

## Introduction

Among the many messages Muslims have put out in engaging their religious faith in the contemporary context, there is one that stands out with special tenacity. *Al-Islām dīn al-fiṭra*, it runs. “Islam is the religion of our original nature.” It is a catchphrase that has grown to be ubiquitous in the contemporary setting, appearing in a broad spectrum of writings, particularly popular ones, among authors who might otherwise be divided by important differences in intellectual orientation. We hear it among those who remain stakeholders of more traditional educational environments. We hear it among those, like the members of the broad Islamist movement, who stand for the new religious approaches spawned by the circumstances of modernity. And when we hear it, its sound is that of a refrain whose presence has come to be so pervasive in the acoustic field that it no longer invites pause. Take the tract by the late Saudi cleric Muḥammad ibn Ṣāliḥ al-‘Uthaymīn, for example, running under the title *Ḥuqūq da‘at ilayhā al-fiṭra wa-qarrarathā al-sharī‘a* (“Rights demanded by our original nature and confirmed by the Shari’a”), which offers an enumeration of different kinds of rights filed under familiar headings: the rights of spouses, of children, of neighbours; the rights of God. More remarkable than these contents is the fact that the language of *fiṭra*, having appeared in the title, never once appears in the body of the text itself, its function apparently complete in this elliptical gesture and wholly comprehensible (we may suppose) to its readers.

And toward what, one may ask, might this gesture be? Considered more closely, the notion of *fiṭra* here and elsewhere would seem to point us to a particular matrix of relationships or correspondences. At its heart, and most immediately, lies the claim of a correspondence between the demands of our nature, and the demands and principles of the Islamic faith. It is a message of harmony that stands out, for example, in the characteristic expression found in a recent popular work on ethics by the prominent Damascene scholar of law Wahba al-Zuḥaylī: “Islam does not conflict with human nature or innate desires because it is the religion of our original nature (*fiṭra*) and the religion of moderation.”<sup>1</sup> Yet joined to this first correspondence as its implicit *alter ego* would seem to be another: the message of a

correspondence between the prescriptions of the faith, and the nature of the prescribed actions themselves. A good illustration of the latter is provided by a remark that appears in a highly popular work by the well-known Egyptian cleric and member of the Muslim Brotherhood, Yūsuf al-Qaraḍāwī. “Out of mercy for His servants,” al-Qaraḍāwī writes in *al-Ḥalāl wa’l-ḥarām*, “God Almighty has made permissibility and prohibition dependent upon intelligible grounds (*ja’ala al-taḥlīl wa’l-taḥrīm li-‘ilal ma’qūla*), which relate to the welfare of human beings themselves. It thus became known in Islam that the prohibition of something follows upon (or depends on: *yatba’*) its malignancy and harmfulness (*al-khubth wa’l-ḍarar*).”<sup>2</sup> We may notice that al-Qaraḍāwī here accentuates considerations of utility in explaining this correspondence; al-‘Uthaymīn, on the other hand, had sounded the deontological accent with the notion (*ḥaqq*) that figured as his organising term.

It is this twofold correspondence—connecting the commands of the Islamic faith with our own nature, on the one hand, and the nature of actions on the other—that would appear to underlie the pervasive catchphrase as we find it. And with this matrix out in the open, now, those considering this intellectual scene against the classical theological tradition might respond with a certain sense of surprise. For certainly, the notion of *fiṭra* as such had hardly been a foreign one in the Islamic tradition, given the deep scriptural roots that grounded it. The notion of *fiṭra* (“the natural disposition” or “constitution,” “our original nature”) makes a key appearance in the Qur’an in the verse that reads: “So set your face to the religion, a man of pure faith (*ḥanīfan*)—the nature (framed) of God, in which He has created man (*fiṭrat Allāh allatī faṭara al-nās ‘alayhā*).” This scriptural base had been enriched by several prophetic traditions taking *fiṭra* as their central term, the most familiar being the one that states: “every child is born with the natural disposition (*‘ala’l-fiṭra*), and it is its parents that render it a Jew, or a Christian, or a Magean.” Picking up on the connection forged in the Qur’anic text between human nature and the religion of the original monotheists (*ḥunafā’*), this *hadith* was part of a pool of rich (though not uncontested) resources that had been used to theorise about the positive religious impulses built into the material of human nature. Drawing on these resources, the most important way in which the notion of *fiṭra* had been developed by Muslim writers was as a base disposition for religious belief, or indeed, as some would argue the point more thickly, for the Islamic faith.

