ISLAMIC ECUMENISM IN THE 20TH CENTURY

SOCIAL, ECONOMIC AND POLITICAL STUDIES OF THE MIDDLE EAST AND ASIA

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ISLAMIC ECUMENISM IN THE 20TH CENTURY

The Azhar and Shiism between Rapprochement and Restraint

BY

RAINER BRUNNER

TRANSLATED FROM THE GERMAN BY JOSEPH GREENMAN
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The past is never dead. It's not even past.
William Faulkner: *Requiem for a Nun*

Once under such a bush he saw the war of the ants. He instantly knew the cause of the war and the nature of the parties. The red ants, whose bite (he had been told) was slightly poisonous, were Sunnis, the party among Muslims that rejected the claim of the descendants of Ali, and they were attacking the black ants, who were obviously Shiah, since black as well as green was a color worn by people like Ali Hashemi's father who claimed descent from Ali. He remembers admiring the black ants for the justness of their cause and their individual heroism; but as the battle continued, he began to admire the orderliness and steadiness of the slower-moving red ants. As far as he could tell, neither side won.

Roy Mottahedeh: *The Mantle of the Prophet*

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TRANSLATOR'S NOTE

Back in the seventies, when I was a student at the University of Michigan in Ann Arbor, I had to pass a reading test in German to get admitted to Ph.D. candidacy. Professor James Bellamy had the thankless task of administering it.

I had taken a couple of Arabic literature and poetry courses with him and liked him very much as a person and certainly respected him as a scholar. However the combination of my sentiments regarding the German language (two or three rungs below Mark Twain's), my utter inability to distinguish *sogar* from *obwohl* and dozens of other nonsensical multisyllabic mysteries, coupled with Professor Bellamy's testing duties, cast him as the living personification of Torquemada in my eyes.

The situation was hopeless. My first attempt elicited a kind smile and a heartfelt recommendation to "go over some of the main grammar points". Try two wasn't an iota better, and the bad news was that the same person who had written the rules of baseball also apparently penned the U of M's regulations for admission to Ph.D. candidacy. My outlook was much worse than the Mudville nine's that fateful day.

For masochistic reasons that I no longer remember, I decided to sign up for the make-or-break third try. Two days before doomsday, I happened to encounter Professor Bellamy in the corridor. He said, "I see you're going to try the German test again". I replied lamely, "I've gone over some of the grammar", to which he quietly commented "Why don't you have a look at page 173 in Nöldeke?" and walked on.

I've looked at my admission-to-candidacy certificate with fond memories of Michigan on several occasions, and not finishing my Ph.D. can probably be considered a service to the world of scholarship more than anything else. Anyway, Professor Bellamy, this one's for you.

More immediate and certainly no less intense gratitude goes to my wife, Monika Götz. Without exaggeration, she helped me at least once per page through the entire work. If my translation manifests any quality at all, it's because of her efforts. Her assistance was invaluable and cannot be overstated. She's also the best friend a person could ever have. Thanks Moni. Thanks Moni. Thanks Moni.

JG

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Science, Albert Einstein is often quoted as having said, is the present state of our error. I am deeply indebted therefore to Olaf Köndgen from Brill for having provided me with the opportunity to bring the error of my Ph.D. dissertation up-to-date. During supper in a Chinese restaurant in Leiden some time ago, Olaf unexpectedly asked whether I could imagine having my book translated into English. He also proposed to undertake the negotiation of copyright matters and the inevitable fund-raising and to arrange for a competent translator. Needless to say, this was an offer I couldn't resist.

My thanks also go to Reinhard Schulze for including the book in his S.E.P.S.M.E.A. series, and to Gerd Winkelhane, in whose publishing house the German version had appeared in 1996 (*Annäherung und Distanz. Schia, Azhar und die islamische Ökumene im 20. Jahrhundert*, Klaus Schwarz Verlag, Berlin; Islamkundliche Untersuchungen, vol. 204) and who readily agreed to the project. The translation itself was made possible by a grant from Inter Nationes, an organization that is usually concerned with translations of German *belles-lettres* titles into foreign languages. I decided to take this as a favourable sign.

Working with my translator, Joe Greenman, has been a highly stimulating experience, and I learned a lot about the traps and snares of my own text and of conveying it from one language into another. Some creative misunderstandings on both sides sharpened my senses and obliged me to go over many sentences numerous times. That Joe never lost patience and was ready to include correction over correction and addition over addition certainly deserves a separate mention of thanks.

Thanks also go to Trudy Kamperveen from Brill, working with whom has been the usual pleasure.

Since the original publication of the book nearly eight years ago, new primary material has come to light, and the secondary literature has proceeded. I have incorporated these titles wherever possible and have also continued the epilogue to include recent political developments. I was lucky to discover that I did not have to alter basic arguments of the book. Nevertheless, the process of updating could not have been achieved without the gracious help of librarians, who

never tired of providing me with new books or photocopies of articles. I owe special thanks to Adelheid Iguchi and her colleagues from the University Library in Tübingen, Dr. Helga Rebhan from the Bavarian State Library in Munich, and Dr. Volker Adam from the University and State Library in Halle.

Finally, two technical remarks. The system of transliteration has been adapted to Anglo-American standard; Persian names and words are rendered according to their pronunciation: Muḥammad Rashīd Riḍā, but Moḥammad Reżā Pahlawī. In cases of doubt, the Arabic form was given preference. Certainly, many an inconsistency may have remained in the text. As a matter of course, these, as well as all other mistakes, are my responsibility alone.

The URLs cited in the footnotes were valid as of February 29, 2004.

Freiburg, March 2004 Rainer Brunner

INTRODUCTION

THE DISPUTE ABOUT THE "CORRECT" HISTORY

In the summer of 1986, a fierce controversy erupted among German historians. Under the headline "The past that does not want to pass on", which was both appropriate and momentous, Ernst Nolte triggered a major controversy that had two essential aspects. On the one hand, there was the question raised in his article whether the National Socialists' annihilation of European Jews was a singular crime, or whether the 'Gulag Archipelago' was not, in fact, to be regarded as more primal than Auschwitz.[1] On the other, the quarrel struck a sensitive nerve regarding the place the most controversial aspect of German history, the Third Reich, occupies or rather should occupy in German historical literature.

The debate, sometimes articulated with extreme acrimony and polemic, was neither the first nor last of its kind, not even in the context of German history. One need only think back to the 1960s and the quarrel about the strategic aims of the German *Reich* in the First World War,[2] or the discussion after the fall of the Berlin Wall concerning the assessment of the State Security files of the former GDR to find further examples of the correlation of historical debates and national identity—and of the impossibility of reaching a definitive answer to questions of this kind. All these controversies illustrate how capable history, or rather its putatively "correct" interpretation, is of waking emotions that sometimes tend to manifest themselves in terms of personal attacks. This also, perhaps, holds even more true for academics, who claim to regard their professional endeavours *sine ira et studio*.

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[1] E. Nolte: "Vergangenheit, die nicht vergehen will", *Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung*, June 6, 1986; reprinted in: *"Historikerstreit". Die Dokumentation der Kontroverse um die Einzigartigkeit der nationalsozialistischen Judenvernichtung*, Munich 1987, 39–47, on 45; Nolte's main opponent in this controversy was Hans-Ulrich Wehler who wrote a furious reply: *Entsorgung der deutschen Vergangenheit? Ein polemischer Essay zum "Historikerstreit"*, Munich 1988.

[2] F. Fischer: *Griff nach der Weltmacht. Die Kriegszielpolitik des kaiserlichen Deutschland 1914/18*, Düsseldorf [1]1961; English translation: *Germany's Aims in the First World War*, New York 1967.

There is, of course, nothing new about this observation, and it is not restricted to European, let alone German historiography.[3] The intellectual history of the Islamic Orient in the twentieth century, not to mention the events themselves, are full of examples that demonstrate even today the far-reaching and frequently undreamt-of results produced by incidents of the first decades of Islamic history and their interpretation.[4] Thus, the Egyptian university lecturer of philosophy Naṣr Ḥāmid Abū Zayd caused an outbreak of furor in the 1990s with his attempt to historicize the Koran. The result was a bizarre affair in which his opponents tried to brand him an apostate and required the annulment of his marriage, whereupon the couple decided to go into exile. Things like these can only be comprehended against the background of the undiminished significance of early Islamic history down to the present day.[5]

Many of these controversies involve representatives of the two most important Islamic denominations, the Sunnis and the Shiites.[6] The fact that the roots of this conflict date back more than 1300 years is more than made up for by its present-day repercussions. The disagreement defines both parties' contemporary religious self-perception more directly and powerfully than any secular historiography, and ultimately colours their political identity as well as routine aspects of daily life. Any attempt to raise doubts regarding an individual revered by one of the factions or to question a set of circumstances

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[3] The history of the historiography about the French Revolution and its role for the French self-image is examined by E. Schulin: *Die Französische Revolution*, Munich 1988, 22–51.

[4] Cf. Ende: *Arabian Nation*, passim; Wielandt: *Offenbarung und Geschichte*, passim; Haddad: *Contemporary Islam and the Challenge of History*, passim; a case study has been examined by G. Kassian: *Die Orientierung an der frühislamischen Geschichte in der Ideologie des Arabischen Sozialismus in Ägypten unter Nasser*, Ph.D. dissertation, Bonn 1991; regarding Muslim historiography in general, see F. Rosenthal: *A History of Muslim Historiography*, Leiden ²1968, as well as B. Lewis/P.M. Holt (eds.): *Historians of the Middle East*, London 1962; regarding historiography of the modern age, see also Y.M. Choueiri: *Arab History and the Nation State. A Study in Modern Arab Historiography, 1820–1980*, London 1989; T. Nagel: "Identitätskrise und Selbstfindung. Eine Betrachtung zum zeitgenössischen muslimischen Geschichtsverständnis", *WI* 19/1979/74–97.

[5] In regard to the background of this case, which also became known in the Western press, see N. Kermani: "Die Affäre Abû Zayd. Eine Kritik am religiösen Diskurs und ihre Folgen", *Orient* 35/1994/25–49; the controversy was caused by Abū Zayd's book *Mafhūm al-naṣṣ. Dirāsa fī ʿulūm al-qurʾān* (Cairo 1990); see also below, p. 393 note 70.

[6] Unless otherwise specifically mentioned, the term "Shiites" in this work refers to "Twelver" Shiites (*Imāmiyya*).

from the early Islamic period viewed by one group as incontrovertible, can easily be judged as an attack on this group in its contemporary form. And exactly that is not infrequently intended. Examples of this extension of the two denominations' traditional polemics into the twentieth century that are not always easily discernible to outsiders might include the composition of a refutation of a controversial text from a bygone century, or, *mutatis mutandis*, classical authorities being invoked as key witnesses in a quarrel against contemporary opponents.[7] Bernard Lewis best describes this currentness of history when he says: "The names of Ali, of Muʿawiya, of Yazid are as contemporary as this morning's newspaper, more so than yesterday's."[8]

Whereas the polemical barriers are built on a long heresiographic tradition, the aspiration toward ecumenical rapprochement of the denominations (*taqrīb* or *taqārub*) is essentially a phenomenon of recent Islamic history.[9] It was expressed for the first time at the end of the nineteenth century in the course of the general pan-Islamic tendencies that were in their formative stages at the time. Starting with these initially isolated events, interconfessional cooperation was first manifested in an organized form in the Islamic congress movement of the 1920s and 30s. Somewhat later, individual groupings specifically established for this purpose started to appear. Usually bearing programmatic names, their publications offered a forum for dialogue to Shiites and Sunnis alike.

The object of the present study is to trace the origin and course of this inner-Islamic debate throughout the twentieth century. At the centre of the discussion is the vicissitudinous relationship between Cairo's Azhar University, until today the most important centre of Sunni scholarship, and the Shiite clergy. Although Shiism itself is only of secondary significance in modern Egypt, it is here that the most meaningful chapter of the ecumenical movement has been written. This is to the credit of the *Ǧamāʿat al-taqrīb bayn al-madhāhib al-islāmiyya*, an institution that gave cogent form to the *taqrīb* debate for a period of almost two decades, the only one so far that has managed to do so. Established in 1947, it has attracted not only numerous Azhar scholars but also Shiite *ʿulamāʾ* from the wider Islamic world.

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[7] Ende: *Arabische Nation*, 114f.; a recent example is *al-Shīʿa wa-imāmat ʿAlī* by ʿĀmir an-Najjār (Cairo 1414/1993).

[8] Lewis: "The Shiʿa in Islamic History", 24.

[9] A preliminary survey is given by the article "Taḳrīb", *EI*² X/139f. (W. Ende).

The activities of this organization, its history, and the virtual microcosm it was able to forge temporarily into being will be discussed in detail.[10] The main question of interest is what, besides theological and juridical goals that are to be expected, motivated the individual scholars to take up contact with representatives of the other denomination. Also scrutinized will be the degree of influence the political circumstances at the time had on the success of the theological deliberations, and to what extent these circumstances actually made the theological discussions possible in the first place and eventually caused their failure. Furthermore, close consideration will be given to the style of the argumentation, the actual potential for rapprochement, and the constraints that re-surfaced during the discussions. Finally, not to be ignored are the polemics evoked by the ecumenical endeavours themselves.

Until a few years ago, these modern Islamic ecumenical activities had attracted astonishingly little attention among Western scholars and were almost exclusively restricted to references in general surveys of the relationships between Sunnis and Shiites in the twentieth century.[11] Moreover, there are several articles on specific topics or individuals that devote attention to the question of *taqrīb*. Foremost among these are the works by Werner Ende,[12] Frank Bagley[13] and Pierre Rondot.[14] Two of the central figures of the ecumenical movement, Muḥammad Jawād Mughniyya and Maḥmūd Shaltūt, have been treated in detailed biographies in which their involvement in this field is also

[10] The relationship between Sunni and Shiite scholars in other locales (Iraq, Lebanon, and Pakistan come first to mind) has intentionally been given only peripheral attention in the present study, since such contacts have been of considerable, yet primarily local, significance. Scholars in these countries have not articulated the aspiration to address the ecumenical issue in the context of the entire Muslim *umma* as have the Azhar scholars and Cairene society.

[11] Ende: *Arabische Nation*, 113–69, esp. 116ff.; idem: "Sunniten und Schiiten", esp. 198ff.; Enayat: *Modern Islamic Political Thought*, 18–51, esp. 41ff.

[12] "Ehe auf Zeit", esp. 25ff.; "Die Azhar, Šaiḫ Šaltūt und die Schia", passim; "Erfolg und Scheitern", passim; "Sunni Polemical Writings", passim.

[13] "The Azhar and Shī'ism", passim.

[14] "Les chiites et l'unité de l'Islam", passim; Manfred Fleischhammer's article about an anthology of *taqrīb* comments by Arab authors ("*Da'wat at-taqrīb min ḫilāl Risālat al-Islām*—Stimmen zur Stellung des Islams in der Gegenwart") is limited, in contrast, to questions regarding Islamic modernism in general without dealing with the problem of an interconfessional rapprochement; also the article "Sunnī-Shī'ī Rapprochment" by Ahmad Kazemi Moussavi contains only a few paragraphs (on pp. 310ff.) on the *taqrīb* idea in modern times.

described, albeit in the space of a few pages.[15] Surprisingly little information about the Azhar's relation with Shiism is to be found in books on the Azhar proper. Neither the classical history of the University by Bayard Dodge[16] that appeared in 1961, in the heyday of *taqrīb* activities, nor A. Chris Eccel's investigation more than twenty years later[17] go into the topic at all. Finally, in her recent book on the role of the Azhar scholars in contemporary Egypt, Malika Zeghal limits the scope of her interest in this direction to merely two pages, focussing on the question of religious law (*fiqh*).[18]

Recent years, however, have seen the appearance of two important contributions that deserve special mention: in her highly readable book about the Shiite reform movement of the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, Sabrina Mervin included a long chapter on the question of *taqrīb*, centred mainly around two pivotal scholars of modern Shiism, Muḥsin al-Amīn and ʿAbd al-Ḥusayn Sharaf al-Dīn.[19] Finally, Wilfried Buchta produced a thorough investigation into the policy of Islamic unity as set in motion by the Iranian revolutionary government between 1979 and 1996.[20]

In addition to the literature dealing with modern inner-Islamic theological-ecumenical relations, four works that have come out in the last two decades described exhaustively various forms of the pan-Islamic movement that mainly argue (and agitate) on the political level. Martin Kramer's book *Islam Assembled* comprehensively examines the origin of the ideas behind the Islamic Congress and its evolution up to the outbreak of the Second World War. Jacob Landau's *The Politics of Pan-Islam*, a meticulous *tour d'horizon* through 120 years

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[15] Cf. Göbel: *Moderne schiitische Politik und Staatsidee*, esp. 89–94, as well as the three biographies about Shaltūt by Lemke: *Maḥmūd Šaltūt (1893–1963) und die Reform der Azhar*, Index s.v. *Dār at-taqrīb*; Abraham: *Maḥmūd Shaltūt (1893–1963), A Muslim Reformist*, 112–25 as well as Zebiri: *Maḥmūd Shaltūt and Islamic Modernism*, esp. 24ff.

[16] Dodge: *Al-Azhar. A Millennium of Muslim Learning*, Washington 1961.

[17] Eccel: *Egypt, Islam and Social Change. Al-Azhar in Conflict and Accomodation*, Berlin 1984. The same holds true for ʿAbdalḥamīd Muḥammad Aḥmad: *Die Auseinandersetzung zwischen al-Azhar und der modernistischen Bewegung in Ägypten von Muḥammad ʿAbduh bis zur Gegenwart*, Ph.D. dissertation, Hamburg 1963.

[18] Zeghal: *Gardiens de l'Islam*, 138–40; cf. also eadem: "Religion and Politics in Egypt: The Ulema of al-Azhar, Radical Islam, and the State (1952–94)", *IJMES* 31/1999/371–99 (without any mentioning of the *taqrīb* issue); Lazarus-Yafeh: "Religious Thought", deals with the topic briefly on pp. 231f. of her article.

[19] Mervin: *Un réformisme chiite*, 275–329.

[20] Buchta: *Die iranische Schia*, passim; cf. also his articles "Die inneriranische Diskussion über die islamische Einheit" and "Tehran's Ecumenical Society (*majmaʿ al-taqrīb*)".

of pan-Islamic thinking, is restricted to those aspects that aim at institutional or economic agreement among Muslims, deliberately ignoring purely theological considerations. Finally, there are two investigations into Saudi Arabia's internationalist politics. Reinhard Schulze has scrutinized the history of the Muslim World League, founded in 1962, against the background of the transformation and politicization of the Islamic public since the nineteenth century. The Organization of the Islamic Conference, which came into being as a result of King Fayṣal's call for Islamic solidarity in 1969, has in turn been described by Ellinor Schöne. In all these works, however, the political as well as theological forms of modern attempts at unification in the Islamic World are almost exclusively limited to the Sunni context.[21]

* * *

The split of the Muslim community into Sunnis and Shiites, which occurred in the first decades of Islamic history, has left its mark down to the present. Neither was this the only schism that befell Islam[22] nor did the two denominations end up as monolithic blocs. The Sunnis crystallized into the four "schools of law" (Ḥanafī, Ḥanbalī, Mālikī and Shāfiʿī),[23] whereas Shiite beliefs were embodied in their respective sub-groupings, the Imāmiyya or Twelver Shia and, less important and locally limited, the Zaydiyya and Ismāʿīliyya.[24] It is these broad communities to which by far the overwhelming majority of Muslims belongs nowadays.

The inner-Islamic dissent has, until today, largely eluded Western scholars of religion's attempts at a suitable explanation. The fact as such was already known in Europe during the Middle Ages.[25] In con-

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[21] In the works cited, Shiism plays only a secondary role; cf. Kramer: *Islam Assembled*, index s.v. Shiʿis; Landau: *Politics*, index s.v. Shiʿa, Shiites; Schulze: *Internationalismus*, 356–62 and index s.v. Schia.

[22] Cf. Laoust: *Schismes*, passim.

[23] From the abundance of literature about the four schools (*madhāhib*), only the relevant articles from the *Encyclopaedia of Islam* are referred to here: "Ḥanābila", *EI*² III/158–62 (H. Laoust); "Ḥanafiyya", *EI*² 162–64 (W. Heffening/J. Schacht); "Mālikiyya", *EI*² VI/278–83 (N. Cottard) and "al-Shāfiʿiyya", *EI*² IX/185–89 (E. Chaumont).

[24] Regarding the Ismāʿīliyya, see Halm: *Die Schia*, 193–243 as well as F. Daftary: *The Ismāʿīlīs: Their History and Doctrines*, Cambridge 1990; for the Zaydiyya, see W. Madelung: *Der Imam al-Qāsim b. Ibrāhīm und die Glaubenslehre der Zaiditen*, Berlin 1965.

[25] Cf. Dante: *Divine Comedy*, Inferno, canto 28, verse 31–36; S.M. Toorawa: "Muḥammad, Muslims, and Islamophiles in Dante's Commedia", *MW* 82/1992/133–43.

trast to academic occupation concentrating on Sunni Islam, however, it has generated only limited interest within the academic community. The sparse information about Shiism was confessionally coloured, coming mostly from the pens of their opponents, and created a generally unfavourable image of the Shiites among Westerners. Only in the last quarter of the nineteenth century, an independent branch of research on Shiism gradually came into being that was stimulated first and foremost by the eminent Hungarian Orientalist Ignaz Goldziher.[26]

Ever since, efforts to elucidate the Islamic denominational divergences have ranged from comparing them to the Catholic-Protestant strife in Christianity, to historically questionable ethnic explanations: Arabian Sunnism vs. Persian Shiism, to applying the equivocal epithets "Orthodox" and "Heterodox", all the way to interpreting Shiism as a social-revolutionary movement confronting the Sunni (*vulgo*: right) "Establishment". Quoting Bernard Lewis again: "None of these (interpretations) is wholly false, none of them is wholly true. But on the whole, they are more false than true."[27]

The most conspicuous characteristic when considering the Sunni-Shiite contrast is the continual and bitter controversy surrounding the "correct" image to be induced from the course of the earliest events in Islamic history.[28] As a caveat to the following description of events, it must be remembered that we are dealing with *ex post facto* reports: contemporary historical sources are non-extant. The first written collections of theretofore exclusively oral lore date from the eighth century A.D., and even they are only cited more or less extensively in the works of still later historians.[29] This delayed historiography is, as

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[26] One of the first thorough studies in this field is his work "Beiträge zur Literaturgeschichte der Šî'â und der sunnitischen Polemik"; for a general survey see Kohlberg: "Western Studies", passim. Nevertheless it was well into the second half of the twentieth century before Shiism was regarded as an independent manifestation of Islam worthy of mention. For instance, in Richard Hartmann's *Die Religion des Islam* (Berlin 1944, reprinted Darmstadt 1992) the author limited his analysis to a few pages in an appendix under the heading "The Formation of Sects in Islam" (190–98); similar treatment was given by A. Schimmel: *Der Islam. Eine Einführung*, Stuttgart 1990, 82ff.

[27] "The Shi'a in Islamic History", 22. Lewis himself contends that the Sunnis should be viewed as the group that, at least in principle, demanded maintenance of the status quo, and the Shiites as those who rejected specifically that; ibid. 29f.

[28] Ende: "Der schiitische Islam", in: idem/Steinbach (eds.): *Der Islam in der Gegenwart*, 70–74; Momen: *Introduction*, 11–26.

[29] Halm: *Die Schia*, 14f.

may be expected, moulded by the authors' prejudices for their own group and forms the basis for the vast heresiographic literature of the Islamic Middle Ages. In fact, terms designating "Sunnis" and "Shiites" were not familiar to the contemporaries of the events. Also important to bear in mind is that the nomenclature "Shia" as it is applied today does not reflect a coherently identifiable unit that existed in this form from the outset. Particularly the Twelver Shiites, who later became the dominant subgroup, evolved as the result of a complicated historical process that stretched over several centuries. Like any other historical development, it was in no way inevitable.[30] Josef van Ess aptly remarked that the expression "Shiites" pretends a unity that in reality, especially in the formative period, never existed: The Shiites were those who were taken by others to be Shiites.[31]

What triggered the quarrel was the mainly political question of who should take over the leadership of the Muslim community after the death of the Prophet. The Shiite opinion emphasizes that during his lifetime, Muḥammad had designated his son-in-law, ʿAlī ibn Abī Ṭālib, as his successor, but that through the intrigues of ʿAlī's opponents, the fulfilment of Muhammad's (and thereby God's) will was prevented. Two events are of particular significance in this context: the actual or putative designation of ʿAlī during the Prophet's return from the "Farewell Pilgrimage" and the circumstances surrounding the election of Abū Bakr as the first caliph.

The claim that Muhammad appointed ʿAlī as caliph and thus as leader of the community is based on a series of *ḥadīth*s in which the Prophet repeatedly stressed ʿAlī's exalted position above all other Muslims. The most important of these statements is reported to have been made in March 632, when the pilgrim caravan halted at the pond of Khumm (*Ghadīr Khumm*) during the return from Mecca.[32] On this occasion, according to Shiite tradition, Muḥammad addressed the believers saying: "He whose master I am (or: have been), ʿAlī

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[30] Cf. M.G.S. Hodgson: "How Did the Early Shīʿa Become Sectarian?", *JAOS* 75/1955/1–13; E. Kohlberg: "From Imāmiyya to Ithnā-ʿashariyya", *BSOAS* 39/1976/521–34; regarding the development of the heresiographical literature, cf. W. Madelung: "Häresiographie", in: H. Gätje (ed.): *Geschichte der Arabischen Philologie, vol. 2: Literaturwissenschaft*, Wiesbaden 1987, 374–78 and the literature mentioned therein.

[31] van Ess: *Theologie und Gesellschaft*, II/233.

[32] "Ghadīr Khumm", *EI*² II/993f. (L. Veccia Vaglieri; with additional literature); see also H. Laoust: "Le rôle de ʿAlī dans la Sīra Chīʿite", *REI* 30/1962/25f.; Jafrī: *Origins*, 19–23; Momen: *Introduction*, 15 (quoting Ibn Ḥanbal).

is his master" (*man kuntu mawlāhu fa-ʿAlī mawlāhu*). For the Shiites, this signifies a God-ordained stipulation (*naṣṣ*) of ʿAlī as Imam, and even more so, as Muhammad was explicitly ordered to designate him through a Koran verse revealed on the very same day: "O Apostle! Proclaim the (Message) which hath been sent to thee from thy Lord"! (Koran 5/67).[33] In addition, according to the Shiites, also on the same day, the Prophet received the verse: "This day have I perfected your religion for you, completed my favour upon you, and have chosen for you Islam as your religion" (Koran 5/3) as a confirmation of Ali's appointment.

In the Shiite view of history, all of this granted the event paramount significance: As far back as the tenth century, the Būyids elevated the 18th of Dhū l-Ḥijja to a holiday (still celebrated today), and modern-day authors continue to devote their attention to *Ghadīr Khumm* and the incidents related to it. ʿAbd al-Ḥusayn al-Amīnī al-Najafī, a scholar of Iranian origin living in Iraq, has presented the topic in a work that contains eleven volumes.[34] Also, a recent convert to Shiism, the Tunisian Muḥammad al-Tījānī al-Samāwī, emphasizes the major role of this celebration in defining Shiite identity.[35] Only the 10th of Muḥarram (*ʿāshūrāʾ*) surpasses it in importance.

Besides the *ḥadīth* quoted above,[36] the Shia have passed down a great number of additional *ḥadīth*s along the same line, all of which purport to confirm the legitimacy of ʿAlī's claims to the leadership

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[33] All Koran quotations in this work follow the translation from A. Yusuf Ali; for the Shiite exegesis of verse 5/67, cf. M. Ayyoub: "The Speaking and the Silent Qurʾān. A Study of the Principles and Development of Imāmī Shīʿī *tafsīr*", in: A. Rippin (ed.): *Approaches to the History of the Interpretation of the Qurʾān*, Oxford 1988, 177–98, esp. 192ff.

[34] *al-Ghadīr fī l-kitāb wa-l-sunna wa-l-adab*; for the author, (1902–1971) cf. *EIr* I/955f. (H. Algar); al-Ziriklī III/278; *RF* I/177–82; *MMI* II/225; *GD* IV/377–79; Jaʿfar Shahīdī/Moḥammad Reżā Ḥakīmī: *Yādnāme-ye Amīnī*, Tehran 1352sh; a discussion of the cited *ḥadīth* from the Shiite viewpoint can be found in Hāshim Maʿrūf al-Ḥasanī: *Uṣūl al-tashayyuʿ*, Beirut s.d., 38–44; for other *ghadīr* titles, cf. *Dharīʿa* XVI/25–28 and *MMN* 255f.; cf. also ʿAbd al-ʿAzīz al-Ṭabāṭabāʾī: *al-Ghadīr fī l-turāth al-islāmī*, Beirut 1414/1993; of the 164 books on the subject mentioned therein, not less than 114 date after 1883 (the beginning of the fourteenth Islamic century).

[35] al-Tījānī: *Thumma ihtadayt*, 206, in which it is mentioned that at the author's instigation, the event of *ʿīd al-ghadīr* was celebrated in Tunisia in the 1970s for the first time.

[36] The crypto-Shiite universal scholar al-Masʿūdī (d. 956 A.D.) claims that this *ḥadīth* originated four years earlier, during Muḥammad's return from al-Ḥudaybiyya; cf. Kornrumpf: "Untersuchungen", 2; cf. also Ch. Pellat: "Masʿûdî et l'imâmisme", in: *Le Shiʿisme imâmite. Colloque de Strasbourg (6–9 mai 1968)*, Paris 1970, 69–90; E. Kohlberg: "Early Attestations of the Term *ithnā ʿashariyya*", *JSAI* 24/2000/343–57, on 345ff.

of the community. Of unique significance are the so-called "*ḥadīth* of the two weighty matters" (*ḥadīth al-thaqalayn*, i.e. the Koran and the descendants of the Prophet) as well as the remark by Muḥammad in which he assigned ʿAlī the same position in relation to himself as Aaron had to Moses.[37]

Nevertheless, ʿAlī was not able to enforce his claims after the Prophet's death. In the eyes of the Shia, it is the second caliph, ʿUmar b. al-Khaṭṭāb, who is to be regarded as the primary culprit. Pointing to the already advanced state of the Prophet's illness, he prevented Muḥammad, recumbent on his deathbed, from writing down his last will, which the Shiites contend would have been a conspicuous confirmation of ʿAlī's assignment.[38] The course of events was rendered irreversible, finally, when Abū Bakr was elected caliph. Basically both Sunni and Shiite authors alike agree on the circumstances of the event: After Muḥammad's demise, ʿAlī, Fāṭima, and several others remained in the Prophet's house in order to prepare his corpse for the funeral. As this was taking place, two groups convened at the meeting ground (*saqīfa*) of the Banū Sāʿida to determine the Prophet's successor as political leader: The Meccans who had emigrated with the Prophet (*muhājirūn*) faced the new Muslims from Medina (*anṣār*).[39] In a heated discussion, the request of the Medinense, who proposed their leader, Saʿd b. ʿUbāda, as claimant to the position, was refused.[40] Ultimately, Abū Bakr, a prominent member of the *muhājirūn* and, through his daughter ʿĀ'isha, father-in-law of the Prophet, was agreed upon. For the Shia, this naturally meant a flagrant and grave disregard of the divine will, the more so as ʿAlī had not been informed of the meeting and thereby intentionally bypassed.[41] Shiite historiography therefore focuses on the fact that

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[37] Regarding this and other *ḥadīth*s: Momen: *Introduction*, 13–17; for the significance of Moses and other pre-Islamic personalities for Shiism, see Kohlberg: "Some Shīʿī Views on the Antediluvian World", passim. The Shia give corresponding emphasis to Koran verse 37/83 in which the word *shīʿa* is used in connection with Abraham; cf. Ende: "Der schiitische Islam", 72; regarding Aaron and Moses in the Bible, cf. *Exodus* 7/1.

[38] Momen: *Introduction*, 15f.

[39] Ibid., 18f. and Jafri: *Origins*, 27–57; "Saḳīfa", *EI*[2] VIII/887f. (G. Lecomte); Madelung: *Succession*, 30ff.

[40] Noth: *Früher Islam*, 44–46; Nagel: *Staat und Glaubensgemeinschaft*, I/81f.; cf. also A. Ibrahim: *Der Herausbildungsprozeß des arabisch-islamischen Staates (. . .)*, Berlin 1994, 82–90.

[41] A report also exists, however, according to which ʿAlī appeared at the convocation and allegedly articulated his claims, cf. *in extenso* M. Muranyi: "Ein neuer Bericht über die Wahl des ersten Kalifen Abū Bakr", *Arabica* 25/1978/233–60.

ʿAlī steadfastly refused until after Fāṭima's death six months later to grant his allegiance (*bayʿa*) to Abū Bakr and ultimately did so only in order to maintain the integrity of the community.[42]

Under the first three caliphs, ʿAlī does not seem to have had any political or military function. Shiite sources even go to great lengths to accentuate his scornful, oppositional attitude, above all to ʿUmar. Nonetheless, in 644 he was a member of the council (*shūrā*) that chose ʿUthmān as the third caliph following ʿUmar's assassination. This decision proved to have precarious results in that it placed a representative of the Banū Umayya at the head of the Muslim community for the first time. This clan had held a dominant position in pre-Islamic Meccan aristocracy and for that very reason had comprised those who were among the most bitter opponents of the new religion. The personal piety of ʿUthmān, who was among the very first to convert to Islam, is not to be doubted. Nevertheless, the rampant nepotism that took place during his rule engendered a broadly diversified opposition movement that also included ʿAlī. The discord resulted in the first civil war (*fitna*), during which ʿUthmān was killed in 656.[43]

ʿAlī's accession as caliph was by no means unanimously accepted. Although he had not participated in ʿUthmān's murder directly, he allowed himself to be chosen as leader by the perpetrators of the bloody deed, who made him thus appear as their accomplice.[44] In the very same year, ʿAlī was confronted with the first of several resistance movements. ʿĀ'isha, the Prophet's widow, had joined forces with the companions Ṭalḥa and Zubayr in order to avenge the assassination of ʿUthmān, to whom she had *nota bene* likewise been opposed. This movement, however, met a sudden end at the "Battle of the Camel" in December, 656 near Kūfa. During the hostilities, the Prophet's widow, having spurred on her fellow combatants while seated

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[42] Cf. for the Shiite point of view, Muḥammad Riḍā al-Muẓaffar: *al-Saqīfa*, Najaf 1373/1953; cf. on this topic Göbel: *Moderne schiitische Politik*, 93f.; Kohlberg discusses the attitude of the Zaydiyya: "Some Zaydī Views", 93–95; further Shiite works about this event are mentioned in *Dharīʿa* XII/206f.

[43] M. Hinds: "The Murder of the Caliph ʿUthmān", *IJMES* 3/1972/450–69; regarding the first three caliphs in general, cf. Nagel: *Staat und Glaubensgemeinschaft*, I/81ff. and Madelung: *Succession*, 28–140; for modern assessments of the caliphate of ʿUthmān by Sunni authors, cf. Ende: *Arabische Nation*, 191–99; on the term *fitna* and its connotations in early Islamic history, cf. Sirri: *Religiös-politische Argumentation*, passim.

[44] "ʿAlī", *EI*² I/382f. (L. Veccia Vaglieri).

on her camel, was seized and sent back to Medina. Her two allies fell in the fray.[45]

Less symbolic as far as the participants were concerned, but entailing much graver consequences for Islamic history as a whole was ʿAlī's conflict with the Syrian governor Muʿāwiya b. Abī Sufyān.[46] Muʿāwiya, who had already been installed by ʿUmar, belonged to the same clan as ʿUthmān, and after the latter's assassination, refused to swear an oath of allegiance to the new caliph. This resulted in the battle of Ṣiffīn in July 657, which took place on the upper Euphrates and was finally halted by means of arbitration.[47] Since no clear victor emerged out of this assembly, the question of the legitimate caliph remained unanswered. From a historical perspective, however, ʿAlī must be considered as the unambiguous loser. His adherents, the "followers of ʿAlī" (*shīʿat ʿAlī*) from whose name the attribute "Shiites" was later to be derived, split during the course of events. One faction, which subsequently became known as the Khārijites, broke away in protest against ʿAlī's acquiescence in the arbitration process, a desertion for which ʿAlī took bloody vengeance at Nahrawān in 658. On the other hand, Muʿāwiya had been considered as the only legitimate caliph by his supporters long before he actually succeeded in coming to power after ʿAlī was stabbed and killed by the Khārijite ʿAbd al-Raḥmān b. Muljam in retaliation for the slaughter at Nahrawān.

In the Shiite view, ʿAlī's caliphate, which lasted only five years, is regarded as the exemplary era of the Islamic history, since at long last, almost a quarter-century after the designation made at the pond at Khumm, the Prophet's will had been done. Yet at the same time, it cannot be denied that during this period, the split of the Muslim community became evident, and that Shiite claims to political and religious leadership of the *umma* were thrown out once and for all by Muʿāwiya's accession to power and the establishment of the Umayyad dynasty.[48]

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[45] Laoust: *Schismes*, 10f.; articles "ʿĀ'iṯha", *EI*² I/307f. (W. Montgomery Watt) as well as "ʿAlī", ibid. 383; for more general information, see also D.A. Spellberg: *Politics, Gender, and the Islamic Past. The Legacy of ʿA'isha Bint Abi Bakr*, New York 1994; Madelung: *Succession*, 141–83.

[46] Halm: *Die Schia*, 10–17 and the literature mentioned therein (16f.); Madelung: *Succession*, 184ff.

[47] M. Hinds: "The Siffīn Arbitration Agreement", *JSS* 17/1972/93–129; Kornrumpf: "Untersuchungen", 15–21; "ʿAlī", *EI*² I/383ff.

[48] This is even more valid in view the renunciation by ʿAlī's first son, Ḥasan, of

An indication of the resulting imbalance of power is the martyrdom of the third Shiite Imam, ʿAlī's second son, Ḥusayn. When Muʿāwiya, shortly before his death, designated his own son, Yazīd, to succeed him, Ḥusayn and his followers began a revolt. According to tradition, Ḥusayn and a mere 72 companions undertook the "battle" that was easily put down by the Umayyads at Karbalāʾ, west of the Euphrates, in 680.[49] This event plays a central role in the self-perception of the Shia until today. In their eyes it clearly supports once again the legitimacy of the Shiite claims to leadership, whereas their opponents had nothing but violence with which to counter these claims.

The Sunnis held (and continue to hold) a completely different, almost diametrically opposed, view of the events of the first decades of Islamic history. It is hardly surprising that, in decided contrast to the Shiites' interpretation of history as it was supposed to have been, theirs is much more strongly oriented toward the *status quo*. The Sunnis neither challenge the events at the Ghadīr Khumm nor deny the above-cited *ḥadīth* handed down in connection with the occasion.[50] However, they absolutely refuse to take these words as a designation of ʿAlī as caliph. Rather, they consider them as an expression of Muḥammad's general esteem for his son-in-law, whose behaviour during the military expedition he led into Yemen shortly before had given rise to debate.[51] Thus the choice of Abū Bakr as caliph does not represent any violation of a divine order, but is as legitimate as that of the following caliphates of ʿUmar and ʿUthmān, despite the criticism of the latter's reign that is brought forward even from some Sunnis. Unlike Shiite writers, Sunni historiographers also report ʿAlī's immediate oath of allegiance to Abū Bakr.

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his claim; cf. Momen: *Introduction*, 26–28; Halm: *Die Schia*, 17f.; cf. also the relevant *EI*² articles about "Ḥasan" (III/240–43; L. Veccia Vaglieri), "Ḥusayn" (III/607–15; eadem), "Ibn Muḏjam" (III/887–90; eadem), and "Muʿāwiya" (VII/263–68; M. Hinds); "Ḥasan b. ʿAlī", *EIr* XII/26–28 (W. Madelung).

[49] Momen, 28–33; Halm, 18–21; for present-day interpretations of "Ḥasan's peacemaking and Ḥusayn's revolt", see Ende: *Arabische Nation*, 153–69; see also below, pp. 237f. note 101.

[50] Evidence in Wensinck: *Concordance*, VII/334a; the other two traditions mentioned are also recognized by the Sunnis, cf. Wensinck, I/294a (*ḥadīth al-thaqalayn*) and VI/422a (Aaron-Moses comparison); also see Momen: *Introduction*, 325 notes 7ff.

[51] "Ghadīr Khumm", *EI*² II/993f. According to the Sunni opinion, Koran verse 5/3 was not revealed at the Ghadīr Khumm, but a few days earlier at ʿArafāt during the farewell pilgrimage; cf. also Paret: *Konkordanz*, 114; in this regard, see al-Bahnasāwī: *al-Ḥaqāʾiq*, 13ff.

Nevertheless, for a long period of time, these contradicting portrayals of history did not hinder some Sunnis from passing harsh judgements against the dynasty that followed the era of the four "Rightly Guided" caliphs, among whom ʿAlī is also counted as a matter of course. In fact it can be said that the Umayyads have not appeared in a positive light in the major part of Sunni historiography. Their rehabilitation has been the work of some Sunni scholars only since the nineteenth century under the influence of secularist and Arab-nationalist thinking, which has, however, engendered increased tensions with Shiism as a negative by-product.[52]

The following short survey of the main contentious issues that still provoke rancour between Sunnis and Shiites is not intended as a rehash of the sometimes quite polemic debates that have occurred over the course of history. Rather, it is an attempt to sketch out a necessarily preliminary impression of the topics that have formed, and continue to form, the focal point of these discussions.[53] The differences can be classified *grosso modo* into two main categories: on the one hand there are those of a historical-political nature that arose out of divergent perceptions of history or were at least directly related to them; and, on the other hand, there are differences in the field of Islamic law.

The most important controversy in the first category is unquestionably the issue of the Imamate.[54] The basic features of the Shiite doctrine of the Imams originated as early as the middle of the eighth century, in the lifetime of the sixth Imam Jaʿfar al-Ṣādiq (d. 765), from whose name the two most common denotations for the Shia—Imāmiyya and/or Jaʿfariyya—derive. The underlying basic idea is the conviction that an Imam must exist at all times in order to preserve the pristine belief and prevent the *umma* from going astray.

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[52] Ende: *Arabische Nation*, 11–30 and passim.

[53] In regard to the following, see also Ende: "Sunniten und Schiiten", 189–93; a similar juxtaposition from the Sunni perspective is found in al-Khaṭīb: *al-Khuṭūṭ al-ʿarīḍa*, 55–64, and from the Shiite viewpoint in Mughniyya: *al-Shīʿa fī l-mīzān*, 75–86; further: al-Niʿma: *Rūḥ al-tashayyuʿ*, 473–83; al-Wardānī: *ʿAqāʾid al-sunna wa-ʿaqāʾid al-shīʿa*, 250; Muḥammad Rashād Sālim: Introduction to Ibn Taymiyya's *Minhāj al-sunna*, 52–58 (who enumerates Shiite convictions unacceptable to the Sunnis); see also Kāẓim Ḥuṭayṭ: "Naḥwa waḥda ʿaqāʾidiyya islāmiyya", *al-ʿIrfān* 76/1 (Jan. 1992), 99–103; 76/3 (Mar. 1992), 29–35; 76/4 (Apr. 1992), 29–36; 77/4 (May 1993), 39–47.

[54] "Imāma", *EI*² III/1163–69 (W. Madelung); Momen: *Introduction*, 147–60; Lambton: *State and Government*, 219–41; Nagel: *Staat und Glaubensgemeinschaft*, I/131–277.

Correspondingly the Imamate and therefore the very existence of Shiism had to be extended to the pre-Islamic period: Noah, Abraham, Moses, and Jesus were therefore already simultaneously both prophets and Imams.[55] At the pond of Khumm, Muḥammad finally transmitted the office of Imam, which was now stripped of the characteristics of prophethood, in an act of the "authorization" (*waṣiyya*) to ʿAlī,[56] and after him to the (male) descendants of his marriage to Muḥammad's daughter, Fāṭima.[57] They constituted that group of people who came to be known as "the people of the (Prophet's) house" (*ahl al-bayt*). The Shia primarily derive their certainty that this expression refers exclusively to them from the interpretation of Koran verse 33/33, which reads: "God only wishes to remove all (pagan) abomination from you, ye members of the family, and to make you pure and spotless". This statement, as well as verses 42/23 and 37/83 that from the Shiite viewpoint amount to the same result, produce a considerably narrower definition of the term Imam than that prevalent among the Sunnis, which in itself is not always homogeneous.[58]

Meanwhile, this delicate issue is also controversially discussed in Western scholarship. In his recent book on the succession to Muḥammad, Wilferd Madelung has argued that in regard to the importance the Koran places upon the families of the pre-Islamic prophets, it was only natural that indeed the blood-relations of Muḥammad alone were understood by the term *ahl al-bayt*. In his eyes, it seems highly unlikely that the Prophet could "have considered Abū Bakr his natural

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[55] Cf. above, note 37.

[56] For the meaning of the term *waṣiyya* cf. Nagel: *Rechtleitung und Kalifat*, 157–84, esp. 167.

[57] In regard to Fāṭima's role in early Islamic history and especially in Shiism, cf. "Fāṭema", *EIr* IX/400–04 (M.A. Amir-Moezzi/J. Calmard); the transformation and alteration of the portrayal of Fāṭima in Islamic literature is investigated by V. Klemm: "Die frühe islamische Erzählung von Fāṭima bint Muḥammad: Vom *ḫabar* zur Legende", *Der Islam* 79/2002/47–86; a modern inner-Shiite controversy surrounding the assessment of Fāṭima is described by Rosiny: " 'The Tragedy of Fāṭima al-Zahrā' ".

[58] In verse 42/23 "kinship" (*qurbā*) is mentioned, which in the Shiite exegesis alludes to Muḥammad; in verse 37/83 the term *shīʿa* appears in connection with Abraham; for further relevant Koran verses, see Momen: *Introduction*, 151–53; regarding the *ahl al-bayt* in general, see *EI*[2] I/257f. (I. Goldziher et al.); Paret: *Konkordanz*, 239f. (to 11/71–73) as well as idem: "Der Plan einer neuen (. . .) Koranübersetzung", in: idem (ed.): *Orientalische Studien. Enno Littmann zum 60. Geburtstag*, Leiden 1935, 121–30, esp. 127ff.; also, the reader is here reminded of the importance of the above-mentioned *ḥadīth*s relating to ʿAlī.

successor or have been pleased by his succession"—an interpretation that brings him fairly close to the Shiite point of view.[59]

Two points constantly arouse vehement objection from among non-Shiites. The first is the religiously based restriction of the genealogical principle of succession (*nasab*). According to the Sunni caliphate theory, which also revolves around genealogy, the caliph has to belong to the same tribe as the Prophet, whereas the Shiite Imam has to descend directly from him.[60] The other point is the discussion of the two main qualities attributed to the Imams. One, at least potentially, grants hidden knowledge (*ʿilm al-ghayb*), i.e. knowledge of the future, an ability that Sunni theology reserves exclusively for the prophets. Furthermore, according to the Shia, the Imams are absolutely free from sin (*maʿṣūm*) and consequently infallible, in order to be able to fulfil their task of correctly guiding the community. Sunni critics down to the present view this contention, which, in effect, ascribes to the Imams traits similar to those of the prophets, as an affront to the Islamic belief in monotheism (*tawḥīd*).[61]

From a historical point of view, the fact that the genealogy of the Imāmiyya comprises twelve Imams[62] cannot be taken as a matter of course. Furthermore, uncertainties regarding the correct succession after the death of an Imam occurred on numerous occasions. This was also the case in 874, when al-Ḥasan al-ʿAskarī, the eleventh Imam, died without a descendant being known to the community, or at least to the majority of his adherents. After a period of confusion, the faction prevailed, presumably still in the ninth century, that claimed that he had left behind a young, still minor, son named Muḥammad, who was, however, transposed by God to a mysterious

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[59] Madelung: *The Succession to Muḥammad*, 1–27 (quotation on p. 16); for the response to this book, cf. the reviews, e.g. in *Journal of Islamic Studies* 9/1998/66–69 (Yasin Dutton), *Iranian Studies* 32/1999/403–05 (A.J. Newman), *Journal of the Royal Asiatic Society* 8/1998/88f. (H. Kennedy), *MESA Bulletin* 31/1997/166f. (J.E. Lindsay), *Acta Orientalia* 58/1997/215–20 (J. Hämeen-Anttila), *al-Abḥāth* 47/1999/148–50 (M. Jarrār).

[60] Noth: "Früher Islam", 74–78; for a juxtaposition of the Shiite Imamate and the Sunni caliphate, cf. Farsakh: "Comparison", passim and Tamadonfar: *Islamic Polity*, 75–125.

[61] Cf. al-Khaṭīb: *al-Khuṭūṭ al-ʿarīḍa*, 57–59; in general cf. "ʿIṣma", *EI*² IV/182–84 (W. Madelung/E. Tyan); regarding the apotheosis of ʿAlī and the Imams—a concept absolutely rejected by the Twelver Shiites—see Halm: *Die islamische Gnosis*, index *s.v.* ʿAlī b. Abī Ṭālib; concerning the knowledge of the "hidden", see "al-Ghayb", *EI*² II/1025f. (D.B. Macdonald/L. Gardet); regarding the role of the Imam as omniscient leader in early Shiism cf. van Ess: *Theologie und Gesellschaft*, I/278–85; cf. in general Amir-Moezzi: *Le guide divin*.

[62] Cf. the genealogical tree in Halm: *Die Schia*, 37.

concealment (*ghayba*) in the year of his father's death. Only at the end of days, it is contended, will he emerge as the *Mahdī*, that is, the redeemer (literally: "the awaited, rightly guided one", *al-mahdī al-muntaẓar*) in order to establish God's just dominion.[63]

Although according to the classical Shiite explanation, any expression of political power can claim at best limited legitimacy as long as the twelfth Imam remains absent, steadily increasing authority has been attributed to the Shiite scholars in the course of time which enables them to fill this gap and lead the community during the *ghayba*. A temporary culmination of this development is Khomeynī's theory of the "Guardianship of the Jurisconsult" (*welāyat-e faqīh*), whereby Shiite political thinking has experienced twentieth century what in the truest sense of the word is a revolutionary transformation.[64] Despite the fact that in Sunni Islam the idea of a "redeemer" is not unknown either,[65] the Shiite conviction remains down to the present the object of repeated Sunni criticism, often mixed with derision and mockery.

In view of the foregoing, it is hardly surprising that the Sunni and Shiite assessments of the behaviour of the Prophet's companions are diametrically opposed. In the Shiite opinion, the vast majority of the *ṣaḥāba* in the *saqīfa* and later refused to support ʿAlī's claims to succession of the Prophet, and many, e.g. ʿĀ'isha, even engaged in open struggle against him. In doing so, in the eyes of the Shia, they unambiguously broke away from Islam and joined the ranks of the "hypocrites" (*munāfiqūn*) and "idols" (*ṭawāghīt*, singular *ṭāghūt*) mentioned in the Koran.[66] This anathema has been specifically directed at the

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[63] Ibid., 41–47; Momen: *Introduction*, 161–71, where numerous other Shiite traditions about the signs alleged to portend the return (*rajʿa*) of the Mahdī are compiled.

