Râzî ile birlikte yeni bir kelam dili ve Hanefilerin bu yeni dile uyum sağlama ihtiyacı ortaya çıkmıştır. Mātūrīdilik içerisinde bu dilin, Semerkandî (öl. 722/1322) ile birlikte ilk ve en gelişmiş formlarından biri Sadrüşşerīa'da görülmektedir. Bu bakış açısından hareketle makale; Sadrüşşerīa'nın ta'dīl girişimi olarak kavramsallaştırdığım faaliyetini, tarihsel olarak bu iki ekol arasındaki ilişki ve genel anlamda dini ile felsefi düşünce arasındaki münasebet üzerine kurgulamaktadır. Sadrüşşerīa'nın girişiminin, Mātūrīdiliğin İbn Sînâ örneğinde felsefi meselelerle ve felsefi dille karşılaşmasını temsil ettiği ileri sürülmektedir.

INTRODUCTION

Fakhr al-Dīn al-Rāzī (d. 606/1210), a pivotal figure in the tradition of Islamic religious thought, unequivocally demonstrated that the philosophical corpus of Avicenna could not be disregarded. The interaction process observed in the works of al-Juwaynī (d. 478/1085) and al-Ghazālī (d. 505/1111) culminated with al-Rāzī. Nonetheless, this narrative holds true primarily for a specific doctrinal school. The Ash'arite tradition's engagement with Avicennan philosophical thought diverges significantly from that of the Ḥanafī-Māturīdī tradition, to which Ṣadr al-Sharī'a (d. 747/1346) belonged, in terms of both the manner and timing of this intellectual engagement. Unlike the post-Rāzī Māturīdī theologians, Ṣadr al-Sharī'a critically examined the Avicennan philosophical system and endeavored to fortify his own theological school. However, as a distinguished representative of Islamic religious thought, he extends his critique of Avicenna's philosophy beyond his own school, offering a broader evaluation of how these two systems of thought interact and benefit from one another. This endeavor, which I term *ta'dīl*, is inspired by the title of Ṣadr al-Sharī'a's seminal work.*

First, it is essential to delineate the concept of the *ta'dīl* endeavor. The foundation of Ṣadr al-Sharī'a's *ta'dīl* of kalām can be traced to an evolving conceptual framework and content shaped by changing interlocutors. Consequently, Ṣadr al-Sharī'a epitomizes the intersection of the Māturīdī theological system with the philosophical system. M. Fatih Arslan articulates this as “an endeavor to modernize Māturīdī theology and ensure its continued relevance and endurance.”¹ Qurbān 'Alī Idris identifies the interlocutors of Ṣadr al-Sharī'a's kalām, asserting that, like al-Ṭūṣī and al-Samarqandī before him, Ṣadr al-Sharī'a's approach represents a synthesis of Avicenna's philosophy and kalām. Idris also notes that “it was an important historical stage for Māturīdī theology in Transoxiana and Khorasan,” though he does not elaborate on this assertion.² Ḥamāda Muḥammad Ibrāhīm says that Ṣadr al-Sharī'a represents a “new phase” in Māturīdī theology and calls him “the philosopher of the Māturīdīs.”³ Ramon Harvey also argues that the Ḥanafīs' adaptation to the Avicennan method began with al-Samarqandī (d. 702/1303) and Ṣadr al-Sharī'a.

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¹ Mehmet Fatih Arslan, “Ta'dīlül-Kelām: Kelâmın Felsefeyle 'Ta'dīl'i”, *Kutadgubilig Felsefe-Bilim Araştırmaları* 37 (2018), 254, 287.

² Qurbān 'Alī Idris, “Ṣadr al-Sharī'ah wa Kitābuhū Ta'dīl al-'ulūm”, *Minbar Islamic Studies* 2/11 (2018), 448.

³ Ḥamāda Muḥammad Ibrāhīm, “al-Jānib al-Ilāhī 'inde Ṣadr al-Sharī'ah al-Aṣghar”, *el-Mecelletü'l-İlmiyye bi-Külliyeti'l-Ādâb* 33 (2018), 475.

However, he also points to doubts about Samarqandī's school identity, a matter that will be examined in greater detail later.⁴

In my view, Ṣadr al-Sharī'a's endeavor to actualize within Māturīdī theology the transformation that occurred in Ash'arite theology through the works of al-Juwaynī, al-Ghazālī, and al-Rāzī is termed *ta'dīl*. Ṣadr al-Sharī'a's concept of *ta'dīl* involves the consolidation of the science's framework and the substitution of robust evidence for weaker proofs. For Ṣadr al-Sharī'a, the *ta'dīl* of kalām signifies the fortification of Māturīdī kalām both in its conceptual apparatus and in its methodological approach to addressing theological issues.

Without a thorough examination and justification of Ṣadr al-Sharī'a's *ta'dīl* endeavor, the findings regarding the evolution and position of later Māturīdism will remain obscured. Therefore, this attempt must be analyzed within the context of the Ash'arī-Māturīdī relationship, focusing on the phases of the Ḥanafī-Māturīdī tradition and its influence on these stages. Given that this study specifically addresses the theological aspects of the *ta'dīl* project, Ṣadr al-Sharī'a's contributions to other areas of interest have been excluded from the scope. To form comprehensive judgments about his *ta'dīl* project in the realms of methodology, jurisprudence, rhetoric, logic, and astronomy, it is imperative to undertake detailed studies on the structure of these sciences, the historical development of the school, and its interactions with other intellectual traditions.

Ṣadr al-Sharī'a's engagement with various interlocutors constitutes another crucial aspect for consideration. While the specific interlocutors vary by topic, figures such as Avicenna (d. 428/1037), al-Rāzī, al-Tūṣī (d. 672/1274), and Shams al-Dīn al-Samarqandī emerge prominently. Ṣadr al-Sharī'a scrutinized, critiqued, responded to criticisms from, and sought to refine his arguments in relation to these scholars across a wide array of subjects.

Expecting the simultaneous development of schools of thought necessitates the equalization of political, social, and geographical conditions, while accounting for their interaction with opposing factions. However, such equalization remains unattainable across different historical periods. Analyzing the viewpoints of a school or its representative on any subject requires identifying interlocutors and their interactions, thereby commenting on the school's development. Understanding this necessitates examining relations within the school, among opposing factions, and the contextual factors of space and time that shape these relations. This approach guides the study. Hence, the study will present the historical background and general characteristics of Ṣadr al-Sharī'a's endeavor. This section includes a general description of the processes that the Ḥanafī-

⁴ Ramon Harvey, *Transcendent God, Rational World A Māturīdī Theology* (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 2021), 42.

Māturīdī school went through until Ṣadr al-Sharī'a's time. It does not go into the details of the historical process in question. Still, it points to the transformation of Māturīdism through its relationship with other schools as reflected in highly representative names. Ṣadr al-Sharī'a's approach to the science of kalām can be analyzed from two perspectives: The first and general one focuses on the question "How is the approach represented by Ṣadr al-Sharī'a dated?" given the transformation of the science of kalām over time. Second, it seeks an answer to the question, "Which phase of the Māturīdī School is he in?" What I mean by "dating" here is to identify the historical background of the grounding of the Avicennan philosophical language that Ṣadr al-Sharī'a, unlike the Māturīdīs before him, possessed. The grounding of this different philosophical content can be explained in terms of different schools of thought. For this reason, I have analyzed the historical interaction process of the Māturīdī-Ash'arī relationship in particular and kalām-Peripateticism in general. Hence, I employed comparative historiography, comparing analogous or divergent historical processes across various regions, cultures, schools, or epochs to discern their underlying causes, outcomes, and ramifications.

One of the critical points to be considered to understand the content of Ṣadr al-Sharī'a's *ta'dīl* attempt is identifying the tradition to which he belonged. Once the tradition is identified as Māturīdism, the nature of the Māturīdī tradition's relationship with Ash'arism, directly, and with Peripateticism, indirectly, after the sixth century, shows the nature of his attempt. The critical point here is the position of Māturīdī theology vis-à-vis Ash'arism. To this end, it is necessary to examine the Māturīdī-Ash'arī relationship in the previous period. The objective of this study is to demonstrate the pioneering role of Ṣadr al-Sharī'a in the later period of Māturīdism. Accordingly, I will first focus on the historical background leading up to Ṣadr al-Sharī'a. Subsequently, I will substantiate my thesis regarding the later period of Māturīdism through an analysis of Ṣadr al-Sharī'a's work.

1. Historical Dynamics: A Comprehensive Overview of Māturīdī-Ash'arī Relations from al-Māturīdī to Ṣadr al-Sharī'a

Information regarding Ṣadr al-Sharī'a's life remains sparse. While his contributions to jurisprudence are prominently featured in the *ṭabaqāt* -a genre within Islamic scholarly tradition dedicated to biographies of notable figures- his later impact on methodological discourse is also underscored. Through an analysis of his writings across various disciplines, it becomes evident that Ṣadr al-Sharī'a was actively involved in both rational and *naqlī* sciences, the latter referring to disciplines based on divine revelation and transmitted knowledge. Scholars belong to the Ḥanafī tradition in his parental lineage. His paternal grandfather was Tāj al-Sharī'a (d. 709/1309) and his

maternal grandfather was Burhān al-Sharī'a (d. 7th-8th/13th-14th century).⁵ His grandfathers were brothers, and their father, Şadr al-Sharī'a, was called *al-Awwal/al-Akbar*, while Şadr al-Sharī'a, the subject of this study, was called *al-Thānī/al-Aşghar*. Since Şadr al-Sharī'a's life has been presented in various studies, it will not be discussed separately here.⁶ Therefore, the position of Şadr al-Sharī'a in terms of kalām in general and the Māturīdī tradition in particular will be determined, and what he wanted to realize with *ta'dīl* will be shown in terms of its historical context.