Yet the conceptual matrix underlying modern usage would seem to go beyond this intellectual tradition, bringing out a set of connections belonging to the evaluative rather than the more narrowly theological field. And in doing so, it would stir up old ghosts which our readings of Islamic theological history would appear to have laid to rest. Because taken together, the series of correspondences just outlined as the subtext of that well-worn catchphrase—*al-Islām dīn al-fiṭra*—point to an understanding of the relationship between God’s command and human reason that we regard as having been largely rejected by Sunni Muslim theologians in the classical period, when questions about the nature of value and our epistemic access to it had come up for heated debate. It was a debate that came to be known as that of *al-taḥsīn wa’l-taqbīḥ*—literally, the determination of good and bad—and one that, in the story’s telling most familiar to us, was defined by a binary opposition between the vantage point of Ash‘arite and Mu‘tazilite theologians. Notions of right and

wrong, the latter had argued, are intuitively available to the human mind, and yield objective moral standards that apply across agents, as much to human beings as to God. It was a position we have often understood through its contrary, which was the Ash'arite claim that God authors the values of actions by attaching consequences—reward and punishment—to their performance or omission. Right and wrong are constituted through God's word; and it is through the same means that they can be exclusively known.

In the classical debates, the notion of *fiṭra* was not known to have made an appearance. It was rather the notion of reason (*ʿaql*) that figured as the central term of dispute. Yet if we hold our hand over this change of register, the modern notion of *fiṭra*—carrying with it the idea of a correspondence between what the Shari'a commands, and what is already present within us naturally or independently of religious input—would seem to involve a semantic freight not at all far removed from what the Mu'tazilites had been concerned to claim. In doing so, it would re-open the door of a debate that had long ago appeared to close in the face of Mu'tazilism and its rationalistic commitments. Whether we call it nature or reason, Mu'tazilite moral rationalism would not lie far in the distance.

This study began as a desire to re-open that door and discover where it leads. How to understand the historical origins of the characteristic turn of thinking codified in the notion of *fiṭra*? How seriously to take the message of moral rationalism that appears to buoy it up? How to relate this message to the premises and outcomes of the theological discourse inherited from the classical period?<sup>3</sup> As so often in Islamic thought, however, questions about the present lead back to the past and they sometimes retain one there with a tenacity unanticipated by the searchlights of one's initial investigation. In this case, the return to the past took the form of a return to the terms of the classical debate itself, to consider more directly the contribution of one of its more maverick participants. For standing just outside the familiar perimeter of this debate was a figure that has often been felt to cast a particularly tenebrous shadow over contemporary Islamic thought, the Ḥanbalite theologian Taqī al-Dīn Ibn Taymiyya.

And accosted with the uncertain curiosity of the present, his writings seemed calculated to provoke a twofold reaction of recognition—and a new surprise. Recognition, because it was soon clear that the notion of *fiṭra* so amply attested in the contemporary scene was one that assumed critical dimensions in his thought, including his writings on ethics. Surprise, because probed more closely, Ibn Taymiyya turned out to articulate a view that appeared to run cross-beam to the shape of the traditional debate on the nature of value as we have often narrated it. Disavowing the binary opposition of Mu'tazilism and Ash'arism that has supplied such narratives with their backbone, Ibn Taymiyya called for a new position that would overcome it: not Mu'tazilism, not Ash'arism, but something in between. Yet this *via media* was one that Ibn Taymiyya appeared to spell out in explicitly rationalist terms. Right and wrong, he claimed, are known by reason. And while the language of reason would indeed be deployed in couching this claim, Ibn Taymiyya in many places replaced it with another—that of *fiṭra*. The claim then became: we know what is right and wrong by the human *fiṭra*.

Taken seriously, it is an intellectual development that would appear to

subvert everything we thought we knew about the shape of this theological debate, and to call for a brand new chapter to this well-rehearsed history. A new chapter, a new answer, and one that holds out a double excitement to the reader of the classical theological tradition: in offering a fresh synthesis in an old debate, and in offering a synthesis distinctly framed in rationalist terms. Before us would seem to stand nothing less than the promise of a new claim of moral reason.