[64] Göbel: *Moderne schiitische Politik*, 206–19; Ende: "Der schiitische Islam", 85–87; Amir-Moezzi: "Réflexions", passim; Arjomand: "Ideological Revolution", passim. Khomeynī's theory is by no means uncontroversial, even among Shiite theologians, see, e.g. Göbel, 128–37; cf. in general A.A. Sachedina: *The Just Ruler (al-sultān al-ʿādil) in Shiʿite Islam. The Comprehensive Authority of the Jurist in Imamite Jurisprudence*, New York, Oxford 1988; on inner-Shiite criticism in particular, cf. also M. Ourghi: "Shiite Criticism of the *welayat-e faqih*", *Asiatische Studien*, forthcoming.

[65] "al-Mahdī", *EI*[2] V/1230–38 (W. Madelung). Also the Sunni occupiers of the Ḥaram Mosque in Mecca in 1979 proclaimed one of their members, Muḥammad al-Qaḥṭānī, to be the Mahdī; cf. J. Reissner: "Die Besetzung der großen Moschee in Mekka 1979 (. . .)", *Orient* 21/1980/194–203, on 197, as well as J.A. Kechichian: "Islamic revivalism and Change in Saudi Arabia. Juhaymān al-ʿUtaybī's 'Letters' to the Saudi People", *MW* 80/1990/1–16, on 15.

[66] R. Koebert: "Das koranische 'Ṭāġūt' ", in: R. Paret (ed.): *Der Koran*, Darmstadt 1975, 281f.

caliphs Abū Bakr, ʿUmar, and ʿUthmān: since they refused to observe a divine order, their reigns are considered usurpations and, therefore, rejected (*rafḍ*).[67]

To dissociate oneself from this group (*barāʾa*) and to curse them (*sabb, laʿn*) has been a shibboleth among Shiites for centuries.[68] Notwithstanding temporary endeavours by Shiite authorities to curb the expression of such feelings, this practice has not completely disappeared even in recent times: Before 1979, it was customary among certain sections of the Iranian population to celebrate the *ʿīd-e ʿOmar koshan*, i.e. the day on which ʿUmar had been killed.[69] On the Sunni side, the strict Salafiyya movement, as represented particularly by Muḥibb al-Dīn al-Khaṭīb, made the defence of *all* the Prophet's companions one of the cornerstones of their ideology and continually inveigh against the Shiites for their hostile attitude. Thus the broad gulf this issue has engendered between the parties was not narrowed in the twentieth century.

Inseparably bound to the diverging assessments of the personages of early Islamic history are the opposing viewpoints regarding the *ḥadīth*s they transmitted: the Shiites reject a considerable part of the Sunni corpus of traditions, whereas the Sunnis disavow the Shiite Imams' *ḥadīth*s. The latter form a *de facto* historical continuation of equal ranking to the *ḥadīth* of the Prophet that in turn is virtually in need of attestation by the Imams. Until today, numerous diatribes

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[67] Hence the name *rāfiḍite*s, an early denotation of the Shia that gradually became a swearword in the mouths of their opponents: W. Montgomery Watt: "The Rāfiḍites: a Preliminary Study", *Oriens* 16/1963/110–21; E. Kohlberg: "The Term 'Rāfiḍa' in Imāmī Shīʿī Usage", *JAOS* 99/1979/677–79; "al-Rāfiḍa", *EI*² VIII/386–89 (E. Kohlberg); for a modern polemic use of the word, cf. Rashīd Riḍā: *al-Sunna wa-l-shīʿa aw al-wahhābiyya wa-l-rāfiḍa*, passim.

[68] Kohlberg: "Some Imāmī Shīʿī Views on the *ṣaḥāba*", passim; idem: "*Barāʾa* in Shīʿī Doctrine", passim, esp. 147ff.; also, see I. Goldziher: "Spottnamen der ersten Chalifen bei den Schiʿiten", *WZKM* 15/1901/321–34 (reprinted in: idem: *Gesammelte Schriften*, Hildesheim 1967, IV/295–308); Stewart: "Popular Shiism", 45–52. On the resurgence of these customs during the Ṣafavid era, cf. below, p. 27. The degree of divergence of the modern Sunni interpretation is incidentally demonstrated by ʿUmar Riḍā Kaḥḥāla, who allots five times more space to ʿĀʾisha than to Fāṭima in his lexicon of famous Islamic women: *Aʿlām al-nisāʾ fī ʿālamay al-ʿarab wa-l-islām*, Damascus 1378/1959, III/9–131 and IV/108–32, respectively; cf. also in general "Ṣaḥāba", *EI*² VIII/827–29 (M. Muranyi).

[69] Buchta: *Die Iranische Schia*, 71–74; for a modern Shiite discussion of the topic, cf. Rasūl Jaʿfariyān: *Gozāreshī az ketāb "Tohfe-ye fayrūziyye shojāʿiyye be jehat-e sade-ye saniyye-ye Solṭān-e ḥoseyniyye" az Mīrzā ʿAbdallāh Tabrīzī Esfahānī Afandī*, Isfahan 1420/2000, 77–86.

on both sides are devoted to "verifying" the falsification of the *ḥadīth* of the antagonist.[70]

While questions of a purely theological nature—for example, whether and to what extent it is possible to see God[71]—do not play a prominent role in the inner-Islamic argument, the situation is completely different at the level of "popular" religiosity, especially as it is expressed within Shiism. The martyrdom of the third Imam, Ḥusayn, on *'āshūrā'* day of the year 61 (October 10, 680), favoured the emergence of a mourning ritual of great symbolic force and significance for the masses of the believers. It must be counted among the most striking practices of Shiism and was repeatedly described by European observers with a mixture of fascination and disconcertment.[72] Every year during the first ten days of Muḥarram, extensive manifestations of grief occur in which the events at Karbalā' are re-enacted in dramatic passion plays (*ta'ziya*) that reach their climax in processions of self-flagellation.[73] In regions with mixed Sunni-Shiite populations (for example on the Indian sub-continent), interconfessional clashes that occasionally take on the fury of a civil war not infrequently break out as a result of this ritual. The particular explosiveness of the Muḥarram ceremony is founded on its potential for exploitation as a political instrument: Ḥusayn's struggle against Yazīd can easily be interpreted as Shiite opposition to any government perceived as hostile or unjust. The revolutionary fervour that swept Iran in 1978–79 bears witness to the effectiveness this type of ritualization of early Islamic history

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[70] Kohlberg: "*al-uṣūl al-arba'u-mi'ah*", *JSAI* 10/1987/128–66; Falaturi: " Die Zwölfer-Schia", 64–71; Ende: "Der schiitische Islam", 78–82.

[71] This generally is denied by the Shia, but accepted by some Sunnis in regard to the afterlife; see also 'Abd al-Ḥusayn Sharaf al-Dīn: *Kalima ḥawl al-ru'ya*, Sidon 1371/1952; G. Vajda: "Le problème de la vision de Dieu (*ru'ya*) d'après quelques auteurs šī'ites duodécimains", in: *Le Shī'isme imâmite. Colloque de Strasbourg (6–9 mai 1968)*, Paris 1970, 31–54.

[72] Halm: *Der schiitische Islam*, 53–97 (with extensive quotations from European travelogues since the seventeenth century). The English writer Rudyard Kipling (1865–1936) incorporated his observations made during the Muḥarram ceremonies in Lahore, Pakistan in the short story "On the City Wall" (printed in his collection of stories, *Soldiers Three. The Story of the Gadsbys Black & White*, London 1965, 322–55); cf. in this regard Pinault: *The Shiites*, 66–72.

[73] Momen: *Introduction*, 238–44, esp. the illustrations after 242; cf. in general Halm: *Die Schia*, 177–85 and the literature mentioned therein (183ff.), and also more recently Pinault: *The Shiites*, passim and Y. Nakash: "An Attempt to Trace the Origin of the Rituals of 'Āshūrā'", *WI* 33/1993/161–81; for background of the *'āshūrā'* day as a day of fasting, cf. S. Bashear: "'Āshūrā, an Early Muslim Fast", *ZDMG* 141/1991/281–316.

can have on the masses.[74] This factor may also ultimately be pivotal in the Shiite clergy's unwillingness—despite isolated critical comments on such issues as self-flagellation[75]—to reform this essential aspect of Shiite self-perception from a modernist viewpoint.[76]

A further important component of Shiite popular belief is the extensive cult of graves. Not only the graves of the first eleven Imams (who, in the eyes of many Shiites, were all murdered by their Sunni opponents), but also those of their relatives and countless descendants (known as *imām-zādeh*s) hold the highest reverence among the population and have become important pilgrimage destinations. The centres of Shiite learning, Qom and Mashhad, as well as the so-called Iraqi *ʿatabāt* (Najaf, Karbalāʾ, Kāẓimiyya and Sāmarrāʾ) were consequently established in the surroundings of burial places. Also, the fact that four of the eleven Imams[77] are buried in the Baqīʿ cemetery in Medina, now under control of the manifestly anti-Shiite Wahhabis, has extended the quarrel regarding the fervour Shiite pilgrims evince for their sepulchres to the present day.[78]

The last point of contention that might be called "historical" concerns dissimulation (*taqiyya*). The question whether and to what extent believers may be allowed to conceal their faith for self-protection in

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[74] Cf. H.G. Kippenberg: "Jeder Tag ʿAshura, jedes Grab Kerbela. Zur Ritualisierung der Straßenkämpfe im Iran", in: K. Greussing/J.H. Grevemeyer (eds.): *Religion und Politik im Iran*, Frankfurt 1981, 217–56; Elias Canetti also emphasizes the relevance of the Muḥarram celebrations for the impact of Shiism on the masses: *Masse und Macht*, Frankfurt 1992 ([1]1960), 162–72.

[75] Ende: "The Flagellations of Muḥarram", passim; Mervin: *Un réformisme chiite*, 229–74.

[76] A partial attempt to limit these practices was undertaken by the Iranian government when it prohibited ritual self-mutilations in 1994; cf. Buchta: *Die iranische Schia*, 287–92.

[77] al-Ḥasan b. ʿAlī (2nd Imam), ʿAlī Zayn al-ʿĀbidīn (4th), Muḥammad al-Bāqir (5th) and Jaʿfar al-Ṣādiq (6th); in addition to the Prophet's daughter Fāṭima.

[78] See the articles "ʿAtabāt", *EI*[2] S/93–95 and *EIr* II/902–4 (H. Algar); "Baḳīʿ al-Gharḳad", *EI*[2] I/957f. (A.J. Wensinck/A.S. Bazmee Ansari); cf. from the Shiite viewpoint Jaʿfar al-Khalīlī's twelve-volume encyclopedia *Mawsūʿāt al-ʿatabāt al-muqaddasa*, Beirut [2]1987 (vol. 3 on Medina); on the Baqīʿ cemetery and other graves in Medina, cf. also Moḥammad Bāqer Najafī: *Madīne-shenāsī*, Cologne 1364sh/1985, 319–435; *GD* VIII/50–66; Y. Nakash stresses the function of the grave visits for the Shiite identity building: "The Visitation of the Shrines of the Imams and the Shiʿi Mujtahids in the Early Twentieth Century", *SI* 81/1995/153–64. A direct result of the great attraction of these places is the long-standing practice of *mujāwara*, during which individual believers sojourn for a specific time in the vicinity of holy places in order to study or lead a life of asceticism; cf. "Mud̲jāwir", *EI*[2] VII/293f. (W. Ende); see also "Emāmzāda", *EIr* VIII/395–412 (H. Algar/ P. Varjāvand).

case of threat to life and limb is by no means restricted to Islam. Nor is it—within Islam—limited to Shiism.[79] However, the origin and evolution of this group in a hostile Sunni environment have caused Shiite theologians to make good use of this maxim, particularly with reference to Koran 16/106 and many Imamic *ḥadīth*s. Although there can be no question of *taqiyya* being a uniform, dogmatic obligation of the believer, it provides Sunni opponents with convenient grounds to distrust everything the Shiites claim, especially in interconfessional issues. Given this attitude, any new interpretation of *taqiyya*, such as Khomeynī's rejecting it in favour of *jihād*, can either be ignored or even in turn be dismissed as *taqiyya*.[80]

We leave at this point the problems that have evolved historically yet are politically pertinent still today and turn to a number of disputed questions in the broad field of the Islamic jurisprudence (*fiqh*). It must be said, though, that very few of these at present retain the significance of the topics described above.[81] Also, none pertains in any essential way to the Five Pillars of Islam (*arkān*).

The exception, however, proves the rule. For instance, two significant differences exist in regard to the *ʿibādāt*, that is, the rules that govern the relationship of the believer to God and thus represent the practical manifestation of the *arkān*. One concerns the call to prayer (*adhān*). In Shiite regions, it is usual that after the two well-known parts of the *shahāda*, a third follows in which it is testified that ʿAlī is the friend (*walī*) of God. In spite of occasional attempts of Shiite theologians to relegate this practice to popular belief and brand it an objectionable innovation (*bidʿa*), the practice continues.[82]

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[79] H.G. Kippenberg: "Ketmān: zur Maxime der Verstellung in der antiken und frühislamischen Religionsgeschichte", in: J.W. Henten et al. (eds.): *Tradition in Jewish and Early Christian Literature. Essays in Honour of J.C.H. Lebram*, Leiden 1986, 172–83. For the Sunnis, *taqiyya*—primarily in dealing with non-Muslims—played a relatively marginal role (cf. Koran 3/28).

[80] Kohlberg: "*Taqiyya* in Shīʿī Theology and Religion", passim; Meyer: "Anlaß und Anwendungsbereich der *taqiyya*", passim; for the social-historical background of *taqiyya* in general, cf. H.G. Kippenberg: *Die vorderasiatischen Erlöserreligionen in ihrem Zusammenhang mit der antiken Stadtherrschaft*, Frankfurt/M. 1991, 426–83; for Khomeynī's attitude, see Göbel: *Moderne schiitische Politik*, 176–84.

[81] An overview is given by Salām: *Fiqhiyyāt*, passim. Appreciable differences exist primarily in questions of the family and inheritance law, as well as in some principles of the sources of law. For example, the Shia reject analogy (*qiyās*) as a part of *uṣūl al-fiqh* and instead place a far higher value on reason (*ʿaql*); for details, see Löschner: *Die dogmatischen Grundlagen*, 149–94. On the question of *ijtihād* in the modern ecumenical discussion, see below, pp. 220–22, 234f.

[82] Falaturi: "Die Zwölfer-Schia", 77f.; Ende: "Erfolg und Scheitern", 125ff.; for

The second case concerns a detail with regard to the ritual purity for prayer: the question is whether it is acceptable under specific circumstances to leave one's shoes on during the ritual ablution and still fulfil the purity requirement by merely wiping them with moist hands (*al-masḥ ʿalā l-khuffayn*). The Sunnis generally accept this practice, yet it is categorically rejected by the Shia. What may seem to an external observer to be a triviality, has remained in the theological and apologetic literature of Islam a serious point of contention through the ages and actually led to violent clashes at the beginning of the twentieth century in Syria.[83] As an aspect of the issue of ritual purity, it has also received attention in modern collections of *fatwā*s.[84]

The dissension between the Sunnis and Shiites over the question of temporary marriage (*mutʿa*) is far more acerbic than that related to the issues just mentioned, and down to the present has featured in virtually every mutual polemic. Indirectly, this problem, too, can be associated with a diverging historical assessment: while the Shia continued to hold *mutʿa* as a permitted practice, the Sunnis are of the opinion that the Prophet himself and ʿUmar after him initially approved of it but later revoked their assent. To the Sunnis, its ongoing practice more or less smacks of prostitution.[85] This is not to say, however,

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the background, cf. J. Eliash: "On the Genesis and Development of the Twelver-Shīʿī Three-tenet Shahādah", *Der Islam* 47/1971/265–72.

[83] *al-Manār* 4/3 (Apr. 1901), in 116; Muḥammad al-Ḥusayn Āl Kāshif al-Ghiṭāʾ addressed questions of ritual purity (esp. *masḥ*, *ghusl* and *wuḍūʾ*) as "important" differences of opinion between Sunnism and Shiism in his sermon during the Jerusalem conference (see below, pp. 93–95): *al-Khuṭba at-tārīkhiyya*, 7; cf. the comments of the Lebanese Shiite scholar ʿAbd al-Ḥusayn Sharaf al-Dīn: *Ajwiba*, 110–18 (a refutation to Mūsā Jārallāh's remonstrance); idem: "al-Masḥ ʿalā l-arjul aw ghusluhā fī l-wuḍūʾ", in: Najm al-Dīn al-ʿAskarī: *al-Wuḍūʾ fī l-kitāb wa-l-sunna*, Cairo, approx. 1960, 125–60; cf. also *al-ʿIrfān* 36/3 (Mar. 1949), 229–37 and 36/4 (Apr. 1949), 340–47; see the general Salām: *Fiqhiyyāt*, 29–51; "al-Masḥ ʿalā 'l-khuffayn", *EI*[2] VI/709f. (Ch. Pellat) as well as Paret: *Konkordanz*, 115–17 (on Koran 5/6).

[84] Cf. e.g. Yūsuf al-Qaraḍāwī: *Fatāwā muʿāṣira*, Beirut 1421/2000, I/221ff.; Muḥammad b. Ṣāliḥ al-ʿUthaymīn: *Rasāʾil wa-fatāwā fī l-masḥ ʿalā l-khuffayn wa-l-tayammum*, Riyadh 1417/1996–97, 23–63.

[85] Ende: "Ehe auf Zeit", passim; more recent titles include: ʿAlī Ḥusain al-Sāʾiḥ: *al-Aṣl fī l-ashyāʾ. Wa-lākin al-mutʿa ḥarām!!*, s.l., 1408/1988; al-ʿAskarī: *Maʿālim al-madrasatayn*, II/242–80; Fūda: *Ẓawāj al-mutʿa*; Wolūjerdī: *Ezdewāj-e mowaqqat*; cf. for the general background A. Gribetz: *Strange Bedfellows: mutʿat al-nisāʾ and mutʿat al-ḥajj. A Study Based on Sunnī and Shīʿī sources of tafsīr, ḥadīth and fiqh*, Berlin 1994, and for the contemporary situation S. Haeri: *Law of Desire: Temporary Marriage in Shiʿi Islam*, Syracuse 1989; a characteristic example of its significance today is highlighted by C. Erck: "Anstandhäuser und Ehen auf Zeit", *Neue Zürcher Zeitung*, Nov. 2, 2002, 61.

that social reality within Sunnism was always and everywhere in accordance with legal prescriptions: European observers attest the practice of temporary marriages in the Ottoman Empire in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries (where it seems to have been called *kebin*), and even in Mecca during the nineteenth century.[86] Even until today, there are isolated attempts at revising the strict ban on *mutʿa*, mostly with reference to the situation of Muslims (which in this case means Muslim men) in the diaspora.[87]

As a last, but most certainly not least important, point, the Koran itself has to be mentioned. Contrary to what might be expected, there was no absolute and conclusive agreement upon the authenticity and completeness of the Holy Book for most of Islamic history. To the Sunnis, the recension codified under ʿUthmān has always stood beyond question.[88] However, it is only in modern times that the Shiites have abandoned the accusation that the Sunnis had manipulated and maliciously falsified the revealed text (*taḥrīf al-qurʾān*). The ancient collections of *ḥadīth*s and early exegetical works contain abundant allusions and more or less explicit references in this regard. According to this conviction, the Sunni collectors of the ʿUthmānic edition deliberately suppressed those passages in which ʿAlī's succession to the Prophet was unequivocally confirmed.

The rationalist critique of the traditions that began after the occultation of the twelfth Imam ensured that this highly sensitive issue was temporarily pushed into the background.[89] When, however, the traditionalist Akhbārī school of thought (re-)emerged in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, the classical accusation saw a remarkable renaissance. In many Koran commentaries and legal works of the

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[86] C. Imber: "Guillaume Postel on Temporary Marriage", in: S. Prätor/Ch.K. Neumann (eds.): *Frauen, Bilder und Gelehrte (. . .). Festschrift for Hans Georg Majer*, Istanbul 2002, 179–83; C. Snouck Hurgronje: *Mekka in the Latter Part of the 19th Century (. . .)*, Leiden & London 1931, 124f.

[87] Cf. below, p. 184.

[88] Regarding the history of the text, see T. Nagel: *The Koran*, Munich [2]1991, 15–34; cf. also Noth: "Früher Islam", 81 (with note 222, p. 600); H. Motzki: "The Collection of the Qurʾān. A Reconsideration of Western Views in Light of Recent Methodological Developments", *Der Islam* 78/2001/1–34; K.-H. Ohlig: *Weltreligion Islam. Eine Einführung*, Mainz 2000, 42–92; "The Collection of the Qurʾān", *EQ* I/351–61 (J. Burton).

[89] The early debate is summarized by Amir-Moezzi: *Le guide divin*, 200–27 and Kohlberg: "Qurʾān", passim; the article "Taḥrīf", *EI*[2] X/111f. (H. Lazarus-Yafeh) is nearly exclusively restricted to the Muslim (also from the Sunni side) reproach against Jews and Christians for having falsified the revealed scriptures prior to the Koran.

Ṣafavid period, the conviction of the falsification of the Koran was taken for granted. Not even the final triumph of the Uṣūlīs over their rivals put an end to this view. As late as the end of the nineteenth century, the Iranian scholar Ḥusayn b. Muḥammad Taqī al-Nūrī al-Ṭabrisī wrote an impressive and staunch defence of the classical doctrine, which he characteristically entitled *Faṣl al-khiṭāb fī ithbāt taḥrīf kitāb rabb al-arbāb*. Although the overwhelming majority of Shiite scholars in the twentieth century firmly dissociated themselves from al-Nūrī and tried to rally around the extant text, the Sunni polemicists found it comparatively easy to turn the question of *taḥrīf* into the most controversial one in the contemporary debate.[90]

[90] Regarding al-Ṭabrisī (1838–1902): *EI*² X/41 (D. MacEoin); al-Ziriklī II/257f.; *RF* III/1307f.; *ṬASh* I.2/543–55, *Dharīʿa* XVI/231; *GAL* SII/832; for a general survey of the debate since the Ṣafavid period cf. Brunner: *Die Schia und die Koranfälschung*, passim (39–69 on al-Ṭabrisī) and idem: "La question de la falsification du Coran", passim.

CHAPTER ONE

FIRST ATTEMPTS AT RESOLVING THE CONFLICT

The quarrel between Sunnism and Shiism has always been more than an academic discussion limited to polemic and apologetic. At times, it represented a very real, even existential problem for the affected population. To cite only one example of many: when the most famous of all Muslim travellers, Ibn Baṭṭūṭa, entered the area of Iṣfahān in March 1327, he found the city "in ruins for the greater part". The reason, which he uses sober terms to describe, was the ". . . feud (*fitna*) there between the Sunnis and the Rāfiḍīs, which continues to rage between them still to the present day, so that they never cease to fight."[1] Countless other reports provide an impression of the bizarre appearances these struggles have sometimes assumed.[2]

Furthermore, the theologians of both parties have never tempered their efforts to "expose" the views of their counterparts from the opposite camp as heretic and deviant from "true Islam" as they understood it. Suffice it to give only one example, though one of the most important in Muslim heresiography. At about the same time Ibn Baṭṭūṭa was travelling what was to him the known world, two outstanding representatives of Islamic intellectual history aimed vehement polemics at each other. Jamāl al-Dīn al-Ḥasan b. al-Muṭahhar al-Ḥillī, known as "al-ʿAllāma" (the outstanding scholar), from Ḥilla, halfway along the Euphrates, wrote a defence of the Shiite Imamate doctrine in a small but very popular treatise entitled *Minhāj al-karāma fī maʿrifat al-imāma*.[3] His no less scholarly opponent, Taqī al-Dīn Aḥmad b.

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[1] *Riḥlat Ibn Baṭṭūṭa*, ed. Ṭalāl Ḥarb, Beirut 1407/1987, 214 (English translation by H.A.R. Gibb: *The Travels of Ibn Baṭṭūṭa*, Cambridge 1958–71, II/294f.); for a chronological arrangement, see I. Hrbek: "The Chronology of Ibn Baṭṭūṭa's Travels", *Archiv Orientální* 30/1962/409–86, on 431ff.; regarding the term *rāfiḍites*, see above, p. 18 note 67.

[2] Some examples are quoted in T. Nagel: *Die Festung des Glaubens* (. . .), Munich 1988, 50ff.; cf. also al-Madanī/al-Zuʿbī: *al-Islām bayn al-sunna wa-l-shīʿa*, I/46–53; a case study has been examined by M. Heidari-Abkenar: *Die ideologische und politische Konfrontation Schia-Sunna am Beispiel der Stadt Rey des 10.–12. Jahrhunderts n. Chr.*, Ph.D. Diss. Cologne 1992.

[3] Laoust: *Schismes*, 301–07; idem: "La critique du sunnisme dans la doctrine d'al-

Taymiyya responded with the work *Minhāj al-sunna al-nabawiyya* "qui constitue l'une des contributions les plus imposantes à la littérature sunnite de polémique anti-šīʿite."[4] Since their first appearance, both have seen numerous new editions, thus ensuring them wide circulation in the Islamic countries until today. These have extended the polemical quarrel that has continued unabated into the twentieth century and have regularly engendered new refutations.[5]

It would, however, be rash to reduce the relations between Sunnis and Shiites to polemical disputes and bloody struggles. For more than two centuries following the Mongol conquest in the thirteenth century, the situation in Iran under the Īlkhāns and their heirs, the Timurids, was characterized by a syncretism not always distinguishable from what might be seen as religious indifference.[6] It was in this atmosphere that ferment formed and gave rise to a power which proved not only of the greatest importance for the internal development of Shiism, but that put interaction with the Sunnis on a completely new basis: the Ṣafavids.

Their assumption of power under Shāh Ismāʿīl after the conquest of Tabrīz in 1501 is one of the important turning points in Islamic history, though the contemporaries appear not to have been aware of its significance. Initially Sunnis, the dervish order whose beginnings date back to the thirteenth century gradually came to adopt extreme Shiite positions.[7] The Ṣafavids' ascension to power meant immediate

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Ḥillī", *REI* 34/1966/35–60; regarding al-Ḥillī (1250–1325), see S. Schmidtke: *The Theology of al-ʿAllāma al-Ḥillī (d. 726/1325)*, Berlin 1991; *EIr* XII/164–69 (S. Schmidtke).

[4] Laoust: *Essai*, 97; cf. idem: *Schismes*, 266–73; regarding Ibn Taymiyya (1263–1328): Laoust: *Essay*, passim; regarding the mutual polemic, see also M. Mazzaoui: *The Origins of the Ṣafawids. Šīʿism, Ṣūfism and the Gulāt*, Wiesbaden 1972, 27–34.

[5] Ende: *Arabische Nation*, 115; cf. al-Wardānī: *al-Munāẓarāt*, 101–64.

[6] U. Haarmann: "Staat und Religion in Transoxanien im frühen 16. Jahrhundert", *ZDMG* 124/1974/332–69, on 349; for the background, see Roemer: *Persien auf dem Weg in die Neuzeit*, 160–63, as well as the detailed book by M. Gronke: *Derwische im Vorhof der Macht. Sozial- und Wirtschaftsgeschichte Nordwestirans im 13. und 14. Jahrhundert*, Stuttgart 1993.

[7] On the evolution of the order before 1501, cf. Mazzaoui: *Origins* (as in note 4) as well as Gronke (as in the previous note), 241–357. It is still not clear, however, who in fact is to be regarded as the first "real" Shiite leader of the order; Hans Robert Roemer even maintains that there is no grounds for assuming that any Ṣafavid prior to Shāh Ismāʿīl I had embraced Shiism; cf. his *Persien auf dem Weg in die Neuzeit*, 225ff. Other Sufi orders also occasionally went through a similar metamorphosis; for the example of the Kubrawiyya see Enayat: *Modern Islamic Political Thought*, 37–39, *EI*² V/300f. (H. Algar) and M. Molé: "Les Kubrawīya entre sunnisme et shiisme au huitième et neuvième siècles de l'hégire", *REI* 29/1961/61–142.

adoption of the Shiite rite at the official level, but certainly not among the populace at large: Iran was mainly a Sunni country at the beginning of the sixteenth century and remained so for decades.[8] Under the patronage of the new power, however, the imamite legal scholars succeeded in reorganizing for the first time in their history without fear of repression by Sunni rulers.

On the contrary: the consolidation of Shiism went hand in hand with an intense struggle against non-Shiite forms of Islam, especially Sunnism and—regardless of the Ṣafavids' own descent—everything that smacked of Ṣūfism.[9] A considerable tightening of the relations with Sunni Islam was the necessary consequence. Immediately after their ascension to power, the Ṣafavids had ordered public vilification of the first three caliphs and the killing of everybody who refused to comply. Later on, they deployed so-called *tabarrā'ī*s, whose task it was to precede the Shah in public and shout abuse at the "enemies of Shiism".[10] Also in theological literature, the issue again became of paramount importance: At the end of the seventeenth century, Muḥammad Bāqir al-Majlisī undertook the tremendous task of (re-)assembling the entire known corpus of Shiite *ḥadīth*s and compiling his monumental collection *Biḥār al-anwār*. Characteristically enough, the whole of the eighth volume of its lithographed edition is devoted to the strife between Sunnism and Shiism and also contains detailed prescriptions to curse the first three caliphs.[11]

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[8] A.J. Newman: "The Myth of the Clerical Migration to Safawid Iran: Arab Shiite Opposition to ʿAlī al-Karakī and Safawid Shiism", *WI* 33/1993/66–112; R.J. Abisaab: "The Ulama of Jabal ʿAmil in Safavid Iran, 1501–1736: Marginality, Migration and Social Change", *IS* 27/1994/103–22; D.J. Stewart: "Notes on the Migration of ʿĀmilī Scholars to Safavid Iran", *JNES* 55/1996/81–103.

[9] Arjomand: *The Shadow of God*, 112–19; K. Babayan: *Mystics, Monarchs, and Messiahs. Cultural Landscapes of Early Modern Iran*, Cambridge/MA 2002, esp. 245–92 and 439–82.

[10] E. Glassen: *Die frühen Safawiden nach Qāżī Aḥmad Qumī*, Freiburg 1970, 215; on the general background, cf. J. Calmard: "Les rituels shiites et le pouvoir. L'imposition du shiisme safavide: eulogie et malédictions canoniques", in: idem (ed.): *Etudes Safavides*, Paris/Tehran 1993, 109–50; one of the first European travellers who reported about the custom of the *tabarrā'ī*s was Michele Membré, cf. his *Mission to the Lord Sophy of Persia (1539–1542). Translated with Introduction and Notes by A.H. Morton*, London 1993, 20, 24, 41, 52.

[11] The *Kītāb al-fitan wa-l-miḥan* forms vols. 28–34 of the modern printed edition, Beirut [3]1983; with regard to the question of vilification in particular, cf. e.g., XXX/145–405; regarding al-Majlisī (1627–1699/1700), see *EI*[2] V/1086–88 (A.H. Hairi); al-Ziriklī VI/48f.; Halm: *Die Schia*, 125f.; on the *Biḥār*, cf. *Dharīʿa* III/16–25; *GAL* SII/572–74, *EIr* IV/90–93 (E. Kohlberg) and above all K.-H. Pampus: *Die theologische Enzyklopädie Biḥār al-Anwār des Muḥammad Bāqir al-Maǧlisī (1037–1110 A.H. = 1627–1699 A.D.). Ein Beitrag zur Literaturgeschichte der Šīʿa in der Ṣafawidenzeit*, Ph.D.

As a corollary, the Shiite *ʿulamāʾ* developed into a class that may justifiably be designated as a clergy, at least far more so than among the Sunnis. This evolution culminated in the eighteenth century in the final triumph of the so-called Uṣūlī school. Unlike their adversaries, the Akhbārīs, who limited religious authority exclusively to the Koran and Imam *ḥadīth*s, the Uṣūlīs admitted the use of reason (*ʿaql*) in the process of evaluating the traditions and in jurisprudence. Gradually the *ʿulamāʾ* assumed more and more tasks that had originally been the Mahdī's prerogatives and finally were granted the right to make independent legal decisions (*ijtihād*). The concept, whose roots are to be found in the thirteenth century with the previously mentioned al-ʿAllāma al-Ḥillī, *summa summarum* bequeathed an enormous increase of power to the *ʿulamāʾ*. In the long term, it was here that the preconditions for the politicization of the Shiite clergy in modern times were created.[12]

Beside this inner-Shiite development, the victory of the Ṣafavids and their subsequent behaviour had yet another aspect of importance for the entire Islamic ecumene. The resurgent conflict between Sunnis and Shiites had thus taken a quasi-governmental character, the more so as the new Iranian rulers faced aspiring major Sunni powers that included, in addition to the Uzbeks and Moguls, first and foremost the Ottomans.[13] Henceforth, not only did theological considerations play a role in confrontation between representatives of the two denominations, but also, though usually tacitly, the political interests and power calculations of the discussant scholars as well as those of the rulers, who from now on stood next to the scholars.

The first attempt to overcome Sunni-Shiite antagonism by means of a formal (or, in this case, perhaps "forced") dialogue of scholars occurred in the fourth and fifth decades of the eighteenth century. In 1722, the state of the Ṣafavids succumbed to the advance of Afghan invaders, and the following three-quarters of a century, until

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dissertation, Bonn 1970. By contrast, Colin Turner's book *Islam without Allah? The Rise of Religious Externalism in Safavid Iran*, Richmond 2000, is more a furious indictment against Shiism in general and al-Majlisī in particular than a serious work of research; cf. *WI* 42/2002/276–79 and *MESA Bulletin* 37/2003/139–41.

[12] Halm: *Die Schia*, 84–90, 124–32; M.A. Amir-Moezzi: "Remarques sur les critères d'authenticité du hadîth et l'autorité du juriste dans le shi'isme imâmite", *SI* 85/1997/5–39; in addition, Falaturi: "Die Zwölfer-Schia", 80–90.

[13] E. Eberhard: *Osmanische Polemik gegen die Safawiden im 16. Jahrhundert nach arabischen Handschriften*, Freiburg 1970; A. Allouche: *The Origins and Development of the Ottoman—Safawid Conflict (906–962/1500–1555)*, Berlin 1983.

the Qājārs' assumption of power in 1796, was a period of such political disarray and general insecurity that it may well be described as a "quagmire of anarchy".[14]

A military leader soon stood out: Nādir Khān, who put himself on the throne in 1736 as Nādir Shāh.[15] The news of his ruthless behaviour, especially the sack of Delhi in 1739 that resulted in hundreds of thousands of dead, soon extended beyond his realm, and by the middle of the eighteenth century, he was one of the best known and most notorious persons of contemporary Asian history in Europe.[16] Not much noted for great personal piety,[17] Nādir Shāh nevertheless pursued the clear religious-political goal of establishing Shiism as a fifth *madhhab*, equivalent to the four recognized Sunni schools of law. *De facto*, however, the venture must have given contemporary Shiite scholars the feeling that they had been robbed of their doctrine of the Imamate, and thus, ultimately, their identity and independence. The logic for this assumption was the perception that Imam Ja'far was being degraded to nothing but the founder of a school of law.[18] Nādir Shāh's intention was twofold: On the one hand, he tried to break the influential position of the Shiite clergy in their own country and obviate any potential Ṣafavid renaissance. The confiscation of Shiite *waqf* lands, which were theoretically inalienable, aimed at helping achieve this. In the entire process, however, he took great care not to appear anti-Shiite but only anti-Ṣafavid. Therefore, some of the Shia rituals that were less problematic to the Sunnis, e.g. pilgrimages

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[14] Roemer: *Persien auf dem Weg in die Neuzeit*, 381; cf. in general ibid. 376–88 and P. Avery: "Nādir Shāh and the Afsharid Legacy", in: idem (ed.): *The Cambridge History of Iran*, VII/3–62; a brief description of the "post-Ṣafavid Ṣafavids" is given by J.R. Perry: "The Last Ṣafavids, 1722–1773", *Iran* 9/1971/59–69.

[15] Regarding Nādir Shāh, cf. what is still the unsurpassed biography by L. Lockhart: *Nadir Shah*, London 1938, as well as the article in *EI*[2] VII/853–56 (J.R. Perry, with extensive bibliography); see also Momen: *Introduction*, 124–26; "Wathīqe-ye etteḥād-e eslām-e nāderī", *Yādgār* 4/6 (Feb.–Mar. 1948), 43–55; *ASh* M IV/189–212; a recent comprehensive description by a Persian author is Abū Turāb Sardādwar: *Tārīkh-e nezāmī wa siyāsī-ye dawrān-e Nāder Shāh*, Tehran 1378sh/1999 (pp. 802–11 on Nādir Shāh's *taqrīb* policy).

[16] The European judgements of Nādir Shāh are discussed by J. Osterhammel: *Die Entzauberung Asiens. Europa und die asiatischen Reiche im 18. Jahrhundert*, Munich 1998, 221–27.

[17] Likewise the concurring judgement of Lockhart: *Nadir Shah*, 278, and Algar: "Religious Forces in Eighteenth and Nineteenth-Century Iran", 709.

[18] In the twentieth century this demand was given new meaning and re-interpreted—though not without contradiction—in a positive light; see below, pp. 232, 235–37.

to the various shrines, were not only tolerated, they were actually encouraged.[19]

On the other hand, however, Nādir Shāh forbade the aforementioned practices of public invective against the caliphs Abū Bakr and ʿUmar as well as the repudiation of their caliphate that had been the order of the day under the Ṣafavids. This prohibition was designed mainly to calm the waves in relation to the Ottoman Empire while simultaneously insuring continued Persian independence. It was, however, more than merely symbolic because the Shiites' practice of vilifying the first caliphs was one of the most important points in the anti-Shiite polemic of Ottoman authors.[20] As a quid pro quo, Nādir Shāh demanded two equally symbolic concessions from the Ottomans: the establishment of a fifth *maqām* at the Kaʿba for the *jaʿfarī*s as well as their own *amīr al-ḥajj* during the pilgrimage.[21]

The Ottoman Sultan, Maḥmūd I, and his representatives kept a low profile. Despite a few minor concessions, they clearly proved themselves unwilling to grant any type of wholesale recognition of Shiism during the entire decade of Nādir Shāh's rule. The Shiite clerics, for their part, for whom the prevailing confessional policy represented a threat to their very existence, frequently sought refuge in *taqiyya*. The fate of the Mollā-Bāshī ʿAbd al-Ḥusayn, whom Nādir Shāh had had strangled even before his ascension to the throne because of a pro-Ṣafavid comment putatively made in confidence was still fresh in their memories.[22]

Nādir Shāh's efforts to subject the Shia and thus move the Ottoman Sunnis to recognize the Jaʿfariyya culminated in the first conference

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[19] The hope related to this, i.e. the desire to reintroduce the "true" Shiite practices cleansed of the abominable innovations of the Ṣafavids, was continued in the twentieth century; cf. ʿAlī Sharīʿatī's book *Tashayyoʿ-e ʿalawī wa tashayyoī-e ṣafawī*; R. Savory: "Orthodoxy and Aberrancy in the Ithnā ʿAsharī Shīʿī Tradition", in: W.B. Hallaq/D.P. Little (eds.): *Islamic Studies Presented to Charles J. Adams*, Leiden 1991, 169–81.

[20] Eberhard: *Osmanische Polemik* (as in note 13), 104–10; cf. also above, p. 18 note 68.

[21] "Kaʿba", *EI*[2] IV/317–22 (A.J. Wensinck/J. Jomier); regarding Nādir Shāh's religious policy in general, see Tucker: "Nadir Shah", passim; S. Shaw: "Iranian Relations with the Ottoman Empire in the Eighteenth and Nineteenth Centuries", in: Avery (ed.): *The Cambridge History of Iran*, VII/297–313, esp. 306ff.; H. Algar: "Religious Forces in Eighteenth and Nineteenth-Century Iran", ibid., 705–31, esp. 706–10 as well as idem: "Shiʿism and Iran in the Eighteenth Century", passim; "Caliphs and the Caliphate, as viewed by the Shiʿites of Persia", *EIr* IV/677–79 (H. Algar).

[22] Lockhart: *Nadir Shah*, 99; regarding the office of the Mollā-Bāshī, see Arjomand: "The Mujtahid of the Age", passim.

that was called *expressis verbis* for the purpose of an inner-Islamic reconciliation. In December 1743, he convened a considerable number of both Sunni and Shiite scholars during an Iraq campaign at ʿAlī's tomb in Najaf. Seventy Iranian as well as seven each from Afghanistan and Transoxania were reportedly present.[23] They were supposed to discuss the vilification of the first caliphs, the legitimacy of their rule, the question of the Prophet's companions in general, and temporary marriage (*mutʿa*).[24]

This meeting actually produced a written accord that obliged the Shiite *ʿulamāʾ* to refrain from the practices most offensive to the Sunnis, but it was hardly worth the paper on which it was written. On the one hand, no delegation from the Ottoman side was present, and on the other, the Persian scholars, persisting in their tried-and-tested *taqiyya*, expediently bent like reeds before the political tempest. The Ḥanafi *qāḍī* ʿAbdallāh al-Suwaydī, who wrote the protocol of the conference at the behest of Nādir Shāh, reported an exceptional example of this "art of mental reservation."[25] He explained that upon completion of the agreement, a Shiite cleric held the closing sermon before 5000 believers in the mosque. A formulaic feature of this had the cleric pronounce the *tarḍiya*, i.e. the eulogy *raḍiya llāh ʿanhu* ("may Allah be pleased with him"), after the names of Abū Bakr and ʿUmar, as Sunni Muslims usually do upon mentioning the names of the *ṣaḥāba*. The preacher did as was expected, but he made a "mistake" and pronounced ʿUmar's name with a triptote ending, turning the meaning of the formula into "may Allah be pleased with anyone named ʿUmar". Playing, in addition, on the two inflectional terms *ʿadl* and *maʿrifa*, which are commonly known to grammarians, he made an extremely sublime pun that only a listener with advanced grammatical expertise—like al-Suwaydī—would grasp. The Shiite preacher thus surreptitiously fulminated against the second caliph by twisting the usual meanings of *ʿadl* and *maʿrifa* (justice and knowledge)

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[23] al-Suwaydī: *Muʾtamar*, 85f., who also lists several names.

[24] Algar: "Religious Forces", 708; see also Mallat: "Religious Militancy", 701–04; Enayat: *Modern Islamic Political Thought*, 39f.; Lockhart: *Nadir Shah*, 232–34; Richard: *L'Islam chiite*, 251f.; Siyār al-Jamīl: "Ḥiṣār Nādir Shāh li-l-Mawṣil ʿām 1743 (. . .)", *Arab Historical Review for Ottoman Studies/al-Majalla al-tārīkhiyya al-ʿarabiyya li-l-dirāsāt al-ʿuthmāniyya* 1–2/1990/Arabic section, 93–115.

[25] The Polish Nobel Prize for Literature winner Czesław Miłosz used these words ("die Kunst des inneren Vorbehalts") to describe the relationship of many intellectuals to governmental powers in the former East European "peoples' democracies": *Verführtes Denken*, Frankfurt 1974, 64.

and unequivocally declared ʿUmar void of these two virtues without explicitly uttering it.[26]

Nādir Shāh's politically motivated attempt to force Sunnism and Shiism together was certainly anything but idealistic ("schwärmerisch") as Goldziher apostrophizes it,[27] and proved, in the end, fruitless. The Ottomans maintained their negative posture, and after Nādir Shāh's assassination in 1747, his successors no longer showed interest in his intent. It should be no surprise, therefore, that in the twentieth century, this episode was hardly deemed worth mention in the literature of the ecumenical movement. The ecstasy found *en passant* in the work of Muḥammad ʿAlī al-Zuʿbī is clearly the exception. To him, Nādir Shāh's religious politics represented a "dawn of mutual understanding" (*fajr tafāhum*) and the conference of Najaf an "approach brimming with blessing" that merely lacked a follow-up carried out in adequate spirit.[28] Not even the mere statement that Nādir Shāh was motivated by a kind of *taqrīb* thinking *avant la lettre* can be regarded as representative.[29]

In contrast to this, though, anti-Shiite polemicists and opponents of reconciliation soon discovered Nādir Shāh for their own purposes. For instance, Maḥmūd al-Mallāḥ, displaying his characteristic vehe-

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[26] al-Suwaydī: *Muʾtamar*, 98f.; see for this purpose the remarks of H. Ritter in a footnote of a review of E.G. Browne's *A History* of Persian Literature (. . .), in: *Der Islam* 15/1926/106f., as well as the additional remarks by A.E. Schmidt, ibid. 16/1927/266f.; also idem: *Iz istorii sunnitsko-sütskich otnoseniĭ*, in: عقد الجمان—*V.V. Bartol'du turkestanskie druz'ja, učeniki i počitateli*, Tashkent 1927, 69–107 (I owe my thanks to Dr. Florian Schwarz for a copy of this article); regarding al-Suwaydī (1693–1761) cf. Abū l-Faḍl al-Murādī: *Silk al-durar fī aʿyān al-qarn al-thānī ʿashar*, I–IV, Būlāq 1301/1883, III/84–86; al-Ziriklī IV/80; Kaḥḥāla VI/48f. and XII/40, as well as *GAL* II/495 and SII/508; also ʿImād ʿAbd al-Salām: *ʿAbdallāh al-Suwaydī: Sīratuhu wa-riḥalātuhu*, Baghdad 1988; al-Suwaydī, in fact, was from a distinguished literary family, cf. Lūwīs Shaykhū: "al-Ādāb al-ʿarabiyya fī l-qarn al-tāsiʿ ʿashar", *al-Mashriq* 11/1908/273–86, on 275f.; al-Suwaydī's report is briefly analyzed by H. Fattah: "Representations of Self and the Other in Two Iraqi Travelogues of the Ottoman Period", *IJMES* 30/1998/51–76, esp. 55–62; on the contacts between the Suwaydī family and Muḥammad b. ʿAbd al-Wahhāb, cf. E. Peskes: *Muḥammad b. ʿAbdalwahhāb (1703–92) im Widerstreit. Untersuchungen zur Rekonstruktion der Frühgeschichte der Wahhābīya*, Beirut 1993, 62–64.

[27] Specifically, in his *Vorlesungen über den Islam*, 296.

[28] al-Zuʿbī: *Lā sunna wa-lā shīʿa*, 206; Moḥammad Moḥīṭ Ṭabāṭabāʾī also expressed praise in his introduction to al-Shīrāzī's anthology *Eslām. Āʾīn-e hambastegī*, 15–22, on 19f.; cf. in contrast, the rejectionist attitude of Moḥammad Taqī Qommī, who, however, does not identify Nādir Shāh by name, *RI* 11/1959/352; in the nineteenth century, this rejection does not yet appear to have been so directly articulated, cf. Kramer: *Islam Assembled*, 1f.

[29] al-Anṣārī: *al-Fuqahāʾ ḥukkām ʿalā l-mulūk*, 59–62.

mence, alluded to two important figures of Shiite history, and called Nādir Shāh, the "first martyr" (*al-shahīd al-awwal*) to be deceived by prevaricators in his environment regarding the true intentions of the Shia.[30] Finally, Muḥibb al-Dīn al-Khaṭīb in particular distinguished himself in this field by bringing out a new edition of al-Suwaydī's conference report in 1367h (1947–48), produced by his Cairo-based *Salafiyya* Printing House. In its preface, al-Khaṭīb states unequivocally that his primary goal was to strike a blow at the *taqrīb* activities of the twentieth century.[31]

This episode of the eighteenth century definitely cannot be regarded as a model for a successful agreement between Sunnis and Shiites in the modern age. It is nonetheless significant in that it represents an early instructional example of the complicated relationship between politics and theology, specifically as far as inner-Islamic rapprochement is concerned. Furthermore, it occurred at a time when the concept of Islamic ecumenism did not actually even exist. This dependence on politics that frequently determines the success or failure of ecumenically oriented legal-theological endeavours will often be encountered in later periods.

In the century and a half that followed Nādir Shāh's "conference", there were no further efforts to eliminate the confessional differences between the two groups. On the contrary, in the heavily Shiite-inhabited provinces of the Ottoman Empire in Iraq, repeated clashes occurred in which the question of denominational affiliation was a factor of considerable importance. Some of these outbreaks of violence even temporarily raised questions about Ottoman sovereignty over the area.[32]

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[30] al-Mallāḥ: *Tārīkhunā l-qawmī*, 99 with note 1; idem: *al-Ārā'*, 68 note 1 (incidentally, al-Mallāḥ characterized the Iranian writer Aḥmad Kasrawī, murdered in 1946 by the Fedā'iyyān-e Eslām, as "the second martyr"); regarding the two Shiite martyrs, see Momen: *Introduction*, 319f. as well as Index s.v. "Shahīd"; further examples of Sunni polemic are provided by ʿAbd al-Mutaʿāl al-Jabrī, who without further ado calls the behaviour of the Shiites in 1743 "fascist", *Ḥiwār*, 49, and al-Ḥasanī: *Manhaj ahl al-bayt*, 163 note 1; cf. also Rashīd Riḍā: *al-Sunna wa-l-shīʿa*, 28.

[31] al-Khaṭīb: Preface to al-Suwaydī: *Muʾtamar al-Najaf*, 49–58; al-Suwaydī's report appeared originally in 1323h/1905–06 in Cairo (*Maṭbaʿat al-saʿāda*) with the title *al-Ḥujaj al-qaṭʿiyya li-ttifāq al-firaq al-islāmiyya*; Khalīl Mardam published a summary in *RAAD* 5/1925/179–86; regarding al-Khaṭīb, see below, pp. 255ff.

[32] J.R.I. Cole/M. Momen: "Mafia, Mob and Shiism in Iraq: The Rebellion of Ottoman Karbala, 1824–1843", *Past and Present* 112/1986/112–43, esp. 137f.; regarding previous Ottoman persecution of the Shiites see C.H. Imber: "The Persecution of the Ottoman Shiʿites According to the *mühimme defterleri*, 1565–1585", *Der Islam* 56/1979/245–73. The fact that there were also examples of peaceful coexistence is documented in U. Haarmann's observations regarding "Evliya Čelebīs Bericht

It was not before the last third of the nineteenth century that, due to the emergence of pan-Islamic tendencies, contacts between Sunni and Shiite *ʿulamāʾ* were revived, though only after a hesitant beginning. Viewed in terms of intellectual history, pan-Islamic thinking is a concomitant of Islamic reformism (*iṣlāḥ*), which in turn emerged from various politically motivated attempts at modernism, e.g. the *tanẓīmāt* legislation in the Ottoman Empire, and the cultural renaissance movement (*nahḍa*) in the middle of the century that bore primarily an Arab character.[33] Faced with the advance of European colonialism throughout the Islamic world, the pan-Islamic activists propagated the sense of ties that existed among *all* Muslims and from which a united front could and should be forged against the common European enemy. In this way they hoped to be able to compensate for the backwardness of the Islamic world in relation to the West, which they themselves recognized.