Certainly, Şadr al-Sharī'a unequivocally identifies as a theologian within the Māturīdī tradition. His position within this tradition is substantiated through an examination of its evolution, particularly highlighting his pivotal role in its transformation. This justification will draw upon evidence gleaned from his extensive body of work to elucidate his contributions and doctrinal perspectives within the broader context of Māturīdī theology. In this regard, a twofold justification can be articulated. First, he refers to the previous Māturīdī theologians as "*aşhābunā* and *mashāyikhunā*" (our companions and great *madhhab* teachers).⁷ Considering his use of this expression when referring to the views of Māturīdī theologians and the scholarly tradition to which his family belongs, it is understood that he considers himself a member of this tradition. Second, the fiercest debate between the Māturīdīs and the Ash'arīs in the previous period concerned whether the attribute of takwīn is eternal. Şadr al-Sharī'a aims to justify the assumptions of the Māturīdī tradition and objects to the views of the Ash'arites.⁸ He also presents his objections to al-Ash'arī (d. 324/935-36) and the Ash'arite tradition through al-Rāzī's *Maḥşūl* on the voluntary acts and their characterization as *ḥasan-qabīḥ* (acts that are beneficial and harmful in terms of life in this world and the hereafter).⁹ His acceptance of wisdom as one of the attributes of God and his placing it in a position that controls the functioning of other attributes are among the issues that

⁵ On the dispute over the identification of the names of his grandfathers, see. Şalāh Muḥammad Abu al-Hāj, *al-Tuḥfat al-badīa fi aḥbāri Şadr al-Sharī'a* (Amman: Center al-Anwārī al-Ulamā li al-Dirāsāt, 2020), 17-21.

⁶ For the main sources that provide information about his life among the classical works of the classical tabākāt books, see. al-Hīndī Leknawī, *al-Fawā'id al-bahiyya fi terājimi al-Ḥanafiyya*, ed. Sayyid Muḥammad Bedruddīn (Cairo: Dār al-Kitāb al-Islāmī), 109-112; Ibn Kutluboga, *Tāj al-terājim*, ed. Muḥammad Hayr Ramaḍān Yusuf (Dimashq: Dār al-Kalem, 1992), 203; Omar Riḍa Keḥḥāle, *Mu'cem al-mūallifin* (Beirut: Müessesat al-Risāle, 1993), 2/355; Abdulqādir al-Qurayshī, *al-Jawāhir al-muḍīyya fi ṭabaqāti al-Ḥanafiyya* (Haydarābād: Dāirat al-Meārifi al-Osmāniya, 1332), 2/365; Taqīyy al-Dīn al-Tamīmī, *Ṭabakāt al-seniyya fi terājimi al-Ḥanafiyya*, ed. 'Abd al-Fattāḥ Muḥammad al-Hulw (Riyadh: Dāru al-Rifa'ī, 1989), 4/429; Ḥāja Muḥammad al-Hāfizī Pārsā, "Nesebu Şadr al-Sharī'a 'Ubayd Allāh al-Mahbubī al-Anşārī al-Bukhārī", *al-Dir'iyya* 18-19 (2002), 135-170. For his works and content introductions, see also. Şalāh Muḥammad Abu al-Hāj, *al-Tuḥfa*, 45-87.

⁷ As an example of one of the usage styles that exemplify this situation, see. 'Ubayd Allāh Ibn Mas'ūd Şadr al-Sharī'a, *Sharḥ Ta'dīl al-'ulūm*, Suleymaniye Library, fl. 187b.

⁸ Şadr al-Sharī'a, *Sharḥ Ta'dīl al-'ulūm*, fl. 185a.

⁹ Şadr al-Sharī'a, *Sharḥ Ta'dīl al-'ulūm*, fl. 188b; 'Ubayd Allāh Ibn Mas'ūd Şadr al-Sharī'a, *al-Tawdīḥ sharḥ al-Tankīḥ*, ed. Muḥammad Adnān Darwīsh (Beirut: Dāru al-Arqām, 1998), 1/375.

support his membership in the Māturīdī school.¹⁰ Finally, his statement that exceptions are not permissible in faith shows his school identity.¹¹

Ulrich Rudolph states that there are two impressions of al-Māturīdī and thinks the second one is incorrect. The first is that he was a “faithful successor of Abū Ḥanīfa”, and the second is that he was “the eastern counterpart to al-Ash‘arī”.¹² The first work that gives information about al-Māturīdī’s life, works, and teachers is Abu al-Mu‘īn al-Nasafī’s *Tabṣira*. In the region where Ḥanafism is dominant, al-Māturīdī is considered a third-generation scholar of the Ḥanafī madhhab. Still, it is natural for Ḥanafīs to attribute themselves to al-Māturīdī and to identify him as an “imām” after his lifetime. What is unnatural, however, is that with al-Pazdawī and al-Nasafī, he was referred to as an essential theologian for the first time in a long time. So, what happened that al-Māturīdī, who was considered one of the Ḥanafī scholars, began to be recognized as an “imām” who, although not the founder of the theological system of Ḥanafism, continued and developed the method of Abū Ḥanīfa (d. 150/767)? What motivated al-Pazdawī and al-Nasafī to do so? Moreover, al-Nasafī tends to see al-Māturīdī as one of the great scholars of the region, rather than as the founder of the *madhhab*. The founder of the *madhhab* is Abū Ḥanīfa.¹³ What is the purpose of such a distinction?

The answers to these inquiries can be gleaned from two distinct perspectives. First, examining the Ḥanafī approach to rational sciences within the region sheds light on their stance. Second, analyzing the dynamics of interaction between Ḥanafī scholars and the Shāfi‘ī-Ash‘arī tradition provides additional insights. From the fourth century onward, the region increasingly adopted a skeptical stance towards rational sciences, particularly kalām, while demonstrating growing interest in fiqh (jurisprudence) and hadīth (Prophetic traditions). During this period, Ḥanafī scholars did engage with kalām methodology to some extent, yet this discipline did not occupy a central or foundational role in their intellectual pursuits. Hence, it is understandable that a scholarly community less focused on kalām methodology might not prominently feature figures such as al-Māturīdī in their discourses.¹⁴ Therefore, it was not until the fifth century that al-Māturīdī’s theological framework gained traction in the region. The intellectual landscape that al-

¹⁰ Ṣadr al-Sharī‘a, *Sharḥ Ta’dīl al-‘ulūm*, fl. 194a.

¹¹ Ṣadr al-Sharī‘a, *Sharḥ Ta’dīl al-‘ulūm*, fl. 274b.

¹² Ulrich Rudolph, *Al-Māturīdī and the Development of Sunnī Theology in Samarqand*, trans. Rodrigo Adem (Leiden-Boston: Brill, 2015), 4.

¹³ Abū al-Mu‘īn al-Nasafī, *Tabṣira al-Adilla fī usūl al-dīn*, ed. Muhammed Enver Hamid Īsa (Cairo: al-Maktaba al-Azhariyya li at-Tūras, 2011), 1/364; Abū al-Yusr Muḥammad b. Muḥammad b. Ḥusayn al-Pazdawī, *Uṣūl al-dīn*, ed. Hans Peter Lins (Cairo: Dāru lhyai‘l-Kutubi‘l-Arabiyya, 1963), 14. Also see. Angelika Brodersen, *Der unbekannte kalām Theologische Positionen der frühen Māturīdiya am Beispiel der Attributenlehre* (Münster: Lit Verlag, 2014), 19-21.

¹⁴ al-Pazdawī, *Uṣūl al-dīn*, 15.

Māturīdī engaged with and critiqued primarily consisted of the doctrines put forth by Mu'tazilite theologians. This era can aptly be characterized as "the initial phase of Māturīdism."¹⁵ Due to geographical constraints, intense interaction with Ash'arite theologians during this period was impractical. Furthermore, al-Māturīdī was notably less cited compared to later periods. This situation persisted until approximately one and a half centuries after his death, around the fifth century, when Ḥanafī-Ash'arite interactions intensified, and al-Māturīdī began to be recognized prominently as a staunch adherent of Abū Ḥanīfa. The escalation of interactions coincided with the Ash'arites' activities spreading into Ḥanafī regions, particularly as the Seljuks expanded into the Transoxiana region. This phenomenon is closely tied to the Niẓāmiya Madrasah's establishment goals, reflecting broader intellectual currents influenced by the Ismā'īlī movements.

Another pertinent issue regarding the marginalization of theological discourse in general, and specifically the relative neglect of al-Māturīdī's influence in the region until a certain period, relates to the activities of the Ismā'īlī movement. The region became influenced by Ismā'īlī activities in the latter part of the second century, following the migration of *dā'īs* fleeing from Abbasid authority.¹⁶ Analyzing al-Māturīdī's influence in the region through the lens of science and politics, his impact is divided into two distinct periods. In the first sixty years of his life, regional emirs maintained a moderate stance towards diverse schools of thought, prioritizing scholars and fostering the development of various intellectual traditions through their stable policies. However, the latter thirty years witnessed increased turmoil, particularly with the ascendancy of Ismā'īlī influence in Transoxiana, notably during the Ismā'īlī control of Baghdād. The Ismā'īlīs embarked on vigorous propaganda efforts in the region, influencing even the Sāmānid ruler Naṣr II (310-331/914-943), who briefly entertained their doctrines. In response, al-Māturīdī distanced himself from political entanglements, while Naṣr II's successor, Noah bin Naṣr (331-343/943-955), tightened controls to curb Ismā'īlī-Bāṭinī tendencies and promoted Sunni orthodoxy, thereby restricting intellectual freedoms, including those of theologians like al-Māturīdī who opposed Ismā'īlism. Consequently, despite maintaining his theological views, al-Māturīdī and other theologians faced neglect as the region increasingly prioritized *naqlī* sciences over theological discourse, largely as a precaution against sectarian challenges.¹⁷ The relegation of theological activity to the background in the region until the Māturīdiya-Ash'arīyya confrontation can be attributed to the perception that engaging in

¹⁵ See also for detailed information on the period Ramon Harvey, "The Case of the Missing Disciple: Abū l-Ḥasan al-Rustughfānī and the First Reception of al-Māturīdī's Theology in Samarqand", *Oriens* 49 (2021), 95-130.