It was this surprise that gave the present book its immediate impetus. In its progress, the historical questions that provided the original impetus quickly transformed themselves into a deeper engagement with Ibn Taymiyya's ethical thought. Thus, while these questions continue to shadow the present study as its distant framework, and while I hope to be offering some of the material needed for answering them, the study that follows is an effort to engage directly and on his own terms a thinker that still remains—remarkably given his wide influence in the contemporary context—understudied. At the heart of this engagement stands a question about the claim of reason announcing itself in Ibn Taymiyya's works. How to understand the promise of this claim and how to judge its fulfilment?

Questions about Ibn Taymiyya's engagement of reason have formed a prominent theme in scholarly appraisals of his intellectual legacy. Only until recently, Ibn Taymiyya appeared in narratives of the history of Islamic theological and philosophical thought as herald of a new era of decline and augur of an anti-rationalist retrenchment following several centuries of efflorescence in the rationalist sciences. The new age of anti-rationalism, Majid Fakhry could write in his recent introduction to the Islamic intellectual tradition, was marked by a "return to the Ḥanbalite position which rejected all philosophical, and even theological, methods of discourse, and clung to the sacred text, literally interpreted."<sup>4</sup> And it was Ibn Taymiyya that was identified as one of the salient contributors to this Ḥanbalite re-implosion. More recent writings on Ibn Taymiyya—notably by Jon Hoover, Yahya Michot and Ovamir Anjum among others—have sought to reverse this facile judgment, emphasising the significance of Ibn Taymiyya's engagement with the discourses forming the object of his supposed rejection. Taking the question of Ibn Taymiyya's rationalism to one of its most important seats, the present study can be read as a contribution to this larger debate concerning the nature of his legacy.

The focus of this study falls on Ibn Taymiyya's ethical outlook relative to two key questions that shaped classical theological debates about ethics: a question about the nature of ethical value, and a related question about the nature of ethical knowledge and the role of reason in achieving this. Piecing this account together involves tackling several separate tasks. Given the long life such questions had led within classical debates, and given the crucial significance of these historical debates in framing Ibn Taymiyya's own enterprise, clarifying Ibn Taymiyya's ethical views must in part be pursued as an effort to recount their relationship to pre-existing theological topography. This book is thus as much a window into classical theological debates about ethics—particularly Mu'tazilite and Ash'arite approaches to ethics—as it is a window into Ibn Taymiyya's own thinking. Mu'tazilite theologians, of course, have often been celebrated for having pressed a bold claim of reason in ethical matters. Yet what has received less attention among readers of this region of Islamic theological history is the claim of reason that Ash'arite thinkers

had articulated in both their theological and legal writings.

Shedding clearer light on Ash‘arite ethical thought is important in its own right, giving us new resources for recalibrating our understanding of classical debates. But it is equally important for telling the more specific story that forms the subject of this book. For one of the things I hope to show is that the story of Ibn Taymiyya’s ethical views can be told far more compellingly as a story about his relationship to the Ash‘arites, than as a story about his affinities to Mu‘tazilism. It is also a story, as I hope to show, that must partly be told as an account of Ibn Taymiyya’s fraught engagement with the philosophy of Avicenna, the perception of whose towering intellectual presence Ibn Taymiyya shared with late Ash‘arites, but was far more concerned to contest. It may seem both surprising and unsurprising, in this respect, to discover that it is Avicenna’s denial of the connection between ethical judgements and human nature (*fitra*)—a denial that had made deep inroads into Ash‘arite ethical thought—that provides Ibn Taymiyya with a critical context for developing his own view of this connection and of ethical judgements more broadly.

Probing Ibn Taymiyya’s ethical outlook, thus, involves engaging a wider series of intellectual contexts, bringing into view the trajectory of key ethical ideas across the fields of theology, philosophy, and indeed law. Yet classical debates about ethics, additionally, had always been profoundly anchored in an underlying structure of theological concerns. Questions that on the surface revolved around matters of value as these pertain to human existence—questions about what *human beings* know regarding right and wrong, or what is right and wrong for *human beings* to do—ultimately pointed beyond human life and translated into fundamental questions about the moral life of God himself. A fuller appraisal of Ibn Taymiyya’s ethical views must thus involve transposing his views about human morality into their theological context, and considering the understanding of God’s morality that complements them and lends them their significance.