The pan-Islamic movement was unambiguously Sunni-dominated in its origins, and neither the Shiite *ʿulamāʾ* in Iran nor in the Iraqi *ʿatabāt* participated in the early period. The Sunni authors for their part were presumably quite conscious of the existence of Shiism, but apart from general calls for unity addressed to all Muslims, an ecumenical dialogue did not play a role in their writings. A characteristic example of this can be seen in the works of the most effective pan-Islamic activist, Jamāl al-Dīn al-Afghānī, who concealed his Iranian-Shiite origin throughout his restless life, portraying himself as a Sunni Afghan.[34] His concept of Islamic unity becomes clear through the articles he and his Egyptian disciple, Muḥammad ʿAbduh, published during their 1884 Paris sojourn in their short-lived journal *al-ʿUrwa al-wuthqā*.[35] Both stayed in Europe at this time involuntarily and—

über die Altertümer von Gize", *Turcica* 8/1976/157–230, on 177; also idem: "Ein früher Bericht über Kuwait", *Der Islam* 55/1978/340–44, on 342, as well as "Murtaḍā b. ʿAlī b. ʿAlawān's Journey Through Arabia in 1121/1709", in: *Sources for the History of Arabia*, Riyadh 1979, II/247–51, on 248.

[33] Regarding the general background see the articles "Iṣlāḥ", *EI*^{2} IV/141–71 (A. Merad et al.); "Nahḍa", *EI*^{2} VII/900–03 (N. Tomiche); "Pan-Islamism", *EI*^{2} VIII/248–50 (J.M. Landau) and "Tanẓīmāt", *EI*^{2} X/201–09 (R.H. Davison), as well as the detailed examination by Hourani: *Arabic Thought*, passim; P. Dumont: "La période des *Tanzîmât* (1839–1878), in: R. Mantran (ed.): *Histoire de l'Empire Ottoman*, Paris 1989, 459–522.

[34] In regard to him (1838–1897), see the article "Afġānī", *EIr* I/481–86 (N.R. Keddie) as well as in detail eadem: *Sayyid Ǧamāl ad-Dīn "al-Afghānī"*.

[35] Cf. ibid., 214–28, as well as J. Jomier: "La revue Al-ʿOrwa al-Wothqā (13 mars–16 octobre 1884) et l'autorité du Coran", *MIDEO* 17/1986/9–36; the title is an allusion to Koran verses 2/256 and 31/22 ("the most trustworthy hand-hold").

ironically enough—for reasons due to the European colonialism in the Middle East. Al-Afghānī had been expelled from Egypt by the Khedive Tawfīq and reached Paris via India. ʿAbduh joined him there after being expelled from Cairo in the wake of the ʿUrābī Revolt and the British occupation in 1882.[36]

The following argumentation is almost paradigmatic in their writing: In order to recover the former grandeur and prestige that had afforded them world dominance (described in colourful terms), Muslims would have to reflect on the virtues of unity and cooperation (*al-ittifāq wa-l-taḍāfur*), which were among the most powerful pillars of the Muḥammadan denomination (*al-dīyāna al-muḥammadiyya*). Only in doing so would it be possible to overcome their present inferiority in science and industry and once again unite Muslims from Edirne to Peshawar under the banner of the Koran. The model to be followed was Czarist Russia, also poor and backward compared to Europe, but which through unity and an unbending self-assertion had managed to raise alarm bells across the European continent.[37]

The call for *al-waḥda al-islāmiyya* (thus the title of the article just quoted) and the struggle against European predominance is a leitmotif that runs through the entire journal.[38] Nowhere, however, is there explicit mention of a rapprochement between Sunnis and Shiites. The closest al-Afghānī and ʿAbduh came to this aspiration was their call for the (Shiite) Persians to reach an agreement with the (Sunni) Afghans, but even this article assiduously avoided mention of the two denominations by name, preferring instead to stress their common opposition to British politics.[39] Particularly with respect to Egypt and the Sudan, the fight against colonialism formed the main emphasis

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[36] Concerning ʿAbduh (1849–1905), see *EI*[2] VII/418–20 (J. Schacht); Hourani: *Arabic Thought*, 130–60, as well as the three-volume biography by Muḥammad Rashīd Riḍā: *Tārīkh al-ustādh al-imām al-shaykh Muḥammad ʿAbduh*, Cairo 1350/1931.

[37] *al-ʿUrwa al-wuthqā* (re-printed Cairo 1957), 67–73; a complete French translation of this article by Marcel Colombe is in *Orient* (Paris) 6/1962/22/139–47, English excerpts can be found in Landau: *Politics*, 318–20 (cf. also ibid., 16–18). Rather ironically, this positive image of Russia as a shining example of modernization was to change thoroughly two decades later, during the Russo-Japanese war in 1904/05, when substantial parts of the Muslim public sided with Japan; cf. K. Kreiser: "Der japanische Sieg über Rußland (1905) und sein Echo under den Muslimen", *WI* 21/1981/209–39, and M.F. Laffan: "Mustafa and the Mikado. A. Francophile Egyptian's Turn to Meiji Japan", *Japanese Studies* 19/1999/269–86 (about Muṣṭafā Kāmil).

[38] *al-ʿUrwa al-wuthqā*, 13–22 (a call for reform of the *umma*), 33–35 (reasons for the downfall of the Muslims), 39–48 (fight against fanaticism/*taʿaṣṣub*), 125–27 (based upon Koran 3/105).

[39] Ibid., 106–10; the unification of the German empire in 1871, incidentally, served as the model for an agreement that could lead to unity.

in the news reports carried in *al-ʿUrwa al-wuthqā*.[40] Less an expression of effort in the direction of inner-Islamic ecumenical reconciliation, to which al-Afghānī personally was apparently absolutely open-minded[41] and which he presumably took for granted in his construct of ideas, the publication must rather be seen as a classic example of an anti-imperialist argument couched in religious terms.

As indicated, these calls did not evoke any noticeable resonance among Shiite scholars. It was not so much the endeavour itself, which aimed at unifying the Muslims in the face of an external threat, that may have been decisive for their reserved attitude, as rather the auspices under which this unity should be effected. Sultan ʿAbdülḥamīd II had discovered pan-Islamic propaganda for his own political purposes and essentially subsumed it in the service of his government, an effort in which numerous activists, among them al-Afghānī and ʿAbduh, supported him.[42] This meant, however, that the sovereignty over the all-encompassing *umma* aspired to, would rest with the Sunni Ottoman caliph, a concept in which the Shiites for familiar reasons could hardly find anything positive. Yet other obstacles were al-Afghānī's denial of his Shiite origin and the fact that his (and ʿAbduh's) religious profession had generally not been elevated above all doubt.[43]

The only appreciable Persian contribution to that stage of pan-Islamic activity came, as might be expected, not from a religious scholar, but from a member of the Qājārī dynasty, Abū l-Ḥasan Mīrzā Shaykh al-Raʾīs, who had been through theological training, though. In a treatise entitled *Etteḥād-e Eslām*, published in Bombay in 1894, he discussed in detail the relationship between Sunnis and Shiites. He did this, however, not so much on a doctrinal-theological level but on a diplomatic-political one. His main motivation was to bring about some type of equilibrium between the governments of the Ottoman Empire and Qājār Iran. He also supported recognition of both the mundane and the spiritual sovereignty of the Ottoman sul-

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[40] Ibid., 153–423; as is generally known, the British had occupied Egypt two years earlier. Regarding the dates and circumstances of the 1957 reissue of the journal, see below, p. 280.

[41] Landau: *Politics*, 15f.; Keddie: *Sayyid Jamāl ad-Dīn "al-Afghānī"*, 433.

[42] Landau: *Politics*, 9–72; Kramer: *Islam Assembled*, 19f.; cf. also J. Jankowski: "Ottomanism and Arabism in Egypt, 1860–1914", *MW* 70/1980/226–59.

[43] E. Kedourie: *Afghani and ʿAbduh. An Essay on Religious Unbelief and Political Activism in Modern Islam*, London 1966; W. Ende: "Waren Ǧamāladdīn al-Afġānī und Muḥammad ʿAbduh Agnostiker?" in: W. Voigt (ed.): *XVII. Deutscher Orientalistentag (. . .)*, Wiesbaden 1969, 650–59.

tan, a fact that necessarily rendered his initiative unacceptable to the Shiite *ʿulamāʾ*.[44] Remarkably enough, though, he assured the reader that he neither wanted to convert Sunnis to Shiites nor vice versa; this asseveration was to become one of the most frequently recurring arguments of the ecumenical discussion in the last hundred years.[45]

The reserve of Shiite authors does not mean, on the other hand, that a pan-Islamic initiative could automatically count on the support of the Shiites merely because it voiced opposition to the Ottomans. The best-known example in this regard is the Syrian ʿAbd al-Raḥmān al-Kawākibī and his fictitious report of an Islamic congress, *Umm al-qurā*, which appeared around the turn of the twentieth century.[46] In this conference set in Mecca (hence the book's title), he made a *mujtahid tabrīzī* attend as the representative of the *madhhab Jaʿfar* (sic!). The delegate lamented over the fragmentation of Islam into its different schools and sects and called for applying the spirit of *ijtihād* in order to overcome the belief in authority and blind imitation (*taqlīd*) that accompanied this fragmentation.[47] Furthermore, the statutes of the organization set up by the participants—the "Society for the Instruction of the Professors of Unity" (*Jamʿiyyat taʿlīm al-muwaḥḥidīn*)—contained an article in which it is stressed explicitly that this society gave no preference to any particular Islamic school of law (*madhhab*) or party (*shīʿa*).[48] However, the suggestion made at the end of the book was far from corresponding to the Shiites' ideal of a just and legitimate government: an Arab caliph from the tribe of Quraysh was to be in-stalled whose term of office was limited to three years,

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[44] A reprint of this book appeared in 1984 in Tehran; in regard to the author and his work, cf. M. Kia: "Pan-Islamism in Late Nineteenth Century Iran", *MES* 32/1996/30–52, esp. 39ff.; further Landau: *Politics*, 31f.; Kramer: *Islam Assembled*, 22–24; Hairi: *Shīʿism and Constitutionalism in Iran*, 80 with note 98; H. Algar: *Religion and State in Iran 1785–1906 (. . .)*, Berkeley 1969, 228f. Also the diplomatic reconciliation of the two countries does not seem to have gone any further than a futile visit by Moẓaffar al-Dīn Shāh to Istanbul in 1900, see Landau, 42f.; regarding the Ottoman government's anti-Shiite policies toward the Iraqi Shiites, cf. Deringil: "The Struggle Against Shiism in Hamidian Iraq", passim.

[45] Kia: "Pan-Islamism" (as in the previous note), 46f.; see also below, pp. 229–32.

[46] Regarding him (1849/54–1902) see *EI*² IV/775f. (S. Haim); *MMS* 445f.; OE II/405f. (E.E. Shahin); Kramer: *Islam Assembled*, 30–35; Schulze: *Internationalismus*, 55–58; Amīn: *Ẓuʿamāʾ al-iṣlāḥ*, 249–79; Nazīh Kabbāra: *ʿAbd al-Raḥmān al-Kawākibī. Ḥayātuhu wa-ʿaṣruhu wa-ārāʾuhu*, Tripoli (Lebanon) 1415/1995; Saʿd Zaghlūl al-Kawākibī: *ʿAbd ar-Raḥmān al-Kawākibī. al-Sīra al-dhātiyya*, Beirut 1998; R. Raz: "Interpretations of Kawakibi's Thought, 1950–1980s", *MES* 32/1996/179–90.

[47] al-Kawākibī: "Umm al-qurā", 352–57.

[48] Ibid., 380.

whose political power was restricted to the Ḥijāz, and whose authority was spiritual only.[49] Finally, by limiting in this report the area of the Shiites' presence to Persia and the region around the Caspian Sea, al-Kawākibī himself ruled the Shiites quite clearly out of any leadership role and dismissed their claims to govern.[50] Indelible as al-Kawākibī's place in the development of the idea of the Muslim congress as well as in the genesis of Arab nationalism may be, his work had no consequences for the *taqrīb* movement.

The idea of pan-Islam lived to a great degree through the initiatives and suggestions of individuals whose widespread geographic distribution and social, religious and intellectual diversity created a dense and sometimes opaque web of activities.[51] Unlike al-Afghānī, ʿAbduh and al-Kawākibī, who left a significant mark on the future path of Islamic intellectual history, the last case to be mentioned in this connection has remained unknown to a large extent, and also serves as an example of just how bizarre some activists could be. Mīrzā Moḥammad Bāqer Bawānātī, a multi-lingual eccentric, had grown up as a Shiite and found his way back to a very idiosyncratic version of Islam by way of both Christianity and Judaism.[52] In the first volume of his biography of Muḥammad ʿAbduh, Muḥammad Rashīd Riḍā reports about this *literatus* who also appeared under the name Ebrāhīm Jān Moʿaṭṭar and from whose tireless endeavours at converting others to Islam, apparently not even the British Queen Victoria was safe.[53] In 1884, Bawānātī, ʿAbduh and other supporters set up a secret society in Beirut that sought to bring about a rapprochement among Islam, Christianity and Judaism. In our context, this society is remarkable because—to the best of my knowledge—the term "rapprochement" (*taqrīb*) emerged explicitly for the very first time from its

[49] Ibid., 397f.

[50] Ibid., 353, 354f.; it is remarkable that in this passage, al-Kawākibī puts the eulogy to the names of Abū Bakr and ʿUmar in the mouth of the Shiite delegate (p. 355, last line).

[51] Cf. Schulze: *Internationalismus*, 47–86; Landau: *Politics*, passim.

[52] In regard to him (ca. 1814/20–1892/93), see the article "Bavānātī", *EIr* III/874f. (Ī. Afshār); Strauss: "19th-Century Ottoman and Iranian Encounters", passim; see also Keddie: *Sayyid Jamāl ad-Dīn "al-Afghānī"*, 23f.

[53] Rashīd Riḍā: *Tārīkh al-ustādh al-imām al-shaykh Muḥammad ʿAbduh*, Cairo 1350/1931, I/817–22 (here he also explicitly discusses the allegedly successful conversion of Aḥmed Midḥat Efendi); a photograph that shows him with ʿAbduh and others in Beirut in 1885 can be found in Ī. Afshār: "Ibrāhīm Jān Moʿaṭṭar", in: idem: *Sawād wa bayāż*, Teheran 1344sh/1965, I/1–45, on 5.

activities; other pan-Islamic activists had usually referred to *ittiḥād* or *waḥda* (*islāmiyya*).

The first important Sunni scholar who, beyond very general pan-Islamic calls, clearly made relations with the Shiites an issue for public debate was the just-mentioned Muḥammad Rashīd Riḍā, who decades later alluded to his efforts with a considerable degree of pride.[54] His medium was the magazine *al-Manār* ("The Lighthouse"), founded by him in March 1898, which soon became the most influential and widespread mouthpiece of the reformist Salafiyya movement.[55] The latter mainly consisted of scholars and intellectuals who strove to revive a kind of pristine form of Islam in order to counter the growing European dominance over most of the Islamic world.[56] This ambitious aim was to be achieved above all in two ways: First, by means of an adaptation of Islamic law to contemporary needs and a modern interpretation of Islamic jurisprudence. An essential tool in this regard was the issuing of legal judgements (*fatwā*s) and the resuscitation of *ijtihād*, more or less in dissociation from the traditional class of *'ulamā'*. More than any other Salafiyya protagonist, Rashīd Riḍā made ample use of this device in the columns of his journal.[57] And secondly, every effort was to be undertaken to close the ranks of the Muslims

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[54] Rashīd Riḍā: *al-Sunna wa-l-shī'a*, 14–20; regarding him (1865–1935) in general, see *EI*[2] VIII/446–48 (W. Ende) and the literature given there; moreover, the books mentioned in the bibliographies of Darnīqa, al-Marrākushī and al-Shawābika as well as the introduction of Yūsuf Ḥusayn Ībish to *Maqālāt al-Shaykh Rashīd Riḍā al-siyāsiyya*, I/5–14; his early years are treated by E. Sirriyeh: "Rashīd Riḍā's Autobiography of the Syrian Years, 1865–1897", *Arabic and Middle Eastern Literatures* 3/2000/179–94; regarding Rashīd Riḍā's later transformation to one of the most influential critics of the Shia, see below, pp. 88ff.

[55] "al-Manār", *EI*[2] VI/360f. (J. Jomier) and the literature mentioned there; additionally, al-Jundī: *Tārīkh al-ṣiḥāfa al-islāmiyya*, vol. 1 passim; al-Marrākushī: *Tafkīr*, passim; in January 1998, exactly 100 years after Rashīd Riḍā, a journal called *al-Manār al-jadīd* was founded in Cairo by some well-known Islamist intellectuals such as Muḥammad 'Imāra, Ṭāriq al-Bishrī, Yūsuf al-Qaraḍāwī, etc.; cf. A. Hamzawy: "Die Zeitschrift 'al-Manār al-ǧadīd' oder die Wiederentdeckung der Reformtradition (. . .)", in: A. Hartmann (ed.): *Geschichte und Erinnerung im Islam*, Göttingen 2004, 95–116.

[56] Cf. Skovgaard-Petersen: *Defining Islam*, 65–75; regarding the Salafiyya in general, see *EI*[2] VIII/900–09 (P. Shinar/W. Ende); Commins: *Islamic Reform*, passim, esp. 34ff.; Schulze: *Internationalismus*, index. s.v.; Ende: *Arabische Nation*, 91ff.; I. Weismann: *Taste of Modernity. Sufism, Salafiyya, and Arabism in Late Ottoman Damascus*, Leiden 2001, index, s.v. and idem: "Between Ṣūfī Reformism and Modernist Rationalism—a Reappraisal of the Origins of the Salafiyya from the Damascene Angle", *WI* 41/2001/206–37.

[57] His *fatwā*s were collected and edited by Ṣalāḥ al-Dīn Munajjid, Beirut 1390–91/1970–71 (6 vols.).

and to forge a united front against European colonialism—precisely what al-Kawākibī, ʿAbduh and al-Afghānī had stood up for.

It is therefore not the least surprising that Rashīd Riḍā in his journal, which was expressly intended to act in the spirit of al-Afghānī's and ʿAbduh's Paris publication of 1884,[58] clearly supported their pan-Islamic ideals. The clearest instance was already in December 1898 when, to further the cause of Islamic unity, he suggested in a detailed article the creation in Mecca of an Islamic society under the protection of the caliph. To achieve this, the tenets of belief (*ʿaqāʾid*), precepts (*aḥkām*) as well as the language of the Muslims should be unified.[59] From about 1901, contact with the Shia played a continuous role in the columns of the journal, though not a paramount one. Again it was by issuing appropriate *fatwā*s that Rashīd Riḍā delved decisively into concrete problems. When asked, for instance, whether a Shiite man was allowed to marry a Sunni woman—the underlying question of course being whether Shiites were to be considered Muslims at all—his reply was unequivocally affirmative. He added that the scholars of the (Sunni) legal schools agreed that the differences found in the Shiite doctrine did not amount to issues of belief or unbelief and, moreover, that the *umma* was in more urgent need of mutual consideration and unity than ever. The mutual aversion and distance that had plagued the Muslims had been a mistake and was now being recognized as such.[60]

In fact, Rashīd Riḍā was not prepared to recognize as Muslims all groupings that had split off from Shiism. The followers of the Bābiyya, for example, were for him outside the pale.[61] On the other hand, when necessary, he defended the Imāmiyya against attacks from the ranks of his own Sunni brethren. When confessionally motivated riots broke out in Homs in 1901, Rashīd Riḍā lashed out at "these hotheads and fanatics" who proved to be the true sources of division of the community of believers rather than contributing to the efforts toward unity.[62] In the case of the Indian scholar ʿAbd al-Ḥaqq al-

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[58] "*li-iḥyāʾ taʿālīm al-ʿurwa al-wuthqā*": *al-Manār* 2/22 (Aug. 1899), 340.

[59] Ibid., 1/39 (Dec. 1898), 764–71; cf. Kramer: *Islam Assembled*, 27f.; see also *al-Manār* 1/29 (Sep. 1898), 547–51 (demand for an expansion of the educational system as a prerequisite for *ittiḥād*); 1/44 (Jan. 1899), 851–54 (historical events that led to the split); 2/30 (Oct. 1899), 475–79.

[60] Ibid., 7/12 (Aug. 1904), in 462; other *fatwā*s: 7/5 (May 1904), 182f.; 13/12 (Jan. 1911), 897–906.

[61] Ibid., 12/10 (Nov. 1909), 755.

[62] Ibid., 4/3 (Apr. 1901), 116f.; the issue was the question of the *masḥ ʿalā l-khuffayn* (see above, p. 22).

Aʿẓamī, he similarly berated those "sheikhs who pretend to be legists" (*mashāyikh mutafaqqihīn*), after the *ʿālim* had been declared an unbeliever only because he had referred to the Shiites in a sermon as "our brothers".[63] Such sentiments produced positive reverberation from among the Shiite readers of the *Manār*, and their letters of appreciation, in which Rashīd Riḍā felt his efforts toward Islamic unity duly appreciated, were quoted by him verbatim and certainly not without satisfaction.[64]

On the Shiite side, scholars were extremely reserved regarding the approaches of pan-Islam. It was not until the events of the Constitutional Revolution in Iran that began in 1905, in which the *ʿulamāʾ* played a long-term, active political role for the first time in the modern era,[65] that some of them initiated contacts with the Sunni authorities of the Ottoman Empire. The position of the Iranian clergy toward the question of the legitimacy and necessity of a constitution was divided. A group of *ʿulamāʾ* around Sheikh Faẓlollāh Nūrī condemned the constitution as being contrary to the *sharīʿa* and fought bitterly against it, which led to their spokesman being hanged publicly in July 1909.[66] In contrast, many notable scholars, especially in

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[63] Ibid., 8/3 (April 1905), 116f.; cf. Goldziher: *Vorlesungen über den Islam*, 387 note 104; Darnīqa: *al-Sayyid Muḥammad Rashīd Riḍā*, 147–62, esp. 149; violent clashes also occurred in other locations, cf. regarding the confrontation in Bukhara in 1910: Adam: *Rußlandmuslime*, 400–10; Ṣadr al-Dīn ʿAynī: "Nezāʿ-e shīʿe wa sonnī dar Bukhārā, yek tawṭiʾe", *Majalle-ye moṭālaʿāt-e Āsyā-ye markazī wa Qafqās* (Teheran) 2/1993/2/37–48; *RMM* 10/1907/345–48; for examples of local Sunni-Shiite reconciliation, see *RMM* 1/1906/115–17 and 8/1907/534.

[64] See, for example, *al-Manār* 7/1 (Mar. 1904), 66–68 and 7/14 (Sep. 1904), 554f.; Rashīd Riḍā: *al-Sunna wa-l-shīʿa*, 16.

[65] A kind of dress rehearsal for this took place in 1891/92 in the protest against the concession that Nāṣer al-Dīn Shāh had granted the British Imperial Tobacco Corporation of Persia; following a *fatwā* by the *Marjaʿ al-taqlīd* Mīrzā Ḥasan al-Shīrāzī, who resided in Sāmarrāʾ (1815–1895; see *RF* II/769f.; *ṬASh* I/1, 436–41; Bakhshāyeshī: *Foqahā*, 355–92; *EIr* XII/37–40 [H. Algar]; Litvak: *Shiʿi Scholars*, 83–90; W. Ende: "Der amtsmüde Ayatollah", in: G. Selz [ed.]: *Festschrift für Burkhart Kienast zu seinem 70. Geburtstage dargebracht von Freunden, Schülern und Kollegen*, Münster 2003, 51–64), which involved a general boycott of tobacco, the concession was revoked in January 1892; see in this regard the details in N.R. Keddie: *Religion and Rebellion in Iran. The Tobacco Protest of 1891–1892*, London 1966; regarding the institution of the *Marjaʿ al-taqlīd*, see the article in *EI*² VI/548–56 (J. Calmard) as well as A.K. Moussavi: "The Institutionalization of Marjaʿ-i Taqlid in the Nineteenth Century Shīʿite Community", *MW* 84/1994/279–99; during this affair, al-Shīrāzī had also been in contact with Jamāl al-Dīn al-Afghānī, cf. Amanat: "In Between the Madrasa", 120.

[66] Regarding Nūrī (b. 1843/44), see *EI*² VIII/140 (V. Martin) and *RF* III/1308f.; S.A. Arjomand: "The Ulama's Traditional Opposition to Parliamentarism: 1907–1909",

the Shiite *ʿatabāt* in Iraq, struggled with equal intensity in favour of a constitutional government. They did this much less out of a fundamentally democratic conviction than to diminish the Shāh's domination, which they considered despotic.

The situation came to a head when the constitution that had been wrested from Moẓaffar al-Dīn Shāh in December 1906 was annulled only two years later by his son and successor Moḥammad ʿAlī Shāh, whereupon the stridency of the conflict increased significantly. The two Āyatollāhs Muḥammad Kāẓim al-Khurāsānī and ʿAbdallāh al-Māzandarānī played a decisive role in these events, and in their efforts to find allies in the fight against the Shāh, they even turned to the Ottoman Sultan Meḥmed V, explicitly addressing him in their correspondence of May 1909 as "our caliph" (*khalīfatunā*).[67] It is doubtful whether any kind of formal recognition of the legitimacy of the Sunni ruler was actually implied by this action.[68] In general, steps like this, with obvious political calculations in the background, are hardly to be understood as a theologically motivated rapprochement in the true sense.

Attempts of this type definitely existed, though. One need only think of the reform journal *al-ʿIlm*, published by Hibat al-Dīn al-Shahrastānī,[69] or the activity of the constitutional union *Anjoman-e saʿādat* based in Istanbul, which, in addition to its constitution-related efforts, devoted its endeavours to the relationship between Sunnis and Shiites.[70] The

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MES 17/1981/174–90; V.A. Martin: "Shaykh Fazlallah Nuri and the Iranian Revolution 1905–09", *MES* 23/1987/39–53; regarding the general progress of the Constitutional Revolution, see *EIr* VI/163–216 (A. Amanat et al.); V.A. Martin: *Islam and Modernism: the Iranian Revolution of 1906*, London 1989; M. Bayat: *Iran's First Revolution: Shiʿism and the Constitutional Revolution of 1905–09*, New York 1992.

[67] *al-ʿIrfān* 1/5 (May 1909), 240f.; English translation in Hairi: *Shīʿism and Constitutionalism in Iran*, 242f.; see, in general, ibid., 87–98 as well as Luizard: *Formation*, 242–83. Already in the previous year, the *ʿulamāʾ* had sent a telegram to the former Sultan ʿAbdülḥamīd II; its authenticity, however, has never been verified, see Hairi, 88f.; regarding al-Khurāsānī (1839–1911) see *EI*² V/61f. (A.H. Hairi); *EIr* I/732–35 (A.H. Hairi/S. Murata); Bakhshāyeshī: *Foqahā*, 393–402; ʿAbd al-Raḥīm Muḥammad ʿAlī: *al-Muṣliḥ al-mujāhid Muḥammad Kāẓim al-Khurāsānī*, Najaf 1973 (esp. 65–97); ʿAbd al-Ḥosayn Majīd Kafaʾī: *Margī dar nūr. Ẕendegānī-ye Ākhūnd Khorāsānī*, Tehran 1359sh/1980; regarding al-Māzandarānī (1840–1912), see *EIr* I/200–02 (H. Algar); *ṬASh* I.3/1219f. and *RF* III/1138f.

[68] Hairi: *Shīʿism and Constitutionalism*, 125.

[69] dī Ṭarrāzī: *Tārikh al-ṣiḥāfa al-ʿarabiyya*, I/40f.; regarding al-Shahrastānī (1884–1967), see *EI*² IX/216f. (W. Ende); *RF* II/761f.; *MMI* III/438–41; *ṬASh* I.4/1413–18; Khāqānī: *Shuʿarāʾ*, X/65–94; obituary in *al-ʿIrfān* 55/3–4 (Aug.–Sep. 1967), 399; also *Mishkāt* 31/1991/105–18; Ḥasan al-Amīn in *al-ʿIrfān* 58/5 (Sep. 1970), 501–05.

[70] *RMM* 11/1910/117–20; in general, see the article "Anjoman-e saʿādat", *EIr* II/89

most far-reaching initiative in this direction was probably a declaration signed by eight Shiite *ʿulamāʾ* that spoke matter-of-factly about "five Islamic groups" (*al-firaq al-islāmiyya al-khamsa*) and—referring to Koran verse 3/103—demanded an outward-looking "unity of all Muslims" (*ittiḥād kāffat al-muslimīn*), while simultaneously respecting the independence of every group within Islam.[71]

As promising as these pronouncements were, what they called for was not meant to be. The Young Turks' increasingly nationalistic Turkification policy, as well as the sudden demise of the two central figures of the Shiite side—al-Khurāsānī died in December 1911, and al-Māzandarānī only a few months later—effectively muted them. The sole remaining *Marjaʿ al-taqlīd*, Muḥammad Kāẓim Yazdī, who had been a declared opponent of the constitutional movement from its outset, assumed a far more quietist attitude in political affairs.[72]

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Although a suitable forum for a permanent dialogue between Sunni and Shiite scholars had not yet been found, the activities outlined here were to be of considerable significance for the *taqrīb* ideas that gained ground after the First World War. With their journal *al-ʿUrwa al-wuthqā*, al-Afghānī and ʿAbduh had created a model that would be reactivated by Muslim ecumenical thinkers over half a century later, and al-Kawākibī's concept of an Islamic congress, an almost utopian idea when it was conceived, soon became reality in various manifestations. Likewise, the Shiite *ʿulamāʾ* finally gave to understand that

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(H. Algar); A. Pistor-Hatam: *Iran und die Reformbewegung im Osmanischen Reich (. . .)*, Berlin 1992, 219–25; H. Djoudaki: "L'Anjoman-e Saʿādat des Iraniens d'Istanbul", in: Th. Zarcone/F. Zarinebaf (eds.): *Les Iraniens d'Istanbul*, Paris et al. 1993, 85–90; Luizard: *Formation*, 271f.; Nakash gives information concerning the meaning of the constitutional movement in the Ottoman Empire and the Young Turk revolution for the Iraqi Shia: *The Shiʿis of Iraq*, 50–55.

[71] *al-ʿIrfān* 3/4 (Feb. 1911), 159f.; French translation in *RMM* 13/1911/384–87; also al-Khurāsānī and al-Māzandarānī were among the signers.

[72] Concerning him (1831–1919), see Bakhshāyeshī: *Foqahāʾ*, 419–28; Hairi: *Shīʿism and Constitutionalism*, index, s.v.; the often quoted *jihād* calls of the Ottoman Empire, which the Shiite *ʿulamāʾ* endorsed, should not be given undue significance, especially as they were made at the urging of the German Empire; see W. Ende: "Iraq in World War I: The Turks, the Germans and the Shiʿite Mujtahids' Call for Jihad", in: R. Peters (ed.): *Proceedings of the Ninth Congress of the Union Européenne des Arabisants et Islamisants (. . .)*, Leiden 1981, 57–71; H.L. Müller: *Islam, ǧihād („Heiliger Krieg") und Deutsches Reich. Ein Nachspiel zur wilhelminischen Weltpolitik im Maghreb 1914–1918*, Frankfurt/M. 1991; P. Heine: "C. Snouck Hurgronje versus C.H. Becker. Ein Beitrag zur Geschichte der angewandten Orientalistik", *WI* 23–24/1984/378–87.

also in their view the gulf between Sunnism and Shiism was not ineluctably insurmountable.

As with the advances, the main characteristics of the constraints on inner-Islamic ecumenical endeavours also presented themselves at this early stage. The most significant of these was the clear connection between theological pronouncements and the specific political scene of the moment.

Like the conference of Najaf convened by Nādir Shāh, pan-Islamic appeals or the behaviour of Shiite scholars in the Iraqi pilgrimage sites can only be understood against the backdrop of the prevailing politics,[73] a situation that was to remain unchanged in the *taqrīb* debates of the twentieth century. In this respect, these activities that decidedly bore the mark of being an *inner*-Islamic reform movement are in no way different from the pan-Islamic congress concept. This activity made the position of Islam in the international power structure a main feature of its platform and strove for a political strengthening of Muslims in dealings with non-Muslim rulers.

Thus it should hardly be surprising that the convening of Muslim conferences with international participation, whose goal was to promote the forging of personal contacts, created the precursor necessary to breathe life into the Shiite-Sunni dialogue. In the course of these conferences, an institution emerged as a possible forum for this debate. Though it had not played any previous role in this discussion, in the first half of the twentieth century it grew in status to become *the* Sunni scholarly venue and as such, emerged as the natural interlocutor for Shiite scholars: Cairo's Azhar University.

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[73] Rashīd Riḍā's articles about Shiism in the early volumes of *Manār* that focused on legal questions rather than the political topics of the day can be regarded as exceptions.

CHAPTER TWO

THE AZHAR REFORM AND SHIISM AT THE BEGINNING OF THE TWENTIETH CENTURY

The nineteenth century was a time of far-reaching change for Egyptian scholars and their institutions. By clearly dissociating themselves from mystic brotherhoods and as a result of their social and economic relationships to the neo-Mamluk rulers, the *ʿulamāʾ* had managed since the eighteenth century to establish a politically powerful position. Their role not only outlasted Napoleon's occupation of the country from 1798 to 1801 but was actually strengthened by it and even experienced a brief "golden age".[1] In fact, the prestige of the scholars was so great that one of them, the renowned historiographer ʿAbd al-Raḥmān al-Jabartī, ranked them immediately after the prophets and friends of God, and before all rulers, kings and sultans.[2]

The peak of their influence, however, was not to last long. Only a few years after his assumption of office, Muḥammad ʿAlī, who had still required the legitimization of the *ʿulamāʾ* at his enthronement, dismissed one of their most prominent representatives, the *naqīb al-ashrāf* ʿUmar Makram.[3] In 1811, when he finally did away with the system of tax concessions (*iltizām*)[4] and confiscated the profits of the pious endowments (*awqāf khayriyya*), he robbed the scholars of their economic basis in one stroke and plunged them into a long stage of economic ruin and social insignificance. The former soon resulted in most mosques and madrasahs going to rack and ruin,[5] and the latter was later intensified and extended by the emergence of a new class of intellectuals. Independent of the *ʿulamāʾ* as they were and aided by

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[1] Crecelius: "Nonideological Responses", 173; cf. for this section in general ibid., 167–90 and Schulze: *Internationalismus*, 17–46.

[2] Schulze, 22; cf. the English translation: *ʿAbd ar-Raḥmān al-Jabartī's History of Egypt*, ed. by Thomas Philipp, Stuttgart 1994, I/10–15; regarding al-Jabartī (1754–1825/26) see *EI*² II/355–57 (D. Ayalon).

[3] Regarding the office of the "Leader of the Prophet's descendants", see M. Winter: "The *ashrāf* and *niqābat al-ashrāf* in Egypt in Ottoman and Modern Times", *AAS* 19/1985/17–41; concerning ʿUmar Makram ibid., 36ff.

[4] See the article "Iltizām", *EI*² III/1154f. (G. Baer) and the literature mentioned therein.

[5] Cf. the observations of European travelers quoted in Schulze: *Internationalismus*, 24.

the general spread of the printing press, they ultimately brought the scholars' monopoly over knowledge into question.[6]

The Azhar University was not spared the general decline of the Islamic institutions. Its size, however, enabled it to endure the economic losses better than others. Almost paradoxically, by the end of this process, the Azhar and its rector had become the dominating institution in Egypt.[7] The University owed its renaissance, which took place around the turn of the nineteenth to the twentieth century within less than two decades, to the fact that the disappearance of former structures of religious learning engendered a gradual centralization of the *ʿulamāʾ* in the direction of the Azhar. Furthermore, unlike other institutions that had enjoyed influence previously, the University never ceased to remain under the control of autochthonous Egyptian scholars: at no time had a Turkish *ʿālim* held the office of the *Shaykh al-Azhar*, a post that came into existence at the end of the seventeenth century.[8] As the significance of other institutions faded away, the Azhar, and in particular its rector, became the hub of the spiritual establishment of Egypt.

After decades of withdrawal and opposition, from about 1870 the scholars themselves began to see the necessity of reforms in their traditional fields of endeavour, the educational system and theological learning. These reforms may ultimately be understood as a response to the social and economic pressure that weighed upon the *ʿulamāʾ*.[9] After the centralization process, here was a second cornerstone for the University's (re-)gaining its vigour.

The *spiritus rector* of the reform project that went on the offensive in 1895 (an earlier attempt in 1872 had essentially been a failure) was a scholar already identified in the preceding chapter as one of the leading characters of pan-Islam: Muḥammad ʿAbduh, who was allowed

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[6] Ibid., 27 and 37, for a discussion of the intellectuals' (*mufakkirūn*) description of themselves; on the role of the printing press in the Middle East in the nineteenth century cf. the essays in M. Harbsmeier (ed.): *The Introduction of the Printing Press in the Middle East*, Oslo 1997 and F. Robinson: "Technology and Religious Change. Islam and the Impact of Print", *Modern Asian Studies* 27/1993/229–51.

[7] Cf. concerning the following, Crecelius: "Emergence", passim; the literature about the Azhar in general is almost impossible to keep track of; cf. as the most important works in Western languages: Dodge: *al-Azhar*; Eccel: *Egypt*; Lemke: *Šaltūt* and Zeghal: *Gardiens*.

[8] Crecelius: "Emergence", 111; ʿAbd al-ʿAẓīm lists the biographies of the rectors of the Azhar up to the twentieth century: *Mashyakhat al-Azhar*, vol. 1 passim.

[9] Crecelius: "Nonideological Responses", 191 judges soberly: " 'Islamic' reform has thus more often been a response to social and economic pressures than an ideological commitment to change".

to return to Egypt in 1888 and served as State Muftī of Egypt from 1899 until his death in 1905.[10] Compared to his vision regarding the introduction of a new, modernist spirit at the University, the actual achievements appear quite modest, and sometimes they even had to be pushed through against bitter resistance within the Azhar itself. Nevertheless, the introduction of what might be termed "modern sciences"[11] as well as changes on the organizational level should not be underestimated because the first step was undertaken in a process that ended in 1961 with the loss of its exclusively theological character and the transformation of the Azhar into a modern university.[12]

As a by-product, these reforms were highly important for the scholars' self-perception. From now on, the University would at last be generally recognized as the highest Islamic institution in Egypt, and its rector officially became the highest Muslim dignitary of the country. Moreover, at the end of the First World War, when the Ottoman *ʿulamāʾ* ceased to be the supreme Sunni authority, the Azhar was in a position to fill the gap and assume a leading role that extended beyond Egypt throughout the entire Sunni-Muslim world and that went largely unchallenged until the second half of the twentieth century.

Soon the Azhar undertook several steps to consolidate its aspiration to international recognition exemplified by the Caliphate Congress of 1926 that will be discussed later, the dispatch of official delegations to numerous Islamic countries and of study missions to European universities, and the establishment of relations with countries in the non-Islamic world.[13] Outwardly, the new position (and reputation) of the Azhar scholars became visible through the creation in 1911 of the "Council of Supreme *ʿulamāʾ*" (*hayʾat*—later *jamāʿat*—*kibār al-ʿulamāʾ*).[14] The thirty members of the council, the number of which increased over time, were not only commissioned by law to oversee the religious

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[10] Cf. above, p. 35 note 36; on ʿAbduh's period of office as Muftī cf. Skovgaard-Petersen: *Defining Islam*, 119–33. A survey of the most important stages of the Azhar reform until the middle of the twentieth century is found in the article "al-Azhar", *EI*[2] I/813–21, esp. 817–19 (J. Jomier); for the general background up to the First World War, cf. Delanoue: "L'enseignement religieux", passim; Hatina: "Historical Legacy", 52–55; and Lemke: *Šaltūt*, 20–33.

[11] Regarding this, Lemke, 32 with note 2.

[12] Ibid., 32f.

[13] Ibrāhīm al-Jibālī (ed.): *al-Baʿtha al-azhariyya ilā l-Hind. (. . .)*, Cairo 1937; see also *OM* 15/1935/448; Lemke: *Šaltūt*, 105–07, 116; concerning the Caliphate Congress, see below, p. 86.

[14] Lemke, 129–38; Skovgaard-Petersen: *Defining Islam*, 146–50; cf. also *MA* 66/5 (Nov. 1993), 692–703.

standards of all other Egyptian *ʿulamāʾ* but were also granted the necessary disciplinary means to enforce their decisions. These included the authority to effectively destroy the professional career of anyone found guilty of deviating from official doctrine.[15] Thus the Azhar more or less made up through administrative channels for what the Shiite clergy had achieved in the course of a long, informal process: the creation of an independent, relatively clearly identifiable, quasi class of "clerics".

The new role of the Azhar within Sunni Islam bore consequences for the University's relations to the Shia. Individual, mostly younger and reform-oriented Shiite scholars began to perceive and acknowledge the modifications at the top of the Sunni hierarchy. Simultaneously, these reforms gave them reason to raise discreet questions regarding their own traditions for training young theologians.[16] One of the earliest comments on this subject probably came from the Iranian *ʿālim* Asad Allāh Māmaqānī, al-Khurāsānī's intermediary to the abovementioned *Anjoman-e saʿādat* in Istanbul. Already in 1910 he appears to have called for a thorough revision of the Shiite educational system based on ʿAbduh's model for the Azhar reform.[17]

Some years later, the Lebanese scholar Muḥsin Sharāra went even further. In a three-part philippic that appeared in 1928 in the journal *al-ʿIrfān*,[18] he railed against what he considered to be the disastrous conditions prevailing in Najaf.[19] In its first instalment, and with clearly ulterior motives, he presented the Azhar reform and Muḥammad ʿAbduh's role in it in detail. Sharāra quoted in full an article from

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[15] In particular, the case of ʿAlī ʿAbd al-Rāziq in the 1920s caused quite a stir in this regard; see below, pp. 86f.

[16] A survey of the genesis and development of Shiite institutions of learning is given by Calmard: "Les universités théologiques"; see also below, note 20.

[17] Arjomand: "Ideological Revolution", 183; regarding Māmaqānī (born 1886), see *RF* 396 (first edition), as well as al-Khāqānī: *Shuʿarāʾ*, X/89 (s.v. al-Shahrastānī); some brief, unflattering sentences about Māmaqānī were written by Āghā Bozorg al-Ṭehrānī: *Dharīʿa* VIII/294, who minced few words in stating that Māmaqānī's book *al-Dīn wa-l-shuʾūn* (printed in 1334/1915–16 in Istanbul) consisted of "slander and distortions".

[18] Cf. below, pp. 55f. note 22.

[19] *al-ʿIrfān* 16/1 (Aug. 1928), 95–100; 16/2 (Sep. 1928), 201–07 and 16/3 (Oct. 1928), 331–37; cf. the detailed analysis by Ende: "From Revolt to Resignation", passim, and Mervin: *Un réformisme chiite*, 216–21; concerning Sharāra (1901–1946), see Kaḥḥāla, VIII/185; *ASh* IX/48–50; *RF* II/724; al-Khāqānī: *Shuʿarāʾ*, VII/279–94; obituary by Muḥammad Jawād Mughniyya in *al-ʿIrfān* 33/1 (Dec. 1946), 82–86; Mervin, 430f.; a detailed analysis of the situation in Najaf in the nineteenth century and the development of the Shiite *ʿulamāʾ* there is provided by Litvak: *Shiʿi Scholars*, passim.

the Egyptian journal *al-Muqtaṭaf* that was anything but new and stated that it had made clear to him "where we stand today and where they (i.e. the reformers at the Azhar) stand today". By entitling this particular passage "Our Institutions of Theological Education: the Azhar and Najaf", he left no further doubt about at whom he was pointing with his series of articles, which appeared under the heading "Between Chaos and Correct Education".[20] The brash tone of the young *shaykh*'s attack produced a veritable scandal among his fellow *ʿulamāʾ* in Najaf, some of whom not even shrank from declaring him an infidel and demanding that he be killed. Hardly surprising, Sharāra's intervention did not lead to any tangible result.

More than a decade later, a reiteration of the criticism of the situation in Najaf appeared, again in the *ʿIrfān*, and again written by a Lebanese sheikh, this time ʿAlī al-Zayn. In words no less clear than those of his controversial predecessor, al-Zayn contended that only by imitating the Azhar could Najaf master the prevailing chaos (he also used the expression *al-fauḍā*) and maintain its esteemed position. His suggestion was to establish a program of visits and scholarly exchanges whose goal would be the unification of the two universities' curricula. Also, in the course of the proposed cooperation, yet another idea might be the foundation of a journal devoted to the issue of Islamic unity. Al-Zayn qualified the contentiousness of his concept, though, by demanding some sort of quid pro quo from the Azhar, for example the re-opening of *bāb al-ijtihād*.[21]

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[20] *al-ʿIrfān* 16/1 (Aug. 1928), 95–100 (quotations 98 and 97); the article "Iṣlāḥ al-Azhar" printed there on pp. 98–100 was borrowed from *al-Muqtaṭaf* 30/9 (Sep. 1905), 738–43; regarding the last-named journal (which appeared from 1876 to 1952) cf. N. Farag: *al-Muqtataf 1876–1900 (. . .)*, Ph.D. dissertation, Oxford 1969, D. Glass: "Die Zeitschrift al-Muqtaṭaf (1876–1952) und die Erneuerung der arabischen Sprache (. . .)", in: D. Bellmann (ed.): *Gedenkschrift Wolfgang Reuschel (. . .)*, Stuttgart 1994, 117–25, and above all eadem: *Arabische Zeitschriftenkommunikation im 19. und 20. Jahrhundert.* al-Muqtaṭaf—*Schule und Diskussionsforum der publizistisch-literarischen Öffentlichkeit von 1876–1925*, unpubl. Habilitationsschrift, University of Leipzig 1999 (scheduled to appear Würzburg 2004); regarding the educational system in Najaf cf. J. Berque: "Hier à Nağaf et Karbalā' ", *Arabica* 9/1962/325–42; P. Heine: "Traditionelle Formen und Institutionen schiitischer Erziehung in der Gegenwart am Beispiel der Stadt Nadjaf/Iraq", *Zeitschrift für Missionswissenschaft und Religionswissenschaft* 74/1990/204–18; Mervin: "La quête du savoir" and "The Clerics of Jabal ʿĀmil", passim; eadem: *Un réformisme chiite*, 61–108; Zuhayr al-Aʿrajī: "ad-Dirāsāt al-ʿilmiyya al-dīniyya ʿind al-muslimīn", *al-ʿIrfān* 76/1 (Jan. 1992), 21–29; 76/2 (Feb. 1992), 25–35; Jaʿfar al-Mahbūba: *Māḍī l-Najaf wa-ḥāḍiruhā*, I–III, Beirut 1406/1986 (first ed. 1934).

[21] Alī al-Zayn: "Bawādir al-iṣlāḥ fī jāmiʿat al-Najaf aw nahḍat Kāshif al-Ghiṭā' ", *al-ʿIrfān* 29/2 (Apr. 1939), 179–85, esp. 183; cf. also Muḥammad Jābir al-ʿĀmilī: "Ṣafaḥāt min tārīkh jabal ʿāmil", *al-ʿIrfān* 28/1 (Mar. 1938), 22–30, esp. 28 note 1

That al-Zayn did not have to face consequences after the publication of his article similar to those suffered by Sharāra was primarily due to his having taken pains to use greater reserve in tone than his predecessor. Neither article, however, can be considered as seriously motivated by the genuine desire to reach rapprochement with Sunni Islam. Both Sharāra and al-Zayn first and foremost had the internal reform of the Shiite centres of learning in Iraq in mind (neither of them had ever visited the Azhar), and the model of the Cairene university served as hardly more than a projection surface for their critique of the poor conditions in Najaf. Moreover, both scholars were isolated within their own community: Sharāra had fierce hostility expressed against him, and al-Zayn's interpretation of the concept of *ijtihād* exposed him to similarly vehement censure.[22] Besides, the latter wrote at a time when other, more important representatives of the two denominations had already taken the initiative and inaugurated a dialogue that will be discussed in detail later in this study.[23]

At the same time, the differing reaction to the criticism voiced by al-Zayn shows how much the relationship between Sunni and Shiite scholars had changed in the intervening decade. By now, the Shiite *ʿulamāʾ* seem to have accepted the Azharis as peers with whom a theological reconciliation beyond short-run politically oriented alliances might be pondered, or at least an ecumenical discussion undertaken. Indicative of this is the creation of a *topos*—possibly as the result of articles such as those just cited—that was to be resumed repeatedly in the later *taqrīb* debate: the Azhar on the Sunni side was put face to face with Najaf serving *pars pro toto* as the Shiite "counter pole".[24] As is frequently observed with phrases of this type, the *topos* over time developed an independent existence and was also applied to the contact between a Lebanese Shiite scholar and the *Shaykh al-Azhar* of his time, even though the Shiite *ʿālim* did not even reside in Najaf.[25] This will be the topic of the following pages.

(outline of the reform movement and reform law at the Azhar); cf. also Mervin: *Un réformisme chiite*, 222–25; regarding al-Zayn (d. 1984), ibid., 435.

[22] Ibid., 225–28.

[23] Cf. below, pp. 103ff.

[24] Cf. al-Kafaʾī: *Bayn al-Najaf wa-l-Azhar*; Muḥammad Riḍā al-Muẓaffar: "al-Sunniyyūn wa-l-shīʿa", passim; idem: "Jāmiʿat al-Najaf", *MA* 32/6 (Nov. 1960), 604–09; Nizār al-Zayn: "al-Waḥda bayn al-muslimīn", *al-ʿIrfān* 50/4 (Nov. 1962), 338f.; al-Sarrāj: *al-Imām Muḥsin al-Ḥakīm*, 170f.; al-Fukaykī: *al-Muʿa*, 32; Muḥammad ʿAlī al-Zuʿbī: "al-Azhar wa-l-Najaf: alf ʿām fī khidmat al-islām", *al-ʿIrfān* 47/4 (Dec. 1959), 367–73.

[25] Faḍlallāh: *Rāʾid al-fikr*, 53.

CHAPTER THREE

A CONTROVERSIAL CORRESPONDENCE (1911/36)

A remarkable book stands at the beginning of the dialogue between the Shiite *ʿulamāʾ* and the Azhar. Its topic is a correspondence that is claimed to have taken place between the Shiite scholar ʿAbd al-Ḥusayn Sharaf al-Dīn from Jabal ʿĀmil in southern Lebanon and the former *Shaykh al-Azhar* Salīm al-Bishrī. This cautious formulation has been chosen intentionally because the two dates in the chapter heading indicate one of the main problems regarding the assessment of this case: a quarter of a century passed between the alleged writing of the correspondence and its publication by Sharaf al-Dīn under the title *al-Murājaʿāt*, which may roughly be translated as "consultations".[1] The Sunni participant, al-Bishrī, had already been dead for nineteen years by then. Because of this, not to mention its controversial contents, it should not come as a surprise that the book, over time, has received extremely diverse comments depending on the point of view of the reviewer. The following is an attempt to overcome the opaqueness of the work's origin as well as to investigate the myth it has engendered.

ʿAbd al-Ḥusayn Sharaf al-Dīn[2] was born in the Iraqi pilgrimage

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[1] An unambiguous translation of the term in this context is quite difficult. Wehr's *Arabic Dictionary* offers the following (among other) meanings for *murājaʿa*: "reiteration, repetition, inspection, request, consultation, application (esp. to an authority), verification, review, correction."