¹⁶ Ali Avcu, *Karmatīliğin Doğuşu ve Gelişim Süreci* (Ankara: Ankara University, PhD thesis, 2009), 257; Muzaffer Tan, "Horasan ve Maveraünnehir'de İlk İsmâ'îlî Faaliyetler", *Dini Araştırmalar* 10/30 (2007), 55, 60.

¹⁷ Osman Aydınlı, "İmâm Mâtürîdî'nin Yetiştirdiği İlmî Ortam ve Semerkant'ta İlim Merkezleri", *Diyanet İlmî Dergi* 55/3 (2019), 581, 583, 584, 586.

theological discourse opened the door to Bāṭinī-Ismāʿīlī interpretations. As a result, despite the lack of immediate necessity for theological engagement, kalām was deliberately marginalized to impede the activities of opposing groups.

During the Seljuk period, one of the objectives in establishing the Niẓāmiya Madrasah was to counter the Shiite Fatimids' efforts aimed at undermining the Sunni creed. Niẓām al-Mulk (455-485/1063-1092), aware of the Fatimids' dual strategy of nurturing religious scholars alongside military activities, sought and obtained the permission of Sultan Alp Arslan (457-465/1064-1072) to establish the madrasah. Its purpose was to conduct "counter-propaganda activities," bolster Sunni beliefs, and train state officials essential for governance.¹⁸ As a result of these developments, under the patronage of the Seljuks, the Ashʿarites confidently engaged with the Māturīdīs. The branch of the Niẓāmiya Madrasah in Nishapur played a pivotal role in training theologians such as Abū Bakr Ahmad al-Furakī (d. 478/1085) and Abū Ishāq Rūqn al-Dīn al-Isferāyīnī (d. 418/1027). It was during this period that interactions between Māturīdī and Ashʿarī theologians commenced. Discussions between the two factions primarily centered around theological issues, particularly concerning the attribute of takwīn, which pertains to the act of creation or bringing into being. However, Ḥanafī scholars had not yet fully adopted al-Māturīdī's teachings during this era.¹⁹ By the end of the fifth century, theological discourse among the Ḥanafīs had prominently featured rigorous debates with the Ashʿarites, becoming a central aspect of their intellectual and doctrinal activities.²⁰ During this period, the Ḥanafīs were constrained in their ability to counter Ashʿarite thought through the issuance of fatwas (legal opinions explaining the religious-legal judgment of a jurisprudential issue) due to Niẓām al-Mulk's endorsement of Ashʿarism as a legitimate theological school. Consequently, the Ḥanafīs had to engage more intensively in theological debate as the primary means of challenging and responding to the influx of Ashʿarite ideas in the region.²¹ During this

¹⁸ One month after he acceded to the throne (13 dhu al-Hijjah 455/7 December 1063), Alparslan dismissed al-Kundurī and appointed Niẓām al-Mulk as vizier in his place. Due to al-Kundurī's hostility towards the Ashʿarites, theologians such as al-Qushayrī and al-Juwaynī left Khorasan. In addition, al-Qushayrī wrote a letter on the movement initiated by the vizier Kundurī against the Ashʿarites during the reign of Tugrul Beg (431-455/1040-1063). See: 'Abd al-Karīm ibn al-Khawāzin al-Qushayrī, "Shikāyat Ahl al-sunnah bi mā nālehum min al-miḥna", in *al-Resāʿil al-Qushayriyya*, ed. Muḥammad Ḥasen (Pakistan: al-Mahedu'l-Merkezī li'l-Abkhāsi'l-Islamī), 1-39. See also Frank Griffel, *The Formation of Post-Classical Philosophy in Islam* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2021), 44.

¹⁹ The best example of encountering Ashʿarite thought without mentioning al-Māturīdī's name is al-Sālimī. For example, see. Abū Shakūr al-Sālimī, *al-Tamhīd fī beyān al-tawḥīd*, ed. Ömür Türkmen (Ankara-Beyrut: TDV Yayınları and Dāru Ibn Hazm, 2017), 136-137.

²⁰ Harvey discusses the post-İmām Māturīdī tradition according to four phases. Early period: From the beginning of the fourth century to the end of the fifth century. Classical period: From the end of the fifth century to the eighth century. Late classical period: From the eighth century to the thirteenth/nineteenth century. Modern period: From the thirteenth/nineteenth century to the present day. Harvey, *Transcendent God, Rational World*, 38.

²¹ Şükrü Özen also cites the struggle between Iraqī and Samarkand Ḥanafism as one of the reasons for al-Māturīdī's neglect for about a century and a half after his death. According to him, since Samarkand remained under the

period, the Ḥanafīs elevated al-Māturīdī as a foundational authority within their theological framework. Prominent scholars such as al-Pazdawī and Abu al-Muʿīn al-Nasafī frequently referenced and cited al-Māturīdī's contributions, thereby solidifying his central role in the development and articulation of Ḥanafī theology.²² al-Māturīdī, who had previously been regarded merely as one of the Ḥanafī scholars and had not been frequently cited, emerged as a pivotal figure whose works were increasingly referenced and emphasized compared to those of other scholars. In the face of accusations of bid'ah (a term used for beliefs, worships, ideas, and behaviors that emerged after the Prophet's lifetime and that are not based on shaṛī'a evidence) during ongoing debates concerning the attribute of takwīn, the Ḥanafīs adopted a defensive stance and employed the method of kalām. This shift led to a renewed focus on kalām, making it once again a central aspect of theological inquiry among Ḥanafī scholars.

To illustrate the significance of al-Pazdawī and al-Nasafī's references to al-Māturīdī (as opposed to their contemporaries) and their emphasis on his contributions, it is pertinent to consider the approach of Abū Shakūr al-Sālimī (d. after 460/1068), who lived during the same period. When articulating his objections to Ash'arite views, al-Sālimī directly engages with the views of al-Ash'arī himself, without citing contemporary Ash'arite scholars by name or referencing the views of their predecessors who opposed his own stance. Moreover, unlike al-Pazdawī and al-Nasafī, al-Sālimī does not mention al-Māturīdī at all and instead identifies himself strictly as a representative of "Ahl al-Sunnah wa al-Jama'ah." This marked a significant divergence in their approaches. A pertinent example of this divergence can be seen in the issue of takwīn, one of the main topics of theological debate. In addressing this issue, al-Sālimī critiques both Abu'l-Ḥasan al-Ash'arī and the Kerrāmiyya, presenting his views under the authority of "Ahl al-Sunnah wa'l-jama'ah." In contrast, al-Pazdawī and al-Nasafī prominently cite al-Māturīdī, underscoring his importance within the Ḥanafī theological tradition and differentiating their methodological approach from that of al-Sālimī. This distinction highlights the nuanced and varied responses within the Ḥanafī school to the theological challenges posed by Ash'arite doctrines during this period.²³ At this juncture, it becomes evident that by the sixth century, the interaction between the Ash'arites and their counterparts was notably robust, prompting a deeper examination into why figures like al-Pazdawī and al-Nasafī, unlike al-Sālimī, underscored the significance of al-Māturīdī. Central to

influence of Iraq during the fourth and fifth centuries, Abū Zayd al-Dabūsī and his followers, for example, were closer to the understanding of *usul* represented by al-Karhī and al-Jessās rather than following al-Māturīdī. Şükrü Özen, *Ebû Mansûr el-Mâtürîdî'nin Fıkıh Usulünü Yeniden İnşası* (İstanbul, associate professorship thesis, 2001), 68.

²² al-Pazdawī, *Uşûl al-din*, 14, 77; al-Nasafī, *Tabşıra*, 1/364, 369, 564. Ramon Harvey makes the same determination in his study. Harvey, *Transcendent God, Rational World*, 40.

²³ al-Sālimī, *al-Tamhīd*, 136.

this dynamic were accusations leveled by Ash'arites during debates concerning the issue of takwīn, where they branded their opponents as "bid'ahists" (deviators from orthodox doctrine). Understanding this context is crucial not merely for its historical detail but for its implications on the discourse before and after these debates.²⁴

In response to the Ash'arite contention that no one had historically accepted the attribute of takwīn as eternal, thereby branding such views as *bid'ah* (innovation), al-Pazdawī counters by asserting that al-Māturīdī held similar views. al-Nasafī further supports this position by citing specific scholars in Samarqand, aiming to refute the accusation of *bid'ah* and establish continuity of these theological perspectives within established scholarly traditions.²⁵ al-Nasafī's emphasis on al-Māturīdī stems from his recognition that al-Māturīdī's works provide a comprehensive response and solution to the accusation that the belief in the eternal nature of takwīn constitutes *bid'ah*. By enumerating the names of scholars who shared the belief in the eternal nature of takwīn, al-Nasafī effectively counters the Ash'arite claim, demonstrating that this perspective has a historical precedent and is not an innovation within Islamic theological discourse. Thus, al-Nasafī's approach seeks to validate and substantiate the theological position through scholarly precedent and intellectual continuity.²⁶ Hence, al-Māturīdī was emphasized as one of their most important authorities. In other words, presenting al-Māturīdī as the person who best understood Abū Ḥanīfah's system²⁷ shows that he is considered to be ahead of other Ḥanafī scholars, unlike previous periods, while referring to his view that takwīn is eternal and linking it to Abū Ḥanīfah shows that this view dates back to the early period and shows that the accusation of *bid'ah* is not valid.²⁸ This is because Abū Ḥanīfah, in his book *al-Waṣīyya*, while talking about the actions of the servants, states that "good deeds are realized by Allah's tahlīq, that is, takwīn".²⁹ al-Māturīdī was

²⁴ While the Ash'arites argue that takwīn is created, the Māturīdīs argue that it is eternal. The Ash'arites criticize the Māturīdīs by saying that "the view that takwīn is eternal is a view that no one has ever held before". This is an explicit accusation of innovation. The accusation of *bid'ah* is a grave accusation for a school that expresses itself as "adherent to the Sunnah". For detailed information on this issue, see. Güvenç Şensoy, "Sadr al-Sharī'a's Criticisms of the Māturīdī Tradition in the Context of the Attribute of Takwīn", *Hitit İlahiyat Dergisi* (Special Issue on Religion, Philosophy and Society) 22/3 (2023), 998-1009.