Set against this nest of intellectual contexts, one of the conclusions of this book can be stated simply: Ibn Taymiyya’s claim of moral reason, examined more closely, turns out to be a rather misleading one. Reason, when it comes to determining right and wrong, carries a far less substantive and far less substantially articulated content than at first sight appears, and than the *prima facie* resemblance between Ibn Taymiyya’s position and the Mu‘tazilites’ may lead one to anticipate. Restated in terms of the theological possibilities as we know them, Ibn Taymiyya’s view of moral reason in fact coincides with Ash‘arism in most of its basic features, and with the more limited brand of rationalism expounded by Ash‘arite writers.

I speak of stating conclusions “simply.” Yet one of the chief messages I hope readers will take away from this book is that simple conclusions are not so easy to wrest from Ibn Taymiyya’s work. If Ibn Taymiyya’s ethical view, upon closer consideration, turns out to be different from what an initial consideration leads us to expect—if “appearances” can be “misleading,” and the realities can surprise our expectations—this already suggests that something unusual must be afoot. Interpretive work, of course, is often about digging more deeply beneath appearances and ferreting out what is not immediately plain to view. Wonder has frequently been thought of as the passion of intellectual inquiry; surprise seems to

me a good candidate for one of the main passions that move us not only to but *through* the effort to reconstruct a thinker's viewpoint. On one level, this simply reflects the fact that interpretation is an activity that unfolds in time. The web of interpretation begins to weave itself from the very first line of the very first page ("Can it be . . . ?" "Does he really mean . . . ?" "It would be interesting if . . . "); and the progress of interpretation as we pursue our journey through a body of extended writing is partly a matter of partial impressions and early expectations ceding to more holistic perspectives, as more and more of this body comes into view. At the same time, what the notion of surprise seems to flag is our inescapable investment in a particular conception of what interpretation involves—a conception in which the notion of discovery, and ideals of unity, occupy a central place. When we ask "What does A think about . . . ?", that part of us which remains untouched by sophisticated literary scruples cherishes the prospect of discovering an answer that we could present with reasonable coherence, telling it without being too self-conscious about the act of telling, and without needing to lay the nuts and bolts on the table one by one to show how the story was pieced together, what was accepted and what thrown out.

It is an ideal of discovery and self-effacing interpretive unity that comes under special strain when one brings it to Ibn Taymiyya's work. For Ibn Taymiyya's views—on the topics that form the subject of this book, certainly—turn out to require effort of a particularly concerted kind to be pieced together. The journey into Ibn Taymiyya's account often has all the excitement, yet also all the precariousness, of detective work undertaken under challenging conditions: the conflict of testimonies, the statement made only to be retracted, the circumstantial evidence here, the witness who unintentionally misleads the jury. Key positions (like the ethical positions of Mu'tazilite thinkers just referred to) are described in ways that appear like mis-descriptions, and have to be carefully winnowed apart. Central distinctions are obscured, and have to be dug up. Clear statements are made in one place that appear to be contradicted by the clear implications of others, making the evidence harder to unify. Theses are offered with promissory terseness but never extensively developed, leaving one wondering how seriously they were intended to be taken. Theses are voiced in polemical contexts, leaving one wondering whether they would have been voiced in others. Sifting through these elements exacts a high degree of textual focus and a far more self-conscious attention to the way one relates the different pieces that enter the story one tells. If readers of texts might sometimes be able to avoid dwelling too much on their own form-making activity, the form of Ibn Taymiyya's works makes that self-forgetfulness out of reach and often forces one to show one's hand.

Such unselfconsciousness is of course never a virtue (if indeed it is even a possibility); and thinkers who place our interpretive fantasies under strain pay us a valuable service in forcing us to interrogate these fantasies and to reflect on the standards and aims that drive our activity. Yet to the extent that certain thinkers expose these fantasies to greater strain than others, this will be important to bring out in limning the character of their intellectual contribution. I would thus argue more strongly that those elements of the *how* of Ibn Taymiyya's writing which thematise the painter's hand by hindering it are ones that, far from being mere

hindrances or disturbances to the *what* of his views, form an essential and substantive lesson to be learnt about Ibn Taymiyya's oeuvre. They certainly compel us to ask a more pointed question regarding Ibn Taymiyya's aims in pressing the claim of ethical reason. They also provide us with resources for understanding why Ibn Taymiyya's legacy, speaking in elusive voices, may allow itself to be appropriated in plural ways and play host to competing interpretations.