[2] No comprehensive study of the life and work of Sharaf al-Dīn exists so far in Western languages; for a first introduction, cf. the article "Sharaf al-Dīn" in *EI*[2] IX/314f. (W. Ende), and now also Mervin: *Un réformisme chiite*, 301–10, 430 and index, s.v.; regarding Arabic and Persian literature, cf. al-Ziriklī III/279; *MDA* III/626–29 (where his birth date is incorrectly given as 1870); Kaḥḥāla V/87 and M/337; *ASh* VII/757; *RF* II/736–38; Modarres: *Rayḥānat al-adab*, III/194–96; *ṬASh* I.3/1080–88; see also the bio-bibliographic sketches by Muḥammad Ṣādiq al-Ṣadr: "Qabs min ḥayāt as-sayyid al-muʾallif", in: Sharaf al-Dīn: *al-Ijtihād*, 5–44 (on p. 8, note 1 a complete genealogy of Sharaf al-Dīn is given that extends—via the seventh Imam Mūsā al-Kāẓim—back to ʿAlī; cf. also al-Mūsawī: *al-Shīʿa fī l-tārīkh*, 34) as well as "Ḥayāt al-muʾallif" by Murtaḍā Āl Yāsīn, in: *Sharaf al-Dīn: al-Murājaʿāt*, introduction 42–66; biographic descriptions that cannot always be distinguished from hagiography include Faḍlallāh: *Rāʾid al-fikr al-iṣlāḥī*; ʿAlī: *al-Imām Sharaf al-Dīn* and Qubaysī: *Ḥayāt al-imām*; the most important primary source is Sharaf al-Dīn's

site Kāẓimiyya[3] at the beginning of Jumādā II 1290 (end of July/beginning of August 1873), where his father, Yūsuf Sharaf al-Dīn,[4] had taken up residence for the sake of studying (*li-ṭalab al-ʿilm*). ʿAbd al-Ḥusayn was the scion of a famous scholarly family from Jabal ʿĀmil, closely associated in a variety of ways with one of the most important Iraqi-Iranian dynasties of *ʿulamāʾ*, the Āl Ṣadr.[5]

Young ʿAbd al-Ḥusayn received his first instruction from his father, whom he accompanied upon the latter's return to Lebanon. At the beginning of October 1892, the son returned to Iraq in order to continue and complete his religious studies at the *ʿatabāt* under the tutelage of several of the most famous Shiite scholars of the day. These included, in Sāmarrāʾ, the previously mentioned Mīrzā Ḥasan al-Shīrāzī,[6] and in Najaf, among others, the Āyatollāhs Muḥammad Kāẓim al-Khurāsānī and ʿAbdallāh al-Māzandarānī, who have also already been referred to.[7] ʿAbd al-Ḥusayn seems to have made an excellent impression on his mentors, soon having to his own credit numerous authorizations to teach (*ijāzāt*).[8] In May 1904, before reach-

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autobiography: *Bughyat al-rāghibīn*, II/63–344 (portions of which have already appeared in *al-ʿIrfān* 45/1958/377–84, 473–80, 577–84, 673–80, 777–84).

[3] In regard to Kāẓimiyya, see G. Krotkoff: "Kazimein—ein schiitischer Wallfahrtsort", *Bustan* 9/1968/3–4/59–62; *GD* VI/285–311; "Kāẓimayn", *EI*² IV/854–56 (M. Streck/A.A. Dixon); al-Khalīlī: *Mawsūʿāt al-ʿatabāt al-muqaddasa*, vols. IX and X.

[4] For further information about him (1847–1916), see Sharaf al-Dīn: *Bughyat al-rāghibīn*, I/459–86.

[5] Sharaf al-Dīn: *Bughyat al-rāghibīn*, vol. 1, passim; *ṬASh* I.1/445f. (s.v. Ḥasan al-Ṣadr; Sharaf al-Dīn's mother, al-Zahrāʾ, was a sister of Āyatollāh Ḥasan al-Ṣadr [1856–1935]); *Dāʾerat ol-maʿāref-e tashayyoʿ*, I/183 (Āl Sharaf al-Dīn) and I/192f. (Āl Ṣadr). Also the former leader of the Lebanese Shiites, Mūsā al-Ṣadr, who disappeared without a trace in 1978 in Libya, and Muḥammad Bāqir al-Ṣadr, who was executed by the Iraqi regime in 1980, originated from this family (see Sharaf al-Dīn: *Bughyat al-rāghibīn*, II/619–35 and 637–776); cf. also Momen: *Introduction*, 132–34, 270f.; regarding the general background, see Rieck: *Die Schiiten und der Kampf um den Libanon*, esp. 83–310; Mervin: *Un réformisme chiite*, 15–60; M. Pohl-Schöberlein: *Die schiitische Gemeinschaft des Südlibanon (Ǧabal ʿĀmil) innerhalb des libanesischen konfessionellen Systems*, Berlin 1986; "Mutawālī", *EI*² VII/780f. (W. Ende).

[6] Cf. above, p. 41 note 65.

[7] Sharaf al-Dīn: *Bughyat al-rāghibīn*, II/63–82; Qubaysī: *Ḥayāt al-imām*, 30–40; concerning the two scholars, see above, p. 42 note 67; Ḥusayn al-Nūrī al-Ṭabrisī, whose thesis about the falsification of the Koran which was mentioned briefly above is still a source of considerable polemic in the twentieth century, was also among Sharaf al-Dīn's teachers, see *Bughyat al-rāghibīn* II/76; I did not have access to Sharaf al-Dīn's book *Thabt al-ithbāt fī silsilat al-ruwāt*, Sidon 1355/1936 (see *Dharīʿa* V/6), in which he introduced his teachers.

[8] Listed in Sharaf al-Dīn: *Bughyat al-rāghibīn*, II/87–92 and Qubaysī: *Ḥayāt al-imām*, 43–49.

ing the age of 31, he returned to Jabal ʿĀmil already holding the rank of *mujtahid muṭlaq*, that is, one authorized to issue independent decisions in every aspect of Islamic law. His reputation now extended far beyond Najaf.[9]

In January 1908, after an interlude in Sh(u)ḥūr, ʿAbd al-Ḥusayn Sharaf al-Dīn settled down in the port of Tyre (Ṣūr), where, apart from a few journeys, he remained for the rest of his life. Two of these trips took him to the Ḥijāz. The first, in August 1910, was to Medina, where he visited his Shiite brethren in residence there, the Nakhāwila. His second trip to the Arabian Peninsula occurred twelve years later, when he performed the pilgrimage to Mecca in July 1922.[10] A sojourn in Cairo from around October 1911 to April 1912 later proved to be memorable and will be discussed in greater detail below. His last major trip, between February and April 1937, brought him to the holy sites of Iraq and the religious centres of Iran.[11]

Both Sharaf al-Dīn's theological learning, reflected in a great number of works that include some very extensive treatises,[12] and his public social activities that found their expression in his founding of schools and religious-charitable organizations in Tyre[13] gradually earned him almost undisputed authority among the Shiite community in Lebanon. Following the death of Muḥsin al-Amīn[14] in 1952 at the

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[9] al-Ṣadr: "Qabs", 12; see also Sharaf al-Dīn: *Bughyat al-rāghibīn*, II/104–11.

[10] Ibid., II/197f. (Medina) and 202–11 (Mecca); Qubaysī: *Ḥayāt al-imām*, 106–08; concerning the Nakhāwila, cf. Ende: "The Nakhāwila", passim; an insider's view is given by Y. al-Khoei: "The *Marjaʿ* and the Survival of the Community: The Shiʿa of Medina", in: L.S. Walbridge (ed.): *The Most Learned of the Shiʿa. The Institution of the Marjaʿ Taqlid* (sic!), Oxford 2001, 247–50; Muḥammad al-Tījānī al-Samāwī, citing Muḥammad Bāqir al-Ṣadr, reports in his book *Thumma ihtadayt*, p. 68, an alleged meeting between Sharaf al-Dīn and King ʿAbd al-ʿAzīz b. Saʿūd, but without mentioning when this meeting took place and the specific reason, though it is supposed to have focused on a dispute over the Shiite grave cult. Also noteworthy is Murtaḍā Āl Yāsīn's report that during Sharaf al-Dīn's stay in Mecca, the prayer in the Ḥaram Mosque was performed behind a Shiite—without *taqiyya (fī ghayr al-taqiyya)*—for the first time in such a public manner, *Ḥayāt al-muʾallif*, 63.

[11] Sharaf al-Dīn: *Bughyat al-rāghibīn*, II/212–54; *GD* I/253–55.

[12] In almost all biographies mentioned in note 2, there are extensive lists of publications, though these diverge substantially, especially in regard to the question of which unpublished works are still extant; referred to in particular here is Sharaf al-Dīn: *Bughyat al-rāghibīn*, II/93–103; al-Ṣadr: "Qabs", 31–35; Faḍlallāh: *Rāʾid al-fikr*, 57–70; Qubaysī: *Ḥayāt al-imām*, 53–69, as well as *MMI* II/228f.

[13] Sharaf al-Dīn: *Bughyat al-rāghibīn*, II/114–38; idem: "al-Madrasa al-jaʿfariyya ramz al-ʿurūba wa-l-islām", *al-ʿIrfān* 31/1–2 (Jan.–Feb. 1942), 7–12; Qubaysī: *Ḥayāt al-imām*, 84–99.

[14] Regarding him (1867–1952), see *MDA* II/141–46; Kaḥḥāla VII/183–85 and

latest, Sharaf al-Dīn was regarded as virtually the sole leader of the Lebanese Shia, and even earlier some viewed him as the legitimate successor to the *Marjaʿ al-taqlīd* Abū l-Ḥasan al-Iṣfahānī, who died in 1946.[15] ʿAbd al-Ḥusayn Sharaf al-Dīn passed away in Beirut on December 30, 1957, and a huge popular entourage accompanied his corpse to Najaf, where he was buried on January 1, 1958.[16]

Sharaf al-Dīn's standing as a universally respected integrating factor may also be attributed, at least to a degree, to the virtually nationalist opposition he espoused against any foreign rule in Lebanon. As early as 1909 he had expressed his approval of the deposition of the "despotic sultan" (*sulṭān al-istibdād*) ʿAbdülḥamīd II and articulated his hope that the desolate state of the *umma* would improve again as a result.[17]

Immediately following the end of the First World War, Sharaf al-Dīn directed his attention against the impending French occupation of Syria and Lebanon in the wake of the Sykes-Picot Agreement. Due to his agitation against colonization and in particular because of his participation in an opposition meeting in Wādī Ḥujayr at the end of April 1920, he soon raised the wrath of the occupiers and had to flee to Damascus. After the battle of Maysalūn in July of the same year and the French occupation of Syria, Sharaf al-Dīn went into exile in Egypt and later Palestine before being permitted to return to Jabal

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M/578; *RF* I/173f.; *MMS* 42f.; *GD* I/247–51; al-Khāqānī: *Shuʿarāʾ*, VII/255–73, as well as esp. *ASh* X/323–447; also ʿAlī Murtaḍā al-Amīn: *al-Sayyid Muḥsin al-Amīn. Sīratuhu wa-nitājuhu*, Beirut 1413/1992 ([1]1980); Mervin: *Un réformisme chiite*, 422f. and passim; his autobiography that had originally appeared as vol. 40 of the first edition of his biographical dictionary *Aʿyān al-shīʿa* has been translated into French by Sabrina Mervin: *Autobiographie d'un clerc chiite du Ǧabal ʿĀmil*, Damascus 1998; cf. also al-Mīlād: *Khiṭāb al-waḥda al-islāmiyya*, 151–63.

[15] In regard to al-Iṣfahānī, see *EIr* I/302f. (H. Algar) and the literature mentioned there; obituary in *al-ʿIrfān* 33/1 (Dec. 1946), 14–16; al-Ṣadr: "Qabs", 41f. reports that shortly before his death, al-Iṣfahānī himself stressed during a visit in Lebanon how much Najaf needed Sharaf al-Dīn; there are several reports about at least temporary problems in Sharaf al-Dīn's relationship with other *ʿulamāʾ*; cf. Göbel: *Moderne schiitische Politik*, 83–86 (regarding Mughniyya), Ende: "From Revolt to Resignation" (regarding Sharāra), idem: "Eine schiitische Kontroverse über *Naql al-ǧanāʾiz*", in: W. Voigt (ed.): *XX. Deutscher Orientalistentag (. . .)*, Wiesbaden 1980, 217f., and idem: "Flagellations", 31 (both concerning Muḥsin al-Amīn).

[16] Sharaf al-Dīn: *Bughyat al-rāghibīn*, II/255–344 (this passage, as well as the sections about Sharaf al-Dīn's descendants, was written by his son ʿAbdallāh; in regard to whom, see ibid., II/425–31); see also the obituaries in *al-ʿIrfān* 45/5 (Feb. 1958), 466–72 and 45/6 (Mar. 1958), 571–76 as well as in *RI* 10/1958/108–10; cf. also al-Khunayzī: *Nasīm wa-zaubaʿa*, 179–88.

[17] "Ta'līf al-umma", *al-ʿIrfān* 1/8 (Aug. 1909), 389–91.

ʿĀmil in June 1921.[18] His struggle against the Mandate power, though, appears to have been limited to an episode in Sharaf al-Dīn's life: in the following two-and-a-half decades until Lebanon's independence, he does not seem to have taken part in any further activities of this type.

In our context, however, these events were not without consequence: both Sharaf al-Dīn himself and all his biographers concur in reporting how French soldiers, in a punitive measure, encroached upon his possessions during his absence, attacking his houses in Shḥūr and Tyre in June 1920. What exactly happened, though, does not become clear from the sources: while many report that both houses and particularly the library of the estate in Tyre were torched (*uḥriqat*),[19] Sharaf al-Dīn merely speaks of plunder (*nahb*) in both cases.[20] Whatever the case, it appears that with the library, about twenty of Sharaf al-Dīn's unpublished manuscripts were irreplaceably lost.[21] With regard to the history of the publication of the *Murājaʿāt*, this fact will be of interest below.

Relations with Sunni Islam were a central issue to Sharaf al-Dīn during the whole of his long scholarly life. In his very first contribution to the Shiite reformist journal *al-ʿIrfān*, established in 1909 in Sidon (Ṣaidā), he called for unity between Shiism and Sunnism (*ittiḥād al-tashsayyuʿ wa-l-tasannun*) to resist the increasing decadence exemplified in the "armies of barbarity" (*juyūsh al-tawaḥḥush*) as he termed it.[22]

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[18] Sharaf al-Dīn: *Bughyat al-rāghibīn*, II/146–70 (170–96: enumeration of various poems written for the celebration of his return); Muḥammad Kūrānī: *al-Ǧudhūr al-tārīkhiyya li-l-muqāwama al-islāmiyya fī Ǧabal ʿĀmil*, Beirut 1414/1993, 123–231; idem: "Muʾtamar Wādī l-Ḥujayr wa-dawr al-imām Sharaf al-Dīn", in: *al-Imām al-sayyid*, 311–21; Aḥmad Riḍā: "Ḥawl al-mudhakkirāt al-tārīkhiyya", *al-ʿIrfān* 33/4 (Feb. 1947), 442f.; Muḥammad ʿAlī Makkī: "Lamaḥāt min tārīkh al-Shīʿa fī Lubnān", *al-ʿIrfān* 76/1 (Jan. 1992), 44; Muḥammad Ḥasan al-Amīn: "al-Imām ʿAbd al-Ḥusayn Sharaf al-Dīn", *al-ʿIrfān* 77/3 (Apr. 1993), 10–22, esp. 10f.; al-Ṣadr: "Qabs", 22, stresses explicitly that Sharaf al-Dīn became the "absolute leader" (*al-zaʿīm al-muṭlaq*) both in religious and mundane matters; on the Shiite attitude towards the French mandate as reflected in *al-ʿIrfān*, cf. Naef: "Les chiites du Liban", passim.

[19] *MDA* III/627; *ṬASh* I.3/1082; Āl Yāsīn: "Ḥayāt al-muʾallif", 50; Qubaysī: *Ḥayāt al-imām*, 112.

[20] Sharaf al-Dīn: *Bughyat al-rāghibīn*, II/163 note 1 and II/98; similar al-Ṣadr: "Qabs", 17.

[21] *ṬASh* I.3/1082; Āl Yāsīn: "Ḥayāt al-muʾallif", 59f.; Faḍlallāh: *Rāʾid al-fikr*, 67–70.

[22] "Jamʿ kalimat al-umma", *al-ʿIrfān* 1/7 (July 1909), 348–50 (quotation 350); cf. in the same year, the continuation of this article, pp. 389–91, 451, 489–91, 583–87 as well as 2/2 (Feb. 1910), 100–04; regarding the journal *al-ʿIrfān* and its founder Aḥmad ʿĀrif al-Zayn (1881–1960), see al-Ziriklī I/141; *ṬASh* I.1/127f.; *MDA* III/516–18; *al-ʿIrfān* 48/5–6 (Jan.–Feb. 1961), 401–608; Mallat: *Shiʿi Thought*, 9–15; Khalidi: "Shaykh Ahmad ʿArif al-Zayn and al-ʿIrfan", passim; Ayyūb Fahd Ḥumayyid:

He continued that he himself had taken this task into account by writing his book "The Most Important Chapters in the Unity of the Muslim Community".[23] Also in later years, Sharaf al-Dīn repeatedly addressed this topic, the essence of his argument being that there was no harm whatsoever in Muslims differing in their opinions regarding legal questions as long as they remained conscious of their fundamental common convictions—the belief in God, the Prophet, the Koran, the five *arkān al-dīn*, etc.—and based their argumentation firmly upon them.[24] His positive attitude toward the Cairene *Jamāʿat at-taqrīb* in the 1950s may also be judged from this point of view.[25]

This of course is not to say that Sharaf al-Dīn was not skilled in using also the tools of polemic when he deemed it advisable. An utterly traditional polemic pamphlet against the Prophet's companion Abū Hurayra (d. 679)[26] flowed from his pen as naturally as did extremely vehement pieces attacking contemporary Sunni scholars, especially Mūsā Jārallāh[27] and Muḥammad Kurd ʿAlī. In the sec-

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al-Shaykh Aḥmad ʿĀrif al-Zain. Muʾassis majallat al-ʿIrfān, Beirut 1986; S. Naef: "Aufklärung in einem schiitischen Umfeld: die libanesische Zeitschrift al-*ʿIrfān*", *WI* 36/1996/365–78; Mervin: *Un réformisme chiite*, esp. 191–95.

[23] *al-Fuṣūl al-muhimma fī taʾlīf al-umma*, Sidon 1330/1912; see also *Dharīʿa* XVI/246 (there with the incorrect subtitle: *fī tārīkh al-aʾimma*), and *al-Muqtabas* 8/1914/217; since the second edition Sidon 1347/1928–29 with numerous revisions and additions.

[24] Thus, for example, in his epilogue (dated Aug. 28, 1951) to al-Madanī/al-Zuʿbī: *al-Islām bayn al-sunna wa-l-shīʿa*, II/114–18.

[25] Cf. for this purpose below, pp. 197ff.

[26] ʿAbd al-Ḥusayn Sharaf al-Dīn: *Abū Hurayra*, Sidon 1946 (reprints Najaf 1956 and 1964; see *MMN* 63); review in *al-ʿIrfān* 34/1 (Nov. 1947), 127; cf. also *al-ʿIrfān* 32/9–10 (Oct.–Nov. 1946), 972–74 and 33/5 (Mar. 1947), 593; Sunni criticism in *MA* 25/5 (Jan. 1954), 551f. and 25/9 (May 1954), 1081f.; see also Āl Salmān: *Kutub ḥadhdhara minhā l-ʿulamāʾ*, I/362–68; regarding the reaction of Muṣṭafā al-Sibāʿī, see below, p. 246; about Abū Hurayra cf. *EI*[2] I/129 (J. Robson) and from the Sunnite point of view: Muḥammad ʿAbdallāh Muḥammad Ḥawwāʾ: *Abū Hurayra. al-Ṣaḥābī al-muftarā ʿalayhi*, Cairo 1998.

[27] Concerning him (1878–1949), a Muslim born in Rostow on the Don who was temporarily Imam in Petrograd, see al-Ziriklī VII/320f.; Kaḥḥāla XIII/36f.; *OE* I/216–18 (A.A. Rorlich); Kramer: *Islam Assembled*, index s.v. Bigi; Sharaf al-Dīn's book *Ajwibat masāʾil Jārallāh* (Sidon 1936, Najaf [3]1966) is a reply to Jārallāh's *al-Washīʿa fī naqḍ ʿaqāʾid al-shīʿa*, Cairo 1936; further refutations by Shiites: Muḥsin al-Amīn: *Naqḍ al-washīʿa*; idem: *Riḥalāt*, 184f. (regarding al-Amīn's and Sharaf al-Dīn's criticism, see also Mehmet Görmez: *Musa Carullah Bigiyef*, Ankara 1994, 43f.); al-Fukaykī: *al-Muṭʿa*; al-Amīnī: *al-Ghadīr*, III/324–33; further *Dharīʿa* XVIII/19 (no. 471); Mughniyya: "al-Diʿāya ḍidd Filasṭīn fī kitāb al-washīʿa", *al-ʿIrfān* 28/5 (Jul. 1938), 481f.; the Iraqi polemicist Maḥmūd al-Mallāḥ attacked Sharaf al-Dīn sharply because of the latter's comments on the topic of *taḥrīf al-qurʾān* (see *Ajwiba*, 28–37) and called it "a further example of the columns in the (Shiite) edifice of lies": *al-*

ond edition of the above-mentioned work *al-Fuṣūl al-muhimma*, he used a particularly vicious pun and referred to the latter as قرد, which can either be vocalized as *qurd* (tick) or *qird* (monkey). This may be understood as an allusion to an episode reported by al-Masʿūdī about the second Umayyad Caliph Yazīd, whom the Shiites hold responsible for the death of Ḥusayn and thus particularly despise: According to al-Masʿūdī, Yazīd possessed a monkey by the name of Abū Qays that he decorated splendidly and let participate in his carouses.[28]

Nevertheless, Sharaf al-Dīn did not fail to point out that he certainly differentiated between the Sunnis in general, with whom rapprochement was both necessary and thoroughly possible, and *these* people in particular, who disqualified themselves through their anti-Shiite comments.[29] Specifically, the defence of a view of history sympathetic to the Umayyads—such as that promoted by Kurd ʿAlī—appeared to Sharaf al-Dīn to be a denigration of Shiism, against which he would fight bitterly to the very end of his life.[30]

It seems Sharaf al-Dīn became known to a large, non-Shiite public for the first time through a short review of *al-Fuṣūl al-muhimma* that Muḥammad Rashīd Riḍā published in his *Manār* in September 1913. He did this with an intent that was blatantly critical and in a tone equally reproachful:

> The title of the book indicates its content, and if the title and content were consistent, this book would be among the best and most useful that have come out recently. However, the author takes a path that does not lead to his stated aim. He treads the path of propaganda (*daʿwa*) for his own legal school (*madhhabihi*) and deprecates the legal schools of those who think differently by using a new type of propaganda. That is, he indeed mentions the most important points of contention

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Ārā' al-ṣarīḥa, 101–03; ibid., 36 note 1, al-Mallāḥ announced a separate retort to Sharaf al-Dīn's work against Jārallāh.

[28] Sharaf al-Dīn: *al-Fuṣūl al-muhimma*, 172; the affair of the monkey is mentioned in al-Masʿūdī's *Murūj al-dhahab wa-maʿādin al-jawhar*, Beirut 1970, III/265; cf. in this regard Ende: *Arabische Nation*, 123f.; Hermann: *Kulturkrise*, 249f.; another of Sharaf al-Dīn's polemics against Kurd ʿAlī is his *Ilā l-majmaʿ*, passim, regarding which see *al-ʿIrfān* 37/6 (Jun. 1950), 703f.; concerning Kurd ʿAlī see below, pp. 159–61.

[29] Cf. Sharaf al-Dīn: *Ajwibat masā'il Ǧārallāh*, 3–7; idem: *Ilā l-majmaʿ*, 5–12; in regard to this argument also see below, p. 245.

[30] He also devoted his last book *al-Naṣṣ wa-l-ijtihād* (Najaf 1375/1956; concerning which see *al-ʿIrfān* 44/3 [Dec. 1956], 316) to those incidents that in his view had deprived ʿAlī of leadership and ultimately brought Muʿāwiya to power; for Kurd ʿAlīs defence of the Umayyads, cf. Ende: *Arabische Nation*, 64–75 and Hermann: *Kulturkrise*, 207–17.

> between Sunnis and Imamis, however in doing so he confirms and denies whatever happens to suit him and thus holds both groups against the yardstick of the authority of his own blind faith (*taqālīd*) and defends nothing but his own religious chauvinism (*ʿaṣabiyya*).[31] It would have been more sensible had he called attention to that on which the two groups agree—namely, all the fundamentals of the religion (*uṣūl al-dīn*) and what necessarily has to be differentiated from these—and had he omitted the hackneyed core of contention, because anyone propagating only one legal school is propagating *ʿaṣabiyya*. The reformer calling for unity avoids the sources of schism and does not in any way, shape or form attempt to glorify those led astray, as this might lead his opponents to conclude that he, in fact, had taken refuge in the fortress of *taqiyya*.[32]

Despite this clearly worded defiance and occasional later friction,[33] the relationship between Rashīd Riḍā and Sharaf al-Dīn was characterized by mutual respect. Just two decades after the above-quoted criticism—in the meantime, he had been involved in several famous polemics with Shiite scholars that will be discussed in the next chapter—Rashīd Riḍā mentioned that he had already met with ʿAbd al-Ḥusayn Sharaf al-Dīn in Beirut numerous times and that there was no difference of opinion between them regarding the necessity of reconciliation between Sunnis and Shiites. In particular, Sharaf al-Dīn's comment that the two denominations had once been divided by politics, and that politics, therefore, would have to reunite them, earned his approval.[34] At no point, however, did Rashīd Riḍā refer to a Cairo sojourn of his Lebanese interlocutor. It remains uncertain whether he knew about such a visit and particularly about the correspondence resulting therefrom; Rashīd Riḍā did not live to see the publication of the *Murājaʿāt* in 1936, having died in August 1935.

A Shiite scholar in residence at the Azhar in the period preceding the First World War was not an everyday event, but neither was it out of the question. While on the way to the Ḥijāzi holy sites—particularly if the journey from Syria or Lebanon was via the Mediterranean—it could certainly happen that a pilgrim traveller

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[31] Regarding the term *ʿaṣabiyya*, see *EI*² I/681 (F. Gabrieli).

[32] *al-Manār* 16/10 (Sep. 1913), 791.

[33] Ibid., 31/4 (Oct. 1930); 292, where Rashīd Riḍā wrote that Sharaf al-Dīn had composed a book disparaging the *ṣaḥāba* and stated that his own response to it was almost finished.

[34] *al-Manār* 32/2 (Feb. 1932), 147; cf. also Sharaf al-Dīn's remarks in *Ilā l-majmaʿ*, 11; *Ajwibat masāʾil Jārallāh*, 5f. and in his epilogue to al-Madanī/az-Zuʿbī: *al-Islām bayn al-sunna wa-l-shīʿa*, II/116 as well as below, p. 241.

made a side trip to Cairo. Though an earnest endeavour to make contact with Sunni *ʿulamāʾ* might certainly have been the goal of such a visit, it is just as likely to have come about as the result of a desire to relive wistful memories of the Shiite past of the Azhar[35] or to pay a visit to Cairo's Persian "colony".[36]

It was on one such occasion in 1904 that Muḥsin al-Amīn stopped in Cairo, where he discussed, among other things, the curriculum and teaching methodology at the Azhar with the *Naqīb al-ashrāf*.[37] Only few years after that, in 1910, the Iraqi *ʿālim* Muḥammad al-Ḥusayn Āl Kāshif al-Ghiṭāʾ,[38] who later also rose to great fame, undertook a three-month trip to Egypt during which he met both with the *Shaykh al-Azhar* Salīm al-Bishrī and Muḥammad al-Bakhīt, who was to be appointed Egypt's Grand Muftī a short while later.[39] During this period, he reportedly even gave lectures outside the University that were attended by numerous Azhar students.[40] Thus ʿAbd al-Ḥusayn

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[35] As is generally known, the Fatimid caliph al-Muʿizz li-Dīn Allāh had the Azhar constructed around the year 975, i.e. immediately following the Fatimid conquest of Egypt. It was almost two centuries later that Ṣalāḥ al-Dīn al-Ayyūbī—who came to fame in Europe as Saladin—"sunnitized" the mosque and the university on the way to bringing down the curtain on the Fatimidi interlude; for the Fatimid period cf. H. Halm: *Die Kalifen von Kairo. Die Fatimiden in Ägypten, 973–1074*, Munich 2003, 21f. and index, s.v. Azhar.

[36] Regarding the Persian community in Cairo at this time, see A.W.M. Luesink: "The Iranian Community in Cairo at the turn of the Century", in: T. Zarcone/ F. Zarinebaf (eds.): *Les Iraniens d'Istanbul*, Istanbul 1993, 193–200.

[37] al-Amīn: *Riḥalāt*, 10–25, esp. 23ff.; cf. *ASh* X/363; in regard to a second Cairo stay, in 1923, see *Riḥalāt*, 60–65; Hibat al-Dīn al-Shahrastānī (see above, p. 42 note 69), for instance, is reported to have made contacts with the "greats of vital thought in Egypt" (*aqṭāb al-fikr al-ḥayy fī Miṣr*) around this time (in the context, approximately 1906), see al-Khāqānī: *Shuʿarāʾ*, X/67; Āghā Bozorg al-Ṭehrānī (see below, note 53) also numbered among his teachers ʿAbd al-Raḥmān ʿUlaysh, a *mudarris bi-l-Azhar*, see *al-ʿIrfān* 66/4 (Apr. 1978), 410 and *Mishkāt* 32/1991/77 (in these two cases, however, this does not necessarily mean a physical presence in Cairo).

[38] In regard to him (1877–1954), see *ṬASh* I.2/612–19; *RF* III/1048f.; *MMI* III/144–47; *MDA* II/45f. and III/44–47; al-Ziriklī VI/106f.; Moshār II/cols. 818–20; *GD* I/251–53 and VI/269; al-Khāqānī: *Shuʿarāʾ*, VIII/99–183; al-Khalīlī: *Hākadhā ʿaraftuhum*, I/227–52; Khiyābānī: *ʿOlamā-ye moʿāṣerīn*, 194–201; Naef: "Un réformiste", passim; al-Mīlād: *Khiṭāb al-waḥda al-islāmiyya*, 165–74.

[39] Āl Kāshif al-Ghiṭāʾ: *Muḥāwarat al-imām al-muṣliḥ Kāshif al-Ghiṭāʾ*, 52; al-Bakhīt (1854–1935; see al-Ziriklī VI/50) was Grand Muftī from 1914 to 1920; in this regard, see *al-Fatāwā al-islāmiyya min Dār al-iftāʾ al-miṣriyya*, vol. VII (Cairo 1982), 2676–78; Skovgaard-Petersen: *Defining Islam*, 133–41; cf. also below, p. 87 note 16.

[40] Āl Kāshif al-Ghiṭāʾ: *Muḥāwarat al-imām al-muṣliḥ Kāshif al-Ghiṭāʾ*, 52f.; *Dāʾerat ol-maʿāref-e bozorg-e eslāmī*, II/105; Muḥammad al-Ḥusayn Āl Kāshif al-Ghiṭāʾ: *Aṣl al-shīʿa*, 10f. (this is a biographical sketch signed only with the name *Najafī*); al-Khāqānī: *Shuʿarāʾ*, VIII/112; Ṣāliḥ al-Jaʿfarī: "al-Jāmiʿa al-miṣriyya fī l-Najaf", *al-*

Sharaf al-Dīn was neither the first nor the only Shiite to be found at the Azhar or among the circle of Azhar scholars. However, in comparison with Muḥsin al-Amīn and Muḥammad al-Ḥusayn Āl Kāshif al-Ghiṭā', the assessment of his visit was by far the most controversial, although it set in only some decades later.

When Sharaf al-Dīn arrived in Cairo at the end of 1329 (ca. October 1911), Salīm al-Bishrī was still *Shaykh al-Azhar*.[41] He had already held this office previously around the turn of the century (from 1899 to 1903), but was removed from office because of his bitter opposition to the Azhar reforms introduced by Muḥammad ʿAbduh. When he was reappointed in 1909, his conservative attitude had not changed, but faced with the fact that the reform had already begun to take root, he had no choice but to come to terms with the new circumstances.[42]

Al-Bishrī was not unknown in the realm of pan-Islamism at his time. In 1908, he presided over the committee responsible for the organization of an international Islamic conference that had been publicly proposed the previous year in Cairo by the Crimean journalist Ismāʿīl Gasprinskij. In spite of congress statutes being drafted and published, the idea itself came to nothing.[43] Actually the project had nothing to do with the strife between Sunnites and Shiites; quite on the con-

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ʿIrfān 21/3 (Mar. 1931), 308–16, on 308; see also Naef: "Un réformiste", 60f.; Muḥammad al-Ḥusayn's dispute with the Azhar scholar Yūsuf al-Dijwī about the falsification of the Koran originated probably during this sojourn; see M. Hartmann's remarks in *WI* 2/1914/288–90; Brunner: *Die Schia und die Koranfälschung*, 72f.; regarding al-Dijwī (1870–1946), see al-Ziriklī VIII/216f.; Kaḥḥāla XIII/272f.; Saʿīd ʿAbd al-Ḥayy: "Nubdha ʿan ḥayāt al-shaykh al-Dijwī", *MA* 53/2 (Jan. 1981), 382–85; Boberg: *Ägypten*, 159–71 and index s.v.

[41] Regarding him (1832–1917), see al-Ziriklī III/119; Kaḥḥāla IV/249; ʿAbd al-ʿAẓīm: *Mashyakhat al-Azhar*, I/291–95; Eccel: *Egypt*, 178ff., as well as the literature mentioned by Lemke: *Šaltūt*, 48 note 2; a lengthy obituary written by Muḥammad Rashīd Riḍā is found in *al-Manār* 20/3 (Oct. 1917), 160–65.

[42] al-Ṣaʿīdī: *Tārīkh al-iṣlāḥ*, I/83; Lemke: *Šaltūt*, 44f.

[43] Cf. the detailed account in Kramer: *Islam Assembled*, 36–54; Landau: *Politics*, 146–56; Schulze: *Internationalismus*, 61–63; T. Kuttner: "Russian Jadīdism and the Islamic World: Ismail Gasprinskii in Cairo 1908 (. . .)", *Cahiers du Monde Russe et Soviétique* 16/1975/383–424, esp. 413ff.; *al-Manār* 10/9 (Nov. 1907), 673–82, esp. 676ff. and 11/3 (May 1908), 181–84; regarding Gasprinskij (or Gaspralı; 1851–1914) see *EI*[2] II/979–81 (Z.V. Togan) and *OE* II/52f. (E.J. Lazzerini); Adam: *Rußlandmuslime*, 88–102, 192–96 and index, s.v. Ismail Gasprinski; concerning his role in various attempts at orthographic reform in Czarist Russia, cf. I. Baldauf: *Schriftreform und Schriftwechsel bei den muslimischen Rußland- und Sowjettürken (1850–1937)*, Budapest 1993; index p. 769 s.v. Ismail Gasprinskij; a French translation of the statutes of the congress led by al-Bishrī and Gasprinskij has been published in *RMM* 4/1908/399–403, an English translation in Kramer: *Islam Assembled*, 171–74; cf. also *RMM* 5/1908/372f.

trary, participation of the Shiite scholars was indirectly precluded by article 15 of the statutes, which stipulated that the congress could only accept proposals for reform grounded in the four *uṣūl al-fiqh* recognized by the Sunnis (Koran, Sunna, *ijmāʿ* and *qiyās*), Shiism categorically rejecting the last-mentioned of these principles. Likewise, the remark that among the conference goals was combating "des hérésies qui se sont introduites dans la religion du Prophète" (article 14) could in some ways even be interpreted as having been directly aimed against Shiism, as the accusation of heresy was one of the standard arguments in the ongoing mutual polemic.

Sharaf al-Dīn had not come to Cairo alone; he was in the company of his uncle Muḥammad Ḥusayn al-Ṣadr,[44] who actually seems to have been the initiator of the travel plans and, in fact, had to persuade his nephew to accompany him. Nothing is heard about him, however, for the duration of the trip, the only additional information being that he died in Kāẓimiyya approximately five months after their return.

In fact Sharaf al-Dīn's comments about his Cairo stay are, in general, relatively scanty compared with those concerning his other trips.[45] In contrast to Muḥsin al-Amīn, who provides the reader with a replete report of his tour program: Pyramids, Zoo, Egyptian Museum (even pointing out the pedagogic benefits of each!),[46] Sharaf al-Dīn limits himself exclusively to introducing the individuals he considered his most important contacts among Sunni scholars.

First and foremost among these was Salīm al-Bishrī, into whose circle of students Sharaf al-Dīn claims he was admitted immediately after his arrival. He explains further that private tutorials (*khalawāt*) with al-Bishrī led to that particular correspondence that later developed into the *Murājaʿāt*.[47]

The first of the letters indeed bears the date 6 Dhū l-Qaʿda 1329 (October 29, 1911), and the contact continued the following five-and-a-half months until Sharaf al-Dīn's departure in April 1912, with only intermittent breaks of a few days' duration. The product was a collection of 112 letters, the last of which was dated 2 Jumādā I

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[44] Regarding him (1871/72–1912) see Sharaf al-Dīn: *Bughyat al-rāghibīn*, I/423–29 (424f. about the Cairo trip); al-Ṣadr: "Qabs", 15f. (quotes this passage); also *ṬASh* I.2/665 (there the vague date of death appears: "around 1327"/1909).

[45] Sharaf al-Dīn: *Bughyat al-rāghibīn*, II/98 and 199–201; the latter passage was first published in *al-ʿIrfān* 45/8 (May 1958), 778–80.

[46] al-Amīn: *Riḥalāt*, 12–18.

[47] Sharaf al-Dīn: *Bughyat al-rāghibīn*, II/98.

1330 (April 19, 1912). There is no further corroboration for the contention in Sharaf al-Dīn's memoirs that the correspondence continued "for awhile" after his return into Lebanon before succumbing to the chaos of the First World War,[48] and Sharaf al-Dīn himself did not repeat this claim anywhere else to the best of my knowledge.

Sharaf al-Dīn lists three other Sunni *'ulamā'* besides Salīm al-Bishrī with whom he claims to have been in contact in Cairo: the previously mentioned Muḥammad al-Bakhīt, Muḥammad al-Samālūṭī and Muḥammad ʿAbd al-Ḥayy b. ʿAbd al-Karīm al-Kattānī, a *ḥadīth* scholar of Moroccan origin who had come to Cairo in 1912 after the establishment of the French-Spanish protectorate over Morocco.[49] Not without pride does Sharaf al-Dīn relate that he was granted a teaching authorization (*ijāza*) for Sunni law by each of the four scholars.[50]

After Sharaf al-Dīn's return to Tyre, nearly a quarter-century passed before the correspondence finally appeared in print in 1936, put out by the *'Irfān* publishing house in Sidon. What happened to the book in the intervening period remains shrouded in darkness, and Sharaf al-Dīn casts only a glimmer of light on it in two passing remarks. As with the visit to the Azhar itself, we are obliged to rely to a large extent on his own statements in regard to the reconstruction of the alleged results of this stay.

When attempting to uncover anything about the origin of the book's history beyond this narrow range of comments, one merely encounters the date of its initial publication (1936) without further comment,[51] or inconsistencies. Part of this confusion may have been caused by Āghā Bozorg al-Ṭehrānī's treatment of the book in his monumen-

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[48] Ibid., II/201.

[49] In regard to the latter (1885 or 1888–1962), see *EI*^{2} IV/744f. (A. Faure); al-Ziriklī VII/187f. and *GAL* SII/ 891; R. Elger: *Zentralismus und Autonomie. Gelehrte und Staat in Marokko, 1900–1931*, Berlin 1994, 104–14, 145–58, 213–16, 229–33; cf. *GD* I/254f.; regarding Bakhīt, see above, note 39; regarding Muḥammad Ibrāhīm al-Samālūṭī, cf. Zakī Muḥammad Mujāhid: *al-Aʿlām al-sharqiyya*, Beirut ^{2}1994, I/354 (where it is stated, however, that he taught at the Azhar only after 1333/1914–15).

[50] Sharaf al-Dīn: *Bughyat al-rāghibīn*, II/201; however, he does not mention them in the separate listing of the *ijāzāt* granted to him, ibid., II/87–92 (there only his Shiite teachers are identified); Qubaysī: *Ḥayāt al-imām*, 41f. based upon Sharaf al-Dīn's work *Thabt al-ithbāt* (see above, note 7). Qubaysī reckons that Sharaf al-Dīn had five Sunni teachers: al-Bishrī, al-Kattānī, Badr al-Dīn al-Dimashqī, Muḥammad b. ʿAbdallāh al-Khānī al-Naqshbandī, as well as Tawfīq al-Ayyūbī al-Anṣārī (regarding the last-mentioned [d. 1932], see Muḥammad Muṭīʿ al-Ḥāfiẓ/Nizār Abāẓa: *Tārīkh 'ulamā' Dimashq fī l-qarn 14h*, Damascus 1986, I/455f.).

[51] As in *MDA* III/627; Moshār III/col. 737; Āl Yāsīn: "Ḥayāt al-mu'allif", 56; Qubaysī: *Ḥayāt al-imām*, 54–57; *MMI* II/228f.; *ṬASh* I.3/1086.

tal bibliography of Shiite literature, *al-Dharīʿa ilā taṣānīf al-shīʿa*. There is no specific entry about the *Murājaʿāt*, although al-Ṭehrānī knew the book and explicitly referred to it twice in the article about Sharaf al-Dīn in his biographical dictionary.[52] Instead, in the *Dharīʿa*, he cites a pre-1911 work of Sharaf al-Dīn's entitled *al-Munāẓarāt al-azhariyya wa-l-mubāḥathāt al-miṣriyya*. As this was among the books that had been "stolen" (*nuhiba*), Sharaf al-Dīn allegedly rewrote it based upon scattered drafts (*min al-musawwadāt al-mutafarriqa*) and finally published it. Neither any location nor the year are cited, and about the content nothing more is said than that the author addressed the various issues that gave rise to controversy between Sunnis and Shiites (*bayn al-khāṣṣa wa-l-ʿāmma*), and that he ascertained the truth by applying the methodology of the Sunnis.[53]

In the same volume, only few pages later, al-Ṭehrānī refers to another work of Sharaf al-Dīn's entitled *Munāẓarat as-sayyid ʿAbd al-Ḥusayn Sharaf al-Dīn*, in which he debated issues regarding divorce law "with several (or possibly: 'with one') Azhar scholar(s)" (*maʿa baʿḍ fuḍalāʾ al-Azhar*).[54] In fact, a short treatise bearing the inconspicuous title *Munāẓara ʿilmiyya* was published together with Muḥsin al-Amīn's small booklet *al-Shīʿa wa-l-Manār* that appeared in Beirut in 1910 (i.e. before Sharaf al-Dīn's Cairo stay) as a supplement to the seventh fascicle of the *ʿIrfān*.[55] In all probability, this tract is a short, perhaps

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[52] *ṬASh* I.3/1082 and 1086; in another collection of biographies of Shiite scholars, he does not mention this book: *Muṣaffā l-maqāl fī muṣannifī ʿilm al-rijāl*, Tehran 1378/1958–59, col. 221.

[53] *Dharīʿa* XXII/281; regarding al-Ṭehrānī (1876–1970), see *MDA* III/739–42; Moshārv/cols. 232–35; obituaries in *al-ʿIrfān* 58/2 (Jun. 1970), 210–13 and 58/3–4 (Jul.-Aug. 1970), 363–66; also *EIr* II/169f. (H. Algar) as well as (concerning *Dharīʿa*) VII/35f. (E. Kohlberg) and the literature quoted there in regard to each. In Shiite heresiography the Shia denote themselves as the "chosen" group (*khāṣṣa*), in contrast to the Sunnis, who constitute the "common people" (*ʿāmma*); see also the article "al-Kẖāṣṣa wa'l-ʿĀmma", *EI*[2] IV/1098–1100 (M.A.J. Beg).

[54] *Dharīʿa* XXII/296 (no. 7167).

[55] Ibid., XIV/274 (no. 2562); cf. Boberg: *Ägypten*, 208. What may have added to the general bewilderment is the fact that there is mostly unclear and sometimes contradictory information given on this book: in Sarkīs: *Muʿjam*, *MDA* II/141–46 (s.v. Muḥsin al-Amīn), and *MMS* 42f. (ditto) there is no evidence at all; according to *MDA* III/627 and Kaḥḥāla V/87, it was composed by Sharaf al-Dīn himself; in the bibliographical part of his autobiography, Muḥsin al-Amīn says (*ASh* X/372f.) that the book was written by him and was printed; nevertheless information about the place and year of publication is missing (as is also the case in al-Khāqānī: *Shuʿarāʾ*, VII/260); finally, Muḥammad Rashīd Riḍā, the target of the book, stated that it was authored by "*baʿḍ ʿulamāʾihim* (i.e. the Shia) *fī Sūrīya*": *al-Manār* 28/5 (Jun. 1927), 349.

preliminary version of al-Amīn's more elaborate *al-Ḥuṣūn al-manīʿa*, directed against Muḥammad Rashīd Riḍā, that came out at approximately the same time.[56] Although the co-author signed only as "Ibn Sharaf al-Dīn al-Mūsawī", there is no reason to doubt that it was in fact ʿAbd al-Ḥusayn. There seems to be, however, no direct connection between his contribution to this book and the *Murājaʿāt*. The somewhat opaque wording in the *Dharīʿa* was clarified by the explicit statement that the short discussion on law arose from a meeting the author had had with some eminent scholar who had graduated from the Azhar (*baʿḍ al-afāḍil mimman takharraja min al-Azhar*). Neither the name of the scholar nor the location of their meeting, though, are stated.[57]

A footnote to an article by Sharaf al-Dīn written in 1927/28 (1346h) and published in February 1929 in the *ʿIrfān* is the first real evidence of the (non-) existence of the correspondence in question. At the very end of this tract, he touches upon the tribulations he had suffered in 1920 "on the way of the believers" (*fī sabīl al-muʾminīn*; cf. Koran 4/115) when the French (though not mentioned by name) destroyed his library. In his listing of the nineteen manuscripts lost as a result, he identifies number eleven as the work we encounter in al-Ṭehrānī: *al-Munāẓarāt al-azhariyya wa-l-mubāḥathāt al-miṣriyya*.[58]

In a further footnote that was written about the same time for the revised reprint of his book *al-Fuṣūl al-muhimma*, Sharaf al-Dīn mentions the mysterious book again, this time, however, with two interesting nuances: one is the very first appearance of what later became the work's actual title (Sharaf al-Dīn here speaks of *Murājaʿātunā al-azhariyya wa-munāẓarātunā al-miṣriyya*); the second is the announcement that the book would be published shortly.[59] Whereas he had previously spoken without great ado about the loss of the manuscript (implying an absolute and irreplaceable loss), the work now suddenly seems ready to go to press. One might be inclined to presume from this that in the five years which passed between the two footnotes, Sharaf al-Dīn (re-)wrote the book and even circulated it among some of his

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[56] In regard to this book and al-Amīn's polemical clashes with Rashīd Riḍā, cf. below, pp. 89ff.

[57] al-Amīn: *al-Shīʿa wa-l-Manār*, 34.

[58] Sharaf al-Dīn: "al-Kalima al-gharrāʾ fī tafḍīl Fāṭima al-zahrāʾ", *al-ʿIrfān* 17/2 (Feb. 1929), 136–76, on 174f. (see also *Dharīʿa* XVIII/126); in his autobiography, he later cited the title mentioned here as a subtitle of *al-Murājaʿāt: Bughyat al-rāghibīn*, II/98.

[59] Sharaf al-Dīn: *al-Fuṣūl al-muhimma*, 94 note 2.

colleagues in the Jabal ʿĀmil region. One of them, Muḥammad Amīn Shams al-Dīn, briefly alluded to it, although under yet another title: *al-Rasāʾil al-azhariyya*.[60]

When the book was finally published at the end of 1936, the author did not add much to the clarification of its origin in the preface. Reference to the plundering of the library was absent, the absence being so conspicuous that it left room for the interpretation that the book had been intentionally withheld for the entire period, possibly for tactical reasons.

> These pages were not just written today, and their basic idea did not arise only recently. Rather, the pages here were penned somewhat over a quarter of a century ago and were almost made public then. Nonetheless, the events and disasters of that period proved to be powerful obstacles that put themselves in the path, and thus they (i.e. the pages) came to be concealed and guarded, lingering and awaiting a more auspicious occasion when the scattered parts could be reassembled and the missing moieties could again become complete. Because just as events delayed the printing of the pages, the events came to encounter the pages' content, too.[61]

Sharaf al-Dīn made it clear that he had thoroughly revised this content and, where he deemed it necessary, supplemented it. However, since the relevant passages were not identified—and could not be identified, if, in fact, the original manuscript actually had disappeared in the assault on the library—the original wording of any correspondence is impossible to reconstruct from retrospect.

> I do not claim that the present pages are limited to the texts we wrote to each other at the time, or that the words of these letters are his handwriting (i.e. that of the Sunni correspondent) without my interference. Because, as mentioned, the events that delayed the publication also prevented the common writing down. Nevertheless, our legal handlings (*al-muḥākamāt*) in regard to the various issues are found in their entirety in this volume, as well as additions demanded by the present situation and those which appeared appropriate based upon advice and spiritual guidance. Occasionally they were also the result of a specific context, however in a way that did not rupture the harmony between us.[62]

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[60] Mervin: *Un réformisme chiite*, 306, referring to Shams al-Dīn: *al-Ḍamīr al-bāriz*, s.l. 1353/1934, I/17.

[61] Sharaf al-Dīn: *al-Murājaʿāt*, introd. p. *d*; cf. *al-ʿIrfān* 56/9–10 (Feb.–Mar. 1969), 1010.

[62] *al-Murājaʿāt*, p. *z*; cf. Sharaf al-Dīn: *Bughyat al-rāghibīn*, II/98.