²⁵ al-Nasafī states this as follows: "As for those who think that this view is a later opinion, which has no basis in the Salaf and has not been accepted by the "imāms", this assumption is false and comes from ignorance of the opinion of the Salaf." al-Nasafī, *Tabṣira*, 1/551. cf. al-Pazdawī, *Uṣūl al-dīn*, 77.

²⁶ al-Nasafī, *Tabṣira*, 1/551-558.

²⁷ al-Nasafī, *Tabṣira*, 1/320. Abu al-Barakāt al-Nasafī would later use this expression. Abu al-Barakāt al-Nasafī, *Sharḥ al-'Umda*, ed. Abdullah Muḥammad Abdullah Ismail (Cairo: al-Mektebet al-Azhariyya li al-turās, 2012), 161.

²⁸ It is noteworthy that Qāḍīkhān al-Ozkandī (d. 592/1196) refers to al-Māturīdī as "al-Imām, al-Shaykh, Reīs ahl al-Sunnah". Fakhr al-Dīn Ḥasan b. Manṣūr al-Ozkandī Qāḍīkhān, *al-Fatāwa al-Khāniyya* (Egypt: al-Maṭbaat al-Kubrā al-Amīriyya, 1893), 3/424.

²⁹ Numan ibn Thābit Abū Hanīfa, "al-Waṣīyya", ed. Mustafa Öz, (İstanbul: Marmara University İlahiyat Fakültesi Vakfı Yayınları, 2006), 88.

one of the first theologians to accept the expression “takwīn” as an attribute of God. It is crucial in this respect that he is “presented as the person who best understood Abū Ḥanīfa’s system.”

The debates between Fakhr al-Dīn al-Rāzī and Nūr al-Dīn al-Ṣābūnī in the sixth century represent an event in the trajectory of the relationship between Māturīdism and Ash’arism. During his visit to Transoxiana, al-Rāzī engaged al-Ṣābūnī in discussions on three specific theological issues. According to reports, al-Rāzī claimed victory in all three debates. However, it should be noted that the primary accounts available are from al-Rāzī’s perspective, and there is limited direct documentation of al-Ṣābūnī’s responses or viewpoints regarding these debates. This historical episode underscores the ongoing intellectual exchange and sometimes contentious interactions between proponents of Māturīdism and Ash’arism during this period.³⁰

It is noteworthy that since the debates are recounted solely from al-Rāzī’s perspective, the accuracy of these events as narrated is not definitive. Therefore, while al-Rāzī’s proficiency in jadal (dialectical argumentation) undoubtedly contributed to his success, there must have been additional factors that distinguished him in these encounters against scholars from the Ḥanafī-Māturīdī tradition.

This aspect becomes clearer when considering the development phases of the Ash’arite theological system throughout history. The theological views of al-Ash’arī were systematically transmitted and expounded upon by subsequent scholars such as al-Bāqillānī (d. 403/1013) and Ibn Fūrak (d. 406/1015). Their contributions involved refining and systematizing al-Ash’arī’s doctrines, thereby solidifying and perpetuating his theological legacy within the Ash’arite tradition.³¹ The system established in this manner was fortified by al-Juwaynī’s critical analysis and his student al-Ghazālī’s application of these critiques, which challenged Peripatetic philosophy and altered its language and methodology. This process marked the advent of a later phase in Ash’arism, culminating in its zenith with figures like al-Rāzī.³²

³⁰ Griffel also comments that al-Rāzī’s visit to the region, the debates, and the publication of the debates had a “political role”. According to him, the work has three purposes: “First, the unknown political purpose supported by the preparations for an attack on Transoxiana by the Ghurid ruler Mu‘izz al-Dīn Muḥammad (599-602/1203-1206). Second, the book serves as a vehicle for the introduction of Ash’arism and Shāfism into Ghurid lands by confronting Māturīdī and Ḥanafis. The third purpose of the book is to introduce a person: Fakhr al-Dīn al-Rāzī.” Griffel, *The Formation of Post-Classical Philosophy in Islam*, 295-296. Altaş, on the other hand, states that al-Rāzī “set out for Transoxiana in search of new patrons”. Eşref Altaş, “Fahredden er-Râzî’nin Hayatı, Hâmileleri, İlmî ve Siyasi İlişkileri”, *İslam Düşüncesinin Dönüşüm Çağında Fahreddin er-Râzî*, ed. Ömer Türker - Osman Demir (İstanbul: İSAM Yayınları, 2013), 63.

³¹ The richest information on al-Ash’arī’s understanding of kalām can be found in Ibn Fūrak’s *Mujarred Maqālat al-Shaykh Abu’l-Ḥasan al-Ash’arī*.

³² Unlike al-Ghazālī, al-Rāzī did not engage in a subject-based confrontation with Avicenna’s philosophy and treated philosophy as a system. In this respect, Shihadeh argues that it was with al-Rāzī that “Islamic philosophy” emerged for the first time after the “Ghazālīan anti-philosophical tradition”. Ayman Shihadeh, “From al-Ghazālī to al-Rāzī:

After establishing al-Rāzī's position, it becomes apparent what distinguishes him from Māturīdī theologians. What sets al-Rāzī apart from the Ḥanafī scholars with whom he engaged in discussions in the region is his familiarity with Avicenna's philosophy. In terms of historical phases, Māturīdī kalām, if one may describe it as such, had not yet moved beyond its early period (mutaqaddim). Unlike al-Bāqillānī, who systematically organized al-Ash'arī's theological doctrines soon after his death, references to al-Māturīdī's theological views emerged about a century and a half later. This delay was due to caution against Bātinī influences and a perceived lack of necessity for systematic theology. Abu al-Mu'īn al-Nasafī completed the systematization of the Māturīdī school at the beginning of the sixth century. While Ḥanafīs utilized kalām methodology up until al-Nasafī, the language and content of the pre-Nasafī period were considered adequate for their engagements with their new adversaries, the Ash'arites. In this regard, al-Nasafī's role mirrors that of al-Bāqillānī within Ash'arism. This underscores that the doctrines of these two "imams" were systematized in the early fifth and early sixth centuries, respectively.³³

By the end of the sixth century, the Ḥanafīs had "reaffirmed" their theological identity and authored treatises in which they articulated arguments against their new counterparts. Nevertheless, their engagement with al-Rāzī introduced them to a discourse they were unfamiliar with. Moving into the seventh century, the region was plunged into turmoil by the Mongol invasions.³⁴ Ṣadr al-Sharī'a's early years coincided with the Mongol invasion of Bukhārā. During this tumultuous period, his grandfathers fled the Mongol persecution and sought refuge in Kirmān.³⁵ In Kirmān, under the rule of the Qutlughkhānids, the ruler Qutlugh Turkān (654-680/1256-1281) appointed Ṣadr al-Sharī'a's grandfathers as muderris (professors) at the Qutbiyya

6th/12th Century Developments in Muslim Philosophical Theology", *Arabic Sciences and Philosophy* 15/1 (2005), 177-178. al-Rāzī's criticism of Avicennan's philosophy and his approach to organizing the content of theology led later thinkers to discuss theological and philosophical issues within the exact text. In this process, called the kalām of the later period, theologians analyzed not only theological schools' views but philosophers' views. "The discussion of theological and philosophical issues in the same literature brought the concept of 'tahqīq' to the fore." Eşref Altaş, "Fahredden er-Rāzī: Küllî Perspektifler Arasında", *İslam Felsefesi Tarih ve Problemler*, ed. M. Cüneyt Kaya (İstanbul: İSAM Yayınları, 2013), 442, 444. Shihadeh also considers this as a "synthesis of theology and philosophy", especially in the case of *Muḥaşşal*. Shihadeh, "From al-Ghazālī to al-Rāzī", 172. al-Rāzī says he adopted a method that was not practiced before him. Fakhr al-Dīn Muḥammad Ibn 'Umar al-Rāzī, *al-Mabāḥith al-mashrīqiyya*, ed. Muḥammad al-Mu'tasim billah al-Bağdādī (Beirut: Dār al-Kitāb al-Arabī, 1343), 1/88-89. For Eşref Altaş's explanations on al-Rāzī's method, see also. Eşref Altaş, *Fahredden er-Rāzī'nin İbn Sînâ Yorumu ve Eleştirisi* (İstanbul: İz Yayıncılık, 2009), 52-63.

³³ The transformation of this temporal difference into a disparity in scholarly stature can be attributed to several factors: al-Rāzī's historical analysis in the form of a "history of thought," his enhancement of theological arguments, and his utilization of the logical and conceptual depth found in the Avicennan system. Thus, the evolving landscape in the sixth century involved the interaction between Ash'arite theology, rooted in philosophical principles, and Māturīdī theology, often perceived as a reaffirmation of earlier positions by Māturīdī scholars.

³⁴ On the presence of the Mongols in the region, see. Salāh Muḥammad Abu al-Hāj, *al-Tuhfa*, 9-12; Kılıç Aslan Mavil, "Bir Hanefī-Māturīdī Âlimi Ebü'l-Berekât en-Nesefī", *Uludağ Üniversitesi İlahiyat Fakültesi Dergisi*, 22/1 (2013), 63-65.