My own conclusions about the principal tendency of Ibn Taymiyya's ethical thought and about the limited claim of reason that shapes it need to be read against this more complex appreciation of what it means to form conclusions about Ibn Taymiyya's thought. Although several of the moments of surprise that moved my own investigation forward have been filtered out of view in presenting the story that follows—faithfully to the tradition of inquiry, in its characteristic drive to purify the product of inquiry from the temporality of its process—I hope these actuating surprises, and the way they thematise the act of story-telling, will still be palpable.

So let me say something about how the discussion unfolds. In chapter 1, I set the stage for the discussion by first isolating certain features of Ibn Taymiyya's intellectual outlook that are of special relevance for approaching his ethical views—namely his advocacy of the *via media*, his engagement of rationalist methods, and his claim of harmony between reason and revelation—and by framing a broad comment about the nature of Ibn Taymiyya's writing and the significance of this particular subject in the structure of his concerns. I then turn to my main topic, Ibn Taymiyya's understanding of the nature of ethical value. Ibn Taymiyya proposes to carve a *via media* between Mu'tazilite and Ash'arite approaches, but he appears to draw far nearer to the Mu'tazilite pole of this intellectual field in espousing an objectivist view of ethical value. Yet the Mu'tazilites, for their part, had given a prominent place to deontological considerations in spelling out their ethical ontology. A closer study of a number of Taymiyyan texts, by contrast, suggests that Ibn Taymiyya's objectivism is construed in overwhelmingly consequentialist or utilitarian terms. The central ethical concept for Ibn Taymiyya is utility (*manfa'a*, *maṣlaḥa*), and the value of seemingly deontological types of acts is reduced to their utilitarian tendencies, not only for the individual but indeed for the social community.

With this insight in place, in chapter 2 I go on to address Ibn Taymiyya's ethical epistemology, focusing on two salient epistemic notions that Ibn Taymiyya appeals to in his ethical remarks: reason (*'aql*) and nature (*fiṭra*). I begin by schematising the argument (or thought experiment) articulated by Avicenna against including moral judgements in the perspective of human nature, an argument that can be taken to mark a broad distinction between nature and convention. I then turn to Ibn Taymiyya's counter-claim. In his evaluative deployment of the notion of *fiṭra*, I argue, Ibn Taymiyya primarily approaches *fiṭra* as a desiderative principle—as a principle of natural desire, alternately construed as a desire for what is pleasurable and as a desire for what is beneficial. Mined more carefully, this construal reveals that nature cannot be taken to carry the positive status or constitute the source of

ethical guidance that Ibn Taymiyya's remarks invite us to assume, reflecting the positive scriptural connotations of the notion of *fiṭra*. Similar limitations attach to the resources of reason. While in certain writings Ibn Taymiyya shows an interest in developing the idea that moral judgements are the product of naturalistic empirical reasoning (*tajriba*), elsewhere he lays a strong emphasis on the limitations of reason as a source for knowing the consequences of actions that constitute their ultimate value. The evaluative guidance available to us through our natural or internal epistemic resources thus turns out to be subject to serious limitations. For the full criterion of ethical value, we instead need to look to the revealed Law.

In chapter 3 I make an approach to Ibn Taymiyya's elusive relationship to Ash'arite ethical thought. Ibn Taymiyya often appears to be locked in relations of bitter conflict with Ash'arite theology, and this extends to questions of ethics. A closer scrutiny of the facts, however, paints a different picture. A more nuanced survey of the evolving Ash'arite view of ethics, particularly with regard to the ethical role of reason, and of the Ash'arite assimilation of Avicenna's ethical ideas, reveals Ibn Taymiyya's relationship to Ash'arism to be one of concealed indebtedness. Some of Ibn Taymiyya's central contentions—not only his claim that right and wrong are known by reason, but also his claim that they are known by (desiderative) nature and indeed his claim that value comes down to utility—find their immediate counterparts in Ash'arite theology.