The most noteworthy of all these puzzles, though, is that neither in the introduction nor in the text of the correspondence, is the name of the Azhar, let alone that of its rector, mentioned, and thus it never becomes explicit that Sharaf al-Dīn's correspondent was, in fact, Salīm al-Bishrī. It is probably due to this circumstance that in the first allusion to the book in the *ʿIrfān* (which covers just five lines) it is stated that the work dealt with conversations that had taken place between Sharaf al-Dīn and "the former *Shaykh al-Azhar* and others".[63]

Identification of the individual missives is limited to the signature *sīn* for the letters of the Sunni interlocutor introduced by Sharaf al-Dīn as *Shaykh al-Islām* (no. 2), and a *shīn* for Sharaf al-Dīn's—or, in order to stick to the manifest symbolism desired by the author: *sīn* for the letters of the Sunni, and *shīn* for those of the Shiite.[64] A greeting that contains a personal name is found only in the first correspondence, sent by *sīn* to Sharaf al-Dīn. It is only in subsequent editions that the respective note was supplemented by the explanation that the *sīn* stood not only for *sunnī*, but also for Salīm, and the *shīn* correspondingly for the *shīʿī* Sharaf al-Dīn. But this seems to be a rather half-hearted attempt to inject al-Bishrī's name into the book after all; given the generally widespread (and for users of biographical dictionaries occasionally cumbersome) practice of arranging entries according to what is actually the first name (*ism*), it would be strange if a *shīn* for the surname (*laqab*) Sharaf al-Dīn was chosen as a symbol instead of an *ʿayn* (for ʿAbd al-Ḥusayn), which would normally be expected in this case, and would also be analogous to the *sīn* for Salīm.

The entire compilation comprises 112 letters. The first two establish a formal commencement of the correspondence with pseudo-Bishrī requesting the initiation of the discussion (and immediately identifying the topics to be covered), to which Sharaf al-Dīn grants his consent.

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[63] *al-ʿIrfān* 27/2 (Apr. 1937), 163: an announcement of this book together with the polemic *Ajwibat masāʾil Jārallāh* that appeared simultaneously. Al-Baʿthī expresses himself with similar circumspection: *Shakhṣiyyāt islāmiyya*, 175 (s.v. Mūsā al-Ṣadr): The book consists of letters exchanged between Sharaf al-Dīn and "a former Azhar *shaykh*" (*aḥad mashāyikh al-Azhar al-sābiqīn*). The editors of the Iraqi journal *al-Ḥātif* seem to have been better informed, for in their short announcement of the book, al-Bishrī's name is explicitly stated: *al-Hātif*, vol. 2, no. 67 (March 19, 1937), p. 8; I am indebted to Prof. Silvia Naef for a copy of this article.

[64] Sharaf al-Dīn indicated explicitly in the first edition that this is what the letters stood for, see *al-Murājaʿāt*, no. 1 note 1 (in the following sections of the present work, quotations from the *Murājaʿāt* will be given by mentioning the number of the respective letter in order to facilitate comparison with other editions than that used by me).

The last two represent a similarly formal conclusion: In letter 111, the Sunni expresses his thanks for the instruction bestowed upon him that has made it possible for him to wipe away the "calumny of the liars and the accusations of the unjust" and to recognize the "sign of the proper guidance" (*ʿalam al-hudā*).[65] Sharaf al-Dīn thereupon releases him from the correspondence (no. 112), certifying that al-Bishrī now understood things and was able to judge them objectively and without the imprints of nationalist emotions and personal biases (*ʿawāṭif qaumiyya, aghrād shakhṣiyya*).

The remaining 108 letters are organized into two parts. The first one (nos. 3–19) appears under the heading *Fī imāmat al-madhhab* and traces the establishment of Shiism as a legal school with equal rights. Following unspoken sectarian needs, the second part (nos. 20–110) deals with the issue of the legitimacy of the Sunni caliphate.[66] From the very first glance, it is obvious that what is at hand has nothing to do with a "dialogue" in the literal sense of the word: more than nine tenths of the entire text are the result of Sharaf al-Dīn's statements, whereas only 13 of al-Bishrī's 56 letters are longer than ten lines in their printed form. The latter's main task consists of supplying Sharaf al-Dīn with keywords and junctures leading to the next subtopic.

Sharaf al-Dīn's letters, in contrast, are certainly organized in a sound and skilful way, yet essentially remain a traditional apologia of the Shiite image of history and the claim to sole leadership of the *umma* resulting therefrom. Friendly in tone and politely instructive in manner, he remains absolutely unyielding in the matter at hand and unprepared to give an iota in regard to Shiite doctrine. The fact that he sets out to rely largely on Sunni sources and substantiations (particularly in no. 16 where he enumerates 100 Sunni authorities who are supposed to have attested to their siding with ʿAlī and the Shia), and thus aims at defeating the Sunnis with their own weapons hardly conceals his underlying objective. The course of his argumentation touches all of the most significant events of early Islamic history (up to Abū Bakr's assumption of power) that have led to contention between Sunnis and Shiites. Since they have been outlined in the introduction to the present work, it seems sufficient to give only a brief summary here:

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[65] For the term *hudā*, cf. Koran 2/2 as well as ʿAbd al-Bāqī: *al-Muʿjam al-mufahras*, s.v.

[66] Here in the title (no. 20) with the revealing name *imāmat al-ʿāmma*; see above, note 53.

a) The restriction of the *ahl al-bayt* to ʿAlī's descendants, to which the entire first part of the *Murājaʿāt* is devoted. At the centre of the "line of proof" is the *ḥadīth al-thaqalayn* (nos. 8ff.), which is supported by both a corresponding interpretation of Koranic verses (no. 12) and a full list of Sunni evidence (no. 16, with an alphabetically arranged enumeration of not less than a hundred alleged authorities).

b) ʿAlī's designation as the Prophet's successor by Muḥammad himself. In addition to the familiar *ḥadīth*s, such as the one that equates ʿAlī with Aaron (here nos. 32ff.), Sharaf al-Dīn mentions a great number of other traditions of the same tenor (for example in nos. 26, 36, 48, 66). That the events at the pond of Khumm are addressed for the first time in letter no. 54, i.e. exactly in the middle of the 108 topic-related writings, is certainly no coincidence and demonstrates the composition skill of the author, who thus organizes his apologia around this central event of Shiite historiography in the most literal sense of the word.

c) The behavior of the most important of the Prophet's companions, in particular ʿĀ'isha (nos. 71ff.), Abū Bakr (79ff.), and ʿUmar (86ff.). The challenge to the caliphate of the last two is only thinly veiled.

d) The assembly at the *saqīfa* to select Abū Bakr, at which ʿAlī, who was not present, was cheated of his right (nos. 101ff.).

In the entire *Murājaʿāt*, a serious sign of Sunni opinion is found only twice in all the letters attributed to al-Bishrī. In letter 57, in regard to the *ḥadīth* that arose from events at the pond of Khumm, he appeals for an interpretation of this tradition by looking at its hidden sense (*ta'wīl*).[67] Also, in number 87, he apologetically attempts to explain ʿUmar's behaviour at Muḥammad's deathbed, where—according to later Shiite interpretation—he prevented the Prophet from putting the designation of ʿAlī as his successor in writing. Sharaf al-Dīn, as might be expected, easily refutes both objections, which his vis-à-vis immediately and dutifully acknowledges (nos. 58 and 89).

The tone struck in the letters of the Sunni must be, without exception, deemed extremely polite, in fact, somewhat obsequious and servile. In almost every letter, he gives his admiration for Sharaf al-

[67] The term comes from Koranic exegesis and designates the interpretation of individual verses aiming at their inner sense—that is concealed (*bāṭin*) to the uninitiated—unlike *tafsīr*, which is limited to the external (*ẓāhir*) sense of the word; in this regard, see H. Gätje (ed.): *Koran und Koranexegese*, Stuttgart 1971, 299f. as well as *EI*² X/390–92 (I. Poonawala); in general article "Exegesis", *EQ* II/99–142 (C. Gilliot/R. Wielandt).

Dīn's scholarship free reign (for example in nos. 1, 5, 9, 11, 17, 19, 25, 43, etc.) and sometimes almost implores him for further instruction.[68] Following a figure frequently encountered in modern Arabic literature, the role intended for the *Shaykh al-Azhar* in the work may well be described as that of the "Sunni yes-man".[69] Willingly and without ado, he concedes that Shiism is ahead in decisive matters of the Sunni interpretation of history, and thus ultimately has the more justified claims to the leadership of the Muslims. Indicative of this is how, at the end of the first section (in letter number 19), he not only acknowledges the twelve Shiite Imams as equals, but actually calls them superior to the founders of the Sunni legal schools.

These Sunnis, he explains, created four different schools whose opinions in all issues of Islamic law vary and who do not even concur concerning their source materials. The Shiites, in contrast, established a single, cohesive *madhhab* carefully conceived by twelve undisputed authorities, which on that basis alone affords no place for doubts and arbitrary decisions by legal scholars. This last remark may be seen *cum grano salis* as a gibe at the competence of the Sunni *'ulamā'*.

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In the two decades after the book's publication, it evoked only modest resonance. It was, in fact, reprinted several times and in the 1940s was even translated into Persian[70] and Urdu.[71] With regard to the

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[68] For example no. 35: "May God watch over your father. How clear and sublime are your signs [*āyāt*, also means Koranic verses]! How eloquent and cogent your explanations! On with the continuation, on with the continuation [the repetition of the expression *ḥayya 'alā* is a component of the daily call to prayer] of your continual, unfailing, and clear texts! Grace (*al-faḍl*) is due unto you."

[69] Wielandt: *Das Bild der Europäer*, 57 defines what she terms the European yes-man ("der europäische Bestätiger vom Dienst") as being the specific European character in a novel or the like whose task it is to confirm to the 'Oriental' reader that the Egyptians, Arabs, Muslims, Orientals, etc. are superior in decisive matters, however these may be defined, in comparison to the materialistic Europeans: "(E)r spielt die Rolle desjenigen, der der kulturellen, ethnischen oder nationalen Bezugsgruppe des Autors, also etwa den 'Orientalen', Ägyptern oder Arabern, zu bescheinigen hat, daß sie im Entscheidenden—wie immer dieses definiert sein mag—doch die Überlegenen sind." Cf. also ibid., 584–89.

[70] Löschner quotes a Persian translation entitled *Munāẓara-yi du rahbar-i maḏhabī* (Qom 1345sh): *Die dogmatischen Grundlagen*, 20; Qubaysī mentions two more translations: *Ḥayāt al-imām*, 55f.; according to him, one appeared with the title *al-Munāẓarāt fī l-murāja'āt* 1365hq/1946 in Iṣfahān (translated by Sardār Ḥaidar Qūlī Kābūlī); regarding the second, he mentions only the name of the translator: Abū l-Faḍl Najmābādī.

[71] Also according to Qubaysī: *Ḥayāt al-imām*, 56, an Urdu translation by certain Moḥammad Bāqer K-j-w-ā-b-h-ā was printed in Pakistan around 1370hq/1950–51.

overall ecumenical discussion of the era, however, it was of no further importance.[72]

The situation did not change until the middle of the 1950s, incited by Sharaf al-Dīn himself. In his last book, *al-Naṣṣ wa-l-ijtihād*,[73] which appeared in 1956, he resumed the topic of the *Murājaʿāt* once more. On the very first page of the text of this rehash of a detailed explanation of the Shiite understanding of history, he gets to talking about his journey to Egypt—already almost half a century in the past at the time—and describes how the work *al-Murājaʿāt* came into being from his conversations with Salīm al-Bishrī (whose name is now finally cited explicitly). Again, however, he avoids any elucidating explanation of the publication's background.[74]

In the book's preface, Muḥammad Taqī al-Ḥakīm describes it as "a treasure (*dhakhīra*; also means 'ammunition') in the art of argument and the debate (viz. with the Sunnis)". If the teachings of this work had been seized upon in the past, he concludes, most of the differences between the two denominations would have long since disappeared.[75]

With this work, Sharaf al-Dīn—for whose engagement in the Cairene rapprochement circle the *Murājaʿāt* had no significance[76]—became established as a precursor of the *taqrīb* concept who had striven for a dialogue with Sunni theologians from early on. Less than half a year after his death, the passage regarding his sojourn at the Azhar appeared in the *ʿIrfān* in the context of the publication of extracts of his autobiography.[77] Possibly still instigated by Sharaf al-Dīn himself, it was this late "rediscovery" at the zenith of the inner-Islamic

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[72] The only exception to this in the literature of the late 1940s that I know of is the casual mention of the book in al-Madanī/al-Zuʿbī: *al-Islām bayn al-sunna wa-l-shīʿa*, II/72.

[73] Review in *al-ʿIrfān* 44/3 (Dec. 1956), 316; excerpts from it already appeared in *al-ʿIrfān* 41/5 (Mar. 1954), 484–88, 41/7 (May 1954), 731–35 and 41/9 (Jul. 1954), 977–90; see also *MMN* 363 (no. 1636); Qubaysī: *Ḥayāt al-imām*, 59f.; the tenth edition, Beirut 1988 used by me has the slightly different title *al-Ijtihād fī muqābil al-naṣṣ*; cf. also Mervin: *Un réformisme chiite*, 302–04.

[74] *al-Ijtihād*, 87f.; cf. ibid., 173ff., where Sharaf al-Dīn quotes al-Bishrī's apology for 'Umar's behaviour and again "refutes" it.

[75] Ibid., 70; regarding al-Ḥakīm (b. 1921) see *MMI* III/116f.; *ṬASh* I.1/257; *RF* I/427f.; Ende: "Ehe auf Zeit", 23.

[76] Muḥammad Muḥammad al-Madanī quoted from the book in the journal of the ecumenical society, but made no comment whatsoever regarding its authenticity; see *RI* 8/1956/405–20, on 419.

[77] *al-ʿIrfān* 45/8 (May 1958), 777–84, on 778–80 (see Sharaf al-Dīn: *Bughyat al-rāghibīn*, II/199–201).

ecumenical endeavours that enabled the correspondence to attain the myth that made it one of the most quoted, and one of the most controversial, pieces of *taqrīb* literature.

The lion's share of the credit for this must go to the Syrian *qāḍī* Muḥammad Marʿī al-Amīn al-Anṭākī, who, at the beginning of the 1960s in his extensive apologetic book "Why I chose Shiism", describes his conversion from the Shāfiʿī school to Shiism, ostensibly under the influence of what he had read in the *Murājaʿāt*.[78] Both he and his brother Aḥmad Amīn al-Anṭākī, who likewise converted to Shiism,[79] remained steadfast in their defiance of the various vehement expressions of enmity and the plots of their Sunni opponents, who had called for a boycott against them. On an extended trip through Iraq and Iran, during which he engaged in conversations with numerous Shiite dignitaries, among them Hibat al-Dīn al-Shahrastānī, Muḥsin al-Ḥakīm and Muḥammad al-Ḥusayn Āl Kāshif al-Ghiṭā', Muḥammad al-Anṭākī made sure of the correctness of his conduct.[80]

In the last part of his book, al-Anṭākī goes on to explain how, in the course of innumerable discussions with Sunni scholars (including an Azhar *shaykh* whose name he does not divulge), he managed to succeed either in effecting their direct conversion, or in at least helping them recognize what—in his view—had been their erroneous esteem of Shiism. In all these stereotypical descriptions of stylized debates, Sharaf al-Dīn's correspondence is an indispensable implement and frequently forms the foundation for his interlocutor's conversion.[81]

Bearing in mind the vehemence with which Sunnis antagonistic to any form of rapprochement with the Shiites had addressed considerably less contentious topics and comments regarding the inner-Islamic dialogue, it is somewhat astonishing that no debate of any kind regarding the *Murājaʿāt* took place at this time.[82] Neither Muḥibb

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[78] al-Anṭākī: *Li-mādhā ikhtart*, esp. 18ff., 352, 363f.; regarding the author, see ibid. 3ff. (*tarjamat ḥayātī*), as well as *MMS* 45; translations of his book exist in Urdu (Lucknow 1966), Persian (Tehran 1970) and English (Karachi 1973); extracts are reprinted in al-Bajnūrī: *al-Mustabṣirūn*, 371–425; cf. Moṣṭafawī: "Etteḥād" (as below, note 106), 47 and also al-Ḥilw: *al-Shīʿa bayn al-ḥaqā'iq wa-l-akādhīb*, 9f.; Āl Salmān: *Kutub ḥadhdhara minhā l-ʿulamā'*, I/346f.

[79] Aḥmad Amīn al-Anṭākī: *Fī ṭarīqī ilā l-tashayyuʿ*, 16–19 and passim (cf. *MMN* 267f.; Urdu translation Lucknow 1965; a book bearing the same title seems to have been written by a ʿAlī Ṣāliḥ Fattāḥ, cf. *MMI* II/424); cf. Bajnūrī: *al-Mustabṣirūn*, 33–39.

[80] al-Anṭākī: *Li-mādhā ikhtart*, 27ff., 33–43.

[81] al-Anṭākī: *Li-mādhā ikhtart*, 319–64 (about the conversion of the Azhar *shaykh* 332–40).

[82] Cf. below, chapters VIII and IX.

al-Dīn al-Khaṭīb nor Maḥmūd al-Mallāḥ, probably the two most adamant opponents of *taqrīb* in the 1950s, devoted particular attention to the book in their writings. In a short item in the Azhar journal, al-Khaṭīb merely described the correspondence *en passant* as a forgery without pursuing the topic either therein or anywhere else in greater detail.[83] Obviously these circles did not attach enough significance to the book to justify giving it further publicity by means of a polemic—and running the risk of engendering refutations from the Shiites.

This reservation changed only after the revolution in Iran in 1979. Several authors among the large number of those who put their opposition to the Khomeynī regime in writing discovered the usefulness the *Murājaʿāt* for their argumentation, and the book's uncertain publication history was clearly very convenient for them. All of a sudden, they complained that Sharaf al-Dīn did not offer a reproduction of even one of al-Bishrī's letters, something that of course would have been impossible, if, in fact, his original composition and the actual letters disappeared during the attack on his library. Furthermore, al-Bishrī's descendants were quoted as confirming the point of view of the various authors and as mentioning they knew nothing about a correspondence between their father and a Shiite scholar. In the eyes of ʿAlī Aḥmad al-Sālūs, who produced a short refutation of the *Murājaʿāt*, the whole thing was a "gigantic slander" that nonetheless had to be read and exposed.[84]

By far the most detailed refutation of the *Murājaʿāt* is a two-volume treatise that came out in 1986. Although neither the name of the publishing house nor any location is given anywhere in the book, it appears that its author, a certain Muḥammad al-Zuʿbī, follows the tracks of Ibn Taymiyya and the later Salafiyya movement, to whom he refers in the preface.[85] Without really tackling the publication history of the letters, he rejects them categorically in a scornful tone

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[83] *MA* 25/3 (Nov. 1953), 370–72.

[84] al-Sālūs: *ʿAqīdat al-imāma*, 170–81 (quotation 181); he placed al-Amīnī's *al-Ghadīr fī l-kitāb wa-l-sunna wa-l-adab* on a level with the *Murājaʿāt* (183f.); al-Sālūs's book is, by the way, an absolutely traditional polemic against the Shiite doctrine of the Imamate, which he attempted to refute with arguments from the Koran and (Sunni) works of *ḥadīth* (in the preface, he frankly admitted that he had not used any Shiite *ḥadīth* compilations, because these had only been written to support Shiite viewpoint; cf. p. 4). Also in the chapter devoted to the *Murājaʿāt* his procedure primarily consists in trying to prove errors in Sharaf al-Dīn's understanding and in the transmitting of Prophetic traditions; cf. also his other anti-Shiite work, *Maʿa al-shīʿa al-ithnā ʿashariyya*, esp. I/165ff. and 203ff.

[85] al-Zuʿbī: *al-Bayyināt*, I/5–14.

on the ground that the work was nothing more than part of a Jewish-Christian imperialist conspiracy intended to overthrow the Ottoman Empire. According to him, Sharaf al-Dīn had to wait so long before publishing the letters because the Ottoman Caliphate would have never allowed him to do so as long as it existed. The actual book constitutes a fairly traditional diatribe that reproduces the entire text of Sharaf al-Dīn's letters and lengthy refutations from the pen of al-Zuʿbī.[86]

All counter-polemics of Sunni critics inevitably came to the conclusion that the veracity of Sharaf al-Dīn's book could be discarded just on the grounds that the *Shaykh al-Azhar* would either have had to acknowledge himself as a Shiite openly or be practicing *taqiyya*, both thoughts being equally absurd.[87] Particularly the impression of al-Bishrī playing the part of Sharaf al-Dīn's pupil met their furious opposition.[88] In some cases, the disparagement also resulted in a contemptuous criticism of Sharaf al-Dīn's epigones, particularly the two al-Anṭākī brothers.[89]

On the side of the apologists of the *Murājaʿāt*, there were few authors who went as far as the Anṭākīs in their admiration by describing the reading of the book as a kind of Damascus experience.[90] Nevertheless, the observation that the work was an example of a peaceful and fruitful dialogue between Sunnis and Shiites at the highest level—and devoid of any polemic purpose—has been a continually recurring argument in the ecumenical literature since the late 1950s. This opinion has not only been expressed by Shiite supporters of *taqrīb*,[91] but

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[86] Cf. for instance ibid., I/192–286 for the refutation of the especially detailed *murājaʿa* no. 16.

[87] al-Sālūs: *ʿAqīdat al-imāma*, 81; al-Gharīb: *Wa-jāʾa daur al-majūs*, 133–35; al-Turkumānī: *Taʿrīf bi-madhhab al-Shīʿa al-imāmiyya*, 99f.; al-Ḥasanī: *Manhaj ahl al-bayt*, 4f.

[88] al-Zuʿbī: *al-Bayyināt*, I/14.

[89] Al-Turkumānī: *Taʿrīf*, 106–08; Mālallāh: *al-Shīʿa wa-taḥrīf al-qurʾān*, 174, mentions a reply composed by him to al-Anṭākī entitled *Iḫyāʾ al-sharīʿa fī naqd kitāb li-mādhā ikhtart madhhab al-shīʿa* as being "in press". al-Anṭākī himself had already mentioned in his book (p. 27f.) a polemic directed against him by Amīn Allāh ʿAyrūḍ (*al-Daʿwa al-muḥammadiyya ilā l-ṣirāṭ al-mustaqīm*; no reference in *MMS* 380, s.v. ʿAyrūḍ).

[90] Comparable cases are al-Qāsim: *Ḥaqīqat al-shīʿa*, 14–16, al-Tījānī: *Thumma ihtadayt*, 87f., 155, 206, and al-Kuthayrī: *al-Salafiyya*, 675ff., 684f.; cf. also al-Wardānī: *al-Shīʿa fī Miṣr*, 148 note 2; more titles by converts (mostly without any bibliographical details and further information about the respective authors) are listed in Aḥmad: *al-Ḥaqīqa al-ḍāʾiʿa*, 208f.; especially the Tunisian al-Tījānī and the Egyptian Ṣāliḥ al-Wardānī developed into prolific authors who tirelessly fight for their cause and describe the hardship they suffer on their way; cf. al-Tījānī: *Kull al-ḥulūl*, 327–39; idem: *Fa-sʾalū ahl al-dhikr*, 5–9; al-Kuthayrī: *al-Salafiyya*, 679.

[91] A more offensive view was propagated by ʿAlī Sharīʿatī who otherwise did

likewise by Sunnis seeking support among their own ranks for the dialogue with the other side.[92] In some cases, even writers who are considered to be sympathetic towards the Islamists accepted the book.[93]

As might have been anticipated, attacks of Sunni doubters further increased the number of those apologetic writings after 1979; more and more voices sharing this opinion were now to be heard. Sometimes, it seems that it is not so much the genesis of the book that really counts. For instance, Jaʿfar Sharaf al-Dīn, the son of the author, linked his own biography (he was born in 1920) to the "re-emergence" of the *Murājaʿāt*, reconstructed by his father after the plunder of the library. He admitted frankly that additions (with no further specifications) had been made, but this did not appear to him to be a basis for scepticism.[94] The same Jaʿfar Sharaf al-Dīn some years later went so far as to convey the impression that the book was entirely written by his father as a kind of report of the discussions he had had with al-Bishrī. In an interview with a Lebanese magazine, he described that shortly before his return to Lebanon, ʿAbd al-Ḥusayn Sharaf al-Dīn revealed to the *Shaykh al-Azhar* that he had drawn up an account of what had been discussed among both of them, just as

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not appear among the participants in the *taqrīb* discussion. He praised the *Murājaʿāt* as being the best example of the "ʿAlid Shīʿa", the return to which in his eyes was indispensable for Shiism: *Tashayyoʿ-e ʿalawī wa tashayyoʿ-e ṣafawī*, 73.

[92] Muḥammad Fikrī Abū l-Naṣr: *al-Murājaʿāt*, in: al-Raḍawī: *Ārāʾ al-muʿāṣirīn*, 177–85 (reprinted in Sharaf al-Dīn: *al-Murājaʿāt*, 20th edition, introduction 16–24; according to the title page of this edition, Abū l-Naṣr belonged to the Azhar *ʿulamāʾ*, though al-Raḍawī refers to him only as a graduate of this university); Murtaḍā al-Ḥakamī: *Taṣdīr al-kitāb*, in: al-Raḍawī: *Maʿa rijāl al-fikr*, 21; Maḥmūd Abū Rayya: *Aḍwāʾ ʿalā al-sunna al-muḥammadiyya*, 346 (cited in al-Ṣāfī: *Maʿa al-Khaṭīb*, 40 note 1); ʿAlī: *al-Imām Sharaf al-Dīn*, 36, 46, 151–53; Dāwūd: *Nazarāt*, 87–97 (reprinted in the 20th edition of the *Murājaʿāt*, 6–14); Fashshāhī: Introduction to Kamareʾī: *Payām-e Īrān*, 9; al-Baʿthī: *Shakhṣiyyāt muʿāṣira*, 175; al-Jundī: *al-Imām Jaʿfar al-Ṣādiq*, 258 note 1; Sayyid al-Ahl: *al-Imām Sharaf al-Dīn*, 129–80.

[93] The most prominent example is probably Fahmī al-Huwaydī, a well-known journalist, who seems to have no reservations concerning the book's authenticity. The mistake in his travelogue *Īrān min al-dākhil*, 328, that Sharaf al-Dīn came to Cairo "around 1910" (sic!) and met with a Sunni by the name of Salīm, concluding that Sharaf al-Dīn meant ʿAbd al-Majīd Salīm (about whom see below, p. 132 note 45, was corrected later by himself: cf. his preface to Mughniyya: *al-Jawāmiʿ wa-l-fawāriq*, 15; about al-Huwaydī, cf. Buchta: *Die iranische Schia*, 234–42; *al-Ahram Weekly*, no. 656 (September 18, 2003); W. Hassab Alla: "Le Christianisme et les Chrétiens vus par deux auteurs musulmans", in: J. Waardenburg: *Islam and Christianity. Mutual Perceptions since the mid-20th Century*, Leuven 1998, 159–211, on 186ff.

[94] Jaʿfar Sharaf al-Dīn: "Min daftar al-dhikrayāt al-janūbiyya wa-tārīkh Jabal ʿĀmil", *al-ʿIrfān* 71/1 (Sep. 1983), 83–86, on 85f. (quotation from Sharaf al-Dīn: *Bughyat al-rāghibīn*, II/98).

was the custom in the study circles in Najaf. After this al-Bishrī and Sharaf al-Dīn spent roughly two hours (*naḥwa sāʿatayn*) proofreading and correcting "the summary of the debate" (*khulāṣat al-niqāsh*), after which the Azhar scholar gave his agreement to Sharaf al-Dīn's plan to have the final version of the report published.[95]

More than on the problematic origin of the book, the authors now focussed on its allegedly beneficial consequences. No less an authority than Āyatollāh Borūjerdī was cited as having vouched for the book's high quality,[96] and possibly as an answer to books like that by ʿAlī al-Sālūs mentioned above, there now also emerged treatises by Shiite authors who set out to prove that Salīm al-Bishrī had in fact converted to Shiism under the influence of his dialogue with Sharaf al-Dīn.[97]

In a book about "great Shiite *ʿulamāʾ* from Kulaynī to Khomeynī" published in the mid-1980s in Qom, there is a brief but characteristic example of this kind of myth-making to be found. Without giving any references or names, the author depicts a meeting that allegedly took place between Sharaf al-Dīn and some Sunni scholars (including the Egyptian State Muftī) at the Azhar. In an intense debate on the topic of the correct leadership after the Prophet, Sharaf al-Dīn manages to silence his counterparts by using only accepted Sunni *ḥadīth*s (which is of course the theme of the *Murājaʿāt*). In the end, the Muftī suddenly recognizes the Lebanese *ʿālim*, who had remained incognito previously. The debate, the story concludes, was printed in Egyptian newspapers and caused quite a few conversions.[98]

After 1979, ʿAbd al-Ḥusayn Sharaf al-Dīn and his writings have also experienced an interesting renaissance of the most official sort. Since the middle of the 1980s, the government of the Islamic Republic of Iran has made itself the standard bearer of Islamic unity, resulting in lively activity in the field ranging from the annual "Unity Week"

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[95] "Shīʿat al-ʿArab wa-Azhar Miṣr", *al-Shirāʿ*, June 1996, 15–23, on 20.

[96] Muḥammad Faḍl Saʿd: "Min al-Sayyid Sharaf al-Dīn ilā l-sayyid Mūsā", *al-ʿIrfān* 71/1 (Sep. 1983), 87–94, on 89; further examples of this attitude are al-Aḥsāʾī: *al-Ṭāʾifiyya*, 70; al-Ḥakīm: *Fikrat al-taqrīb*, 14; Salām: *al-Waḥda al-ʿaqāʾidiyya*, 41; Tuffāḥa: *al-Muslimūn*, 46; al-Tījānī: *al-Shīʿa hum ahl al-sunna*, 67f.; cf. also *al-ʿIrfān* 77/3 (Apr. 1993), 10–22; 77/7 (Sep. 1993), 61–77, esp. 66, and 78/3–4 (May–Jun. 1994), 104–07; al-Mīlād: *Khiṭāb al-waḥda al-islāmiyya*, 175–86.

[97] Bajnūrī: *al-Mustabṣirūn*, 131–37; Aḥmad: *al-Ḥaqīqa al-ḍāʾiʿa*, 206f.; only slightly less outspoken is Shahbàz: "Sayyid ʿAbd al-Ḥusayn Sharaf al-Dīn", 131–33.

[98] Jūrfādāqānī: *ʿOlamā-ye bozorg*, 406f.

(*hafte-ye waḥdat*) to the establishment of the state-supported ecumenical association *Majmaʿ-e taqrīb* in 1990.[99] As a consequence, there has been a growing call to bring Sharaf al-Dīn's example to the forefront. A reprint (in Arabic) of the *Murājaʿāt* produced by a propaganda organization named *Bonyād-e baʿthat* appeared in Teheran as early as 1984, and since then, the two most important of Sharaf al-Dīn's other books on Islamic unity have been translated into Persian.[100]

The pinnacle of Sharaf al-Dīn's being brought into Iranian government politics has been a conference organized by the Iranian Embassy in Beirut from February 18–19, 1993 to honour the Lebanese scholar. The lectures delivered on this occasion concentrated primarily on the concept of Islamic unity and Sharaf al-Dīn's contribution to it. The most important Lebanese Shiite speakers included the *spiritus rector* of the Ḥizballāh militia, Muḥammad Ḥusayn Faḍlallāh[101] as well as Muḥammad Mahdī Shams al-Dīn, who was to be elected president of the Supreme Shiite Council in Lebanon approximately a year after the congress, in spring 1994. With his selection, he became—after Mūsā al-Ṣadr—the second successor to Sharaf al-Dīn as leader of the Lebanese Shia.[102]

In his inaugural address at the Beirut meeting, the Iranian minister of Islamic Guidance, ʿAlī Lārījānī, called the *Murājaʿāt* a "symbol of the brotherly dialogue between Sunnis and Shiites" and specifically mentioned the "revival of the plan for a rapprochement between the

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[99] Cf. in this regard below, pp. 381f.

[100] Namely *al-Fuṣūl al-muhimma* under the title *Mabāḥeth-e ʿamīqī dar jehat-e waḥdat-e ommat-e eslāmī*, Qom 1362sh/1984 (see also *Taqrīb bayn madhāheb-e eslāmī. Wīzhe-nāme-ye panjomīn konferāns-e waḥdat-e eslāmī, shahrīwar māh 1371—rabīʿ al-awwal 1413*, Tehran ca. 1992, 54f.) and *Masāʾil fiqhiyya* under the title *Masāʾel-e feqhiyye*, Mashhad 1371sh (reviewed in *Mishkāt* 38/Spring 1372/185); a Persian translation of the *Murājaʿāt* had already existed since the first edition; see above, note 70.

[101] *al-Imām as-sayyid*, 139–56; cf. al-Mīlād: *Khiṭāb al-waḥda al-islāmiyya*, 259–73; Faḍlallāh is also a member of the *Shūrā-ye ʿālī-ye majmaʿ-e taqrīb* (see *Mishkāt* 32/1370sh/4 and Buchta: *Die iranische Schia*, 255); regarding him, see in detail O. Carré: "Quelques mots-clefs de Muhammad Husayn Fadlallah", *Revue française de science politique* 37/1987/478–501; idem: "La 'révolution islamique' selon Muhammad Husayn Fadlallah", *Orient* 29/1988/68–84; M. Kramer: "Redeeming Jerusalem: The Pan-Islamic Premise of Hizballah", in: D. Menashri (ed.): *The Iranian Revolution and the Muslim World*, Boulder 1990, 105–30; Rieck: *Die Schiiten und der Kampf um den Libanon*, index, s.v.

[102] Cf. *al-Imām as-sayyid*, 41–64; cf. al-Mīlād: *Khiṭāb al-waḥda al-islāmiyya*, 275–82; regarding Shams al-Dīn (1931 or 1933–2001), see *RF* II/757f.; Mallat: *Shīʿī Thought*, 32–35; regarding his election as President of the Supreme Shiite Council in Lebanon, see *Arabies* no. 89, May 1994, p. 11; obituary in *Dialogue* (ed. by the *Public Affairs Committee for Shiʿa Muslims* in London) January 2001, p. 7; about the council itself, cf. *al-ʿIrfān* 57/3 (Jul. 1969), 271, 409–14 as well as Rieck: *Die Schiiten und der Kampf um den Libanon*, 100–09.

Islamic legal schools" by Khomeynī's successor as leader of the Revolution, Āyatollāh Khāmene'ī.[103] Another participant, Ja'far al-Muhājir, effusively commemorated Sharaf al-Dīn's Cairo trip in 1911 (and thus indirectly the Iranian policy founded on it) as the resumption of the dialogue between Sunni and Shiite scholars that had been interrupted for nearly 400 years. At that time, in the year 943h (1536/37), Zayn al-Dīn b. 'Alī al-Jubbā'ī, who later became the "Second martyr",[104] and hailed—as did Sharaf al-Dīn—from *Jabal* 'Āmil, met in Cairo with the Sunni *shaykh* Abū l-Ḥasan b. 'Alī al-Bakrī and discussed with him the two confessional groupings and their mutual relations. The contacts, though, were again ruptured due to the repressive policy of the Ottomans.[105]

Between the early 1980s and the mid-1990s, when the Iranian *taqrīb* policy reached its apex, reference to Sharaf al-Dīn was a *ceterum censeo* of nearly all ecumenical comments.[106] The last defence of the book in recent years—and the most extensive of its kind—is a series of articles that have been published since 1994 in the journal *Turāthunā* in Qom. In an absolutely traditional style, the author, 'Alī al-Mīlānī, issued a reply to the Sunni critics: with the formula *qīl . . . wa-aqūl*, he first quoted what were occasionally long passages from various polemics and then went on to refute them even more extensively. In his "argumentation", however, he stuck to the repetition of tried-and-true testimonies—particularly the citation of Sharaf al-Dīn's works themselves—or by reversing the blame. For instance, he attempted to weaken the Sunni reproach that the quarter century which had passed between the alleged origin of the letters and their publication gave rise to doubts by arguing that, as a matter of fact, not less than half a century had passed after the publication of the *Murāja'āt* before the first Sunni criticism appeared.[107]

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[103] *al-Imām al-sayyid*, 40.

[104] Cf. above, p. 33 note 30.

[105] Ja'far al-Muhājir: *al-Ḥiwār al-islāmī—al-islāmī fī a'māl al-imām Sharaf al-Dīn*, in: *al-Imām al-sayyid*, 157–65, on 157–60; other contributions that emphasize Sharaf al-Dīn's efforts toward unification of the Muslims are found ibid., 88ff., 117ff., 174ff., 253ff. and 281ff.; also his fight against colonialism was particularly esteemed: 102ff. and 311ff.

[106] Cf. for example Dhākerī: *Waḥdat-e eslāmī*, 95, 177; Ḥakīmī: *Sharaf al-Dīn*, 98, 170–86; al-Sharqī: *Naqsh-e Eslām*, 532f.; Shīrāzī: *Talāsh-e ro'asā*, 606f.; Jawād Moṣṭafawī: "Etteḥād wa hambastegī yā tafāhom-e shī'e wa sonnī dar Nahj ol-balāgha", *Mishkāt* 2/1362sh/25–60, esp. 47–50; Moṣṭafā Qolī Zādeh: *Sharaf od-Dīn-e 'Āmelī: Chāwūsh-e waḥdat*, Tehran 1372sh/1993–94; on the decreasing importance of the *taqrīb* factor for Iran's foreign policy after 1995, see below, pp. 383f.

[107] Mīlānī: *Tashyīd al-Murāja'āt*, part 1, passim, on 139 note 1; the activities of

That the controversial correspondence has been held in esteem for so long may also be due to the fact that almost all subsequent attempts at Islamic ecumenism—to be discussed in detail in the coming chapters—were sooner or later politically discredited and thus (at least for the purposes of Iranian politics) appeared highly unsuitable as a possible model. Only the *Murājaʿāt*, which found its way into the ecumenical literature only well after the failure of the endeavours toward rapprochement between Sunnis and Shiites, remained unblemished and was not associated with direct political ulterior motives of the respective protagonists. Yet, fifty years after its initial publication and more than seventy years after its alleged penning, this book, too, was caught up in the political quarrel that—particularly since the Islamic Revolution—has in many cases become an extension of the confessional strife within Islam. An indication of this is the request that every Iranian taking part in the pilgrimage to Mecca be given a copy of the work as a present to Muslims from other countries, since the Saudi government does not permit the import of Shiite scientific writings by any other channels.[108]

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Whereas Sharaf al-Dīn's correspondence has played merely a minor role in the Western secondary literature up to now,[109] Sunni and particularly Shiite *taqrīb*-oriented scholars today agree that the work not only has to be regarded as the initial endeavour toward an interconfessional rapprochement in Islam in the twentieth century, but moreover, is a guiding light along the correct path toward Islamic ecumenism. Needless to say, the book in the meantime has also reached the internet: an English version is available on various websites, and several other treatises of Shiite authors and converts may likewise be consulted online.[110]

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the Sunni scholarly circles in opposition to the book possibly form the background for this apologetic: Ṣāliḥ al-Wardānī claims that the *Murājaʿāt* was put on a list of books whose sale in Egypt was prohibited at the instigation of the Azhar; *al-Shīʿa fī Miṣr*, 128 note 3; cf. also idem: *Miṣr . . . Īrān*, 79f.

[108] Dhākerī: *Waḥdat-e eslāmī*, 177.

[109] Cf. the few completely uncritical remarks in Momen: *Introduction*, 265; J.A. Bill/J.A. Williams: "Shiʿi Islam and Roman Catholicism (. . .)", in: K.C. Ellis (ed.): *The Vatican, Islam, and the Middle East*, Syracuse 1987, 69–105, on 103 note 4, and in G. Gobillot: *Les Chiites*, Brepols 1998, 174f.; in contrast, a very thorough discussion of the book is provided by Mervin: *Un réformisme chiite*, 304–10.

[110] Some of the URLs are: <http://www.al-islam.org/murajaat/>; <http://www.

Nevertheless the authenticity of the book must be judged with the greatest scepticism. The only extant reports—sketchy at best—about the origin of the correspondence and the twenty-five year delay in its publication were disseminated by Sharaf al-Dīn himself. They are limited to the two above-mentioned footnotes, the preface to the 1936 edition that is kept intentionally vague, and the respective passages in his autobiography. The last-mentioned work only appeared after his death, and its own publication date cannot by any means be ascertained unequivocally.[111] In none of the Azhar histories or biographies of al-Bishrī known to me is the correspondence even obliquely referred to.

On the contrary, al-Bishrī's image as an extremely conservative, rigidly traditional *shaykh* who bitterly opposed ʿAbduh's reforms renders it most implausible that, in his 80th year, he would embark on so revolutionary a dialogue with a relatively young and—at least to the Sunnis—unknown Shiite *ʿālim*. Compounding the unlikelihood is the fact that, in the event, he would appear to have been content with the humble and humiliating role of the Sunni "yes-man". Finally it also seems scarcely imaginable that such a traditionalist Sunni scholar in the twentieth century would employ the utterly disdainful Shiite term *nawāṣib* to denote their Sunni opponents, which is the polemic epithet from Shiite heresiography and as such the cognate-contrary of *rawāfiḍ*, used by the Sunnis for the Shiites.[112]

In any case, the book can hardly be interpreted as a discussion between two scholars striving to bridge the broad gulf between their denominations. In Sharaf al-Dīn's letters, *taqrīb* merely meant the willingness on his part to accept the dialogue with the Sunni while

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maaref-foundation.com/english/shia_education/murajaat/>; <http://www.zainab.org/commonpages/ebooks/english/sharafudin_musawi/murajaat/toc.htm>; Sharaf al-Dīn's book *Masāʾil fiqhiyya* is available under <http://www.al-islam.org/masail/>, and al-Tījānī's books may be found, e.g. under <http://www.convertstoislam.com/Reading/reading.html>.

[111] While Sharaf al-Dīn's first biographer, Murtaḍā Āl Yāsīn, described it in the preface to the 1946 second edition of the *Murājaʿāt* as existing in manuscript form (see the introduction, pp. 57f.), a year later, the editorial staff of the *ʿIrfān* doubted its existence altogether: In reply to an inquiry by a Senegalese Muslim as to why Sharaf al-Dīn had not yet published any reminiscences of his role during the 1920 fight for independence, it was explained that this was not usual among the *ʿulamāʾ*, and that further, Sharaf al-Dīn probably had not written any memoirs at all; see *al-ʿIrfān* 33/3 (Jan. 1947), 342.

[112] *al-Murājaʿāt*, no. 19; for the term *nawāṣib* (sing. *nāṣibī*) cf. Goldziher: "Beiträge", 313–18.

striving at the same time to convince him of the error of his ways and not budging an inch from his own fundamental apologetic attitude. Actually it may not even have been Sharaf al-Dīn's initial intent to aim his book at a *Sunni* public and open a *taqrīb* debate. The style and date of the publication, in fact, point to other, less audacious and more utilitarian motives: In 1936, in addition to the *Murājaʿāt*, Sharaf al-Dīn brought out two more books: his polemic against Mūsā Jārallāh and his "scientific curriculum vitae" *Thabt al-ithbāt*. In publishing the record of the correspondence in connection with these two writings, his primary motive may have been to bring himself to the attention of the Shiite scholars in Iraq and Iran and to provide them with proof of his great skills as a debater with an archetypical, anonymous opponent.

And certainly ʿAbd al-Ḥusayn Sharaf al-Dīn would not have been the first theologian to resort to such devices: The scholarly disputations that were quite popular in classical times always left room for glossing over debates or directly inventing them.[113] An important precursor and model for our Lebanese scholar may have been the well-known Shiite jurist Ibn Ṭāwūs. In his book *Kashf al-maḥajja*, this prolific author also included several disputes with Sunni counterparts. Not only are the topics of the discussions virtually identical, namely the events following Muḥammad's death and the alleged usurpation of the caliphate by ʿAlī's enemies, but there are also interesting parallels to the technique employed in the *Murājaʿāt*: The interlocuters always remain anonymous, they are always beaten with their own weapons (as Ibn Ṭāwūs restricted himself to Sunni sources), and they are astonishingly quick in acknowledging their defeat, repenting of their former beliefs and being on the brink of converting to Shiism.[114]

Only a few months after the publication of his books, in the spring of 1937, Sharaf al-Dīn's previously mentioned extended visit to the centres of Shiite scholarship took place. It would appear not to be

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[113] For the general background of scholarly disputes in classical Islam, cf. van Ess: "Disputationspraxis", esp. 29f. and idem: *Theologie und Gesellschaft*, IV/725–30 (also ibid., 1043, index s.v. "Disputation[spraxis]").

[114] An excellent summary of these debates is given by Kohlberg: "ʿAlī b. Mūsā ibn Ṭāwūs", 331–36, 341, 344; regarding Ibn Ṭāwūs (d. 1266), cf. *EIr* VIII/55–58 (E. Kohlberg). Without doubt, further examples may be found in classical disputation works, such as Aḥmad b. ʿAlī al-Ṭabrisī's *Kitāb al-iḥtijāj ʿalā ahl al-lajāj* (on whom and which cf. *EI*^{2} X/39f. [E. Kohlberg] and *Dharīʿa* I/281f.); to the best of my knowledge, there is no detailed examination of this kind of literature.

an exaggerated stretch of the imagination to postulate a link between this trip and the works that prepared its path and the deaths of two highly respected Shiite *ʿulamāʾ*, Muḥammad Ḥusayn Nāʾīnī in August 1936 and ʿAbd al-Karīm al-Ḥāʾirī in February 1937.[115] That Sharaf al-Dīn had calculated his chances of gaining recognition as their successor seems to remain within the realm of the possible. Finally, the hypothesis that the *Murājaʿāt* were written primarily for the Shiites themselves is also supported by the fact that it was not until the 1950s, and in light of the successes of the ecumenical movement, that an association was made for the very first time between this work and the idea of rapprochement with the Sunnis.

However, all of this does not necessarily mean that the book is purely fictitious. There is no compelling reason to doubt Sharaf al-Dīn's Cairo trip itself or the possibility that he might have come into contact with Sunni dignitaries there—including the *Shaykh al-Azhar*—and discussed the question of the Imamate with them. In its present form, however, what is witnessed in the *Murājaʿāt* is most probably a highly stylized version of a debate, one not presented as the debate actually happened (which Sharaf al-Dīn admits in the preface), but rather—in his eyes and the viewpoint of those who follow him until today—as it would have had to occur in order to achieve its desired goals. His concern in writing the book was not authenticity, but rather depicting history "as it should have been".[116]

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[115] Regarding Nāʾīnī (1860–1936), see *ṬASh* I.2/593–96; *RF* III/1261f.; Momen: *Introduction*, 318; Nagel: *Staat und Glaubensgemeinschaft*, II/278–304 and Hajatpour: *Iranische Geistlichkeit*, 93–134 (about Nāʾīnī's principal work *Tanbīh al-umma wa-tanzīh al-milla*); regarding al-Ḥāʾirī (1859–1937), the founder of the *Howze-ye ʿelmiyye* in Qom, see *ṬASh* I.3/1158–67; Momen: *Introduction*, 312f.; *EI*[2] S/342f. (A.H. Hairi); *EIr* XI/458–61 (H. Algar); Hajatpour: *Iranische Geistlichkeit*, 234–304 as well as *GD* I/154–203 and 281–304; moreover Bakhshāyishī: *Kīfāḥ ʿulamāʾ al-islām*, 323ff. (= *Ten Decades*, 157ff.).

[116] B. Lewis: *History—Remembered, Recovered, Invented*, Princeton 1975, 71.

CHAPTER FOUR

CALIPHATE AND ECUMENE (1924–1939)

The abolition of the caliphate

The aftermath of the First World War not only completely rearranged the power structures in Europe but also produced profound consequences in the Near and Middle East. The Ottoman Empire, which had entered the war on the side of the German Empire and the Habsburg Austro-Hungarian monarchy and—in solidarity with Iraq's Shiite *'ulamā'*—had called for *jihād*, was decimated by the peace treaty of Sèvres on August 10, 1920: the severing of all Arab provinces reduced its territory to a fraction of its former expanse. But nothing emerged from the hopes of a grand Arab empire under the leadership of the *sharīf* of Mecca that the Europeans had stirred up. Instead the region of the Fertile Crescent itself was split up and subjected to British and French control as Mandates.[1]

The collapse of the Ottoman Empire also came to pass somewhat later off the battlefield in the very area that the sovereigns in Istanbul had assumed as their particular concern since the end of the eighteenth century: the spiritual leadership of the Muslims and the guardianship of Islam, accorded to the Ottoman ruler in his dual capacity as sultan and caliph. Article 4 of the Ottoman constitution of 1876 stipulated this claim explicitly: "His majesty the Sultan is by the title of Kalif the protector of the Mussulman (sic!) religion. He is the sovereign and the Padishar (sic! *pādishāh*) of all the Ottomans."[2] Sultan 'Abdül-

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[1] W.L. Cleveland: *A History of the Modern Middle East*, Boulder/Oxford 1994, 140–60; regarding the Mandate government, cf. the article "Mandates", *EI*[2] VI/385–400 (J.M. Landau) that contains a bibliography whose thoroughness is virtually unsurpassable; concerning the call to *jihād* of the Iraqi *'ulamā'*; see above, p. 43 note 72.

[2] An English translation of the constitution is to be found in *The American Journal of International Law* 2/1908/suppl. 4/367–87; a German version is given in *Die Verfassungsgesetze des Osmanischen Reiches. Übersetzt und mit einer Einleitung versehen von Friedrich von Kraelitz-Greifenhorst*, Vienna 1919; for the general background cf. R. Devereux: *The First Ottoman Constitutional Period. A Study of the Midhat Constitution and Parliament*, Baltimore 1963.

ḥamīd II, who otherwise displayed very little concern for the constitutionality of his regime, did all he could in his pan-Islamic appearance to confirm the validity of at least this passage.[3]

Among the Sunni subjects within the Ottoman Empire and beyond its boundaries, individual issues indeed may have been the object of occasional criticism, such as the fact that the holders of the office of caliph were now Turks rather than Arabs from the tribe of Quraysh, as the classical caliphate theory required. The existence of the caliphate itself, though, was never questioned. Thus the shock caused by the Turkish Grand National Assembly was all the greater when it declared the caliphate abolished on March 3, 1924.

With this step, Mustafa Kemal Pasha "Atatürk", who had held the real reins of power since 1919 and was on the way to constructing a strictly secular Turkish national state from the ruins of the Ottoman Empire, broke once and for all with the Ottoman-Islamic past. The last caliph, ʿAbdülmecit II, who had only been in office since the abolition of the Sultanate in November 1922 and whose actual authority hardly exceeded that of the Abbasid mock caliphs under the Mamlukes in the late Middle Ages, was deposed and exiled to Switzerland along with 123 members of the former dynasty.[4]

This act also, however, extirpated what had at least in theory been the last symbol of unity among (Sunni) Muslims under a central sovereignty, although in reality, the Muslim caliphs had long since lost the political power of their early predecessors. Already in the first centuries of Islamic history, a deep divergence appeared between the norms regulating the exercise of mundane power as required by the *sharīʿa* and historical facts, a cleft that despite numerous attempts at reform by Islamic theologians and jurists could never again be closed.

The classical theory of the caliphate that began with al-Māwardī (d. 1058) in the eleventh century was formulated at a point in time when the military leaders designating themselves as sultans had already

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[3] F. Georgeon provides information about the government of ʿAbdülḥamīd II (1876–1909): "Le dernier sursaut (1878–1908)", in: R. Mantran (ed.): *Histoire de l'Empire Ottoman*, Paris 1989, 523–76; cf. also S.J. Shaw/E.K. Shaw (eds.): *History of the Ottoman Empire and Modern Turkey. Vol. 2: Reform, Revolution, and Republic: The Rise of Modern Turkey, 1808–1975*, Cambridge et al. 1977, 172–272.