³⁵ In early 675, it is stated that they went to Kirman. (I am grateful to Asst. Prof. Yasir Beyatlı for sharing this information and source with me). Abu al-Fadl Ibn al-Shikhna, *Nihāyat al-nihāya fī tahriri taqriri al-Hidāya* (Süleymaniye Library, Aşir Efendi, 108), fl. 33b; Salāh Muḥammad Abu al-Hāj, *al-Tuhfa*, 10.

Madrasah. His grandfather took a keen interest in Şadr al-Sharī'a's education and even authored the work *Vikāyat al-rivāya* for his grandson to memorize.³⁶ Although his grandfathers undertook his education, we do not know where, from whom, or how he received his theological/philosophical education. Considering that he belonged to a family with scholarly depth and that knowledge was passed down from father to son before him, it is evident that his lineage is one of education.³⁷

Şadr al-Sharī'a's diverse works across various branches of science and the sources he utilized indicate his broad interest in all rational sciences.³⁸ Considering that al-Rāzī's works, such as *al-Mabāḥith*, *al-Mulakhkhaṣ*, and *Sharḥ al-Ishārāt*, were read in the region before his travels to Transoxiana,³⁹ and that philosophical-theological activity found adherents in Khorasan and Transoxiana and produced names such as Āmidī (d. 631/1234), al-Bayzawī (d. 685/1286), al-Ṭūṣī, and Shams al-Dīn Samarqandī, we do not know from whom Şadr al-Sharī'a read these works. It is certain that Şadr al-Sharī'a was not indifferent to this new approach, as evidenced by the style of his works, even though we do not have specific information about whom he read. It is noteworthy that al-Rāzī's adversaries continued al-Ghazālī's critiques of Avicenna and employed Avicennan philosophical methods and terminology. Among those whom al-Rāzī engages with are critics of Avicenna who follow al-Ghazālī's perspectives.⁴⁰ It underscores one of the factors indicating the region's vibrant interest in philosophical approaches.

Şadr al-Sharī'a's works prominently cite scholars renowned in logic, theology, philosophy, and *uṣūl* (jurisprudential principles), indicating his comprehensive engagement with and incorporation of previous scholarly traditions into his reorganizational endeavors. Among the figures referenced are: Abū Ḥanīfa (d. 150/767), İmām Shāfi'ī (d. 204/820), Bishr b. al-Mu'tamir (d. 210/828), al-Nazzām

³⁶ Şadr al-Sharī'a, in the introduction to his commentary on this work, states that the completion and memorization of the work, which began to be composed for him to memorize, continued together. 'Ubayd Allāh Ibn Mas'ūd Şadr-Sharī'ah, *Sharḥ al-Wiqāyah* (al-Matbau al-Tibbī, 1844), 2.

³⁷ Pārsā (d. 822/1420) was descended from his maternal grandfather Burhān al-Sharī'a and his paternal grandfather Tāj al-Sharī'a, who in turn was descended from their father Jamāl al-Dīn al-Maḥbūbī (d. 630/1233) (Abū Ḥanīfa al-Thānī, Şadr al-Sharī'a al-Awwal, al-Akbar), who in turn was descended from Abu al-Maḥāsin Rukn al-Islām Sa'd al-Dīn Muḥammad b. Abī Bakr al-Sharqī. Abū Bakr al-Sharqī al-Bukhārī (d. 573/1178), who learned from his father Shams al-eimme al-Zaranjarī (d. 512/1118), who learned from al-Sarakhsī (d. 483/1090), who learned from al-Khalwānī (d. 448/1056), who learned from Abū 'Alī al-Nasafī (d. 424/1033). Pārsā, "Nesebu Şadr al-Sharī'a", 138; cf. Salāh Muḥammad Abu al-Hāj, *al-Tuhfa*, 30.

³⁸ Qurbān 'Alī Idris writes that Şadr al-Sharī'a "probably completed his studies in philosophy and other rational sciences in this scholarly environment, since most of the members of his family were learned scholars in the rational sciences, especially in the sciences of calculation, hendese, and hey'ah, in addition to the rational sciences." Idris, "Şadr al-Sharī'a wa Kitābuhū Ta'dīl al-'ulūm", 444.

³⁹ Fakhr al-Dīn ar-Rāzī. *Münāzarāt-Dinī ve Felsefī Tartışmalar*. trans. Ömer Ali Yıldırım. (İstanbul: Litera Yayıncılık, 2016), 115; Altaş, "Fahredden er-Rāzī'nin Hayatı, Hāmileri, İlmî ve Siyasi İlişkileri", 43. Harvey also identifies that - along with al-Rāzī- the Avicennan method was part of the theological education in the madrasas in the region, albeit through adoption or criticism. Harvey, *Transcendent God, Rational World*, 41.

⁴⁰ Rāzī, *Münāzarāt*, 115.

(d. 231/846), Abu al-Hudhayl al-Allāf (d. 235/849-50), Ibn al-Rāwandī (d. 301/914), Īmām al-Ash‘arī (d. 324/935-36), al-Kalābāzī (d. 380/990), Avicenna (d. 428/1037), Zamakhsharī (d. 538/1144), Shahrīstānī (d. 548/1153), al-Rāzī (d. 606/1210), Najm al-Dīn Kubrā (d. 618/1221), Suhrawardī (d. 587/1191), al-Ṭūṣī (d. 672/1274), Najm al-Dīn al-Kātibī (d. 675/1277), Samarqandī (d. 702/1303), Ibn al-Mutahhar al-Khillī (d. 726/1325), Qutb al-dīn al-Shīrāzī (d. 710/1311). Furthermore, while Ṣadr al-Sharī‘a does not explicitly name them, his discussions of topics critiqued by al-Juwaynī on syllogism and of al-Ghazālī’s criticisms of philosophers concerning the distinction between existence and essence in necessary existence can be inferred from his writings.⁴¹

An example of Ṣadr al-Sharī‘a’s power in the rational sciences can be found in an exciting anecdote quoted by Ṭāshkubrīzāda (d. 968/1561). According to this anecdote, it is possible that Qutb al-Dīn al-Rāzī (d. 766/1365) sent his student Mubārakshāh (d. after 784/1382) to Ṣadr al-Sharī‘a, who was then in Herāt, to learn and report his scholarly level, either because he wanted to engage in a debate with scholars of the region, such as Fakhr al-Dīn al-Rāzī, who had previously (as narrated) defeated the Ḥanafīs by debating them, or because he had heard of Ṣadr al-Sharī‘a’s reputation. Mubārakshāh attended Ṣadr al-Sharī‘a’s lectures and wrote to his teacher that Ṣadr al-Sharī‘a “taught Ibn Sīnā’s *al-Ishārāt* without making use of al-Rāzī and al-Ṭūṣī’s commentaries and even criticizing their interpretations.” He stated that if he got into an argument, he would inevitably be defeated and should avoid the discussion.⁴² The relevance of the anecdote to Ṣadr al-Sharī‘a’s *ta’dīl* attempt is that it shows the reaction of the Māturīdīs to the Ash‘arite theological system they encountered in the fifth century and to their situation when they encountered al-Rāzī in the sixth century. In other words, Ṣadr al-Sharī‘a’s position is essential in showing that the Māturīdīs adapted to this new conceptualization and expansion of issues by the seventh and early eighth centuries, even though their systematization was completed later than Ash‘arī’s. This position indicates the later period of Māturīdism.

Evaluating Ṣadr al-Sharī‘a’s position in the science of logic, Ṭāshkubrīzāda presents the necessity of reading Ṣadr al-Sharī‘a’s *Ta’dīlu’l-mīzān* to reach high levels in the science of logic, pointing out that none of the leading scholars could reach the principles he laid down in this work.⁴³ In particular, the way he establishes the relationship between kalām and uṣūl, logic, and philosophy in the “Muqaddimāt al-arbaa” section of his *Tawdīh* shows his mastery of the tradition of rational

⁴¹ As an example, see. Ṣadr al-Sharī‘a, *Sharḥ Ta’dīl al-‘ulūm*, fl. 170a, 183a.

⁴² Aḥmad Efendi Ṭāshkubrīzāda, *Miftāḥ al-sa‘āda wa misbāḥ al-siyāda fī mawzū‘āti al-‘ulūm*, ed. Kamīl Wahbī - Abd al-Wahhab Abu’n-Nūr (Cairo: Dāru al-Kutūb al-Ḥadīsiyya, 1968), 2/191-192.

⁴³ Ṭāshkubrīzāda, *Miftāḥ al-sa‘āda*, 1/303.

and naqlī sciences.⁴⁴ Regarding his approach to astronomy, which is the last part of the *Ta'dīl* text, Dallal states that Ṣadr al-Sharī'a refers to al-Ṭūṣī's *al-Tazkira fī ilm al-hey'e* and al-Shirāzī's (d. 710/1311) *al-Tukhfā al-thahiyya fī al-hey'e* and develops explanations by addressing problems that they do not address.⁴⁵ In the introduction of his work, Ṣadr al-Sharī'a states that he has a different approach to the moon and planets than previous scholars and that different works in the field should be examined to understand these ta'dīls.⁴⁶ In this respect, it is possible to say that he had a unique style and a new approach to sciences other than kalām.