Turning away from questions about human morality, in chapter 4 I turn to consider what Ibn Taymiyya has to say about the morality of God. A positive emphasis on God's morality—on the fact that God's action is responsive to reasons, that God is just and indeed wise—is central to the ethical *via media* Ibn Taymiyya intends to chart, as it also crucial for appraising his chief point of friction with the Ash'arites. This friction expresses itself partly as a contestation of the notion of God's wisdom (*ḥikma*), and of the role of welfare (*maṣlaḥa*) among the aims of the divine Law. While Ash'arite theorists had foregrounded considerations of welfare in their legal works, in doing so they had appeared to create tension for views they had expressed in a theological context—notably their conservative view of the evaluative grasp of human beings, and their denial that concepts of purpose apply to God. I begin by offering a closer reading of this apparent tension within the Ash'arite viewpoint, and the strategies Ash'arites devised to resolve it. I then detail Ibn Taymiyya's competing conception of God's morality by investigating two questions that respectively thematise God's wisdom and God's justice: why does God command the actions He does? And why must God punish? Both topics re-open questions about the nature of ethical value broached in earlier chapters in relation to human morality, and reinforce (but also problematise) the understanding of the primacy of utility that emerged there.

Turning back to the domain of human morality, in the first part of chapter 5 I seek to broaden the earlier inquiry into Ibn Taymiyya's ethical epistemology by transposing it to his legal writings and by addressing his understanding of how considerations of welfare stand to be engaged within the legal context. Examining Ibn Taymiyya's stance as expressed on three main levels—in his appeal to “pragmatic” grounds of need in his practical legal rulings, in his emphasis on preponderant utility as a determinant of legal rulings, and in his theoretical remarks

about unattested interests (*maṣāliḥ mursala*) as a source of Law—an initial reading bespeaks a robust embrace of the human mind’s ability to engage considerations of welfare directly and substantively in independence from textual safeguards. Yet a closer reading holds up a different picture, displaying the textualist commitments of Ibn Taymiyya’s thinking. This reading is supported by an analysis of Ibn Taymiyya’s position on a debate that forms the hidden backbone of his legal appeal to pragmatic considerations, the debate about the value of actions prior to the advent of revelation (*ḥukm al-afāl qabla wurūd al-sharʿ*). The conclusion reached here dovetails with the understanding of Ibn Taymiyya’s limited rationalism articulated in chapter 2. Having broadened the bases for this understanding, in the second part of the chapter I seek to locate it against two additional foils, by raising a question about Ibn Taymiyya’s deeper motivations for pressing the claim of moral reason, and by raising a larger question about the relation between reason and revelation within his thought. Once again, there seem to be competing messages at work within Ibn Taymiyya’s writings, but I argue that reason must be understood as possessing limited independence and as largely conditioned by, and departing from, the vantage point of religious revelation.

And while my aim in this book is not to effect the historical leap from past to present, in chapter 6 I conclude with some heuristic thoughts about how some of the bridges between past and present might be built.

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<sup>1</sup> Wahba al-Zuhaylī, *Akhḫāq al-Muslim*, vol. 2: *ʿAlāqatuḥu biʿl-naḥs waʿl-kawn* (Damascus: Dār al-Fikr, 2005), 21.

<sup>2</sup> Yūsuf al-Qaraḏāwī, *al-Ḥalāl waʿl-ḥarām fiʿl-Islām*, 13<sup>th</sup> ed. (Beirut and Damascus: al-Maktab al-Islāmī, 1980), 28.

<sup>3</sup> Taken as a question about the contemporary recrudescence of specifically *Muʿtazilite* theological views, this would not be a new question to ask. Much has been said already about the presumed modern revival of such views, and about the legitimacy of talk of a “neo-*Muʿtazilite*” movement. For an in-depth examination of this topic, see Thomas Hildebrandt, “Waren Ḡamāl ad-Dīn al-Aḡḡānī und Muḥammad ʿAbduḥ Neo-*Muʿtazilite*?”, *Die Welt der Islam*, 42 (2002), 207-262; and his book-length study, *Neo-*Muʿtazilismus*? Intention Und Kontext Im Modernen Arabischen Umgang Mit Dem Rationalistischen Erbe Des Islam* (Leiden and Boston: Brill, 2007).

<sup>4</sup> Majid Fakhry, *Islamic Philosophy, Theology, and Mysticism: A Short Introduction* (Oxford: Oneworld Publications, 1997), 101, and see generally chapter 8, “The progress of anti-rationalism and the onset of decline.” Cf. the remarks by Oliver Leaman and Sajjad Rizvi in “The developed *kalām* tradition,” in Tim Winter, ed., *The Cambridge Companion to Classical Islamic Theology* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2008), 83 and 84.