[4] A. Mango: *Atatürk*, London 1999, 396–414, on 406; G. Jaeschke: "Das osmanische Scheinkalifat", *WI* 1/1951/195–228; regarding the abolition of the caliphate, see Enayat: *Modern Islamic Political Thought*, 52–68; S. Haim: "The Abolition of the Caliphate and its Aftermath", in: T. Arnold: *The Caliphate*, London ²1965, 205–44; cf. also *OM* 4/1924/137–53.

assumed *de facto* authority.[5] Over the succeeding centuries, in the area of constitutional law, the *ʿulamāʾ* more or less limited themselves to adapting the theory to the political reality of the day, which in most cases meant acclimating to the advancing decay in the domination of the caliphate. In a way, they sanctioned what may be called "the normative power of factuality".[6]

A military defeat and the beginning of the decline of Ottoman glory were required for the Turks to rediscover the legitimizing function of the caliphate. The peace treaty of Küçük Kaynarca in 1774, which sealed the loss of the Crimea, ceded the Sultan a modest measure of (purely spiritual) authority over the Muslims outside the boundaries of the Ottoman Empire. Even though no real increase of political influence was involved, the politics of the Sublime Porte since the nineteenth century, as well as the emergence of pan-Islamism in general, had at least resulted in replanting the institution of the caliphate at the centre of the discussion surrounding the future of the Muslims in the face of the advance of colonialism.

When the collapse of the Ottoman Empire became clear at the end of the First World War, the degree to which this debate had, in the meantime, evolved into an issue for all Muslims was brought to the fore. Ironically enough, its strongest echo was probably heard among Indian Muslims, who actually had never fallen under the domination of the caliphate. They established a "caliphate committee" whose membership was not limited to Sunnis but also included Shiites and, in the person of the Agha Khan, even the leader of the Ismaili Muslims.[7]

Of all differences of opinion, the caliphate debate, the very question that had once divided Sunnis and Shiites, suddenly formed a

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[5] E.I.J. Rosenthal: "Politisches Denken im Islam. Kalifatstheorie und politische Philosophie", *Saeculum* 23/1972/148–71, esp. 154; concerning the background of this development, see I.M. Lapidus: "The Separation of State and Religion in the Development of Early Islamic Society", *IJMES* 6/1975/363–85; regarding the classical caliphate theory, see also Nagel: *Staat und Glaubensgemeinschaft*, I/279–441.

[6] The expression ("die normative Kraft des Faktischen") was coined by the Wilhelminian constitutional law expert Georg Jellinek (1851–1911), see his *Allgemeine Staatslehre*, Berlin [3]1922, 337ff.

[7] Enayat: *Modern Islamic Political Thought*, 43; Landau: *Politics*, 176–215; "Khilāfa, Khilāfat Movement", *EI*[2] V/7 (A.C. Niemeijer) and the literature cited there; G. Minault: *The Khilafat Movement. Religious Symbolism and Political Mobilization in India*, New York 1982; Muḥammad al-Shaʿbūnī gives information about the reverberation in Tunisia: *Ṣadā ilghāʾ al-khilāfa fī l-bilād al-tūnisiyya*, Tunis 1985; regarding other initiatives between 1918 and 1923, see Kramer: *Islam Assembled*, 69–79.

focal point for initial contacts related to reconciling the two denominations' legal-theological viewpoints. As for the Shiite scholars, their primary motivation in participating in these discussions may not have been so much the crisis of the abolition of the caliphate as another occurrence that stirred the Islamic world in 1924. From Najd in central Arabia, the Wahhabi emir ʿAbd al-ʿAzīz b. Saʿūd (1880–1953) sounded the attack on the Holy Cities in the Ḥijāz in September. It concluded at the beginning of 1926 after the proclamation of Ibn Saʿūd as king of the Ḥijāz, following the conquest of Mecca in October 1924 and Medina in December 1925.[8] It also effectively ended the short-lived shadow caliphate under the Hashemite Sharīf of Mecca Ḥusayn b. ʿAlī (1853–1931) and his son and successor, ʿAlī (1881–1935). The former acted as self-designated caliph from March until October 1924 and even convened a pilgrimage congress in July of that year.[9]

What must have particularly unsettled the Shiites in these events was the fact that the conquerors were followers of the Wahhābiyya, known to be extremely puritanical. Their strictness was directed against every form of reverence of the saints, particularly the veneration of the graves in the vicinity of the burial places of the Imams that is common among the Shia. That the Wahhabis did not limit themselves to a merely academic condemnation of these practices as an blameworthy innovation (*bidʿa*) had been evinced already at the beginning of the nineteenth century by their sack of Karbala (in 1802)[10] and the destruction of the grave domes in Medina (in 1804).[11] As if to

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[8] *OM* 6/1926/43f.; al-Rasheed: *A History of Saudi Arabia*, 44–49; Schulze: *Internationalismus*, 72f.; Holden/Johns: *The House of Saud*, 82–86; J. Habib: *Ibn Saʿūd's Warriors of Islam. The Ikhwan of Najd and Their Role in the Creation of the Saʿudi Kingdom, 1910–1930*, Leiden 1978; for the general background, cf. Steinberg: *Religion und Staat*, esp. 423–69 and 484–505.

[9] Kramer: *Islam Assembled*, 80–85; Teitelbaum: *The Rise and Fall*, 241–48; idem: "'Taking Back' the Caliphate: Sharīf Ḥusayn ibn ʿAlī, Mustafa Kemal and the Ottoman Caliphate", *WI* 40/2000/412–24; regarding the two caliphs, who remained virtually without recognition outside the Ḥijāz, see al-Ziriklī II/249f. (Ḥusayn) and IV/281f. (ʿAlī).

[10] Not in 1801, as found in some of the secondary literature; cf. J. Reissner: "Kerbela 1802, ein Werkstattbericht zum 'Islamischen Fundamentalismus', als es ihn noch nicht gab", *WI* 28/1988/431–44; a Shiite eye-witness's report is given by Aḥmad b. Moḥammad ʿAlī Behbehānī (1777–1819/20; cf. *ṬASh* I.1/100–02; *EIr* IV/97f.): *Mirʾāt al-aḥwāl. Jahān-namā*, Tehran 1370sh/1992, 202–05; Hemmatī: *al-Wahhābiyya*, 148ff.

[11] Cf. above, p. 20 notes 77 and 78.

confirm the Shiite apprehensions, in 1926 the Medinese graves again fell victim to the Wahhabis' religious zeal.[12]

Immediately following the Turkish elimination of the caliphate, scholars from the Azhar called for an international congress to deliberate in detail the new situation and choose a new caliph. At the invitation of the *Shaykh al-Azhar*, Muḥammad Abū l-Faḍl al-Jīzāwī, this congress was supposed to be held in March 1925 in Cairo and—at least according to the will of the organizers—to offer the Egyptian King Fu'ād the title of caliph.[13] Due to a general lack of support for this plan, the conference had to be postponed for a year, but this could not forestall its ultimate failure. When the delegates convened in May 1926, they were unable even to agree on procedures let alone choose a new caliph. The deliberations were terminated after less than a week and contrary to what had been planed, never resumed.[14]

The tense atmosphere in which the caliphate issue was discussed at the time is indicated by the famous case of ʿAlī ʿAbd al-Rāziq, an Azhar graduate and judge. In his book *al-Islām wa-uṣūl al-ḥukm*, which appeared in 1925, he ventured to write that the *sharīʿa* was of a purely spiritual nature and that, correspondingly, Muḥammad's mission comprised religious law alone and was not concerned with the establishment of political power. Neither the Koran nor the Sunna, in his view, provided any basis for the caliphate, which was thus rendered dispensable.[15]

The reaction of the Azhar was prompt and relentless: The Council

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[12] Cf. *OM* 6/1926/287–89, 310, 337f., 355f.; 7/1927/277; there has also been a fierce anti-Wahhabi sentiment among Sunni scholars since the beginning, see Ende: "Religion, Politik und Literatur in Saudi-Arabien (I)", esp. 381ff.; E. Peskes: *Muḥammad b. ʿAbdalwahhāb (1703–92) im Widerstreit. Untersuchungen zur Rekonstruktion der Frühgeschichte der Wahhābīya*, Beirut 1993, esp. 15–121; concerning Wahhabi doctrine in general, see Laoust: *Essai*, 506–40; on the destruction of the holy places from a Shiite point of view, cf. Yūsuf al-Hājirī: *al-Baqīʿ. Qiṣṣat tadmīr Āl Saʿūd li-l-āthār al-islāmiyya fī l-Ḥijāz*, Beirut 1411/1990; al-Ḥasan: *al-Shīʿa fī l-mamlaka al-suʿūdiyya*, II/205–32.

[13] Kedourie: "Egypt and the Caliphate", 182ff.; Vatikiotis: *The History of Egypt*, 303f.; regarding al-Jīzāwī (1847–1927), see ʿAbd al-ʿAẓīm: *Mashyakhat al-Azhar*, II/3–8, as well as Lemke: *Šaltūt*, 48 note 2, and Schulze: *Internationalismus*, 75 note 197.

[14] Regarding the congress and the laborious preparations for it, cf. the detailed information in Kramer: *Islam Assembled*, 86–101 and 183–85 (statutes); *OM* 6/1926/256–73; a list of participants is found in Schulze: *Internationalismus*, 77f.

[15] ʿAlī ʿAbd al-Rāziq: *al-Islām wa-uṣūl al-ḥukm*, Cairo 1925; French translation in *REI* 7/1933/353–90 and 8/1934/163–222; new translation by Abdou Filali-Ansary: *L'islam et les fondements du pouvoir*, Paris 1994; Italian translation Florence 1957; regarding the author (1888–1966), see al-Ziriklī IV/276 as well as the following note.

of Supreme *'ulamā'*, which sat in judgement on ʿAbd al-Rāziq, withdrew the latter's diploma (thereby stripping him of his judicial office) and ejected him from the circle of the Azhar scholars. The former Muftī of Egypt, Muḥammad al-Bakhīt, who immediately after the abolition of the caliphate had publicly argued that this institution was absolutely prerequisite for Islamic order, now went even a step further and—in a separate refutation—declared the author an apostate.[16]

The Cairene caliphate congress had not been intended as an ecumenical discussion aimed at bringing the denominations closer together. Nevertheless, the months preceding it saw the cautious establishment of first contacts between the Azhar and Shiite scholars, invitations being sent not only to representatives of the Sunni legal schools but also to Ibadis,[17] Zaydis and Imamis. The Egyptian envoy in Persia, ʿAbd al-ʿAẓīm Rashīd Pāshā,[18] had taken the initiative and, beginning in January 1926, attempted to move both the scholars in Qom and the government in Tehran toward Shiite participation in the caliphate congress.

Obviously, however, neither the members of the Shiiteʿ *ulamā'* nor the Iranian government were prepared for this offer. The vacillating and hesitant attitude of the scholars, Reżā Shāh's diplomatic delaying tactics, as well as the intervention of the British authorities in Egypt, who suspiciously followed Rashīd's activities and finally prevented them, guaranteed the failure of the initiative.

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[16] Skovgaard-Petersen: *Defining Islam*, 136f.; Muḥammad Rajab al-Bayyūmī: "Mawqif al-Azhar min al-kitāb 'al-Islām wa-uṣūl al-ḥukm' ", *MA* 55/7 (Apr. 1983), 950–58; Hourani: *Arabic Thought*, 183–92; Schulze: *Internationalismus*, 75f. and the literature mentioned therein; on Bakhīt, cf. above, p. 59 note 39; on the scandal centred around ʿAlī ʿAbd ar-Rāziq, cf. also Enayat: *Modern Islamic Political Thought*, 52–68; R. Wielandt: *Offenbarung und Geschichte*, 95–99; L. Binder: *Islamic Liberalism. A Critique of Development Ideologies*, Chicago, London 1988, 128–69; C. Helle: *al-Islām wa-uṣūl al-ḥukm. ʿAlī ʿAbd ar-Rāziqs Beitrag zur Kalifatsdiskussion (1925) und seine Fortwirkung in der innerislamischen Auseinandersetzung*, unpublished M.A. thesis, Phil. Fac., Freiburg 1993; cf. newer "refutations" by Muḥammad ʿImāra: *Maʿrakat al-islām wa-uṣūl al-ḥukm*, Cairo 1410/1989; Muḥammad Jalāl Kishk: *Ǧahālāt ʿaṣr al-tanwīr: qirā'a fī fikr Qāsim Amīn wa-ʿAlī ʿAbd al-Rāziq*, Cairo 1410/1990.

[17] Regarding the Ibāḍiyya, see *EI*[2] III/648–60 (T. Lewicki); U. Rebstock: *Die Ibāḍiten im Maġrib (2./8.–4./10. Jahrhundert). Die Geschichte einer Berberbewegung im Gewand des Islam*, Berlin 1983; P. Shinar: "Ibāḍiyya and Orthodox Reformism in Modern Algeria", in: U. Heyd (ed.): *Studies in Islamic History and Civilization*, Jerusalem 1961, 97–120; J.C. Wilkinson: "Ibāḍī Theological Literature", in: M.J.L. Young et al. (eds.): *Religion, Learning, and Science in the ʿAbbāsid Period*, Cambridge 1990, 33–39.

[18] *OM* 6/1926/162.

When the *Shaykh al-Azhar* finally sent an official invitation, the Persian government, as quasi-representative of the Shiite *ʿulamāʾ*, turned it down on the grounds that the scholars had not had enough time to study the caliphate issue thoroughly. This argumentation was as remarkable as it was indicative of Reżā Shāh's relationship to the clergy.[19] Thus the Shiites were not represented in Cairo by a scholar, but only by an individual observer by the name of Moḥammad Rafīʿ Meshkī, a businessman and emissary of the Iranian embassy in Cairo.[20]

Jerusalem 1931 and its aftermath

Five years later, the time had come. With the gathering of about 150 delegates from more than 20 Islamic countries[21] in Jerusalem from December 7 to 17, 1931, for the General Islamic Conference (*al-muʾtamar al-islāmī al-ʿāmm*), Sunni and Shiite scholars sat at the same table within the framework of a pan-Islamic meeting in order to discuss the possibilities of an inner-Islamic rapprochement for the first time. This topic was not actually the focus of the conference, which primarily was a reaction to the 1929 Zionist Conference in Zurich.[22] Nonetheless its organizer, Muḥammad Amīn al-Ḥusaynī,[23] the Muftī

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[19] Kramer: *Islam Assembled*, 91–93.

[20] *OM* 6/1926/268; see also M. Yadegari: "The Iranian Settlement in Egypt as Seen Through the Pages of the Community Paper *Chihrinima* (1904–1966)", *MES* 16/1980/98–114, on 101; there were also no Shiite scholars (in this case for obvious reasons) at the Islamic World Congress that took place in Mecca at the invitation of Ibn Saʿūd a few weeks after the Cairene meeting; see Kramer: *Islam Assembled*, 106–22; a participant list appears in Schulze: *Internationalismus*, 82f.; see also "Makka al-Mukarrama wa-l-muʾtamar al-islāmī", *al-ʿIrfān* 12/1 (Sep. 1926), 3f.

[21] Cf. the participant lists (that differ from one another in detail) in Schulze: *Internationalismus*, 95–100 and Kupferschmidt: "The General Muslim Congress", 158–62 (identical with idem: *The Supreme Muslim Council. Islam under the British Mandate for Palestine*, Leiden 1987, 267–71); for a new interpretation of the congress, centred around the question of Arab nationalism, cf. W.C. Matthews: "Pan-Islam or Arab Nationalism? The Meaning of the 1931 Jerusalem Islamic Congress Reconsidered", *IJMES* 35/2003/1–22.

[22] At the congress that took place in Zurich from July, 28–August 10, 1929—the sixteenth of its kind, the first having convened at the end of August 1897 in Basel—it was, among other things, decided to expand the Jewish Agency; when, as a result, unrest broke out in Palestine, the British even felt compelled to restrict Jewish immigration temporarily; see the article "Zionist Congresses", *Encyclopaedia Judaica*, Jerusalem 1971, XVI/cols. 1164–78, esp. 1172f. (G. Kressel).

[23] Regarding him (1897–1974) see al-Ziriklī VI/45f.; *MDA* IV/220–25; *EI*[2] S/67–70 (D. Hopwood); P. Mattar: *The Mufti of Jerusalem: al-Hajj Amin al-Husayni*

of Jerusalem since 1921, managed to create the first really significant forum for an inner-Islamic ecumenical debate. The invitation of Shiite *ʿulamāʾ* and their acceptance were especially emphasized by contemporary European observers as "the first outward manifestation of a new spirit of co-operation".[24]

At the conference, the Egyptian scholar and publicist Muḥammad Rashīd Riḍā, who has already been introduced above, established himself as spokesmen for the *taqrīb* debate on the Sunni side, while the Iraqi *ʿālim* Muḥammad al-Ḥusayn Āl Kāshif al-Ghiṭāʾ, likewise frequently mentioned before, spoke for the Shiites.[25] This is all the more to be underlined as both were simultaneously involved in extremely vehement and ongoing polemic quarrels with representatives of the other denomination.

The fact is that even before the First World War, Rashīd Riḍā had partially abandoned the friendly attitude toward Shiism that he had displayed in his *Manār* around the turn of the century. In doing so, he repeatedly attracted the anger of Shiite scholars. The quarrel reached a first climax as early as 1908 when Rashīd Riḍā published a letter from an anonymous Iraqi Sunni who blamed Shiites for using the institution of temporary marriage (*mutʿa*) in order to induce Sunni tribes in Iraq to convert to Shiism.[26] The following year—in the first volume of the newly published *ʿIrfān*—the Lebanese Shiite Munīr ʿUsayrān refuted this insinuation resolutely, labelling it one of the "fabricated fairy tales" (*khuzaʿbalāt*) which sprang from the misunderstandings between Sunnis and Shiites and prevented agreement

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and the Palestinian National Movement, New York 1988; his memoirs have also been published: *Mudhakkirāt al-Ḥajj Amīn al-Ḥusaynī*, Damascus 1999; concerning his role in the ecumenical society, see below, pp. 185–87; regarding the Jerusalem conference in general, see Kramer: *Islam Assembled*, 123–41; Landau: *Politics*, 240–42, as well as the literature mentioned in Schulze: *Internationalismus*, 94 note 257; Rashīd Riḍā also reported about the congress in detail in *al-Manār*: "al-Muʾtamar al-islāmī al-ʿāmm fī bayt al-maqdis", *al-Manār* 32/2 (Feb. 1932), 113–32 and 32/3 (Mar. 1932), 193–208; cf. also B. Wasserstein: *Divided Jerusalem. The Struggle for the Holy City*, London 2001, 104–07; G. Krämer: *Geschichte Palästinas. Von der osmanischen Eroberung bis zur Gründung des Staates Israel*, Munich 2002, 256–64 and 276f.

[24] Gibb: "The Islamic Congress", 101; see also *OM* 12/1932/35ff.

[25] Cf. above, pp. 39ff. and p. 59 note 38.

[26] "Kalimāt ʿan al-ʿIrāq wa-ahlihi li-ʿālim ghayūr ʿalā l-dawla wa-madhhab ahl al-sunna", *al-Manār* 11/1 (Mar. 1908), 45–49 (the Sunni author was Muḥammad Kāmil al-Rāfiʿī); in regard to this, see the detailed information in Ende: "Ehe auf Zeit", 29–31; concerning the conversion of Sunni tribes to Shiism, cf. Y. Nakash: "The Conversion of Iraq's Tribes to Shiʿism", *IJMES* 26/1994/443–63.

among Muslims.[27] Muḥsin al-Amīn wrote a more detailed reply to this Sunni attack in a polemic entitled *al-Ḥuṣūn al-manīʿa fī radd mā awradahu ṣāḥib al-Manār fī ḥaqq al-Shīʿa*, in which he devoted considerable space to explaining the Shiite point of view concerning *mutʿa*.[28] At the same time, he was at great pains to emerge as a supporter of the ecumenical idea by publishing his short treatise *Ḥaqq al-yaqīn fī l-taʾlīf bayn al-muslimīn* in 1914. There he even went so far as to state that he was in fact the first to address this issue from an objective point of view, all previous callers for *taqrīb* having acted in a biased way.[29] It is not difficult to imagine that he again had Rashīd Riḍā in mind.

A decade and a half later Rashīd Riḍā once more clashed with Muḥsin al-Amīn and other Shiite *ʿulamāʾ*, and this time even more vehemently. In the interim he had turned away from his initially pro-Hashimite stance and, brusquely antagonistic to Sharīf Ḥusayn whose caliphate claims he flatly rejected,[30] became arguably the most important publicist to support the Wahhabis, who were then on the advance. In a collection of articles that had appeared previously in his *Manār* and that he published in 1925/26 under the title *al-Wahhābiyyūn wa-l-Ḥijāz*, he described his motives for this step in great

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[27] "Kashf al-sitār ʿan shubhat ʿālim kataba ʿan aḥwāl al-ʿIrāq fī l-Manār", *al-ʿIrfān* 1/7 (Jul. 1909), 350–55; 1/8 (Aug. 1909), 393–95; 1/10 (Oct. 1909), 492–94, quotation 494; regarding ʿUsayrān (1877–1946/47), see Kaḥḥāla XIII/24 as well as *Dharīʿa* IV/211, XVII/243 and XVIII/38.

[28] Damascus 1910, new edition Beirut 1405/1985; concerning *mutʿa* ibid., pp. 48–106; regarding the book, see *Dharīʿa* VII/25; *al-ʿIrfān* 2/4 (Apr. 1910), 222f. and 2/5 (May 1910), 275f.; Sarkīs: *Muʿjam*, col. 1622; at the instigation of the Syrian Salafiyya scholar Jamāl al-Dīn al-Qāsimī (1866–1914; see Commins: *Islamic Reform*, passim, esp. 65–88, as well as the literature mentioned in Ende: *Arabische Nation*, 61 note 1, and in Hermann: *Kulturkrise*, 30 note 4) the Iraqi Maḥmūd Shukrī al-Ālūsī (regarding whom, see below, p. 264 note 58) wrote a reply to al-Amīn's book entitled *al-Radd ʿalā ṣāḥib kitāb al-ḥuṣūn al-manīʿa* that was printed very much later in *al-Manār* 29/6 (Oct. 1928), 433–41; see also Rashīd Riḍā: *al-Sunna wa-l-Shīʿa*, I/49ff.; also Muḥsin al-Amīn's previously mentioned book *al-Shīʿa wa-l-Manār* had been written in this connection, see above, p. 63 note 55; see also al-Amīn: *Kashf al-irtiyāb*, 504; regarding this controversy of 1908–10 in general, cf. Boberg: *Ägypten*, 202–08, and Mervin: *Un réformisme chiite*, 292–96.

[29] al-Amīn: *Ḥaqq al-yaqīn*, 3. The booklet itself contains nothing but general and rather vague calls for better understanding between the Muslim denominations.

[30] Rashīd Riḍā: "Intiḥāl al-Sayyid Ḥusayn Amīr Makka li-l-Khilāfa", *al-Manār* 25/5 (July 1924), 390–400; for the background of this change of mind, cf. E. Tauber: "The Political Life of Rashīd Riḍā", in: K. Dévényi/T. Iványi (eds.): *Proceedings of the Arabic and Islamic Sections of the 35th International Congress of Asian and North African Studies (ICANAS)*, Budapest 1998, I/261–72.

detail and justified his change of heart by referring inter alia to Ibn Saʿūd's complete independence from European powers.[31]

The Shiites could not remain indifferent in the face of this public speaking up for the Wahhabi doctrine, the less so as it came from probably the best-known intellectual in the Islamic world. This proved especially true following Ibn Saʿūd's assumption of power in the Arabian Peninsula when the matter left the realm of the purely academic.

After the destruction of the domes of the Meccan and Medinese graves and the decidedly anti-Shiite comments of Wahhabi theologians,[32] Shiite participation in the pilgrimage was clearly thrown open to question. Hence it should not come as a surprise that in the mutual polemic that was soon to follow, the issue of the Shiite veneration of the graves of the Imams and their descendants was put unambiguously at its centre.[33]

Toward the end of the 1920s, the intensity of the attacks again increased after the retort of Muḥsin al-Amīn, who settled accounts with the Wahhabis in a polemic of more than 500 pages, *Kashf al-irtiyāb fī atbāʿ Muḥammad b. ʿAbd al-Wahhāb*.[34] Rashīd Riḍā did not shy away from personal attacks in this quarrel either, regularly referring to his opponent as *al-rāfiḍī* and intentionally linking his reply to

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[31] Mervin: *Un réformisme chiite*, 296–301; Boberg: *Ägypten*, 217f.; Schulze: *Internationalismus*, 79f.; Rashīd Riḍā, who also in the previous years had published various critical articles about specific points of contention with the Shia (see *al-Manār* 19/1 [Jun. 1916], 33–50: defence of Abū Hurayra against Shiite suspicions; 22/1 [Dec. 1920], 34–42: about Shiite *ʿāshūrāʾ* practices), was not the only one who switched from the Hashimites to the Wahhabis: two other, not less prominent, examples are Muḥibb al-Dīn al-Khaṭīb and the Druze *emir* Shakīb Arslān (1869–1946), who had a long-standing friendship with Rashīd Riḍā, see his *al-Sayyid Rashīd Riḍā aw ikhāʾ arbaʿīn sana*, Damascus 1937; regarding Arslān, cf. al-Ziriklī III/173–75 as well as W.C. Cleveland: *Islam Against the West. Shakib Arslan and the Campaign for Islamic Nationalism*, London 1985.

[32] *OM* 7/1927/277; Steinberg: *Religion und Staat*, 535–42.

[33] Muḥammad ʿAlī al-Ḥāʾirī: *al-Mashāhid al-musharrafa wa-l-wahhābiyyūn*, Najaf 1345/1926 (see *MMN* 320), ʿAlī al-Naqī b. ʿAlī Abī l-Ḥasan b. Ibrāhīm: *Kashf al-niqāb ʿan ʿaqāʾid ʿAbd al-Wahhāb*, Najaf 1345/1926 (see *MMN*, 285); see also *al-ʿIrfān* 10/6 (Mar. 1925), 590–95; moreover, a long debate between the Iraqi Shiite Muḥammad Mahdī al-Kāẓimī al-Qazwīnī (d. 1939; see *MMI* II/253f.; *ASh* X/153; *al-ʿIrfān* 30/1–2 [Feb.–Mar. 1940], 100–03) and the Sunni Muḥammad b. ʿAbd al-Qādir al-Hilālī, printed in *al-Manār* from June 1927 until March 1928: vol. 28, pp. 349–67, 439–49, 516–33, 593–601, 684–92, 776–81 and vol. 29, pp. 57–62.

[34] Damascus 1347/1928 (see *Dharīʿa* XVIII/9; regarding a new edition, see *al-ʿIrfān* 50/4 [Nov. 1962], 437); reprint in *Malāḥiq Aʿyān al-shīʿa*, Beirut 1413/1993, 29–176; concerning the veneration of the graves ibid., pp. 124–60; Persian translation entitled *Tārīkhche wa naqd wa bar-rasī-ye ʿaqāʾed wa aʿmāl-e Wahhābīhā*, Tehran 1357sh/1978, [2]1986; see also Ende: "Ehe auf Zeit", 32f.

his first clash with al-Amīn. At the same time, he placed great emphasis on the observation that he himself had contributed significantly to the rapprochement between Sunnis and Shiites and that he was prepared to continue therewith if only an end were put to these "superstitious views and heretical innovations" (*al-khurāfāt wa-l-bidaʿ*).[35] The polemic had not yet subsided by the beginning of the Jerusalem conference, and mutual refutations and counter-refutations between Sunnis and Shiites in this matter continued on for years.[36]

Muḥammad al-Ḥusayn Āl Kāshif al-Ghiṭāʾ, too, did not remain inactive in the Sunni-Shiite debate of those years. Some comments against Shiism by the Egyptian historian Aḥmad Amīn that were subsequently cited on frequent occasion, to be treated in greater detail later,[37] particularly raised his ire. In 1931, immediately before the pan-Islamic Congress in Jerusalem, the two met personally in Najaf, which ultimately induced the Iraqi scholar to write a general survey regarding the Shiite interpretation of Islam. The resulting book *Aṣl al-shīʿa wa-uṣūluhā*, one of the most famous and influential apologias of Shiism in the twentieth century, appeared in the following year.[38]

Nothing of these quarrels, however, was sensed during the individual sessions of the Jerusalem conference. On the one hand, this was due to the emphasis of the congress being on other topics, specifically the question of the future of Palestine, a project to build an Islamic university in Jerusalem, and the Ḥijāz railroad.[39] On the other hand, there were relatively few Shiite participants, and only Muḥammad

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[35] Rashīd Riḍā: *al-Sunna wa-l-shīʿa*, I/26–31, esp. 30; from February 1929 to May 1930 no edition of the *ʿIrfān* was published that did not contain attacks on the *Manār*, the most replete being by Muḥsin al-Amīn himself under the title "Man al-mufarriq bayn al-muslimīn": *al-ʿIrfān* vol. 18 (Aug.–Dec. 1929), 203–12, 371–79, 497–505, 616–23 and vol. 19 (Jan.–May 1930), 81–88, 229–37, 346–52, 537–64.

[36] Cf. for example al-Qaṣīmī: *al-Ṣirāʿ bayn al-islām wa-l-wathaniyya*, as well as al-Khunayzī's reply to it: *al-Daʿwa al-islāmiyya ilā waḥdat ahl al-sunna wa-l-imāmiyya*; regarding Rashīd Riḍā's *al-Sunna wa-l-shīʿa*, see also al-Amīnī: *al-Ghadīr fī l-kitāb wa-l-sunna wa-l-adab*, III/266–87; for a general account, see Boberg: *Ägypten*, 209–32.

[37] Cf. below, pp. 174ff.

[38] Sidon 1932 (numerous subsequent reprints); see *Dharīʿa* II/169; *al-ʿIrfān* 23/2 (Oct. 1932), 321; *MMN*, 82 (no. 122); English translation Qom 1989, French translation Tehran 1990; see Naef: *Un reformiste chiite*, passim.

[39] Kupferschmidt: *The General Muslim Congress*, 143–47; Kramer: *Islam Assembled*, 125; regarding the Ḥijāz railroad (built at the beginning of the twentieth century in the course of the Ottomans' pan-Islamic policy), see *EI*² III/364f. (Z.H. Zaidi); U. Fiedler: *Der Bedeutungswandel der Hedschasbahn. Eine historisch-geographische Untersuchung*, Berlin 1984; W. Ochsenwald: *The Hijaz Railroad*, Charlottesville, VA 1980.

al-Ḥusayn's involvement for the cause of rapprochement went beyond the mere fact of their being present.[40]

From the very beginning, he proved to be one of the exceptional scholars of the gathering, which was expressed in his assumption of the chairmanship of the Committee for the Holy Places (in Jerusalem).[41] His participation in the *miʿrāj* ceremonies commemorating the Prophet's nocturnal journey to heaven on *laylat al-isrā'* caused quite a sensation among the Sunni congress members[42] and was also probably the reason why he was asked to lead the Friday congregational prayer for all in attendance, a suggestion made by the delegate ʿIyāḍ Isḥāqī from Soviet Kazan.[43]

Measured by previous dealings between Sunnism and Shiism, this gesture was nothing short of revolutionary. Ultimately it did not signify anything other than public recognition of the absolute equality of the Shiites as Muslims who were, as a matter of course, to be granted the same rights as to members of the Sunni legal schools.

In fact, the most enthusiastic response Muḥammad al-Ḥusayn Āl Kāshif al-Ghiṭā' received followed an address he delivered to the congress plenum on December 15, 1931.[44] This *khuṭba* so stirred the organizers that they had the text published only a short time later by the executive committee (*al-lajna al-tanfīdhiyya*), established by them.[45]

With this sermon, reminiscent in both tone and style of the argumentation of the pan-Islamic prototypes from *al-ʿUrwa al-wuthqā*,

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[40] Further Shiite delegates were ʿAbd al-Rasūl Āl Kāshif al-Ghiṭā', ʿAbdallāh Āl Kāshif al-Ghiṭā', Żiyā' ol-Dīn Ṭabāṭabā'ī, Aḥmad Riḍā, Sulaymān Ẓāhir, Muḥammad ʿAlī al-Ḥawmānī, and the editor of the *ʿIrfān*, Aḥmad ʿĀrif al-Zayn; Schulze: *Internationalismus*, 97, also mentions Muḥsin Amīn (sic!) as a participant; I know of no confirmation of that, also Muḥsin al-Amīn himself did not mention any trip to Jerusalem in 1931 in his autobiography.

[41] *OM* 12/1932/27b.

[42] Ibid., 26b and 29b; regarding *isrā'* and *miʿrāj*, cf. J. van Ess: "Vision and Ascension: *Sūrat al-Najm* and its Relationship with Muḥammad's *miʿrāj*", *Journal of Qur'anic Studies* 1/1999/47–62; Paret: *Konkordanz*, 295f. (regarding Sura 17/1); a thorough investigation into the topic is M. Scherberger: *Das Miʿrāǧnāme. Die Himmel- und Höllenfahrt des Propheten Muḥammad in der osttürkischen Überlieferung*, Würzburg 2003, esp. 11–32.

[43] *OM* 12/1932/33a; cf. also *ṬASh* I.2/616; al-Madanī/al-Zuʿbī: *al-Islām bayn al-sunna wa-l-shīʿa*, I/56 and Āl Kāshif al-Ghiṭā': *Muḥāwarat al-imām al-muṣliḥ*, 54–57; Kramer: *Islam Assembled*, 133; regarding Isḥāqī (1878–1954) see *OE* II/240–42 (A.A. Rorlich) and Adam: *Rußlandmuslime*, index s.v. Ayaz Ishakof.

[44] Not on the 14th as indicated in *OM* 12/1932/37b; the date comes from the information on the title page of the published text (see following note), where Tuesday, the 4th of Shaʿbān 1350, is mentioned as the date of the speech.

[45] *al-Khuṭba al-tārīkhiyya*, passim; according to which the date of publication was the end of March 1932.

Muḥammad al-Ḥusayn delivered the first call for *taqrīb* in the twentieth century explicitly intended and understood as such. In contrast to his predecessors as well as to many of the later *taqrīb* advocates, he did not shy away from mentioning some of the points of contention in the relationship between the denominations by name—only by doing so to qualify them immediately.

He began his address by reminding his audience of the *laylat al-isrā'* celebrations which had taken place just a few days earlier. By this, he elucidated the enormous impression they had made on him and how they had enabled him to recognize the "new spirit" (*rūḥ jadīda*) emerging from the conference.[46]

That, however, was not all, he affirmed: Muslims were lacking steadfastness and perseverance (*thabāt*), and as a result, a near-fatal affliction had befallen the *umma*. Muḥammad al-Ḥusayn attributed this to their disposition toward discord, which stood directly contrary to the unity God had enjoined in the Koran. This unity, he asserted, was neither at all compulsive nor unnatural:

> As is generally known, diversity of opinion and freedom of thought are a law (*nāmūs*) in human life and an aspect of human nature (*fiṭra*)[47] that God has bestowed upon mankind (. . .), but misfortune and disaster have allowed differences of opinion to engender enmity and become an implement for the severance of the brotherly and familial bonds between the Muslims.[48]

Of course, he continued, there had even been differences of opinion among the *ṣaḥāba* in regard to "important questions" of ritual purity and the laws of the family and inheritance.[49] Much more essential, though, was the contemplation of the common fundamentals, such as exemplified by the congregational prayer.

The discreet allusion to the ritual prayer (which he himself had led the previous Friday) was certainly intentional, as was the explanation that the sense and purpose of rapprochement (Muḥammad al-Ḥusayn did not use the term *taqrīb*, but rather spoke of *al-daʿwa ilā l-waḥda*) was not to convert Sunnis to Shiism or vice versa; its sole aim was the avoidance of enmity and hatred among Muslims. He conspicu-

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[46] Ibid., 3.
[47] Regarding the term *fiṭra*, see *EI*[2] II/931f.; cf. Koran 30/30.
[48] *al-Khuṭba al-tārīkhiyya*, 6.
[49] Ibid., 7; he names explicitly the points *masḥ*, *ghusl*, and *wuḍū'* as well as *mutʿa* specifically; see above, p. 22.

ously refrained completely from commenting on how this concept might be implemented, warning only in general terms against those who, in the guise of Muslims, were in reality sowing discord.[50]

Impressed by the almost daily calls for Muslim unity, the participants included item 2.1 among the congress's resolutions. This set as a fundamental goal of future pan-Islamic Conferences "to promote cooperation among Muslims of whatever origin or sect" as well as "to promote the spirit of general Islamic brotherhood".[51] The organizer of the assembly, Muḥammad Amīn al-Ḥusaynī, reacted with corresponding optimism, and still a few months after the meeting expressed optimistically that the possibility of a reunification of Sunnis and Shiites existed.[52]

However even during the congress it had become clear that not all delegates felt a dialogue between Sunnis and Shiites was either possible or desirable, let alone had a chance of resulting in rapprochement. When Muḥammad Rashīd Riḍā, who chaired the Committee for the Call to Islam and Proper Islamic Guidance (*lajnat al-daʿwa wa-l-irshād*),[53] put forward the proposal that the conference produce publications dealing exclusively with those topics the various legal schools did not find contentious, the discussion that immediately broke out was by no means harmonious. Besides positive voices like those of the Beirut writer Muṣṭafā al-Ghalāyinī,[54] who called for mutual tolerance—such as that between Muslims and Christians—despite existing differences, and Muḥammad al-Ḥusayn Āl Kāshif al-Ghiṭā', who yet

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[50] *al-Khuṭba al-tārīkhiyya*, 7–10; as an example he mentioned a message from a group of Fatimid Muslims from Abūqīr, written in English, that reached him at the end of October 1931. In it, he was requested to take the necessary steps in Jerusalem to help prevent the supposedly imminent choice of a new caliph, since it was well known that only a "direct descendant of the Fatimid Dynasty" was entitled to hold this office (!). In his letter of reply, Muḥammad al-Ḥusayn resolutely repudiated the unreasonable request of this group, whose members named themselves "The Moslem Nobility"; there is a photograph of this letter with a complete Arabic translation of his reply in *al-Khuṭba al-tārīkhiyya*, 11–14; neither the authenticity nor the background of the letter can be verified here.

[51] ʿAbd al-ʿAzīz al-Thaʿālibī: *Khalfiyyāt al-muʾtamar al-islāmī al-ʿāmm 1350/1931*, Beirut 1988, 341; English translation in Kramer: *Islam Assembled*, 192; Italian translation in *OM* 12/1932/36b.

[52] Kupferschmidt: "The General Muslim Congress", 134.

[53] Regarding the problems of an adequate rendering of the term *daʿwa*, see Schulze: *Internationalismus*, 279 note 280.

[54] Concerning him (1886–1944), a student of ʿAbduh's and member of the Damascene Academy, see al-Ziriklī VII/244f.; Kaḥḥāla XII/277f.; obituary in *RAAD* 20/1945/190f.

again emphasized the common principles (*uṣūl*), there was, of course, blunt criticism.

For example, the *ḥanbali* Iraqi scholar Muḥammad Bahjat al-Atharī[55] stressed that setting up a journal devoted to the social and religious problems of the Muslims was completely out of the question before people well informed about *daʿwa* were trained for this purpose. Not even Muḥammad al-Ḥusayn's statement that Sunnis and Shiites agreed on the foundations of the religion was received unequivocally. The Jerusalem-based scholar and writer Muḥammad Isʿāf al-Nashāshībī, who a few years later happened to become the target of Shiite criticism,[56] insisted that, indeed, a fundamental difference (*khilāf jawharī*) existed among Muslims. In the same instance, though, he passed a vote of confidence in Rashīd Riḍā, as the latter in his eyes had been standing up for the cause of the Muslims for forty years. ʿAbd al-Laṭīf Darāz, a *shaykh* and instructor at the Azhar, finally attempted to mediate. He appealed to the delegates not to address the points of contention at all in view of the obvious signs of unity visible at the conference, first and foremost among them being the congregational prayer that had taken place in the *Aqṣā* Mosque.[57]

The discussion outlined here,[58] the one and only devoted to the subject of *taqrīb* that occurred at one of the congresses which took place before the Second World War, already brought to light all of the substantial difficulties with which the inner-Islamic ecumenical movement has had to struggle virtually since its beginning. Most of the participants were unanimous in the question of a basic necessity to improve the relationship among the Muslim denominations, however it might be termed: unity, rapprochement, cooperation, etc. But how to reach this noble goal in practice, whether there actually were common religious principles accepted by both Sunnis and Shiites and how to define them, how to deal with people opposed to any possible consensus—all these questions ultimately remained unan-

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[55] al-Atharī, later Vice-President of the Iraqi Academy of Sciences, had edited Maḥmūd Shukrī al-Ālūsī's *Tārīkh Najd* (Cairo 1925, ²1929); later, he also made a name for himself as a member of the advisory board of the University of Medina, founded in 1961, see Schulze: *Internationalismus*, 157; cf. further *MMI* III/114–16; *al-ʿIrfān* 61/1 (Jul. 1973), 945–53.

[56] Cf. below, note 62.

[57] Nevertheless, Darāz, who was a member of the *Jamʿiyyat al-shubbān al-muslimīn* (see *MA* 32/2 [Jul. 1960], 232), can absolutely be regarded as "a friend of the Wahhabis"; see Schulze: *Internationalismus*, 101.

[58] Cf. in this regard *OM* 12/1932/35f.

swered or were met with apodictic replies: al-Nashāshībī's contention, e.g., that fundamental differences existed between Sunnis and Shiites, was countered with Muḥammad al-Ḥusayn Āl Kāshif al-Ghiṭā''s equally sweeping statement that all Muslims agreed on the basic principles of the religion, and that discrepancies found in the legal regulations (*furūʿ*) derived from them were insignificant.

At the end of the day, it was the least common denominator that was agreed upon in Jerusalem, and beyond reference to the symbolic character of Sunnis having performed the Friday prayer behind a Shiite imam, the participants were content to let things rest. More substantive proposals such as the formation of joint committees or agreement on ecumenical encounters were obviously not taken into consideration, presumably out of fear of being accused that theologians of either denomination would take part only because they were keen to convert the followers of the other. In any case, it is telling that in the sermon he delivered only a few days after the debate just sketched out, Muḥam-mad al-Ḥusayn Āl Kāshif al-Ghiṭā' felt obliged to refute this specific charge unequivocally and at length.[59]

The General Islamic Conference of Jerusalem was relegated to the same fate as all its predecessors. Although it had been decided in 1931 to reconvene the conference every two years and an executive committee for this purpose was formed under the chairmanship of the former Iranian prime minister Żiyā' ol-Dīn Ṭabāṭabā'ī—as well as various branches, mainly in Palestine—no subsequent meeting ever materialized. Above all, the inability to acquire the necessary funding to put into effect the project of a Jerusalem-based Islamic university meant that already by 1933, all the plans for a follow-up conference had come to naught.[60]

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[59] Already before the actual *taqrīb* debate, a quarrel over the proper path to unification had broken out among the members of the committee for *daʿwa* and *irshād*, led by Rashīd Riḍā. It resulted in two Shiites withdrawing from the committee: the Iraqi *ʿālim* ʿAbd al-Rasūl Āl Kāshif al-Ghiṭā' and the Lebanese poet Muḥammad ʿAlī al-Ḥawmānī (1898–1963/64; see *MDA* III/345–47, *RF* I/456 and *ṬASh* I.4/1346); *OM* 12/1932/29a comments succinctly: "non fu possibile eliminare i dissensi sul modo di indurre il mondo musulmano alla concordia"; regarding al-Ḥawmānī's participation in Jerusalem, see also his short article "al-Islām fī Amrīka", *RI* 1/1949/213f.

[60] Kupferschmidt: "The General Muslim Congress", 151–55; Kramer: *Islam Assembled*, 137–41; in 1932, a branch had even been established in Berlin, see Schulze: *Internationalismus*, 102.

This also holds true for the promising beginnings of the *taqrīb* endeavours that had manifested themselves at the conference, especially as in the first half of the 1930s the polemic clash between Sunni and Shiite scholars flared up again. The dispute between Rashīd Riḍā and Muḥsin al-Amīn had, in the meantime, abated, but other, no less bitter feuds took its place. For instance, in 1933 the appearance of ʿAbd al-Razzāq al-Ḥaṣṣān's book *al-ʿUrūba fī l-mīzān. Naẓra fī tārīkh al-ʿIrāq al-siyāsī* touched off a vehement controversy in Iraq.[61] Also, when in 1935 the work *al-Islām al-ṣaḥīḥ* appeared, written by Muḥammad Isʿāf al-Nashāshībī, who had come to the fore in Jerusalem by virtue of his critical comments about Shiism, the reaction of Shiite *ʿulamāʾ* came forthwith and was anything but favourable.[62]

Despite the fact that Muḥammad al-Ḥusayn Āl Kāshif al-Ghiṭāʾ's presence at the conference produced an immediate, positive reverberation among Shiite authors that has continued down to the present day,[63] at the personal level—for instance in the form of correspondence between Rashīd Riḍā and him—these activities likewise were not continued. As a matter of fact, of all people, these two scholars, who formed the face of Islamic modernism among Shiites and Sunnis alike and whose appearance in Jerusalem had briefly given cause for hope and optimism with regard to a dialogue between the Muslim denominations, became embroiled in a dispute in the following two years that ultimately proved irresolvable.[64]

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[61] Cf. about this, Ende: *Arabische Nation*, 146f.; regarding the author (d. 1964) see *MMI* II/259f. and *MDA* IV/228f.; already in 1927, a book about the history of the Umayyad caliphate of Damascus by the historian Anīs Zakariyya al-Nuṣūlī (1902–57), who taught in Baghdad, had shaken the relationship between the two denominations in Iraq to its foundations; see details in Ende, 132–45.

[62] al-Nashāshībī: *al-Islām al-ṣaḥīḥ*, Jerusalem 1354/1935; Muḥammad al-Kāẓimī al-Qazwīnī wrote a reply to this: *al-Īmān al-ṣaḥīḥ*, Sidon 1368/1948–49; see also *al-ʿIrfān* 26/7 (Dec. 1935), 541f., 26/8 (Jan. 1936), 619–28 and 26/10 (Mar. 1936), 760–65, 776–78; *OM* 26/1946/124–26; al-Subaytī: *Ilā mashyakhat al-Azhar*, 49ff., esp. 57; concerning al-Nashāshībī (1882 or 1885–1948) in general, see al-Ziriklī VI/30f.; Kaḥḥāla IX/45f.; *MDA* II/716–18; obituary in *al-Muqtaṭaf* 112/1948/194–200, and in *OM* 28/1948/50; regarding the al-Nashāshībī family, see Shimoni: *Biographical Dictionary of the Middle East*, 173f.

[63] *al-ʿIrfān* 23/1 (May 1932), 2f. and 123f.; 25/1 (Apr. 1934), 96f.; 32/1 (Dec. 1945), 9f.; 42/5–6 (Mar.–Apr. 1955), 686–88; Amīr al-Ḥilw: *al-Waḥda al-islāmiyya*, esp. 168; see also *GD* I/251–53 (with a long quotation from the *khuṭba* delivered by Muḥammad al-Ḥusayn).

[64] Despite Muḥammad al-Ḥusayn Āl Kāshif al-Ghiṭāʾ's earlier anti-Wahhabi comments (for example in his book *al-Āyāt al-bayyināt fī qamʿ al-bidaʿ wa-ḍ-ḍalālāt*, Najaf 1345/1926–27; cf. in this regard *Dharīʿa* I/46 [no. 229]; *MMI* III/144, *MMN* 102f.

A smouldering quarrel between Rashīd Riḍā and the Lebanese Shiite scholar ʿAbd al-Ḥusayn Nūr al-Dīn[65] that began in the middle of 1931 and was waged in the columns of the *Manār* formed the background of the increasing alienation. Having already in previous years distinguished himself in the Shiite standard *al-ʿIrfān* as a critic of Rashīd Riḍā,[66] Nūr al-Dīn now approached the Sunni with the request to tone down the openly reproachful attitude he had heretofore manifested toward Shiism and to open the *Manār* to a debate about "important points" of contention between the denominations.[67] Rashīd Riḍā consented under the condition that the modalities of such a discussion were to be set in advance. Thus he was all the more indignant in the face of Nūr al-Dīn's contribution (that he nevertheless published in its entirety), in which the latter maintained that for Shiism, the caliphate was a religious principle (*aṣl min uṣūl al-dīn*) comparable to prophethood, whereas for the Sunnis it represented merely a legal norm derived from it (*farʿ*) and was, ergo, of secondary importance. Correspondingly, according to Nūr al-Dīn, the Shiites considered the quarrel over whether ʿAlī or ʿUmar was due greater merit to be a religious issue, while the Sunnis saw it only as a historical problem. In order to avoid any misunderstanding concerning the latter point, he immediately added "definitive proofs" (*barāhīn qaṭʿa*) that purported to substantiate ʿAlī's pre-eminence patently.[68]

In the final analysis, this apologia clearly amounted to the conclusion that it would hardly ever be possible to settle the overall differences between Sunnis and Shiites. For his part, Rashīd Riḍā, who did not conceal his irritation about this article, immediately sent a reminder about comments to other Shiite scholars from whom he expected unmistakably critical words as a matter of course. Rashīd Riḍā reported that during the Jerusalem conference, which occurred shortly

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and *GAL* SII/802), Rashīd Riḍā did not attack him to the same degree as Muḥsin al-Amīn, which might, of course, be due to the fact that Rashīd Riḍā was not aware of the existence of these writings, at least until 1931.

[65] Died in 1950; see *ŢASh* I.3/1075f.; Kaḥḥāla V/89 and al-Ziriklī III/277.

[66] "Radd (thānin) ʿalā ṣāḥib al-Manār", *al-ʿIrfān* 18/5 (Dec. 1929), 624–32 and 19/4–5 (Apr.–May 1930), 564–76.

[67] "Iqtirāḥ munāẓara fī l-khilāf bayn ahl al-sunna wa-l-shīʿa"; *al-Manār* 31/8 (May 1931), 625–27; reprinted in Rashīd Riḍā: *al-Sunna wa-l-shīʿa*, II/131–35.