Samarqandī should also be considered in this context. Firstly, it is noteworthy that he does not refer to scholars of the preceding Ḥanafī-Māturīdī tradition as "*ashābunā* and *mashāyikhunā*." This stands in contrast to al-Ṣadr al-Sharī'a's earlier usage of these terms, highlighting a divergence between al-Ṣadr al-Sharī'a and al-Samarqandī on this point. Furthermore, Samarqandī's intellectual development undoubtedly bears the influence of al-Rāzī. Alongside this influence, there exist uncertainties regarding Samarqandī's adherence to Māturīdī doctrine, owing to certain non-conventional views he expressed.⁴⁷ Furthermore, a marginal note in one of the manuscript copies of his work *Ṣaḥāif*, whose authorship is uncertain, complicates al-Samarqandī's scholarly affiliation. This note suggests that al-Samarqandī is identified as Shi'ī due to his positions on imāmah, as Māturīdī based on his stances regarding the attributes of *ḥasan-qabīḥ*, creation, and kalām, and as Shāfi'ī owing to his opinions on certain jurisprudential matters. This ambiguity highlights the challenge in categorizing his doctrinal allegiance definitively.⁴⁸ It is not accurate to designate the later period of Māturīdism solely with al-Samarqandī, as al-Samarqandī clearly embodies the linguistic characteristics of this later period in his works, such as *al-Ṣaḥāif* and its commentary *al-Maārif*. Ṣadr al-Sharī'a frequently references al-Samarqandī's opinions alongside those of al-Rāzī, indicating a complex relationship. Ṣadr al-Sharī'a diverges significantly from al-Samarqandī on the concept of existence (being), the existential nature of necessity (*wujūb*), and critiques al-Samarqandī's proof of *tawḥīd* (the Oneness of God) as insufficient despite agreeing

⁴⁴ Ṣadr al-Sharī'a, *al-Tawdīḥ*, 1/375.

⁴⁵ Ahmad S. Dallal, *An Islamic Response to Greek Astronomy Kitab Ta'dīl Hay'at al-Aflak of Ṣadr al-Sharī'a*, ed. Ahmad S. Dallal, trans. Ahmad S. Dallal (Leiden-New York-Köln: EJ Brill, 1995), 2, 11. Furthermore, Robert G. Morrison discusses Ṣadr al-Sharī'a's proposals in the fourth chapter of his article on different theories of cosmology. Robert G. Morrison, "Cosmology and Cosmic Order in Islamic Astronomy", *Early Science and Medicine* 24/4 (2019), 340-366.

⁴⁶ Ṣadr al-Sharī'a, *Sharḥ Ta'dīl al-'ulūm*, fl. 306a. For explanations on these ta'dīl, see. Dallal, *An Islamic Response to Greek Astronomy*, 11-13.

⁴⁷ Harvey states that it is also possible that he was an Ash'arite because of the centrality of al-Rāzī's thought in his works. Harvey, *Transcendent God, Rational World*, 42.

⁴⁸ Shams al-Dīn Muḥammad b. Ashraf al-Ḥusaynī al-Samarqandī, *al-Ṣaḥāif al-ilāhiyya* (Süleymaniye Library, Şehid Ali Paşa, 1688), fl. 2b.

with its conclusion.⁴⁹ On some issues, al-Samarqandī objected to Avicenna’s approach by attempting to “strengthen al-Rāzī’s view” against Avicenna. For example, Şadr al-Sharī’a thinks that al-Samarqandī’s objection to Avicenna on the issue of the *wujūdity* of contingency is weak and attempts to strengthen it.⁵⁰ Our study does not focus on how al-Samarqandī attempted to navigate evolving theological discourse in comparison to Şadr al-Sharī’a. The latter’s position within the discourse between kalām and Avicenna’s philosophy requires separate scholarly investigation. Consequently, it is not feasible to extrapolate our findings regarding Şadr al-Sharī’a directly onto al-Samarqandī without first clarifying the latter’s doctrinal affiliation. Specifically, asserting that al-Samarqandī, who remains somewhat ambiguously positioned, initiated the later phase of Māturīdism rather than Şadr al-Sharī’a, whose Ḥanafī-Māturīdī lineage is well-established, would entail resolving this ambiguity through an unsupported decision. Considering al-Rāzī’s influence on al-Samarqandī and their divergent perspectives on contentious theological issues, there is no scholarly justification for preferring Māturīdism over Ash’arism or Mu’tazilism without a proper basis. The distinction between labeling al-Samarqandī as a Māturīdī or associating him with other theological schools lacks scholarly substantiation. Therefore, while acknowledging al-Samarqandī’s place in the history of various theological schools is appropriate, it would be inaccurate to designate him as a pivotal figure in the historical evolution of the school, given the existing uncertainties.

The historical context pertains to the systematization and interaction between Māturīdism and Ash’arism during their respective periods. Ash’arism underwent its initial systematization shortly after its inception and was further developed by engaging with Avicenna’s philosophical concepts, culminating in a comprehensive critique of Peripatetic thought by figures such as al-Rāzī. In contrast, Māturīdism completed its systematic development approximately a century and a half after its namesake’s death. When confronted with Ash’arism, Ḥanafī scholars “reasserted” their theological identity and intensified their engagement in theological discourse. Recognizing the necessity of engaging with this evolving theological discourse, particularly as the influence of thinkers such as al-Rāzī expanded in the region, Ḥanafī scholars undertook the task of integrating new linguistic and methodological approaches. This process culminated in Şadr al-Sharī’a’s endeavor to formulate theological principles utilizing Avicennan philosophical concepts. Şadr al-Sharī’a’s approach often involved critiquing Peripateticism through the lenses of Avicenna and al-

⁴⁹ al-Samarqandī, *al-Şahāif*, 126, 310-311; Şadr al-Sharī’a, *Sharḥ Ta’dīl al-’ulūm*, fl. 163a, 174a.

⁵⁰ Şadr al-Sharī’a, *Sharḥ Ta’dīl al-’ulūm*, fl. 159a; al-Samarqandī, *al-Şahāif*, 129. For detailed information on the difference in approach of the two theologians, see. Güvenç Şensoy, *Sadruşşerīa’nın Kelâmı Ta’dīl Teşebbüsü Varlık ve Ulûhiyyet Merkezli Bir İnceleme* (İstanbul: Marmara Üniversitesi İlahiyat Fakültesi Vakfı Yayınları, 2023), 56, 105.

Tūsī, while also engaging with the critiques of Avicenna by figures like al-Rāzī and al-Samarqandī, sometimes bolstering their arguments and at other times proposing new responses perceived as necessary.⁵¹

2. General Characteristics

Here, the definition of the science of kalām and Ṣadr al-Sharī'a's thoughts on the structure of kalām will be determined. Then, by analyzing his interlocutors and how he handled the subject, the judgment on his approach to kalām will be justified.

2.1. The Science of Kalām

Ṣadr al-Sharī'a's *Ta'dīl al-'ulūm* consists of three chapters. The sections are logic, theology, and astronomy, respectively. To understand what Ṣadr al-Sharī'a meant by "*ta'dīl*", it would be helpful to look at the introduction of the work.

*I turned to Ta'dīl al-mīzān [Logic] to elaborate its essences, to consolidate its intellectual grounds, and to reinforce what had been transmitted. Then, after consolidating the structure of kalām, creating original proofs in this science, and building high palaces and impregnable fortresses in this science, I reached the summit of the research topics of kalām. Then, I descended to the other rational and narrative sciences and narrated the proofs that I had heard in these sciences and those that I had not heard in these sciences. I called the whole of these works Ta'dīl al-'ulūm.*⁵²

Ṣadr al-Sharī'a devotes the second chapter of his work to the *ta'dīl* of the science of kalām. At the beginning of this chapter, he briefly mentions the science of kalām. Although there is no historical narrative about kalām, this section contains clues about how he views it. He says that this part of

⁵¹ As an example of Ṣadr al-Sharī'a's critical engagement with earlier approaches and his reformulation of certain contested issues, one may refer to his treatment of the problem of the *maj'ūliyyat al-māhiyyāt* (the createdness of quiddities). For a detailed analysis of Ṣadr al-Sharī'a's views on this issue and his relationship with the preceding literature, see. Nedim Aydın, "Mahiyetlerin Mec'ūliyeti: Tartışmanın Bağlamı ve Sadruşşerī'a'nın Yaklaşımı", *Hitit İlahiyat Dergisi* 24/2 (2025), 704-730. In this study, the author carefully reconstructs the historical and conceptual background of the debate on the *maj'ūliyyat al-māhiyyāt* and examines Ṣadr al-Sharī'a's approach to this issue through a close analysis of its relationship with the preceding literature. In this context, the author provides a detailed account of how the problem was treated in the post-Rāzian tradition, offering a comparative evaluation of the *maḥall al-nizā'* conceptions of figures such as al-Ījī, al-Jurjānī, and al-Siyālkūtī, and clarifying the divergences that revolve around whether the dispute should be understood as merely verbal or as reflecting a substantive disagreement. The study then analyzes Ṣadr al-Sharī'a's position by examining his criticisms of al-Samarqandī and situating his arguments within the broader discussions on the distinction between existence and quiddity as well as the problem of the *shay'īyyat al-ma'dūm*. In doing so, the article not only systematically delineates the conceptual framework of the debate but also offers insightful observations on the distinctive features of Ṣadr al-Sharī'a's position, thereby making a significant contribution to the existing scholarship. Similarly, for a study that examines the debate surrounding a proof presented by Ibn Sīnā in *al-Ishārāt wa-l-tanbīhāt* through the approaches of al-Rāzī, al-Tūsī, and Ṣadr al-Sharī'a—and that offers an analysis of Ṣadr al-Sharī'a's criticisms of al-Tūsī and his distinctive interpretation, particularly in relation to the distinction between existence and essence and the question of whether existence is added, see. Güvenç Şensoy, "Discussions on Ibn Sīnā's Proof (Ishārah) That Existence Is Not Added to The Necessary: al-Rāzī, al-Tūsī, And Ṣadr al-Sharī'ah", *Ilahiyat Studies* 15/2 (December 2024), 279-309.

⁵² Ṣadr al-Sharī'a, *Sharḥ Ta'dīl al-'ulūm*, fl. 1b-2a.

his work contains all the issues of the science of kalām. He accomplishes this by organizing the “*mabāḥith*” (study topics) according to the order of Sūrah al-Fātiḥa. The author states that the reason why al-Fātiḥa can be considered as the dibājah of kalām is that the science of kalām is called kalām and that whether kalām is considered in the sense of being composed of letters or as *kalām al-nafsī* (interior speech) does not change this. If it is taken in the sense of being composed of letters, the science of kalām is also derived from God's kalām; if it is taken as *kalām al-nafsī*, it is possible to call it this way because it is God's kalām itself.