[68] "al-Munāẓara bayn ahl al-sunna wa-l-shīʿa"; *al-Manār* 32/1 (Oct. 1931), 61–72; in the introductory note to this item, Rashīd Riḍā confused the author Nūr al-Dīn with ʿAbd al-Ḥusayn Sharaf al-Dīn, for which he immediately apologized: *al-Manār* 32/2 (Feb. 1932), 145; Laoust: *Le réformisme orthodoxe*, 218, repeated Rashīd Riḍā's error.

thereafter, the Shiite scholars present complied with his request in that they distanced themselves from Nūr al-Dīn's article and even, as did Muḥammad al-Ḥusayn Āl Kāshif al-Ghiṭā', "most vehemently disapproved" of it.[69]

In the case of Muḥammad al-Ḥusayn, however, Rashīd Riḍā made it clear that this verbal statement was not the end of the affair and asked him to render his criticism in writing in the *Manār* for public view. The comment that in fact appeared was not at all in line with Rashīd Riḍā's taste: Muḥammad al-Ḥusayn limited himself to platitudes invoking the importance of Muslim unity as being among the principal pillars of Islam and its main tasks. By contrast, he mentioned neither Nūr al-Dīn's name nor the background that had led to this disagreement. This restraint did not escape Rashīd Riḍā, and he rebuked the Iraqi scholar with the remark that the issue at hand was in no way one of misunderstandings or inadequate explanations, as Muḥammad al-Ḥusayn had apologetically put it. According to Rashīd Riḍā, beneficial cooperation between the denominations would not become reality until those identified as undermining the endeavour toward unification were censured first and foremost by the *'ulamā'* of their own *madhhab*. Only an accompanying letter from Muḥammad al-Ḥusayn written to him personally—extracts of which he also published—made it possible for Rashīd Riḍā to strike a slightly more conciliatory tone: he conceded that the Iraqi scholar, being the leader of the Shiite community, was obliged to take a broad assortment of sentiments into consideration in his official declarations.[70]

But worse was yet to come. At about the same time the just-mentioned debate was taking place, Muḥammad al-Ḥusayn's previously mentioned apologetic *Aṣl al-shī'a wa-uṣūluhā* came out. When Rashīd Riḍā reviewed this work six months later in the *Manār*, the alienation that had begun to appear between them could not be overlooked any longer. Rashīd Riḍā's wrath was already aroused to the extreme

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[69] *"Ankara 'alayhi ashadd al-inkār"*, *al-Manār* 32/2 (Feb. 1932), 146; furthermore Rashīd Riḍā cites statements by Sulaymān Ẓāhir, Aḥmad Riḍā and esp. Aḥmad 'Ārif al-Zayn; he had explicitly asked them to obtain a comment in a similar vein from 'Abd al-Ḥusayn Sharaf al-Dīn; ibid., pp. 147–52, a reply from the Iraqi Shiite scholar 'Abd al-Hādī Āl al-Jawāhirī to Nūr al-Dīn is printed (regarding al-Jawāhirī [born 1904] see *RF* I/373f.; *MMI* II/355f. and al-Khāqānī: *Shu'arā'*, VI/142–58); the entire article (145–60) together with the one mentioned in the previous note is also found in Rashīd Riḍā: *al-Sunna wa-l-shī'a*, II/136–96.

[70] *al-Manār* 32/3 (Mar. 1932), 232–38 (which corresponds to *al-Sunna wa-l-shī'a*, II/197–210).

by the preface penned by the Iraqi Shiite historian ʿAbd al-Razzāq al-Ḥasanī[71] in which the latter listed—with perceptible pique—numerous opinions about Shiism he had alledgedly heard in the Iraqi countryside. These, he went on to explain, might just as well have had their origins in the Arabian Nights. That this was no anomaly was corroborated for him during a visit in Egypt, Palestine and Syria, where local members of the "educated class" (*al-ṭabaqa al-muthaqqafa*)—at least the Sunnis among them—held virtually identical views. These events caused al-Ḥasanī to turn to Muḥammad al-Ḥusayn Āl Kāshif al-Ghiṭāʾ, the first person (in al-Ḥasanī's view) who could legitimately be considered as having called for Islamic unity. He wanted Muḥammad al-Ḥusayn to do something about this type of prejudice in order to put the process of striving for rapprochement and reform on a stable foundation marked by mutual respect.[72]

Rashīd Riḍā sharply criticized both of al-Ḥasanī's comments. Whatever illiterate Iraqi yokels might think about Shiites was not to be pinned on the Muslims of Egypt, Syria and Palestine, and, furthermore, the very act of publishing this type of opinion, certain to lead to dissention among Muslims, was extremely questionable. Concerning the contention that Muḥammad al-Ḥusayn was the first person to be concerned with Muslim unity, Rashīd Riḍā's rejection was categorical, and not least because of wounded pride. This honour, he went on to explain, was rather due to Jamāl al-Dīn al-Afghānī and Muḥammad ʿAbduh, and by the way, he—Rashīd Riḍā himself—had been pursuing the very same path for 36 years (the *Manār* had already been in existence that long). All in all, he saw nothing but excessive exaggeration in al-Ḥasanī's comments.[73]

He moreover directly included Muḥammad al-Ḥusayn in his criticism. That he had approved of such a preface spoke for itself; and

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[71] Concerning him (born 1906) see *MMI* II/257–59; *GAL* SIII/496f.; *al-ʿIrfān* 40/10 (Oct. 1953), 1150–59; Ende: *Arabische Nation*, 132; al-Ḥasanī became known through his extensive work about the Iraqi governments in the twentieth century *Tārīkh al-wizārāt al-ʿirāqiyya*, first edition (four volumes) Sidon 1933ff.; expanded to ten volumes beginning with the second edition, most recently Baghdad 1988.

[72] Kāshif al-Ghiṭāʾ: *Aṣl al-shīʿa*, 73–77; cf. ibid., 83; the preface carries the date Apr. 8, 1932.

[73] *al-Manār* 33/5 (Sep. 1933), 392–95; Rashīd Riḍā used the word *ghuluww* that has an important connotation in the heresiography and describes the exaggerated reverence held by some (non-Twelver) Shiite groups for ʿAlī (the so-called *ghulāt*), which is rejected by most of the Twelver Shiites. With this, Rashīd Riḍā indirectly accused both al-Ḥasanī and Muḥammad al-Ḥusayn of being among these (heretical) "exaggerators" or at least kindred spirits; cf. also below, pp. 238ff.

furthermore, his role in Jerusalem had been nowhere near as praiseworthy as the Shia maintained. The fact was that the Sunnis who had invited him to the conference deserved more recognition than the Shiite, who only needed to accept the invitation. In addition—and this, Rashīd Riḍā claimed, had already been criticized during the conference—as a result of his having been asked to lead the prayer, Muḥammad al-Ḥusayn seemed to feel he had a genuine claim to this status, generally tried to make himself the focus of attention, and thus lacked the proper humility.[74]

In the extensive second part of his review, Rashīd Riḍā took the book itself to task. He viewed it as a continuation of the "Nūr al-Dīn affair", that is as more propaganda for Shiism. Finally, after having "proven" in great detail Muḥammad al-Ḥusayn's exaggeration, his incorrect dealing with the *ḥadīth*, as well as his general misrepresentation of Islamic history, he concluded with the devastating verdict that it was a sheer mockery when people who put the unity of the Muslims at risk in such a way still wanted their words seen as a contribution to the pursuit of rapprochement.[75]

With that the dialogue between the two scholars—both as obstinate as they were great—came to an end. In the last two remaining years of his life, Rashīd Riḍā made little effort to revive the conversation and, likewise, neither did Muḥammad al-Ḥusayn Āl Kāshif al-Ghiṭā'. In the preface to the second edition of his book *Aṣl al-shīʿa*, which appeared in 1936,[76] the latter, too, appears to have become rather sobered, for he remarked that the efforts toward ecumenical rapprochement bore increasing resemblance to a fata morgana: one became exhausted talking, but there were no real results to be seen. The opponents of the rapprochement like al-Nashāshībī, al-Nuṣūlī or al-Ḥaṣṣān (Rashīd Riḍā, remarkably, was not mentioned) had managed to torpedo the dialogue's promising beginnings and were sowing further discord. Muḥammad al-Ḥusayn agreed with the suggestion to re-convene the conference every year or two in order to overcome this, but he did not follow up with any type of initiative to make it happen.[77]

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[74] *al-Manār*, ibid.

[75] *al-Manār* 33/6 (Oct. 1933), 441–48; both articles are reprinted in *al-Sunna wa-l-shīʿa*, II/211–37.

[76] Cf. *al-ʿIrfān* 27/1 (Mar. 1937), 74 and 27/2 (Apr. 1937), 163.

[77] Kāshif al-Ghiṭā': *Aṣl al-shīʿa*, 57–72, esp. 60, 67f., 71.

The involvement of the Azhar

Only few months after a disillusioned Muḥammad al-Ḥusayn had written these lines, ʿAbd al-Karīm al-Zanjānī set out on an extended trip through several (Sunni) Arab countries. Al-Zanjānī, born in 1887, was a Shiite scholar of Iranian origin who resided in Najaf.[78] He undertook his journey, which was carefully documented by his biographers,[79] with the explicit purpose of trying to breathe new life into the faltering dialogue between Shiites and Sunnis.

In his eyes, the main reason why the contacts between the various legal schools had not yet produced any tangible result was the inefficiency and formulaic nature of the previous conversations. All participants seemed satisfied to profess stereotypically "the advantages of unity, the duty of solidarity, and the necessity of union" without commenting on the question of *how* in fact all this was actually supposed to be managed. In contrast, he stressed the importance of a "new *daʿwa*" in which practical action would replace what had previously been only empty words.[80]

That he significantly avoided any reference to the work of his Najafi "colleague" Muḥammad al-Ḥusayn Āl Kāshif al-Ghiṭāʾ both in his remarks and during his meetings with Sunni *ʿulamāʾ* in general, may indicate the existence of friction between the two scholars. Nevertheless, his initiative allegedly met with the approval of the former *marjaʿ al-taqlīd*, Abū l-Ḥasan al-Iṣfahānī.[81]

The first stage of his trip led al-Zanjānī to Cairo, where he arrived at the end of October 1936 and stayed for five weeks. The visit aroused lively interest in the local daily and weekly press and was

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[78] He died in 1968; regarding him, see al-Ziriklī IV/56; Kaḥḥāla M/404; *MMI* II/307f. and III/638; *MDA* III/502–04; *RF* II/642; *GD* VII/269; a rather long biographical sketch written by Muḥammad Saʿīd Huwaydī that excessively emphasizes his actual position and importance among the Shiite scholars in Najaf is found in *al-ʿIrfān* 28/8 (Jan. 1939), 772–76 (reprinted in al-Daftar: *Ṣafḥa*, 234–46).

[79] Thābit: *al-Waḥda al-islāmiyya*, 31–110, 123–31; al-Daftar: *Ṣafḥa*, passim; in both books, however, the material is arranged in a rather confused way, and the chronology of events is largely disregarded; concerning al-Daftar's work, see *al-ʿIrfān* 33/8 (Jun. 1947), p. 957, as well as Muḥammad Jawād Mughniyya: "Falsafat al-Zanjānī aw ṣafḥa min riḥlatihi ilā l-bilād al-ʿarabiyya", *al-ʿIrfān* 33/9 (Jul. 1947), 998–1000; a follow-up volume that appeared about ten years later (see *MMN* 230; *al-ʿIrfān* 45/7 [Apr. 1958], 699, as well as al-Daftar: *Ṣafḥa*, 493) was not available to me.

[80] Thābit: *al-Waḥda al-islāmiyya*, 39f.

[81] Ibid., 11; concerning al-Iṣfahānī see above, p. 54 note 15.

discussed therein in corresponding detail.[82] The journalistic organs of several Islamic groups shared this attentiveness: for example the journal of the neo-Salafi *Jamʿiyyat al-shubbān al-muslimīn* reported favourably about the Iraqi scholar, in whose honour the president of the society, ʿAbd al-Ḥamīd Saʿīd, had arranged a great reception at which more than 5000(!) visitors were said to have been present.[83]

Further important events during his stay on the Nile included a visit to a second Salafiyya-inspired organization by the name of *Jamʿiyyat al-hidāya al-islāmiyya* (at the invitation of their president, the future *Shaykh al-Azhar*, Muḥammad al-Khiḍr Ḥusayn),[84] an inspection of the *Bank Miṣr*,[85] as well as a lecture at the Egyptian University. The last mentioned is memorable because it was referred to by the Shiite side with great satisfaction that Ṭāhā Ḥusayn, who in his autobiography had extensively ridiculed the turban-wearers and *shaykh*s of the Azhar, had been deeply impressed by al-Zanjānī's words and had spontaneously kissed his hand as a sign of respect.[86]

It was, however, al-Zanjānī's contacts with the Azhar, and in particular its rector, Muḥammad Muṣṭafā al-Marāghī,[87] that attracted by far the greatest attention. Following the failure of the Caliphate Congress in 1926, the Azhar at first withdrew from pan-Islamic discussions extending beyond Egypt, leaving the field largely to the activists of the congress movement such as the Jerusalem Muftī

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[82] Thābit: *al-Waḥda al-islāmiyya*, 43–99, and al-Daftar: *Ṣafḥa*, 41–88 and 292–493 base their presentations to a large degree on contemporary Egyptian newspaper and journal articles.

[83] Thābit: *al-Waḥda al-islāmiyya*, 81–86; al-Daftar: *Ṣafḥa*, 79f. and 442–51; regarding the neo-Salafiyya in general and the *Jamʿiyyat al-shubbān al-muslimīn* in particular, see below, p. 123 note 9.

[84] Thābit: *al-Waḥda al-islāmiyya*, 59–61; al-Daftar: *Ṣafḥa*, 452ff.; see Gershoni: "Arabization of Islam", 29; Muḥibb al-Dīn al-Khaṭīb, who later was to become one of the most vehement opponents of Shiism in the twentieth century, nonetheless pointed out that this meeting had come about at his suggestion, but he (deliberately?) confuses ʿAbd al-Karīm al-Zanjānī with the scholar Abū ʿAbdallāh al-Zanjānī who also resided in Najaf (1891–1941; see al-Ziriklī IV/97; *MDA* III/500f.; *RF* II/637; *ṬASh* I.1/52); see his article "Ṣadā qāṣimatay majallat Dār al-taqrīb", *MA* 24/6 (Feb. 1953), 694–700, here 700; concerning al-Khiḍr Ḥusayn, see below, p. 251 note 6.

[85] al-Daftar: *Ṣafḥa*, 76–79.

[86] Mughniyya: "Falsafat al-Zanjānī", *al-ʿIrfān* 33/9 (Jul. 1947), 1000; al-Daftar: *Ṣafḥa*, 30f., 138, 439; cf. details ibid., 394–439; Thābit: *al-Waḥda al-islāmiyya*, 103 reports that Muḥammad Kurd ʿAlī's allegedly kissed al-Zanjānī's hand after the latter's lecture at the Syrian University in Damascus in December 1936.

[87] Regarding him (1881–1945), see al-Ziriklī VII/103; *MDA* III/1176–79; ʿAbd al-ʿAẓīm: *Mashyakhat al-Azhar*, II/11–43; MA 66/5 (Nov. 1993), 715–22 as well as the literature mentioned in Lemke: *Šaltūt*, 57 note 4.

Muḥammad Amīn al-Ḥusaynī. At the conference he organized in 1931, there was no official delegation representing the Azhar, mainly because of the project of an Islamic university in Jerusalem (*Ǧāmiʿat al-masǧid al-aqṣā l-islāmiyya*) that had previously been brought into the discussion by the organizers. Obviously this led to the fear in Cairo that the Azhar might lose its leading intellectual role.[88]

At the same time, a lively debate had again broken out at the Azhar itself concerning the need for internal reforms of the academic structures, which currently relegated international Islamic activities to the back burner. This quarrel about reform was instigated by al-Marāghī, who in 1928–29, during his first term as Rector, had publicized a comprehensive and noteworthy reform program. Although this program did not mention the idea of a rapprochement with Shiism anywhere, his modernist, open-minded views regarding an official reintroduction of the *ijtihād* received attention also in the Shiite press, where he was immediately compared with Muḥammad ʿAbduh.[89]

After only a short while, al-Marāghī had to acknowledge that his concept was not universally welcomed with open arms at the Azhar when in October 1929 he was replaced as Rector by his conservative opponent Muḥammad al-Aḥmadī al-Ẓawāhirī. The latter, indeed, initiated a reform package a year later, but it was at best half-hearted when measured against al-Marāghī's. Resistance to al-Ẓawāhirīs leadership, however, soon emerged and ultimately took the form of a full-blown student revolt, forcing the King to dismiss al-Ẓawāhirī in April 1935.[90]

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[88] R.M. Coury: "Egyptians in Jerusalem: Their Role in the General Islamic Conference of 1931", *MW* 82/1992/37–54, esp. 38f.; Kedourie: "Egypt and the Caliphate", 195f.; according to Schulze: *Internationalismus*, 93 and 96, al-Marāghī is supposed to have participated at the congress; Kupferschmidt: "The General Muslim Congress", 159f. does not list him, however, and also elsewhere, to the best of my knowledge, there is no reference to him.

[89] "Sāʿa maʿa al-ustādh al-akbar al-shaykh al-Marāghī", *al-ʿIrfān* 18/1–2 (Aug.–Sep. 1929), 145–51; regarding al-Marāghī's first term of office and his reform suggestions, cf. details in Lemke: *Šaltūt*, 58–75; F. Costet-Tardieu: "Un projet de réforme pour l'Université d'al-Azhar en 1928: Le *Mémorandum* du *shaykh* al-Marâghî", *RMMM* 95–98/2002/169–87.

[90] Concerning al-Ẓawāhirī (1878–1944), see ʿAbd al-ʿAẓīm: *Mashyakhat al-Azhar*, II/47–75; also his autobiographical records, *al-Siyāsa wa-l-Azhar. Min mudhakkirāt shaykh al-Islām al-Ẓawāhirī*, Cairo 1945, as well as the literature mentioned in Lemke: *Šaltūt*, 56 note 3; for details in regard to his term in office as *Shaykh al-Azhar*, see ibid., 75–98. Rashīd Riḍā, too, became involved in the reform discussion around 1930; cf. his book *al-Manār wa-l-Azhar*, Cairo 1934 (for this purpose, see *al-Manār* 34/6 [Dec. 1934], 451–58); a few weeks before his death, he called al-Ẓawāhirī's dismissal and

With that step the way was free for al-Marāghī's second term of office as *Shaykh al-Azhar*. This was to last until his death in August 1945 and was characterized by an enormous boost in the prestige of the office of the Rector in general as well as a rise in al-Marāghī's personal power. After the demise of King Fu'ād and his son Fārūq's ascension to the throne in the spring of 1936, al-Marāghī reached the zenith of his social and political influence, primarily based upon the mutual trust that had existed between the still-young king and him for some time.[91] For several years, until the British ultimatum of February 1942 that enforced the return of the Wafd party into the government and the reinstatement of Muṣṭafā al-Naḥḥās as Prime Minister,[92] al-Marāghī held an almost undisputed position of power, the significance of which is only to be compared with that of the rectorship of Maḥmūd Shaltūt after 1958.

Neither al-Marāghī's influential position nor his reform-oriented, broadminded attitude stressing the importance of the freedom of opinion in Islam escaped the attention of the Shiite scholars.[93] They could easily interpret this declaration as a willingness for dialogue with the Shia, especially when al-Marāghī, in the very first year of his second term of office, more or less "re-established himself" in the Shiite press, albeit in a very discreet way.[94]

So when al-Zanjānī came to Cairo in the autumn of 1936, he not surprisingly viewed al-Marāghī as his most important interlocutor, and the conversations at the Azhar in general therefore occupied by far the major portion of his stay there. Quite soon after al-Zanjānī's arrival, the *Shaykh al-Azhar* arranged a reception in his honour in which—in addition to numerous Azhar scholars—the State Muftī of

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al-Marāghī's return to office as "a great coup": "al-Azhar, al-Azhar, al-inqilāb al-kubrā", *al-Manār* 34/10 (May 1935), 764–73.

[91] Kedourie: "Egypt and the Caliphate", 178f., 199; cf. Lemke: *Šaltūt*, 99–149; regarding Fārūq (1920–65), see the unflattering article in *EI*[2] S/299–302, whose author P.J. Vatikiotis called al-Marāghī "(a)nother early, dubious influence on the young, inexperienced king" (300) and paints a picture of the King as an—in later years—"elusive, unpunctual, socially impossible" kleptomaniac and socialite.

[92] Vatikiotis: *The History of Egypt*, 348f.; Mitchell: *Society*, 26f.

[93] "Khuṭbat al-ustādh al-akbar fī l-Jāmiʿ al-Azhar", *Nūr al-Islām* 6/2 (May 1935), 102–08; cf. also Jansen: *Interpretation*, 77f.

[94] He did this in the form of a letter to the editor in the Lebanese journal *al-ʿIrfān* in which he explicitly praised the book *Nafsiyyat al-rasūl al-ʿarabī* by Labīb al-Riyāshī: *al-ʿIrfān* 26/10 (Mar. 1936), 779; regarding al-Riyāshī (1889–1966), a Beiruti journalist and writer who lived—among other places—twenty years in Buenos Aires, see al-Ziriklī V/239f.; *MDA* III/474f.

Egypt, ʿAbd al-Majīd Salīm,[95] the president of the Supreme Court of Justice, Fatḥallāh Sulaymān, as well as dignitaries from the entire Islamic world participated, among them the ambassadors of Iran and Saudi Arabia (!).[96]

In his address to the assembled, al-Marāghī stressed that this testimonial of honour was not addressed at al-Zanjānī alone, but rather was being extended to all Shiites as a sincere, open message of greeting by the Sunni Azhar. Furthermore, he expressed his hope to be able to pay a visit to Najaf, ʿAlī's burial place and the cradle of Shiite learning, in order to strengthen "the bonds of science and Islamic brotherhood".[97] Al-Zanjānī replied in a rather long speech that was also devoted to the significance of Najaf and in which he did not fail to mention that just as the institutions in Najaf, the Azhar, too, had in fact been established by Shiites. Al-Marāghī's intended visit, needless to say, also met with his warmest approval.[98]

That this ceremony was already considered significant by contemporary observers can be seen in the wording of the Cairene newspaper *al-Balāgh*, which proudly announced that this was the first time in more than a thousand years that, under the chairmanship of its Rector, Sunni *ʿulamāʾ* had convened at the Azhar to honour a Shiite scholar.[99]

It was not to remain the only event that brought al-Zanjānī into contact with Azharīs. Coinciding with the beginning of Ramaḍān 1355,[100] at al-Marāghī's urging, he was offered the chairmanship of the congregation that convened in the evening to announce the official beginning of the fasting month upon the sighting of the new moon. On this occasion, he held sway in his refusal—keeping with the traditional doctrine of Shiism—to give an astronomical calculation of the new moon priority over the judgement by scholars who had actually glimpsed the moon with their own eyes.[101] In addition,

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[95] Salīm was the State Muftī of Egypt (official title: *Muftī al-diyār al-miṣriyya*) from 1928 to 1945 and later became *Shaykh al-Azhar* twice; regarding the institution of the Egyptian *dār al-iftāʾ*, see Skovgaard-Petersen: *Defining Islam*, passim (pp. 159–70 on Salīm); for his role in the *taqrīb* movement, see below, p. 132 note 45.

[96] For a detailed report of this reception, see Thābit: *al-Waḥda al-islāmiyya*, 43–57 (text and photographs identical to al-Daftar: *Ṣafḥa*, 311–22); the names of the most important participants are given ibid., 43f.

[97] Thābit: *al-Waḥda al-islāmiyya*, 50f.

[98] Ibid., 51–57.

[99] Ibid., 57; al-Daftar: *Ṣafḥa*, 322.

[100] The first of Ramaḍān, 1355, corresponded to Nov. 15, 1936.

[101] Thābit: *al-Waḥda al-islāmiyya*, 94–99 (= al-Daftar: *Ṣafḥa*, 478–81); for the back-

both chroniclers of al-Zanjānī's activities point out that the Azhar study mission sent to India in 1937[102] was organized at his suggestion. Al-Marāghī, we are told, consented to this initiative and asked the Iraqi *ʿālim* to develop a suitable programme.[103]

Bearing al-Zanjānī's above-mentioned warning in mind, al-Marāghī and he were not content in their meetings to let things lie with platitudes about the need for Muslim harmony; they also gave consideration to practical steps that would pave the way toward a rapprochement between Sunnis and Shiites. A decisive condition to obviate the dialogue's being doomed to failure from the outset was a fundamentally new interpretation of the point of contention that had originally led to the splitting of the *umma* and so far had proven an insurmountable obstacle in the way of an ecumenical debate: the Imamate.

For ʿAbd al-Ḥusayn Sharaf al-Dīn, the question of legitimate sovereignty in Islam had still been "the greatest dispute to have befallen the *umma*".[104] Correspondingly, he had devoted the *Murājaʿāt* in its entirety to this topic, indeed to the exclusion of all other controversies. In his discussions with al-Marāghī, ʿAbd al-Karīm al-Zanjānī now attempted to change this perspective radically and in doing so, to reduce the significance of the issues of the Imamate and caliphate considerably. Thus, both took as their starting point the assessment that purely political motives on the part of "a few Umayyad and Abbasid kings"[105] had been decisive as determinants of the Sunni-Shiite dissension, but that these had nothing at all to do with the religious foundations of Islam.

Quoting the eighteenth-century Shiite scholar Moḥammad Bāqer "Waḥīd" Behbehānī,[106] they defined the principles upon which both denominational groups were in complete agreement as follows:

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ground see the article "Hilāl, i: In Religious Law", *EI*² III/379–81 (J. Schacht) as well as the article "Ru'yat al-hilāl", *EI*² VIII/649f. (D.A. King); the significance of the contribution of uniform Ramaḍān ceremonies to Muslim unity was re-emphasized some years ago, when, in March 1994, the leader of the Iranian Revolution, Āyatollāh Khāmene'ī, arbitrarily curtailed the month by one day in order to guarantee simultaneous celebration of the breaking of the fast (*ʿīd al-fiṭr*) in all Muslim countries; cf. *Arabies* no. 88 (Apr. 1994), 10.

[102] Cf. above, p. 47 note 13.

[103] Thābit: *al-Waḥda al-islāmiyya*, 91, 93; al-Daftar: *Ṣafḥa*, 441f.

[104] Sharaf al-Dīn: *al-Murājaʿāt*, preface, p. *w*.

[105] Thābit: *al-Waḥda al-islāmiyya*, 31; al-Daftar: *Ṣafḥa*, 46; regarding this argument, see below, pp. 240–42.

[106] In regard to him (ca. 1705–92), see *ṬASh* II.1/171–74; *GAL* SII/504; Momen: *Introduction*, 312; Bakhsāyesī: *Foqahā-ye nāmdār-e shīʿe*, 249–89; *EI*² S/134f. and *EIr*

> Let it be known that among our legal scholars, the foundations (*uṣūl*) of Islam are three: the unity of God (*tawḥīd*), the message (i.e. of Muḥammad: *al-risāla*), and the belief in the hereafter (*al-maʿād*). Whoever denies any one of these sets himself outside Islam.[107]

Al-Marāghī and al-Zanjānī left no doubt whatsoever about what this limitation of Islamic piety to three indispensable pillars meant for the question of the Imamate. Their conclusion was that this point was nothing more than a principle particular to the legal school of Shiism (*aṣl madhhabī*). According to this logic, whoever does not share this belief is definitely a Muslim with all rights and duties, he merely is not a Shiite. Similarly, anyone who does not believe in the caliphate is still a Muslim, but not a Sunni.

Hence it is absolutely inadmissible to combat each other because of this, and even less so—here was a decisive point in the argumentation favouring the *taqrīb* dialogue—as the dispute concerning the political leadership had been transformed into a quarrel over history, given the absence of the Shiite Imam and the abolition of the Sunni caliphate. In this respect, the entire issue could be relegated to the realm of interpretation by means of *ijtihād*.[108]

As far as the legal norms (*furūʿ al-dīn*) derived from these religious principles were ultimately concerned, there was, according to the two scholars, not a single opinion on the part of Shiism that ran counter to all Sunni legal schools. Thus the gap between Shiite and Sunni jurisdiction was by no means broader than the differences to be observed among the individual Sunni *madhāhib*. Consequently, al-Marāghī and al-Zanjānī formulated the possibility of unifying these legal norms "in accordance with the principles and sources of the legislation".[109]

IV/98f. (H. Algar); *Dharīʿa* II/177f.; Behbehānī's legal theory is discussed in detail by R. Gleave: *Inevitable Doubt. Two Theories of Shīʿī Jurisprudence*, Leiden 2000; cf. also idem: "The Akhbārī-Uṣūlī Dispute in *Ṭabaqāt* Literature: The Biographies of Yūsuf al-Baḥrānī and Muḥammad Bāqir al-Bihbihānī", *Jusur* 10/1994/79–109.

[107] al-Daftar: *Ṣafḥa*, 46.

[108] Ibid., 46f.

[109] Ibid., 46–50, quotation 49; cf. also "Uṣūl al-dīn", *EI*[2] X/930f. (D. Gimaret); an interesting parallel concerning the self-perception of Islam with regard to pre-Islamic prophets is described by Y. Friedmann: *Tolerance and Coercion in Islam. Interfaith Relations in the Muslim Tradition*, Cambridge 2003, 17: the close relationship and the acceptance of pre-Islamic prophecies "is understood to mean that the prophets' belief in the unity of God and in the principles of their respective religions (*uṣūl al-dīn*) is one, but that they differ with regard to the particular laws (*furūʿ, ʿamaliyyāt, fiqhiyyāt*)."

The division of religious law into three parts that can be seen emerging here is actually the most important aspect of this dialogue. In order for any dialogue not to be reduced to absurdity, it had to be emphasized that an unconditional consensus over the *uṣūl al-dīn* existed by which each of the two groups involved recognized that the interlocutors were, in fact, Muslims. Nevertheless, it had to be accepted that the well-known differences in the portrayal of history and the associated historical legitimation of the two denominations were so fundamental that it was impossible merely to classify them as implicit issues of secondary significance. Al-Marāghī and al-Zanjānī were able to overcome this dilemma by expanding the traditional bifurcation into theoretical principles and practical norms of the religion, to include a third category—namely the principles of the legal schools—that they reserved for the issue of the Imamate and caliphate.

This stratagem was of twofold significance in making rapprochement between Sunnism and Shiism possible. On the one hand, the most contentious problem was thus stricken from the catalogue of topics to be negotiated in that it had, in effect, been historicized and declared a peculiarity of each denomination. As such, it did not appertain to the pillars of Islam about which an *a priori* agreement had to exist, or to those matters of religious practice in which agreement appeared desirable. Rather, the Imamate constituted an independent item on which no agreement was necessary and that actually did not even have to be discussed explicitly.

Instead, this being the other consequence of their train of thought, the two scholars were free to focus their *taqrīb* efforts on the *furūʿ al-dīn*. It was here, and particularly in view of the inner-*Sunni* differences in specific questions of religious practice, that success appeared more likely to them. Unlike ʿAbd al-Ḥusayn Sharaf al-Dīn, who sought to settle the dispute over the "correct" political theory by attempting to convince his opponents of the error in their previous argumentation and move them toward acceptance of the Shiite viewpoint, al-Marāghī and al-Zanjānī intentionally omitted the Imamate and instead pursued the aim of limiting the discussion to issues of the practical legal norms, which they felt would be easier to resolve.

Both scholars concurred that the unification of these norms (*tawḥīd al-furūʿ al-islāmiyya*) could not possibly be within the capacity of a single individual if only because it was most unlikely that his decisions would ever be recognized by the followers of the other legal schools.

Therefore they proposed the establishment of an "Islamic scientific legislative committee" (*majmaʿ tashrīʿī ʿilmī islāmī*) to be composed of exceptional scholars (explicitly the term *mujtahid* was used) from the five[110] Islamic *madhāhib*. Their task would consist of reviewing the opinions of the various *fuqahāʾ* in light of the Koran and the Sunna, and the "essence" (*khulāṣa*) derived in this way would then be submitted to the Islamic World with the express purpose of serving as a reference point for people's religious training.[111]

Further modalities—for instance the question of who would ultimately select the *ʿulamāʾ* or how binding the committee's decisions should be—were either left open at this stage of the discussion or declared among the tasks of a "general Islamic conference" to be convened "from time to time" in the various Islamic countries.[112] Al-Zanjānī himself called the plan for a conference whose purpose was the "union of the five Islamic legal schools" the most important result that he and al-Marāghī had agreed upon in their conversations. He was certain that this suggestion would be enthusiastically welcomed by the Shiite *ʿulamāʾ* in Najaf and elsewhere—a hope that events were to prove premature.[113]

Given the foregoing, it would, however, appear certainly somewhat myopic to regard al-Marāghī's pursuit of the unification of legal norms in collaboration with the Shia as his only motive in undertaking a dialogue with a Shiite scholar who—it must be noted—could not even be counted among the top level of the Shiite clergy. The integrity of his intentions in this direction, as numerous Muslim authors have repeatedly stressed since,[114] and which caused Maḥmūd Shaltūt to attribute the concept of a doctrinal *taqrīb* to al-Marāghī,[115] is not to be questioned here. But rapprochement among the legal schools

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[110] Inclusion of the Zaydīs, which later became a matter of course, was apparently not yet a topic at the time.

[111] al-Daftar: *Ṣafḥa*, 50f.

[112] Ibid., 52.

[113] Ibid., 483–85.

[114] Cf. for example ʿAbd al-ʿAẓīm: *Mashyakhat al-Azhar*, II/21; Anwar al-Jundī: *Tarājim al-aʿlām al-muʿāṣirīn fī l-ʿālam al-islāmī*, Cairo 1970, 421–33, esp. 425; Muḥammad Kurd ʿAlī: "al-ʿAllāma al-shaykh al-Marāghī Shaykh al-Azhar", in: Abū l-Wafāʾ al-Marāghī: *al-Shaykh al-Marāghī bi-aqlām al-kuttāb*, 126–42, esp. 132f.; al-Nimr: *al-Ijtihād*, 298; al-Ṣayyādī: *al-Azhar*, 91; interestingly enough, these authors do not deal with al-Marāghī's contacts with al-Zanjānī but mention only in the most general of terms how much al-Marāghī did for the cause of Muslim unity.

[115] Shaltūt/al-Sāyis: *Muqāranat al-madhāhib*, 5; see also Zebiri: *Shaltut*, 24.

was, as a matter of fact, not his only motive and possibly not even the principal one. Al-Marāghī clearly also used his contacts with the Shiite scholar to help revive a plan he had already initially championed over two decades previously: establishing, or now rather re-establishing, the caliphate under an Egyptian caliph.

His first efforts in this direction date back into the time of the First World War. In a 1915 letter to the British governor-general of the Sudan, Sir Reginald Wingate, al-Marāghī—who was the Chief Justice (*qāḍī l-quḍāt*) in Khartum at the time—cast doubt upon the traditional interpretation of the Islamic caliphate theory according to which the caliph had to stem from the Quraysh tribe. This ascertainment was predominantly directed against the aspirations of the Meccan Sharīf Ḥusayn, who fulfilled this criterion. At the same time, however, al-Marāghī made sure that his judgement was not to be misunderstood as support for the still-existing Ottoman caliphate by pointing out that Islam had not seen any benefit from their side. In doing so, he clearly exposed his true objective: to bring the caliphate to Egypt under a non-Qurayshi office-holder.[116] For this reason, he numbered among the organizers of the Cairo caliphate congress in 1926.[117]

Both initiatives ended in failure, but after his disciple Fārūq had ascended the throne in 1936, time appeared propitious for al-Marāghī to make another attempt. In the meanwhile he had been appointed *Shaykh al-Azhar*—Egypt's highest Islamic dignitary—and thus he no longer required backing from other authorities to pursue his intention. The springboard for this effort was to be a topic that was still relatively new in the middle of the 1930s: interconfessional cooperation between Sunnis and Shiites.

What particularly qualified al-Zanjānī for this purpose in al-Marāghī's eyes was the attitude—unorthodox by Shiite standards—he had demonstrated in the past in regard to the caliphate. Possibly because of a perspicacious premonition of what Ibn Saʿūd's victory would mean for the Shiites, he had paid tribute to the self-appointed

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[116] Kedourie: "Egypt and the Caliphate", 179–81; English translation of al-Marāghī's letter ibid., 208–12.

[117] In the previous year (1925), al-Marāghī had even become directly involved in governmental politics and, during a secret mission in the Ḥijāz, explored possibilities for the establishment of an Egyptian protectorate over the Holy Sites; see M. Kramer: "Shaykh Marāghī's Mission to the Hijaz", *AAS* 16/1982/121–36.

caliph Ḥusayn in 1924.[118] The negotiations between the two scholars at the Azhar seemed to correspond completely with al-Marāghī's concept.

Although this concept was not as a matter of course among the topics of discussion, the definition of Imamate and caliphate as *aṣl madhhabī*, over which Sunnis and Shiites did not absolutely have to see eye to eye, left adequate leeway for the theoretical possibility of a revived Sunni caliphate that the Shiites could find tolerable. Furthermore, al-Zanjānī stressed the compatibility of pan-Arabism and pan-Islamism, indeed declaring the former indispensable in order to strengthen the latter, and thus fitting seamlessly into the intellectual climate regarding Islam that prevailed in Egypt at the time.[119]

Even after al-Zanjānī's departure from Cairo, his contact to al-Marāghī was not severed, especially since the *Shaykh al-Azhar* continued to place emphasis on the topic of a rapprochement among the Muslim legal schools in the spirit of mutual tolerance in his sermons and addresses.[120] For a brief period, it actually appeared possible that the basic dispute between Sunnis and Shiites could be mitigated by historicizing the fundamental issue of the Imamate, as had been done during the conversations between the two *'ulamā'*. The editor of the Azhar journal, Muḥammad Farīd Wajdī, for instance, found that it not only contradicted Islam, but also common sense that a conflict dating back over 1300 years still repeatedly caused flare-ups of interconfessional hatred, such as for example in

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[118] Kramer: *Islam Assembled*, 103 and 214 note 98, with reference to the Meccan newspaper *al-Qibla*; the genuineness of this type of tribute, published in some Ḥijāzi newspapers, cannot be taken for granted: Rashīd Riḍā called many of these writings lies that Ḥusayn's accomplices put about for the purpose of propaganda; see "Intiḥāl al-Sayyid Ḥusayn Amīr Makka li-l-Khilāfa", *al-Manār* 25/5 (Jul. 1924), 390–400, on 395f.; cf. Boberg: *Ägypten*, 57f.

[119] al-Daftar: *Ṣafḥa*, 180–83; cf. also *OM* 18/1938/420, where references are given to two articles on the same topic in the Baghdad daily paper *al-Akhbār*; in the first (July 24, 1938) al-Zanjānī confirmed the viewpoint he expressed in Cairo, in the second (July 26, 1938) Muḥammad al-Ḥusayn Āl Kāshif al-Ghiṭā' took a considerably more cautious position: In his opinion, the current debate about caliphate, pan-Arabism, and Islamic unity was being fuelled to a large part by the European powers to distract Muslims from the Palestine problem. Nevertheless he indicated his willingness to recognize the sovereign of a unified Arab state as caliph of all Muslims if a general Arab agreement on this issue and the establishment of such a state following the Japanese model could be reached.

[120] Cf. *MA* 8/1937–38/646–49; 9/1938–39/5–8, 165–75; 10/1939–40/5–11, 481–83; see also *al-'Irfān* 29/2 (Apr. 1939), 193f.; *OM* 18/1938/14; Thābit: *al-Waḥda al-islāmiyya*, 67 (= al-Daftar: *Ṣafḥa*, 41f.).

India. Although not all of the groups involved were represented in Egypt, all activity had to be vigorously countered wherever the "Muslim mentality" (*ʿaqliyyat al-muslimīn*) was being undermined—an indirect but clear reference to the contention that the Azhar had responsibility for Muslim affairs outside of Egypt as well.[121]

It soon became clear, though, that the conversations in Cairo had not satisfactorily set aside all of the differences, and that even the very agreement to entrust a special committee with the procedures for the rapprochement of the legal points of view of Sunnism and Shiism bore the seeds of a new conflict. As indicated above, in 1936, al-Marāghī and al-Zanjānī had left the questions unanswered as to what the first regular *taqrīb* organization that they planned should look like, who should be entitled to participate, and where it should convene.

In February 1938, when rumours about al-Marāghī's aim to restore the caliphate under Egyptian leadership had spread even farther afield,[122] the rector of the Azhar wrote to al-Zanjānī and renewed his proposal of an institution to oversee Islamic affairs and rapprochement of the denominations and legal schools. This "Supreme Islamic Council" (*majlis islāmī aʿlā*), as he now called it, should represent all Muslims, both from the side of the governments and otherwise. At the same time, he asked the Iraqi *ʿālim* to submit this plan to the other scholars in Najaf and to ascertain their acceptance of Egypt as a venue for the assembly.[123]

In his reply,[124] al-Zanjānī showed himself open to the idea in principle but voiced four serious reservations: First, participation in the council in question had to be limited to *ʿulamāʾ*; no government rep-

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[121] Muḥammad Farīd Wajdī: "al-Durūs al-dīniyya. Khaṭwa muwaffaqa fī sabīl al-tawfīq bayn al-muslimīn", *MA* 8/1937–38/642–44, esp. 643; regarding Wajdī (1875–1954) who edited the Azhar journal from 1933 to 1952, see al-Ziriklī VI/329; *MDA* III/1395–1400; Kaḥḥāla XI/126f. and M/722, as well as Smith: *Islam in Modern History*, 122ff.; Anwar al-Jundī: *Muḥammad Farīd Wajdī. Rāʾid al-tawfīq bayn al-ʿilm wa-l-dīn*, Cairo 1974.

[122] Kedourie: "Egypt and the Caliphate", 204; al-Marāghī was also briefly in contact for this purpose with the head of the Ismāʿīliyya, the Āghā Khān, see Kramer: *Islam Assembled*, 103 and al-Nimr: *al-Ijtihād*, 298.

[123] The letter is printed in Thābit: *al-Waḥda al-islāmiyya*, 68–71, al-Daftar: *Ṣafḥa*, 53f., and in *al-ʿIrfān* 28/4 (Jun. 1938), 372f.; cf. also *OM* 18/1938/222; concerning this and the subsequent letter, see also Kramer: *Islam Assembled*, 103f., and al-Mīlād: *Khiṭāb al-waḥda al-islāmiyya*, 127–37.

[124] Thābit: *al-Waḥda al-islāmiyya*, 72–76; al-Daftar: *Ṣafḥa*, 55–57 (letter of April 9, 1938).

resentatives, who might endanger its success, were to be included. Second, he demanded that the Council must not under any circumstances meet in a country under any type of Western political control. Third, he proposed the formation of an organizing committee, so that the "opponents of religion" (*khuṣūm al-dīn*) would have no chance to accuse the Supreme Islamic Council of dishonourable intentions and thus sow further discord among Muslims. Finally, he recommended that all those who wrote about Islamic history and crucial questions should do so in a polite way, trying to keep good manners and not hurt anybody's feelings, so that no fanaticism (*taʿaṣṣub*) might be stirred.

Al-Zanjānī thus made it clear to al-Marāghī that he had recognized the Egyptian's ulterior motives to put the ecumenical debate into the service of his caliphate plans—and that he categorically rejected them. Excluding participants who were governmental representatives of course referred primarily to the Egyptian government, and stipulating that the Council should only convene in a country completely independent from the West meant the immediate disqualification of de facto British-ruled Egypt. A new version of the caliphate was thus effectively to be prevented. The insistence on an organizing committee can also be interpreted as an attempt to maintain Shiite independence as well as to circumvent the Azhar having the sole say over the topics the Council would consider.

Al-Marāghī understood the subtleties between the lines of al-Zanjānī's message because in a follow-up letter, he was unequivocal that throughout the efforts toward good relations, no one thought of making Najaf an annex (*mulḥaq*) of the Azhar: He added that he, too, favoured the Council being composed solely of religious scholars, but also saw no reason why "some exceptional personalities" (*ʿuẓamāʾ*) who did not come from the ranks of the *ʿulamāʾ* should not participate.[125] He avoided, however, a reply to the challenge concerning the venue.

ʿAbd al-Karīm al-Zanjānī did not remain the only Shiite scholar to express scepticism about al-Marāghī's ideas regarding an Islamic council. In an article that appeared in November 1938 in the *ʿIrfān*,

[125] Thābit, 77f.; al-Daftar, 57f. (letter of May 3, 1938). It was even explicitly mentioned in an article which appeared shortly thereafter in the Egyptian daily paper *al-Muqaṭṭam* that "experts who are not *ʿulamāʾ*" might also participate in the council, see *OM* 18/1938/338.

the Lebanese jurist Muḥammad Jawād Mughniyya[126] also raised some fundamental objections. He agreed in principle with the idea of reaching rapprochement between Sunnism and Shiism with the aid of such a committee since it was for the welfare of the *umma*, but it had to be guaranteed that the council did not become a stage for those who gave the outward appearance of being Muslims but in reality were filled with hatred and secretly worked "in the name of religion toward its destruction". In this connection, Mughniyya displayed his astonishment at the fact that in al-Marāghī's capacity as *Shaykh al-Azhar*, he had not yet felt it necessary to distance himself from the machinations of the "hired" (*musta'jar*) anti-Shiite polemicists such as al-Nashāshībī and Jārallāh, whose effect on Islam was worse than entire "armies of idolatry" (*juyūsh al-shirk*). Any organization that included these people could never contribute to a rapprochement among Muslims and would not gain the approval of the Shia under any circumstances.[127] Mughniyya's reproach of al-Marāghī because of his silence about Sunni opponents of the Imāmiyya is the direct precursor of the criticism that al-Zanjānī was to level in a similar situation at the then-current rector, Maḥmūd Shaltūt more than twenty years later.[128]

After al-Zanjānī had pronounced his reservations so openly in his letter to al-Marāghī, the ways of the two scholars again separated. Al-Zanjānī appeared once more in 1938/39 as a promoter of Islamic unity, but his contacts with the Azhar in this case no longer played a role. Moreover, he now concentrated his activities on Syria and Lebanon.[129] For the time being he made a final appearance of this type that produced international reaction at the beginning of September 1938. At a scholarly conference in Damascus at which he was the only Shiite representative, he stressed the obligation of the *'ulamā'* to work toward Muslim unity.[130]

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[126] Regarding him, see below, pp. 200ff.

[127] Muḥammad Jawād Mughniyya: "al-Waḥda al-islāmiyya bayn al-sunna wa-l-shī'a", *al-'Irfān* 28/6 (Nov. 1938), 577–79.

[128] Cf. below, p. 328.

[129] Cf. "Ḥawl taqrīb al-adyān wa-l-madhāhib aw tawḥīdihā", *al-'Irfān* 28/8 (Jan. 1939), 769–76, esp. 770–72 about al-Zanjānī's lecture at the *Dār al-aytām al-islāmiyya* in Beirut; "al-'Allāma al-Zanjānī yashkur al-quṭrayn al-sūrī wa-l-lubnānī", *al-'Irfān* 29/1 (Mar. 1939), third and fourth cover page; see also al-Daftar: *Ṣafḥa*, 131–58.

[130] The support of al-Zanjānī's suggestions was also among the conference resolutions, being listed as the thirteenth item; for details, see al-Mīlād: *Khiṭab al-waḥda al-islāmiyya*, 139–45; al-Daftar: *Ṣafḥa*, 115–30; Thābit: *al-Waḥda al-islāmiyya*, 107–09;

Al-Marāghī, for his part, apparently also came to realize that his caliphate plans had little chance of meeting the Shiite clergy's approval. He thus ended his correspondence with al-Zanjānī and dropped the project for an Islamic Council. His indirect contacts with other, higher ranking *ʿulamāʾ* in Najaf flagged after 1938 as well. His comrade-in-arms in this matter had been the former Egyptian envoy in Iraq, ʿAbd al-Raḥmān ʿAzzām,[131] but it appears that the links the latter had forged with, among others, Muḥammad al-Ḥusayn Āl Kāshif al-Ghiṭāʾ and Abū l-Ḥasan al-Iṣfahānī, never got beyond the point of non-committal talks in which the *Shaykh al-Azhar* played no direct role.[132]

When, following an invitation of Muḥammad ʿAlī ʿAllūba,[133] who was already known for his congress activities, the "Interparliamentary Congress of Arab and Islamic Lands for the Defence of Palestine" convened in Cairo from October 7–11, 1938,[134] no coherent efforts had been made during the preparations to attract the participation of Shiite *ʿulamāʾ*. Al-Marāghī's project for the Supreme Islamic Council was also missing from the agenda, as were *taqrīb* ideas general.[135]

The discussion about restoration of the caliphate under Egyptian leadership was continued for short time, and actually intensified,

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OM 18/1938/552; Muḥsin al-Amīn lauded the sermon that al-Zanjānī delivered during the congress in the Umayyad Mosque as the completion of the *khuṭba* of ʿAlī b. al-Ḥusayn, the fourth Imam, who had been the only Shiite to have ascended onto this pulpit before al-Zanjānī; see Thābit, 105f.; according to al-Daftar, 90 and 94, this is supposed to have already taken place during al-Zanjānī's first stay in Damascus in 1936.

[131] *OM* 16/1936/233; after 1945 ʿAzzām became the first Secretary-General of the newly established Arab League; regarding him, see al-Dālī: *Asrār al-jāmiʿa al-ʿarabiyya wa-ʿAbd al-Raḥmān ʿAzzām*.

[132] Kramer: *Islam Assembled*, 102f.

[133] ʿAllūba (1875–1956; see al-Ziriklī VI/307; Kaḥḥāla XI/29; see also below, pp. 132f.) had also been Vice-President and Treasurer of the 1931 pan-Islamic Congress in Jerusalem and had participated in 1933 in the unsuccessful India trip of the Congress's executive committee that had been given the task of seeking the necessary funding for a reconvening; see Kramer: *Islam Assembled*, 140; also in Cairo in 1936, he had delivered Muḥammad Amīn al-Ḥusaynī's invitation to ʿAbd al-Karīm al-Zanjānī to visit Palestine, see Thābit: *al-Waḥda al-islāmiyya*, 123; regarding al-Zanjānī's stay in Palestine, see ibid., 123–31 and al-Daftar: *Ṣafḥa*, 159–66.

[134] *al-Muʾtamar al-barlamānī li-l-bilād al-ʿarabiyya wa-l-islāmiyya li-l-difāʿ ʿan Filasṭīn*; in this regard, see E. Rossi: "Il congresso interparlamentare arabo e musulmano pro Palestina al Cairo (7–11 Ottobre)", *OM* 18/1938/587–601; also ibid., 603f., 616f., 624f.; Kedourie: "Egypt and the Caliphate", 204f.; Kramer: *Islam Assembled*, 154f.; regarding the preparations, see *OM* 18/1938/335f., 422, 567.

[135] al-Marāghī sent a message of greeting to the conference; see *MA* 9/1938–39/ before p. 505 (no page numbers).

without Shiite cooperation. These activities found their climax in January 1939 when King Fārūq led the Friday prayer in a Cairene mosque and at the end of the ceremony, cheers for the monarch broke out: The following day, in the mosque of the *Jamʿiyyat al-shubbān al-muslimīn*, ʿAbd al-Ḥamīd Saʿīd actually addressed Fārūq as *amīr al-muʾminīn*. After speculation about these courses of events even broke out in the European press, the Egyptian government immediately saw itself compelled to deny strenuously any aim of reintroducing the caliphate. In any case, the outbreak of the Second World War later in the year put an end to such considerations once and for all.[136]

Also pan-Islamic efforts of the kind al-Marāghī and al-Zanjānī had undertaken were now temporarily overshadowed by more urgent problems.[137] This cannot, however, hide the fact that the *taqrīb* initiative of these two scholars in particular had already failed previously because of its inner contradictions. Despite the considerable effort they had given to reducing the vehemence of the old dispute over political leadership, even raising its discussion to a newly introduced level, that of the "principle of the legal schools" so as to exclude it from the actual struggle over rapprochement, in the end it was exactly this problem that proved so intractable that it led to the breakdown of their talks.