2.2. Definition of Kalām

Şadr al-Sharī'a defines kalām according to both its subject matter and its purpose. According to him, *kalām* is,

*a science that deals with the existence of the Necessary, its unity, the attributes befitting it, and the condition of other beings in terms of the Necessary's pouring on them the waters of essence and existence, and continuing to shower on some of them the rain of grace and mercy both in this world and in the hereafter.*⁵³

Kalām is a discipline concerned with God's existence, unity, attributes, and the state of creation as ordained by God. Initially, it might seem that subjects such as prophethood and the afterlife, integral to theological discourse, are not addressed. However, the ongoing bestowal of divine grace and mercy upon beings in both worldly life and the hereafter underscore the role of prophets in benefiting humanity. The term "grace" denotes the creation of humans and the dispatch of prophets to guide them towards happiness in both temporal existence and the afterlife. According to the Māturīdī tradition, every human, even one who does not encounter a prophet directly, bears responsibility, with the prophet serving as a divine aide.⁵⁴ The continuation of the rains of grace and mercy in the hereafter for some only applies to those who think and live following the commandments and prohibitions. The fact that it is not continued for others refers to the account of the hereafter. By stating that the essence and existence of the existents originate from the necessary, Şadr al-Sharī'a points out that the relation of the Necessary to the existents is not to clothe *non-maj'ūl essences* (uncreated essences) with existence and that it is God who creates essences as essences. Moreover, his use of the concepts of essence and existence has led to the inference that “he has mastered Avicennan philosophical terminology, methodology, and the philosophical system.”

⁵³ Şadr al-Sharī'a, *Sharḥ Ta'dīl al-'ulūm*, fl. 142a.

⁵⁴ As an example see. Abū Maşūr al-Māturīdī, *Kitāb al-tawḥīd*, ed. Bekir Topaloğlu - Muhammed Aruçi (Ankara: TDV Yayınları, 2017), 272.

Şadr al-Sharī'a continues his explanation of kalām. Here, the terms *mabda* (the place or the time of beginning), *ma'ād* (the place or the time to return again), and "the law of Islam" and the discussion mentioned above of the hereafter are explicitly mentioned, and the methodology is also specified.

*It is only through kalām that the most valuable subjects of the rational sciences - namely, maārif al-ilāhiyyah - can be brought from force to actualisation. Kalām is a divine science based on the law of Islam. This is because kalām is a science that comes into being through the presentation of rational proofs based on the warnings and warnings of the prophets. This is because it cannot be based solely on reason, especially concerning the essence of God, His attributes, and the judgments concerning the mabda-ma'ād.*⁵⁵

It is not clear what he means by "*maārif al-ilāhiyyah*" (knowledge of the divine) here. It could be argued that he means metaphysics. In this respect, he may have meant that kalām is a metaphysics based on *sharī'a*. He positions kalām as the counterpart to philosophy, arguing that metaphysical issues can only be realized through kalām. Thus, he defines metaphysics as the essence of God, His attributes, the creation of the universe, and the hereafter. However, this explanation contradicts the sentence "existent in the sense that it exists"⁵⁶ that he mentions later as the subject of metaphysics. The proper establishment of the relationship between the absolute existence of the subject and those mentioned above can be made based on the distinction between subject matter and issues. While the subject matter of kalām, regarded as the counterpart of metaphysics, is absolute existence, God's essence, His attributes, the states of beings in terms of God's creation, the world's creation, and the hereafter are the issues.⁵⁷

2.3. Arrangement of Kalām Topics

It has been previously established that Şadr al-Sharī'a's concept of *ta'dīl* involves internal organization without altering the fundamental subjects. Building on this understanding, Şadr al-Sharī'a's approach to structuring topics can be explored. From his explanations regarding the subjects addressed by kalām, it can be inferred that he views kalām as a discipline that comprehensively addresses all constituents of existence. Şadr al-Sharī'a asserts that kalām encompasses not only God's essence, unity, and attributes befitting Him, but also all other entities

⁵⁵ Şadr al-Sharī'a, *Sharḥ Ta'dīl al-'ulūm*, fl. 2a-b.

⁵⁶ Şadr al-Sharī'a, *Sharḥ Ta'dīl al-'ulūm*, fl. 17b.

⁵⁷ It can be said that this is the point where he differs from al-Urmawī (d. 682/1283) on the subject matter of the science of kalām. Arslan states that at first glance, one might think that Şadr al-Sharī'a's approach is the same as that of al-Urmawī and thinks that it should be stated that "he is closer to al-Jurjānī, who criticizes al-Urmawī's approach, as can be understood from his statements in the following chapters and his approach to the issues that the science of kalām deals with." According to him, "it is not clear whether Şadr al-Sharī'a distinguishes between the subject and the matter of the science of kalām. Although he first mentions the concepts of subject and matter separately in his commentary, he later uses only the concept of subject. Therefore, there is no clarity as to whether the distinction is for unity or for distinction." Arslan, "Ta'dīlül-Kelām: Kelâmın Felsefeyle 'Ta'dīl'i", 257.

in terms of their existence and essence as bestowed by God. Consequently, kalām is regarded as a science that embraces the entirety of existence.

Based on Ṣadr al-Sharī'a's explanation, the arrangement of topics according to the order of Sūrah al-Fātiḥa is structured as follows: he posits that Sūrah al-Fātiḥa encapsulates wisdom and differentiation (*faṣl*). Ṣadr al-Sharī'a interprets the interval between "al-ḥamd l-illāh" and "māliki yawm al-dīn" as encompassing theoretical wisdom, while the remainder addresses practical wisdom. He suggests that *faṣl*, meaning separation or distinction, could imply the separation between truth and falsehood as the primary interpretation. Alternatively, it could denote *maḥṣūl*, indicating what is separated or distinct. In essence, Ṣadr al-Sharī'a argues that the idea of one part being distinguished from another within Sūrah al-Fātiḥa is more fittingly understood as containing a separation of discourse (*faṣl al-khitāb*), aligning with his interpretation.⁵⁸ The seven *ta'dīl* according to the Fātiḥa, which includes wisdom and *faṣl* and verse, are listed as follows in the form of "mabāḥith":

- 1- *Since this science deals with existents and their essences, it begins with the mabāḥith of wujūd and essence.*
- 2- *After the mabāḥith of wujūd and essence, one moves on to the Divine mabāḥith (Wājib) [Necessary],*
- 3- *The substance created by Allah as the rabbi of the people after the divine mabāḥith*
- 4) *and the discussion of accidents.*
- 5- *God then mentions the blessings He has prepared for the Day of Reckoning*
- 6- *and explains the ways of attaining these blessings. This way is the way of worship, and the beginning of this way is faith and Islam.*
- 7- *To reach ṣirāt al-mustaqīm, the path of the blessed, requires Allah's help and guidance, and this includes the topics of messengers, prophethood, caliphate, and wilāyah.⁵⁹*

According to Ṣadr al-Sharī'a, the issues begin with the concepts of existence and essence, i.e., *umūr al-āmma* (general concepts), and the idea of the creator is reached because the existents to which these concepts are attributed have the characteristic of being created. Thus, the issues of necessary existence are discussed. General concepts (*al-umūr al-āmma*), Allah, and the hereafter are discussed. Then, to attain the blessings of the hereafter, servitude must be adequately fulfilled. This refers to faith and Islam. The idea of the Prophet, who must be obeyed to fulfil servitude properly, and prophethood, is discussed.

3. The Unity of Kalām, Islamic jurisprudence (Fiqh), and Sufism

⁵⁸ Ṣadr al-Sharī'a, *Sharḥ Ta'dīl al-'ulūm*, fl. 143a-b.

⁵⁹ Ṣadr al-Sharī'a, *Sharḥ Ta'dīl al-'ulūm*, fl. 142b.

Şadr al-Sharī'a, who provides a framework for organizing topics in kalām, asserts that Sūrah al-Fātiḥa encompasses both theoretical and practical wisdom. He argues against limiting wisdom solely to intellectual pursuits, contending that this restricted usage deviates from its original meaning. Instead, Şadr al-Sharī'a posits that wisdom should encompass both knowledge and action, aligning with its broader and original connotation.⁶⁰ As noted earlier, he maintains that the first segment of the sūrah—from “al-ḥamd li-llāhi rabb al-‘ālamīn” to “mālīki yawm al-dīn”—corresponds to theoretical wisdom, while the verses that follow articulate practical wisdom.⁶¹ Since he thinks that wisdom is not only of scientific relevance, at the end of the kalām section of his work, he states that şırāt al-mustaqīm (the right path) “is the path to be traveled” and that it “can be achieved by ascending to the stations of the saints”.⁶² In this respect, according to him, sufism is included within kalām. The proofs for such an acceptance are (1) the organization of kalām according to Sūrah al-Fātiḥa and the fact that the last part of al-Fātiḥa contains practical wisdom, and (2) the last part of the work is a description of the *maqāms* of the saints and the stages of the journey of ascension.

The fact that kalām, jurisprudence (*fiqh*), and sufism are intertwined sciences in Şadr al-Sharī'a's thought is also seen in his work *Tawdīḥ*. “*The concept of fiqh*” explains the sciences of kalām, fiqh, and sufism, with the added registrations in its definition, and if it is used without the added registrations, it encompasses all three.

*Fiqh is the knowledge of what is for and against a person. In this definition, the word ‘amal’ is added to exclude the matters of faith and conscience so that kalām and sufism are excluded. If it is omitted, it means all of them... This is the definition that has been transmitted from Abū Ḥanīfa.*⁶³

“What is for and against a person includes the matters of faith, for example, that faith is obligatory. It also includes the conscience. That is morality and the faculties of the soul. It also includes practical things like prayer, fasting, and trade. Kalām is the knowledge of what is in favour of and against a person from the theological ones. The knowledge of what is for and against conscientiousness is the science of ethics and sufism... The knowledge of what is for and against the practical is fiqh, which is used as an idiom. Add ‘amalan’ to the definition if you mean this by fiqh. If you want it to cover all three, you don’t. Abū Ḥanīfa

⁶⁰ Şadr al-Sharī'a, *Sharḥ Ta'dīl al-'ulūm*, fl. 15b, 194a.

⁶¹ Şadr al-Sharī'a, *Sharḥ Ta'dīl al-'ulūm*, fl. 142a.

⁶² Şadr al-Sharī'a, *Sharḥ Ta'dīl al-'ulūm*, fl. 286b.

⁶³ Ubayd Allāh Ibn Mas'ūd Şadr al-Sharī'a, *al-Tawdīḥ sharḥ al-Tankīḥ*, ed. Najīb al-Mājdī - Ḥusayn al-Mājdī (Sayda-Beirut: al-Mektebat al-Asriyye, 2009), 1/25-26.

did not add 'amalan' because he meant all of them. He used *fiqh* to mean [the knowledge of] what is in favour and what is against in all of them: the theological, the conscientious, and the practical.⁶⁴

The Qur'ān provides information on beliefs, deeds, and morals. The rulings in the Qur'ān and the hadiths relate to these three areas. The sciences of kalām, jurisprudence, and mysticism are the sciences that have been organized for the derivation of rulings related to these three areas. Şadr al-Sharī'a states that the term *fiqh*, which in the early period meant deepening in knowledge, refers to these three sciences in absolute terms, noting that the term *fiqh*, as transmitted from Abū Ḥanīfa, was not explicitly defined as "that which is related to deeds". The fact that he adds sufism at the end of the section devoted to kalām and then moves on to the third part of the book shows the unity of these sciences, particularly kalām and sufism. His statements in the *Tawdīh*, which he wrote before the *Ta'dīl*, together with the fact that in the *Ta'dīl*, while organizing the subjects of kalām according to Sūrah al-Fātiḥa, he states that after "māliki yawm al-dīn" is the practical wisdom, show that the two works are compatible.

It is noteworthy that the last chapter in the kalām section is titled "Maqāmāt al-'ārifīn". This is the last chapter of Avicenna's *al-Ishārāt*. In the relevant chapter, Avicenna presents the states of the saints in philosophical language. Şadr al-Sharī'a also takes the chapter's name in *al-Ishārāt* and has the same goal as Avicenna.⁶⁵ Regarding Şadr al-Sharī'a's relationship with sufism, we should also consider his initiation into Ḥasan al-Bulgārī (d. 698/1299),⁶⁶ one of the famous sheiks of the time. Şadr al-Sharī'a refers to Ḥasan al-Bulgārī with the expression "*shaykhunā*".⁶⁷ Moreover, at the beginning of "Maqāmāt", he says, "I love the righteous [but] I am not one of them."⁶⁸ This statement can be interpreted as an act of humility and can be taken as evidence that he was a follower of Bulgārī. The fact that in one of the copies of *Ta'dīl*, the phrase is not "لست منهم" (I am not one of them) but "كنت منهم"⁶⁹ (I am one of them), and that the work ends with a prayer of Bulgārī, whom he calls "*shaykhunā*", are points that strengthen the determination. This also shows the source of the power of Şadr al-Sharī'a's explanations of sufism. As a disciple, he must draw

⁶⁴ Şadr al-Sharī'a, *al-Tawdīh* (al-Mektabat al-Asriyya), 1/28.

⁶⁵ Arslan argues that the two chapters with the same title differ in style and methodology. According to him, while "Avicenna explains the issues in general terms, in a non-technical language, and as much as possible in a philosophical conceptual world", Şadr al-Sharī'a "uses a much more sufi language and presents the issues in a holistic scheme". According to Arslan, Şadr al-Sharī'a's approach overlaps with those who see "Sufism as a discipline that affirms the theology of Ahl al-Sunnah". For Arslan's explanations, see. Arslan, "Ta'dīlül-Kelâm: Kelâmın Felsefeyle 'Ta'dīl'i", 284-285.

⁶⁶ He was born in Nakhchivan, one of the towns of Azerbaijan. He lived in Bulgar (Ural-Tataristan), Bukhārā and Kirmān and died in Tabriz at the age of ninety-three. For detailed information about his life, see. Fakhr al-Dīn 'Alī b. Ḥusayn al-Kāshifī, *Rashaḥāt al-'Ayn al-ḥayāt*, ed. Ali Asgar Muīniyān (Tehran, 1977), 2/368-372.

⁶⁷ Şadr al-Sharī'a, *Sharḥ Ta'dīl al-'ulūm*, fl. 305a.

⁶⁸ Şadr al-Sharī'a, *Sharḥ Ta'dīl al-'ulūm*, fl. 286b.

⁶⁹ 'Ubayd Allāh Ibn Mas'ūd Şadr al-Sharī'a, *Sharḥ Ta'dīl al-'ulūm* (Suleymaniye Library, Hamidiye, 721), fl. 206b.

attention to the ascetic's dangers, the stages of ascension, and to his recommendations for overcoming them.

To summarise, Ṣadr al-Sharī'a, who himself belonged to a shaykh, treated sufi issues as a part of kalām since Sūrah al-Fātiḥa, on which kalām is based, also includes practical wisdom. In his thought, jurisprudence, as in the early period, includes belief, practice, and morality. To Ṣadr al-Sharī'a, who thinks these are intertwined, sufi issues complement kalām. Moreover, the fact that he refers to the discussions on knowledge in the kalām section with the section on the "soul" and that these discussions on the "soul" are included in the last section called "Maqāmāt al-'ārifīn" is evidence of this unity.⁷⁰

Conclusion

After al-Māturīdī, references to his legacy resurface, notably among scholars such as al-Pazdawī and Abu al-Mu'īn al-Nasafī. This revival can be attributed to historical developments during al-Māturīdī's time, particularly the influence of Ismā'īlī activities in the region, which led to a distancing from the methods of kalām. Subsequently, Ḥanafī scholars no longer found the study of kalām necessary. However, in their engagement with Ash'arite discourse, especially in discussions of creation (*takwīn*), Ḥanafīs began to re-embrace the kalām methodology. This resurgence highlighted the distinctive Māturīdī theological approach among the followers of Abū Ḥanīfa.

Thus, a significant gap emerges between the systematization of Māturīdism and that of Ash'arism. Ash'arism achieved a systematic formulation notably through figures like al-Bāqillānī, while responding to earlier approaches under the influence of al-Juwaynī. This period marked the culmination of theological developments initiated by al-Ghazālī's engagement with Peripatetic thought and the pinnacle of later theological discourse influenced by al-Rāzī and al-Ash'arism.

In response to encounters with Ash'arites, Māturīdīs sought a new philosophical framework. Ṣadr al-Sharī'a's *ta'dīl* endeavor reflects this necessity, focusing in particular on Māturīdī theology and the broader interaction between religious thought and Avicenna's philosophy. Central to his discourse are constant references to Avicenna, al-Rāzī, al-Ṭūṣī, and al-Samarqandī, demonstrating the depth and complexity of this intellectual engagement.

Especially evident in his frequent references, Ṣadr al-Sharī'a strives to harmonize the themes, terminology, and theoretical foundations of Māturīdī theology with the intellectual milieu of his era. This effort parallels al-Rāzī's approach to addressing theological issues through systematic frameworks and theories. Ṣadr al-Sharī'a seeks to bolster al-Rāzī's method of engaging with

⁷⁰ Ṣadr al-Sharī'a, *Sharḥ Ta'dīl al-'ulūm*, fl. 265b.

Avicenna's philosophy, despite occasional disagreements, using it to support Māturīdī assumptions from a distinct perspective. This entails reinforcing the evidential and conceptual foundations without fundamentally altering the internal structure of these disciplines, a process he terms *ta'dīl*.

The historical context, Şadr al-Sharī'a's approach to the science of kalām and its content, the integration of kalām with fiqh and sufism, and his engagement with various interlocutors are all framed within his project to adapt Māturīdism to the level attained by Ash'arite theology after al-Rāzī. Central to this endeavor is his effort to fortify theological arguments and critiques against the Avicennan philosophical system. Şadr al-Sharī'a's encounter with Avicenna's philosophy involves elucidating Avicenna's ideas, considering al-Rāzī's critiques and responses, examining al-Ṭūṣī's objections to al-Rāzī, and presenting his own treatment of these themes through the lenses of al-Rāzī and al-Ṭūṣī.

Şadr al-Sharī'a's project is not merely a reinforcement of al-Rāzī's views, as he freely discards assumptions from al-Rāzī's framework that do not align with his own views. In some cases, he specifically addresses and refutes al-Rāzī's arguments. Therefore, Şadr al-Sharī'a's engagement with Peripateticism transcends mere reinforcement of Māturīdī theology, and his relationship with al-Rāzī involves more than mere utilization of his ideas. His objections to concepts and judgments adopted by later theologians from philosophers illustrate this critical stance. He approaches later theological developments with the same scrutiny applied to Peripateticism.

For instance, Şadr al-Sharī'a's disagreement with fundamental issues such as the definition of existence underscores that his project of *ta'dīl* not only aims to affirm Māturīdī perspectives but also entails critical assessments of the broader trajectory of kalām. However, this does not imply agreement with the notion that "philosophical theology" permits the use of philosophical concepts more liberally, whereas "theological philosophy" confines their usage within the framework of kalām's logic. The continuation of arguments by later theologians concerning the existence of a free-willed God (*fā'il al-mukhtār*), the origination of the universe, the immaterial nature of the soul, and the reality of bodily resurrection indicates that Şadr al-Sharī'a's awareness was not unique. Rather, the process of transitivity of concepts and the reinterpretation of meanings did not conclude before Şadr al-Sharī'a; instead, it persisted through his critiques and recommendations, influencing subsequent theologians.

Etik Beyan / Ethical Statement

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