Al-Marāghī's attempt to manipulate the *taqrīb* advances of his Shiite interlocutor for his own political goals could not be taken by the Shiites lying down, the less so as the issue was the restoration of the caliphate. When al-Zanjānī finally got the impression that the Azhar was actually trying to take the Shiite *ʿulamāʾ* in, he immediately distanced himself from the plan for a *taqrīb* organization that they had initially discussed. That al-Marāghī also abruptly ended the contact may be seen as an expression of his personal disappointment, but at the same time is an indication of just how closely legal rapproche-ment and political calculation were connected for him: when the latter was proved pointless, the former was no longer worth the effort.

Despite these considerations and the fact that al-Zanjānī was neither one of the most important nor an entirely uncontroversial representative of the Iraqi Shia,[138] there remains no doubt that in Muḥam-

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[136] Cf. *OM* 19/1939/104f.; Kedourie: "Egypt and the Caliphate", 204f.

[137] Regarding the congresses of that period, see Kramer: *Islam Assembled*, 154–65.

[138] Kramer, 214 note 95, even quoted a British diplomat who, in an extremely undiplomatic manner, characterized al-Zanjānī as "an oily creature and not at all trustworthy."

mad Muṣṭafā al-Marāghī, for the first time, a *Shaykh al-Azhar* set the substantial weight of his office behind a dialogue with Twelver Shiism. Furthermore, the plan for a Supreme Islamic Council deserves particular emphasis. Never before had a specific organization been conceived for the difficult business of examining and seeking rapprochement of the legal positions of Sunnis and Shiites, and unlike the previous sporadic congresses, it was planned from the outset as a permanent institution. That the project already failed because of the basic question of who should be approved for participation in this council is one of the numerous tragic twists of the *taqrīb* tale.

As far as instruction at the Azhar was concerned, the contacts to the Shia had only one concrete, although indirect effect, which was the introduction of the Persian language to the curriculum. This modest reform was the result of a socio-political event: the marriage of the Iranian Crown Prince and future Shah, Moḥammad Reżā Pahlawī, to the Egyptian princess Fawziyya, a sister of King Fārūq, on March 15, 1939. Since the latter's mentor al-Marāghī performed the marriage ceremony, this wedding left its traces on the discussion of Islamic unity for a short time. Contemporary European observers saw a possibility that this occasion might open the way for a comprehensive agreement between Sunnis and Shiites *par ordre du mufti* or at least bring about its acceleration.[139]

At the same time, though, it was painfully brought to the Azhar's attention that a basic requirement for any type of agreement was lacking: namely, the ability to communicate directly with the interlocutor. When the Iranian successor to the throne (who spoke no Arabic) paid a visit in the course of the festivities to the Azhar, al-Marāghī's speech had to be translated into French(!), which cast a disparaging light on the current state of Persian-language knowledge

[139] Cf. E. Rossi: "Il matrimonio del Principe Ereditario dell'Iran con la Principessa Fawziyyah e suo significato rispetto all relazioni tra Sunniti e Sciiti", *OM* 19/1939/227f.; J. Guadarrama: "Estado actual del mundo musulmán", *Ciencia Tomista* 58/1939/405–32, on 421 and 430; regarding the wedding, see also *al-ʿIrfān* 28/5 (Jul. 1938), 503f. and 29/2 (Apr. 1939), 125–27; *OM* 18/1938/313, 673f.; 19/1939/58, 161f., 226f., 289; Rizq: *al-ʿAlāqāt al-īrāniyya bi-Miṣr*, 107–09; al-Wardānī: *Miṣr . . . Īrān*, 43f.; a kind of royalist yellow press report on the marriage (including detailed coverage by the Egyptian daily paper *al-Ahrām* of March 1939) is given by A. Sabit/M. Farag: *1939, the Imperial Wedding (Royal Albums of Egypt)*, Cairo 1993 (pp. 27 and 111 on the Shah's visit to the Azhar).

in the theological and legal departments.[140] As a result, it was immediately decided to include Persian among the foreign languages taught.[141] However, even having a common language was apparently not enough to eliminate the problems of mutual understanding with the Iraqi Shiites.

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The Shah's marriage to princess Fawziyya was dissolved in November 1948 with considerably less interest among the Islamic public than their marriage had generated. One of the reasons given for the divorce was that the climate of Tehran had proven insalubrious for Fawziyya.[142]

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[140] "Sumuww walī ʿahd al-dawla al-īrāniyya yazūr al-Jāmiʿ al-Azhar wa-ḥaḍrat ṣāḥib al-faḍīla al-ustādh al-imām", *MA* 10/1939–40/131f.

[141] "Idkhāl al-lugha al-īrāniyya fī l-maʿāhid al-ʿilmiyya al-dīniyya bi-l-Azhar al-sharīf", *al-Majalla al-Zaytūniyya* (Tunis) 3/4 (Apr. 1939), 188 (I owe the reference to this note to Dr. Andreas Tunger-Zanetti); see also *OM* 18/1938/567; on the occasion of the wedding even a grammar of the Persian language by Zaydān Badrān entitled *al-Tuḥfa al-fawziyya fī taʿlīm al-lugha al-fārisiyya* and dedicated to Princess Fawziyya appeared in Egypt, see *OM* 20/1940/459 and 22/1942/180; regarding the introduction of Turkish, the third great language of Islamic culture, see *OM* 20/1940/87 and 22/1942/214; cf. also Āl ʿAlī: *Ǧawānib*, p. *ḍ*f.

[142] *OM* 28/1948/182; Rizq: *al-ʿAlāqāt al-īrāniyya bi-Miṣr*, 111f.

CHAPTER FIVE

THE INSTITUTIONALIZATION OF ECUMENICAL THINKING

Precursors

All of the efforts previously discussed aimed at creating contacts between Sunnites and Shiites with the goal of promoting an agreement between the denominations or at least a partial reconciliation as far as specific legal norms were concerned. Also, they were the efforts of individuals. The driving forces behind the Islamic ecumenical movement, on the Shiite side even more than among the Sunnites, were representatives of the scholarly caste who had gone through the traditional formation as an *ʿālim* or *mujtahid*.

Examples par excellence of the concurrence of these factors are Muḥammad al-Ḥusayn Āl Kāshif al-Ghiṭāʾ's appearance during the Jerusalem conference of December 1931 and ʿAbd al-Ḥusayn Sharaf al-Dīn's attempt to claim his place in the Muslim *taqrīb* movement. The dialogue between ʿAbd al-Karīm al-Zanjānī and Muḥammad Muṣṭafā al-Marāghī proceeded along these lines as well. The former must be considered a loner even among his *ʿulamāʾ* colleagues in Najaf, his activities of the late 1930s notwithstanding. Al-Marāghī, in turn, due to the immense power of his office as well as the highly political objectives of his endeavours, could act without seeking the prior support of the rest of the Azhar establishment. The fact that these scholars had no mandate of any type from a higher institution did not hinder them, however, from claiming to act as representatives of their respective denominations, "Sunnism" and "Shiism" in their entirety.

In the debate about Islamic reformism that occurred during the first quarter of the twentieth century, the almost ubiquitous Muḥammad Rashīd Riḍā played an exceptional role in this dialogue, which otherwise took place among religious scholars. His training[1] and, in

[1] The *madrasa waṭaniyya* established by the Lebanese *shaykh* Ḥusayn al-Jisr in 1879

particular, his activity as a journalist primarily concerned with Islamic issues led him to become one of the most important pioneers of the intellectual change that had gripped Egypt since the second half of the 1920s and was to have consequences for the entire Islamic world: the transformation of the somewhat opaque Salafiyya movement as it had originated at the end of the nineteenth century and the emergence and consolidation of more organized and rigid forms of Islamic reform that have become known as the "neo-Salafiyya". This tendency viewed itself as a kind of social avant-garde, and in the decade and a half that followed its creation, it contributed to the formation of a new understanding of Islam. Constantly fighting against what they perceived as hostile influences from outside (Europe or Kemalist Turkey) and blameworthy innovations (*bidaʿ*) from within, its supporters developed an isolationist worldview clearly modelled on the earliest period of Islamic history: the community in Medina at the time of the Prophet.[2]

To a large extent the secular Egyptian nationalism that had been popular among intellectuals was territorially defined and historiographically rooted in Pharaonism.[3] It was now replaced by a pan-Islamic ideology inextricably bound to pan-Arabic pretensions. In other words, the restoration of the all-encompassing Muslim *umma* was the most pressing priority of the neo-Salafiyya, and the Arab unity that was to precede it was simultaneously both a prerequisite and a means

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in Tripoli had the most lasting educational influence on Rashīd Riḍā; its curriculum was expanded beyond the traditional subjects and included the study of Western-influenced natural sciences as well as the French language; see Hourani: *Arabic Thought*, 222–45; regarding Ḥusayn al-Jisr, see J. Ebert: *Religion und Reform in der arabischen Provinz: Ḥusayn al-Ǧisr aṭ-Ṭarābulusī (1845–1909). Ein islamischer Gelehrter zwischen Tradition und Reform*, Frankfurt/M. 1991, esp. 79ff.

[2] Cf. Schulze: *Internationalismus*, 87–93 as well as idem: *Geschichte*, 118–43. The first person to employ the term "neo-Salafiyya" appears to have been E.I.J. Rosenthal in his book *Islam in the Modern National State*, Cambridge 1965, 154 and 325, although in a rather different context, i.e. with reference to the Moroccan hero of independence, Muḥammad ʿAllāl al-Fāsī (d. 1973; cf. *OE* II/4f.). Considering the changes in the reformist outlook that took place in the 1920s in Egypt, it seems, however, justified to borrow the expression and to apply it to this development; cf. also Mayeur-Jaouen: "Les débuts", 253, and "Salafiyya", *EI*[2] VIII/907 (W. Ende).

[3] Hourani: *Arabic Thought*, 193–221; regarding the background, see I. Gershoni/J.P. Jankowski (eds.): *Egypt, Islam, and the Arabs. The Search for Egyptian Nationhood, 1900–1930*, New York, Oxford 1986; cf. also *al-ʿIrfān* 69/1–2 (Jan.–Feb. 1981), 129–34; on the topic of Pharaonism, see M. Haarmann: *Das moderne Ägypten und seine pharaonische Vergangenheit*, Ph.D. dissertation, Freiburg 1990/2001; D. Walker: "The Collapse of Neo-pharaonic Nationalism in Egyptian High Culture after 1930", *Journal of Arabic, Islamic and Middle Eastern Studies* 1/1993/45–58.

to realize this goal.[4] This process necessarily left its mark on the traditionally trained Muslim religious scholars. The neo-Salafi intellectuals' significantly more aggressive interpretation of Islam developed into an extremely effective competition for them and seriously questioned their traditional monopoly on Islamic education.[5]

It should be stressed, however, that the preceding classification is, of course, idealized; it is not possible to draw a sharp, consistent dividing line between the two groupings, since both repeatedly cooperated in particular areas. For example, the Azhar scholar Muḥammad al-Khiḍr Ḥusayn and others participated in various neo-Salafi organizations,[6] al-Marāghī himself maintained temporary contacts to the Muslim Brotherhood,[7] and a forum such as the Jerusalem conference of 1931 entertained scholars and intellectuals alike.

The neo-Salafiyya was mostly organized in small, hierarchical societies (*jamʿiyyāt*) in which a kind of microcosm of the ideal Muḥammadan community[8] was to be anticipated. Two of these groups (the *Jamʿiyyat al-shubbān al-muslimīn* and the *Jamʿiyyat al-hidāya al-islāmiyya*) have already been briefly mentioned in connection with al-Zanjānī's visit to Cairo. Especially the former succeeded in carrying its message well beyond Egypt: branches are reported to have been founded in Palestine, Beirut and as far as Bombay.[9]

From among the vast number of groups active in this way,[10] the Muslim Brotherhood (*Jamʿiyyat al-ikhwān al-muslimīn*) soon emerged as the most famous exponent.[11] It was established in March 1928 (or

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[4] Gershoni: "Emergence", esp. 70–81; idem: "Arabization", passim, as well as Dawn: "Formation", passim.

[5] Schulze: *Internationalismus*, 87, headed the chapter, which is devoted to this development (valid only for Sunni Islam) "The Victory of the Intellectuals".

[6] Ibid., 91.

[7] Heyworth-Dunne: *Trends*, 33f.; Mitchell: *Society*, 212.

[8] Schulze: *Internationalismus*, 90. The term "Muḥammadan" here explicitly refers to the orientation towards that kind of society created by Muḥammad in Medina, the *umma muḥammadiyya*; it is not a statement regarding any type of religious orientation.

[9] The *Jamʿiyyat al-shubbān al-muslimīn* was founded by ʿAbd al-Ḥamīd Saʿīd, ʿAbd al-ʿAzīz Jāwīsh (1876–1929; obituary in *al-Manār* 29/9 [Feb. 1929], 712–14), and Muḥibb al-Dīn al-Khaṭīb in 1927 (Schulze: *Internationalismus*, p. 91, gives the date Nov. 1928); for the statutes cf. *al-Manār* 28/10 (Jan. 1928), 788–92; cf. also Mayeur-Jaouen: "Les débuts", 248ff.; Heyworth-Dunne: *Religious and Political Trends*, 11–14; Mitchell: *Society*, 7, and G. Kampffmeyer: "Western Egypt and Asia", in: H.A.R. Gibb (ed.): *Whither Islam?*, London 1932 (reprinted 1973), 99–170, esp. 103ff.

[10] Heyworth-Dunne: *Trends*, 30, writes that he gathered information about 135 such organizations (as of 1947); in the corresponding note 30 (pp. 89–91) he mentions the 29 groupings that appear most important to him.

[11] Regarding the Muslim Brotherhood, see Mitchell: *Society*, passim, as well as the

1929) in Ismāʿīliyya by the young teacher Ḥasan al-Bannā, who had not yet reached his twenty-second birthday. Its internal structure was combined with a consistently thought-out programme that strictly adhered to the ideal of early Islam. This not only contributed to its quickly becoming a significant factor in Egyptian domestic politics, but also set a precedent in other Islamic countries, particularly after the end of the Second World War.[12]

From the very beginning, the propagation of pan-Islamic ideas was an important component of the Muslim Brotherhood's ideology, although nowhere was rapprochement among the various Islamic legal schools explicitly mentioned—not even Shiism as an independent denomination. Instead, Ḥasan al-Bannā understood Islamic unity as a fixed, static entity that would be achieved automatically at the very moment the *umma muḥammadiyya* as it had existed in the times *before* the confessional divisions among Muslims was restored. The detour via a long-winded discussion fraught with imponderable difficulties and aiming at standardizing legal norms and an interpretation of history that originated only *after* Muḥammad's death, was rendered superfluous by this recourse to the Koranic concept of the *umma*,[13] since such a process could only be a temporary stage on the way to "true" and "complete" Muslim unity.

With this argumentation, the Muslim Brotherhood was much more closely following the tradition of "classical" pan-Islam as drawn up by Jamāl al-Dīn al-Afghānī in the nineteenth century, with whom Ḥasan al-Bannā was frequently compared.[14] Nevertheless, as the contacts between the Muslim Brotherhood and the *Ǧamāʿat al-taqrīb* that will be discussed below illustrate, the *ikhwān* showed a fundamental willingness to engage in a dialogue of this type with the Shia.

Both the Sunni (principally represented by the Azhar) and the

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literature mentioned in Schulze: *Internationalismus*, 90f. note 238; concerning al-Bannā (1906–1949), see also the short biographical items in al-Ziriklī II/183f., *MDA* II/208–11, and *EI*² I/1018f. (J.M.B. Jones); the information about the foundation date is inconsistent: al-Bannā himself mentioned March 1928 *and* Dhū l-Qaʿda 1347 (corresponding to Apr./May 1929), cf. Mitchell, 8 note 19, as well as J.J.G. Jansen: "Ḥasan al-Bannā's Earliest Pamphlet", *WI* 32/1992/254–58.

[12] J. Reissner: *Ideologie und Politik der Muslimbrüder Syriens. Von den Wahlen 1947 bis zum Verbot unter Adīb aš-Šišaklī 1952*, Freiburg 1980.

[13] "Umma", *EI*² X/859–63 (F.M. Denny); F.M. Denny: "The Meaning of Ummah in the Qurʾān", *History of Religions* 15/1975/34–70; idem: "Ummah in the Constitution of Medina", *ǦNES* 36/1977/39–47.

[14] Mitchell: *Society*, 321f.; regarding al-Bannā's pan-Islamic thinking, cf. ibid., 216f. and Gershoni: "Emergence", 71–80.

Shiite centres of scholarship (foremost Najaf, but also Qom as well as the other *ʿatabāt*) failed to make any unanimous, decisive efforts either to seek or further engage in a dialogue. Therefore it seemed only natural that the *taqrīb* activists did the job of forming groups themselves accordingly by imitating the practice of the neo-Salafiyya from whose ranks they recruited more often than not. Sometimes these societies were connected to publishers and other organizations active in journalism with the express goal of propagating the confessions' knowledge of one another in order to promote rapprochement by means of producing appropriate books and articles.

One of the earliest calls of this type was made by the Shiite legal scholar Muḥammad Riḍā al-Muẓaffar, who taught in Najaf.[15] In a brief contribution for the Cairene reform journal *al-Risāla*[16] in 1935, he introduced the *Jamʿiyyat muntadā al-nashr*, which he had initiated, and summoned to expand the relations between the Azhar and Najaf, and ultimately form an "Islamic Front" (*jabhat al-islām*) by means of intensified contacts to Egyptian institutions. In doing so he directly addressed the well-established and renowned "Committee for Authoring, Translation, and Publication"[17] and in particular its chairman Aḥmad Amīn, who, however, did not respond to these advances.[18]

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[15] Concerning him (1904–1964), see al-Ziriklī VI/127; *MDA* III/1224f.; *MMI* III/170f.; *ṬASh* I.2/772f.; Kaḥḥāla M/642f.; *RF* II/1217f.; al-Khāqānī: *Shuʿarāʾ*, VIII/451–85; Muḥammad Mahdī al-Āṣifī: *Madrasat al-Najaf wa-taṭawwur al-ḥaraka al-iṣlāḥiyya fīhā. Ẓilāl min ḥayāt al-rāḥil al-shaykh al-Muẓaffar wa-dirāsa ʿan al-ḥayāt al-fikriyya fī l-Najaf*, Najaf 1384/1964; obituaries in *RI* 14/1964/340, and by Muḥammad Jawād Mughniyya: "Faqīd al-Najaf al-ashraf", in: idem: *Min dhā wa-dhāk*, 136f.

[16] The editor of this journal was Aḥmad Ḥasan al-Zayyāt (1885–1968), who was later twice (in 1952 and 1959ff.) in charge of the Azhar journal and became a driving force both in the Azhar reform of 1961 and in the legitimation of ʿAbd al-Nāṣir's variant of Islamic socialism; see Vatikiotis: "Islam and the Foreign Policy of Egypt", 142; regarding al-Zayyāt in general, see al-Ziriklī I/113f.; *MDA* III/507–10; Kaḥḥāla M/45; Muḥammad Sayyid Muḥammad: *al-Ẓayyāt wa-l-Risāla*, Riyadh 1982.

[17] *Lajnat al-taʾlīf wa-l-tarjama wa-l-nashr*.

[18] al-Muẓaffar: "al-Sunniyyūn wa-l-shīʿa wa-mawqifuhumā al-yawm", *al-Risāla* 3/1935/1612–14, esp. 1613f. (above quotation, 1614, penultimate); see also al-Ḥakīm: *Fikrat al-taqrīb*, 15f.; in contrast, al-Bahnasāwī's criticism of al-Muẓaffar: *al-Ḥaqāʾiq al-ghāʾiba*, 46; cf. also *al-ʿIrfān* 31/9–10 (Aug.–Sept. 1945), 578; regarding Aḥmad Amīn's committee, see K.L. Crose: *Aḥmad Amīn and Lajnat al-Taʾlīf wa al-Tarjamah wa al-Nashr: A Study of their Contribution to the 20th Century Renaissance of Egypt*, Ph.D. dissertation, Hartford 1955, as well as U. Rizzitano: "L'attività editorale del 'Comitato di Composizione, traduzione ed edizione' del Cairo (1914–1938)", *OM* 20/1040/31–38, and Perrin: "Le creuset", 322–24; concerning the *Jamʿiyyat muntadā al-nashr*, cf. Qubaysī: *Ḥayāt al-imām*, 95; *ṬASh* I.2/772f.; al-Raḍawī: *Ārāʾ ʿulamāʾ al-muslimīn*, 32 note 1; Nakash: *The Shiʿis of Iraq*, 265–68, and Mervin: "The Clerics of Jabal ʿĀmil", 82f.

The first neo-Salafi grouping founded exclusively for the purpose of advancing Muslim unity was the "Association of Islamic Brotherhood" (*Jamāʿat al-ukhuwwa al-islāmiyya*), created in the spring of 1938 in Cairo. The driving force behind it was the Egyptian diplomat and university teacher ʿAbd al-Wahhāb ʿAzzām, who served his country as ambassador in, among other places, Saudi Arabia and Pakistan. As professor for Persian literature at Cairo's Fu'ād I Univer-sity, he moreover had earned great merit for spreading knowledge about his field in Egypt.[19] He had emerged in the area of Sunni-Shiite relations a few years earlier when he publicly defended Shiism against the reproaches of the famous travel writer Muḥammad Thābit. When describing his journeys in Iraq and Iran, Thābit had briefly criticized the Shiite practice of temporary marriage and maintained that the Shiites even preferred the pilgrimage to Mashhad over that to Mecca. In the above-mentioned journal *al-Risāla*, ʿAzzām refuted these remarks, provoking a brief controversy with the Egyptian scholar Amīn al-Khūlī, who spoke in favour of Thābit.[20]

ʿAzzām took over the presidency of the new organization with the publicist Aḥmad Bey Khalīl serving as his deputy.[21] The participation of the leading Egyptian philosopher and writer Ṭanṭāwī Jawharī[22]

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[19] Ṭalʿat Abū Farḥa: "Aḍwāʾ ʿalā l-dirāsāt al-fārisiyya fī Miṣr", in: Āl ʿAlī (ed.): *Jawānib min aṣ-ṣilāt al-thaqāfiyya bayn Īrān wa-Miṣr*, 181–205, esp. 181–86; regarding ʿAzzām (1894–1959) in general, see al-Ziriklī IV/186; *MDA* III/816–19; Kaḥḥāla XIII/403; obituary in *RAAD* 34/1959/368–70; ʿAbd al-ʿAzīz Aḥmad Jīra: "al-Duktūr ʿAbd al-Wahhāb ʿAzzām—al-azharī al-safīr", *MA* 55/5–6 (Mar. 1983), 654–61; Maḥfūẓ ʿAlī ʿAzzām: "ʿAbd al-Wahhāb ʿAzzām—adīb al-Islām", *MA* 53/4 (Mar. 1981), 728–34; al-Khalīlī: *Mansūʿāt*, VI/179–82.

[20] Thābit: *Jawla*, 134–43, 170–82; *al-Risāla* 2/1934/1398f. (ʿAzzām), 1465f. (Khūlī), 1501f. (ʿAzzām), 1543f. (Khūlī); see also Ende: "Ehe auf Zeit", 34f.; regarding Thābit (d. 1958), see al-Ziriklī VI/67f.; J.M. Landau: "Muḥammad Thābit: A Modern Arab Traveller", *JAL* 1/1970/70–74; repudiations of Thābit from the Shiite side are esp. *ASh* I/69–76; al-Fukaykī: *al-Muṭʿa*, 29–34, and al-Amīnī: *al-Ghadīr*, III/311–19; regarding al-Khūlī (1895–1966), see al-Ziriklī II/16.

[21] Heyworth-Dunne: *Trends*, 106f. has, so far, provided the most detailed discussion of the group but has not presented references for his information; see further *OM* 18/1938/222; Gershoni: "Emergence", 71; Schulze: *Internationalismus*, 92f.; Landau: *Politics*, 225f.; Sindi: *The Muslim World*, 121; al-Ṭahṭāwī: *Min al-ʿulamāʾ al-ruwwād fī riḥāb al-Azhar*, 202.

[22] J. Jomier: "Le Cheikh Ṭanṭāwī Jawharī (1862–1940) et son commentaire du Coran", *MIDEO* 5/1958/115–75, esp. 129f.; according to this work, Jawharī also had contacts to the Muslim Brotherhood and the *Jamʿiyyat al-shubbān al-muslimīn*; cf. *OM* 20/1940/88; *MDA* II/276–78 (the dates of his life mentioned there: 1870–1939); *EI*^{2} S/262f. (F. de Jong); Jansen: *Interpretation*, 32, 44ff.; F. de Jong: "The Works of Ṭanṭāwī Jawharī (1862–1940). Some Bibliographical and Biographical Notes", *BO* 34/1977/153–61 does not deal with his participation in the *Jamāʿat al-ukhuwwa al-islāmiyya*.

extended the importance and prestige of the group beyond the borders of Egypt, as did the fact that from its inception, it maintained an international orientation. The executive committee comprised members from eight countries in the Middle East and Eastern Europe, and in total the *Jamāʿa* had 46 branches "in various parts of the world, including nine eastern European lands."[23]

The association's pan-Islamic aspirations were already made clear in the very first article of its statutes, where its objectives were defined, *inter alia*, as follows:

> (i) To work for the mutual recognition of Muslims irrespective of their country of origin, the strengthening of bonds between them, and the emphasis of Islamic brotherhood.
>
> (ii) To overcome doctrinal problems about which there are differences of opinion and to avoid discussing them.[24]

The last formulation is instructive: the *Jamāʿat al-ukhuwwa al-islāmiyya*, too, did not seek to address divisive issues head-on or, should they arise, hold controversial discussions about them, presumably for fear that such a debate might even exacerbate existing embroilments. Instead, they intended to restrict themselves to re-emphasizing the points of commonality and thus close the ranks against the West.

The group's visible achievements remained limited, and with Jawharī's demise in 1940 and the outbreak of the Second World War, its activities became paralysed. The initially proposed publication of its own journal was never put into effect, particularly as the hoped-for broad support from the Azhar and the Egyptian government did not materialize. A follow-up institution of same name set up in 1949 in Karachi[25] was likewise unable to produce any additional new impulses.[26]

The establishment of the Arab League (*Jāmiʿat al-duwal al-ʿarabiyya*) at the end of the Second World War and the overcoming of the

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[23] Heyworth-Dunne: *Trends*, 106.

[24] Ibid.

[25] Landau: *Politics*, 280; ʿAzzām himself also remained active in the areas of pan-Arab and pan-Islamic unity during the wartime, cf. the notice in *OM* 21/1941/236 regarding an "Associazione culturale panaraba di studenti fondata al Cairo", of which ʿAbd al-Wahhāb ʿAzzām was chosen President.

[26] The *Jamāʿat al-ukhuwwa al-islāmiyya* under discussion here must not be confused with the Iraqi offshoot of the Muslim Brotherhood launched in Baghdad by Amjad al-Zahāwī and Muḥammad Maḥmūd al-Ṣawwāf under the name *Jamʿiyyat al-ukhuwwa al-islāmiyya* around 1947; see Schulze: *Internationalismus*, 105f. with notes 283–85; also al-Ṣawwāf: *Ṣafaḥāt*, 23ff., according to whom al-Ṣawwāf (1915–1992; regarding him, see *MMI* III/240 as well as his autobiography *Min sijill dhikrayātī*, Cairo 1987), however, also maintained contacts to ʿAzzām's organization in Cairo (see ibid., p. 15).

European mandates in vast parts of the Middle East helped produce what was at least a temporary and theoretical success in the aspiration to Arab unity. Appeals for Muslim unity beyond that, however, did not let up. On the contrary, particularly outside the Arab World, numerous initiatives constantly called attention to this goal, for example the *Jamʿiyyat khuddām al-dīn* in Lahore, the *Jamʿiyyat al-wāʿiẓīn al-jaʿfariyya*, which was active in Europe, Africa and Malaysia, the *Jamʿiyyat shabāb al-ismāʿīliyya*, located in Bombay, the *Jamʿiyyat Karātshī al-islāmiyya*, and various Indonesian groups.[27]

The Arab countries, likewise, saw significant activity. In Baghdad, the *Jamʿiyyat al-waḥda al-islāmiyya* was established in 1949,[28] and already two years previously an organization called *Dār al-inṣāf* had been founded in Beirut on the initiative of a group of Muslim legal scholars belonging to the Faculty of *sharīʿa* at Fārūq I University. The group's initiators originally wanted to call it *Dār al-daʿwa ilā llāh*, but the owner of the *Inṣāf* printing house, who had declared his willingness to print the group's publications, insisted on changing the name to *Dār al-inṣāf*.[29] Its director, Hāshim al-Daftardār al-Madanī and its secretary Muḥammad ʿAlī al-Zuʿbī[30] were in charge of this society, which specifically proclaimed the promotion of understanding regarding the "true" origin of the Muslim legal schools as one of its purposes.

The organization notched up considerable success in that it drew support from several important Shiite *ʿulamāʾ*.[31] It was no less a person than Muḥammad al-Ḥusayn Āl Kāshif al-Ghiṭāʾ who pushed al-Madanī and al-Zuʿbī to put their program on paper in the two-volume

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[27] al-Madanī/al-Zuʿbī: *al-Islām bayn al-sunna wa-l-shīʿa*, I/58; cf. P. Shinar: "Ibāḍiyya and Orthodox Reformism in Modern Algeria", in: U. Heyd (ed.): *Studies in Islamic History and Civilization*, Jerusalem 1961, 97–120, on 104.

[28] *al-ʿIrfān* 36/2 (Feb. 1949), 145f.; Landau provides information about the whole spectrum of politically motivated pan-Islamism after 1945: *Politics*, 248–303. In contrast, the *Lajnat tawḥīd al-madhāhib* established in Cairo by the judge Riḍwān Shāfiʿī al-Mutaʿāfī in November 1946 was an organization primarily concerned with the issue of an agreement among the Sunni legal schools; see al-Mutaʿāfī: *Fiqh al-Islām al-muyassar min al-madhāhib al-islāmiyya*, 20–35, as well as al-Ṣayyādī: *al-Azhar*, 91.

[29] Regarding the story of the establishment of *Dār al-inṣāf*, see al-Madanī/al-Zuʿbī: *al-Islām bayn al-sunna wa-l-shīʿa*, II/*ḥ-l*.

[30] Concerning al-Madanī, who had also participated in the founding of the previously mentioned *Jamʿiyyat al-hidāya al-islāmiyya* in Cairo, see ibid., II/122–25; regarding al-Zuʿbī, cf. ibid., II/126f.; *MMS* 227f., and *al-ʿIrfān* 56/5 (Oct. 1968), 496–503; acting members included ʿAbd al-Qādir Bawwābī, ʿAbd al-Qādir al-Ghandūr, Muḥammad Ḥassūna, and Rashīd al-Baḥṣilī; see al-Madanī/al-Zuʿbī, II/*y*.

[31] al-Madanī/al-Zuʿbī: *al-Islām bayn al-sunna wa-l-shīʿa*, I/131f., where the approving comments of Muḥsin al-Amīn and Muḥammad Ṣādiq al-Ṣadr are quoted (regarding al-Ṣadr, see below, p. 172 note 94).

al-Islām bayn al-sunna wa-l-shīʿa.[32] Also ʿAbd al-Ḥusayn Sharaf al-Dīn commented positively in his epilogue to the second volume of this work on attempts at Islamic unity in general, as well as al-Madanī's and al-Zuʿbī's initiative in particular.[33]

For a brief period at the beginning of the 1950s, the *Dār al-inṣāf* in Beirut attracted more attention than any other of the previously mentioned pan-Islamic groupings. However, it could not attain a permanent place in the Islamic *taqrīb* movement comparable to that of an organization that in the meantime had come into existence in Cairo, which for the next decade and a half was to leave its mark on the image of the inner-Islamic ecumenical movement. The "Society for Rapprochement among the Islamic Legal Schools" (*Jamāʿat al-taqrīb bayn al-madhāhib al-islāmiyya*/JT) that was not, by the way, considered by al-Madanī and al-Zuʿbī as unpleasant competition by any means; in fact, they took it as a model for their own society.[34]

Foundation and structure of the Jamāʿat al-taqrīb

When, in spring 1939, the Iranian crown prince Moḥammad Reżā Pahlawī traveled to Egypt to marry Princess Fawziyya, a young and largely unknown Shiite *shaykh* by the name of Moḥammad Taqī Qommī was among his entourage. His task was to broadcast the Persian-language radio reports of the festivities from Radio Cairo.[35] It appears that this was not Qommī's first sojourn on the Nile; later on he himself stated that he had come to Cairo the year before for the first time and then had also encountered Muḥammad Muṣṭafā al-Marāghī.[36] He owed the establishment of his contact with the Azhar

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[32] *ṬASh* I.2/616 note 1; *Dāʾerat ol-maʿāref-e tashayyoʿ*, II/106b (in both, s.v. Muḥammad al-Ḥusayn Āl Kāshif al-Ghiṭāʾ); cf. also the reviews in *RAAD* 27/1952/290–92 and *al-ʿIrfān* 37/10 (Oct. 1950), 1186f.

[33] al-Madanī/al-Zuʿbī: *al-Islām bayn al-sunna wa-l-shīʿa*, II/114–18 (dated Aug. 28, 1951).

[34] Ibid., I/58, 81 and II/*ṭ*; see also al-Zuʿbī: *Lā sunna wa-lā shīʿa*, 197ff.

[35] Cf. Aḥmad ʿĀrif al-Zayn: "Bayn al-muʾtamar wa-l-ʿurs", *al-ʿIrfān* 29/2 (Apr. 1939), 121–27, esp. 125.

[36] Qommī: "Rijāl ṣadaqū", *RI* 14/1964/187–93, esp. 189 (regarding the title, cf. Koran 33/23); cf. also idem in *RI* 1/1949/258; a photo showing Qommī, among others, with al-Marāghī and the former Egyptian State Muftī ʿAbd al-Majīd Salīm that may have been taken on the occasion of this visit is found in al-Shīrāzī: *al-Waḥda al-islāmiyya*, 28; according to Abraham: *Shaltūt*, 113, Qommī even gave lectures at the Azhar at al-Marāghī's invitation.

to the efforts of the previously mentioned Egyptian Ambassador in Baghdad and Tehran, ʿAbd al-Raḥmān ʿAzzām, who had been trying to bring al-Marāghī into dialogue with Shiite *ʿulamāʾ* since about 1936.[37]

Qommī himself, who later remained stubbornly silent in general about both the reason for his trip of 1939 and his relations with the ruler in Tehran, stressed that he had already come for the meeting with the *Shaykh al-Azhar* with the explicit aim of pushing along rapprochement between Sunnism and Shiism. But in view of the prevailing climate at the Azhar and the country as a whole, Qommī maintained, it was impossible for al-Marāghī to speak up openly for *taqrīb* issues. Further ecumenical activities which were planned on the occasion of the Azhar's millennium celebration scheduled for 1941 had to be cancelled due to the outbreak of the Second World War. Qommī was therefore obliged to return home without having achieved anything.

In 1946, he returned to Cairo, this time with the firm intention to establish an organization whose task was to be the overcoming of the confessional quarrel within Islam.[38] As Qommī goes on to relate, the impetus for this initiative was an incident that occurred during the Mecca pilgrimage of the year 1362 (December 1943): An Iranian pilgrim by the name of Abū Ṭālib Yazdī had had to vomit during the circumambulation of the Kaʿba. The Saudi Arabian authorities, though, suspected that this was a deliberately induced, particularly infamous violation of the sanctuary by a Shiite, who *per se* certainly harboured malice against the Wahhābiyya. Yazdī was immediately arrested and was beheaded two days later.[39] The event resulted in a serious diplomatic crisis between Tehran and Riyadh as well as a boycott of the pilgrimage for the next few years declared by the Iranian government.[40]

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[37] al-Dālī: *Asrār al-jāmiʿa al-ʿarabiyya*, 36; in his efforts to give significance to ʿAzzām's attempts at pan-Islamic reconciliation, al-Dālī also embellished the position of his interlocutor, calling him *raʾīs ṭāʾifat al-shīʿa bi-Īrān*.

[38] Qommī in *RI* 14/1964/189f.; this idea may be seen as proof that no impulses in this direction worthy of mention were initiated by the other pan-Islamic organizations at this time.

[39] "Balāgh rasmī raqm 82: jarīma munkara", *Umm al-qurā* (Saudi government gazette), 20 Dhū l-ḥijja 1362 (Dec. 18, 1943); English translation in *Records of the Hajj* (see the following note), VII/531.

[40] The political consequences are fully documented in: *Records of the Hajj. A Documentary History of the Pilgrimage to Mecca. Vol. 7: The Saudi Period (1935–1951)*, s.l. (Chippenham) 1993, 527–60; Qommī reported the incident in "Qiṣṣat al-taqrīb", *RI* 11/1959/348–59, on 353f.; also see in this regard *OM* 24/1944/5; S.M. Badeeb:

Upon his second arrival in Egypt, Qommī profited greatly in realizing his plans from his contacts to leading *ʿulamāʾ* of the Azhar that al-Marāghī, who had died by then, had helped him establish in 1938/39. Most important among these was al-Marāghī's successor in the office of rector, Muṣṭafā ʿAbd al-Rāziq. The philosophy professor, trained *inter alia* in Paris and Lyons, was a brother of ʿAlī ʿAbd al-Rāziq, whose ideas about the caliphate and the reverberation they caused have already been mentioned.[41]

ʿAbd al-Rāziq immediately and publicly defended Qommī's *taqrīb* project against all hostilities (which apparently must have already arisen very early),[42] and thus played an important role in bringing Qommī's efforts to fruition and enabling the *Ǧamāʿat al-taqrīb* to convene in Cairo for its constituent assembly in January 1947.[43] Other

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Saudi-Iranian Relations, 50f. and 84f.; Kamareʾī: *Payām-e Īrān*, 13 and 24f.; Kramer: "Tragedy in Mecca", 235; idem: "La Mecque", 41; al-Shīrāzī: *al-Waḥda al-islāmiyya*, 11; al-Tǐjānī: *Thumma ihtadayt*, 43–47, 78; al-Sharqī: *Naqsh-e Eslām*, 538. Apparently this was not the only case of Shiite-Wahhabi disagreement during the War period: At the beginning of the 1940s (Muḥammad al-Ḥusayn?) Āl Kāshif al-Ghiṭāʾ is supposed to have issued a *fatwā* that prohibited (Shiite) believers from making the pilgrimage to Ibn Saʿūd's Kingdom, see A. Viton: "Britain and the Axis in the Near East", *Foreign Affairs* 19/1940–41/370–84, esp. 383.

[41] Cf. above, pp. 86f.; regarding Muṣṭafā ʿAbd al-Rāziq (1885–1947), see *EI*² VII/713f. (N. Tomiche); al-Ziriklī VII/231; *MDA* I/571–73; ʿAbd al-ʿAẓīm: *Mashyakhat al-Azhar*, II/79–92; al-Fayyūmī: *Fī manāhij tajdīd al-fikr al-islāmī*, 67–116; ʿAlī ʿAbd al-Fattāḥ: *al-Mufakkir al-islāmī al-muʿāṣir Muṣṭafā ʿAbd al-Rāziq*, Cairo 1985; concerning his influence on modern Arab philosophy, cf. I.M. Abu-Rabiʿ: "Islamic Philosophical Expression in Modern Arab Society", *Der Islam* 72/1995/47–81, esp. 58ff.; his appointment as *Shaykh al-Azhar* (*OM* 25/1945/27) encountered strong resistance within the University, since he was not a member of the Council of Supreme *ʿulamāʾ (Hayʾat kibār al-ʿulamāʾ);* only after an *ad personam* change of the law due to pressure from King Fārūq was he able to assume his office, see Kedourie: "Egypt and the Caliphate", 203 and D. Crecelius: *The Ulama and the State*, 328–31.

[42] Qommī in *RI* 14/1964/190; Shaltūt: "Muqaddimat qiṣṣat al-taqrīb", *RI* 14/1964/194–202, on 198f. (reprinted in al-Shīrāzī: *al-Waḥda al-islāmiyya*, 15–30; idem: *Eslām. Āʾīn-hambastegī*, 228–43 [Persian], 248–54 [Arabic], English part, 3–13; al-Madanī: *Daʿwat al-taqrīb*, 8–14, and al-ʿAlāyilī: *Masʾalat al-taqrīb*, 13–19; English title: "The Introduction to the Story of Taqreeb" in: *Two Historical Documents*, 3–13); see also al-Shīrāzī: "Talāsh-e roʾasā-ye al-Azhar", 608; ʿAbd al-ʿAẓīm: *Mashyakhat al-Azhar*, II/118 and 189, as well as Muḥammad Muḥammad al-Madanī: "Ṣafḥa bayḍāʾ min jihād Shaltūt fī sabīl al-iṣlāḥ al-dīnī wa-l-taqrīb bayn al-muslimīn", *MA* 35/6 (Jan. 1964), 651–56, esp. 653.

[43] This date is explicitly mentioned by Muḥammad al-Bahayy: "Naqd wa-taʿrīf. Tafsīr al-qurʾān li-l-ustādh al-akbar al-shaykh Maḥmūd Shaltūt", *MA* 31/9 (Mar. 1960), 1013–17, on 1017; according to ʿAbdallāh al-Qommī: *Daʿwat al-taqrīb*, 77 note 1, the first communiqué of the JT (printed ibid., 77–84 and in *RI* 1/1949/87–96) appeared on the 30th of Rabīʿ al-thānī (sic!) 1366 (approx. March 23, 1947); cf. *al-ʿIrfān* 33/8 (Jun. 1947), 952, as well as below, note 55; also the JT itself referred

Azhar scholars, especially the future rectors ʿAbd al-Majīd Salīm and Maḥmūd Shaltūt also committed themselves from the outset to the society, which they had come to learn about through Muṣṭafā ʿAbd al-Rāziq. When the latter died unexpectedly in mid-February,[44] shortly after the foundation of the JT, Salīm, who already enjoyed a considerable reputation among Egyptian scholars after having served as State Muftī from 1928 to 1945, assumed his position and became the organization's most important mentor in this early phase.[45]

The president the JT was, however, not an *Azharī*, but nonetheless a familiar face in pan-Islamic activities: Muḥammad ʿAlī ʿAllūba Pāshā, the treasurer of the Jerusalem congress. He had organized the previously mentioned pro-Palestinian Interparliamentary Congress in Cairo in 1938 and thereafter constantly championed Arab and Islamic unity.[46] His appointment indicates that the founding fathers of the organization apparently from the very beginning sought to attract the participation of neo-Salafi intellectuals in *taqrīb* affairs and to incorporate them into the new organization. Already in November 1947, only a few months after the JT had been established, ʿAllūba, who had good contacts to the neo-Salafiyya, joined with two of their most important representatives: Together with Ḥasan al-Bannā, leader of the Muslim Brotherhood, and Muḥammad Ṣāliḥ Ḥarb, president of the *Jamʿiyyat al-shubbān al-muslimīn*,[47] he formed the "Supreme Committee of the Nile Valley for the Rescue of Palestine" (*Hayʾat wādī n-Nīl al-ʿulyā li-inqādh Filasṭīn*) in order to support the volunteer Arab army in Palestine.[48]

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repeatedly to this date, see *RI* 4/1952/148; 9/1957/20–24; 17/1972/3f.; *MA* 35/6 (Jan. 1964), 655 note 1. The wrong date—1948—found continuously in the Western secondary literature (most recently in Zebiri: *Shaltūt*, 12, Schulze: *Geschichte*, 376 note 39, *MECS* 16/1992/203, Skovgaard-Petersen: *Defining Islam*, 154, and Zeghal: *Gardiens*, 139) is presumably based on the first notice that appeared about the JT in a Western scholarly publication: *OM* 28/1948/126; al-Mīlād: *Khiṭāb*, 51 and 113, gives the date 1946 without, however, producing further evidence.

[44] Obituary in *OM* 27/1947/41.

[45] Regarding Salīm (1882–1954), see al-Ziriklī IV/149; Lemke: *Šaltūt*, index s.v.; al-Khafājī: *al-Azhar fī alf ʿām*, I/188f.; ʿAbd al-ʿAẓīm: *Mashyakhat al-Azhar*, II/107–25; al-Ṣaʿīdī: *Tārīkh al-iṣlāḥ*, I/138–40 and II/4f., 7f.; *MA* 61/5 (Dec. 1988), 568–75 and 61/6 (Jan. 1989), 685–90; see also above, p. 74 note 93.

[46] Cf. above, p. 117 notes 133 and 134; in 1939 he took over the chairmanship of the Committee of Honour of the newly established *Jamʿiyyat al-waḥda al-ʿarabiyya*, see *OM* 19/1939/306.

[47] Regarding him (d. 1968), see al-Ziriklī VI/166; Mitchell: *Society*, index s.v. Harb; as the successor of ʿAbd al-Ḥamīd Saʿīd, he had been at the head of the organization since 1940, see *OM* 20/1940/436f.

[48] Mitchell: *Society*, 56; cf. below, p. 180; regarding the attitude of the Muslim

This type of striving to integrate what might be termed "moderate" neo-Salafi forces pursued a double intention. On the one hand, the Muslim Brotherhood, at this time at the zenith of its religious and socio-political influence, could provide valuable patronage to the *taqrīb* organization and thus add to the latter's general acceptance. On the other, in doing so, it was possible to build up a defensive shield against the anticipated (and soon encountered) criticism from the ranks of the "right-wing Salafiyya", particularly personified by its main protagonist, Muḥibb al-Dīn al-Khaṭīb. Al-Khaṭīb and his like had come to the fore as defenders of an interpretation of history decidedly in favour of the Umayyads, the almost inevitable consequences of which were vehemently anti-Shiite resentments.[49] As al-Khaṭīb's furious reaction to the establishment of the JT shows,[50] this calculation seems to have come off well, at least in the period immediately following the JT's foundation.

It was not only ʿAllūba's contacts to the neo-Salafiyya, but also his political background that made him an almost ideal choice for the office of president of the recently created organization. In 1930 he had penned a resounding renunciation of Pharaonism and simultaneously issued a call for Egypt to turn to the Arab World, thus becoming one of the precursors of pan-Islam in Egypt.[51] Furthermore, he embodied a direct link to the Jerusalem conference that had brought pan-Islamic thinking to international attention like no other and made Sunni-Shiite rapprochement a headline item. And finally, having served in various ministerial posts in several governments, he had valuable political contacts that could be of benefit to the JT. It is indicative of this that at the end of his political career, he was named Egypt's first Ambassador to newly independent Pakistan, in which many pan-Islamists placed great hopes.[52]

Brotherhood to the Palestinian issue, see A. el-Awaisi: "The Conceptual Approach of the Egyptian Muslim Brotherhood towards the Palestine Question, 1928–1949", *Journal of Islamic Studies* 2/1991/225–44.

[49] Ende: *Arabische Nation*, 91–110.

[50] Cf. below, pp. 255ff.

[51] Gershoni: "Emergence", 59–62.

[52] ʿAllūba: *Dhikrayāt ijtimāʿiyya wa-siyāsiyya*, Cairo 1988, 295–97; differences with the Cairo government about Egyptian cultural policy in Pakistan, however, resulted in ʿAllūba's resigning his post after little more than a year in office and withdrawing to private life; his successor in Karachi was ʿAbd al-Wahhāb ʿAzzām, whom we have already encountered among the founders of the *Jamāʿat al-ukhuwwa al-islāmiyya* (see *RI* 5/1953/138–45); in his memoirs, however, ʿAllūba surprisingly ignores his

A similar intention with regard to the scholarly establishment at the Azhar may also have been behind the choice of the organization's vice-president. This office went to ʿAbd al-Majīd Salīm, the most renowned representative of the *ʿulamāʾ* in the JT after the death of Muṣṭafā ʿAbd al-Rāziq. His personal commitment to rapprochement with the Shia went so far that the well-known historiographer of the Azhar reform ʿAbd al-Mutaʿāl al-Ṣaʿīdī described the founding of (as he called it) *Lajnat al-taqrīb bayn al-madhāhib al-islāmiyya* completely as Salīm's work.[53] The cooperation of prominent Azharis also made the building of bridges to Shiite *ʿulamāʾ* possible. In this way, the latter were not only able to maintain the Azhar as their usual Sunni interlocutor, but also, in individual cases, to forge new links to those neo-Salafis who favoured rapprochement, outstanding among them being Ḥasan al-Bannā.

Thus the two most prominent official functions of the society were occupied by a representative of the pan-Islamic intellectual circles of the neo-Salafiyya as well as one coming from the traditional Islamic academia. For his part, Moḥammad Taqī Qommī was content with what at first glance would seem to be the second-ranking post of Secretary-General.[54] From the very beginning, though, it was he, in fact, who was the actual driving force in making the *taqrīb* association known abroad, particularly in the Shiite press. Only few months after the first meeting of the JT, Qommī sent a message to the editor of the *ʿIrfān*, Aḥmad ʿĀrif al-Zayn, including a copy of the society's statutes. In doing so, he informed him more or less officially of the alliance's existence and expressed his hope of being able to win the

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engagement in pan-Islamic affairs, particularly in the JT; regarding the importance of Pakistan for the pan-Islamic movement, see Landau: *Politics*, 253f., 297f.

[53] al-Ṣaʿīdī: *Tārīkh al-iṣlāḥ*, I/138; regarding al-Ṣaʿīdī (1894–ca. 1958), see al-Ziriklī IV/148; al-Khafājī: *al-Azhar fī alf ʿām*, II/115–19 (new edition III/177–83); also later there are a few cases in which it is contended that the JT was founded by the Azhar or formed one of its institutes; cf. al-Bahnasāwī: *al-Ḥaqāʾiq al-ghāʾiba*, 65; Ibrāhīm: *Mawqif al-ʿulamāʾ*, 13, 18ff.; al-Zuʿbī: "al-Azhar wa-l-Najaf: alf ʿām fī khidmat al-islām", *al-ʿIrfān* 47/4 (Dec. 1959), 367–73, esp. 372 (in this regard, see al-Sarrāj: *al-Imām Muḥsin al-Ḥakīm*, 173; al-Zuʿbī's statement was certainly based on the current events of the year 1959); in addition, Fleischhammer: "*Daʿwat al-taqrīb*", 37; Heyworth-Dunne: *Trends* does not even mention the JT, whereas in contrast, Maḥmūd Shaltūt stresses that Qommī had been the first to call for this *daʿwa* (i.e. for rapprochement), *RI* 14/1964/196.

[54] The information found in Bagley: "Azhar", 112, that the JT was "under the leadership of an Iranian named Shaykh Kāẓim", is obviously based on a misunderstanding.

collaboration of al-Zayn and his journal.[55] While it seems that Qommī was the only Twelver Shiite present at founding of the JT,[56] he soon succeeded, by means of active correspondence and obviously intense travel activity, in interesting other Shiite scholars and ultimately winning them over.

Qommī's contributions to the journal *Risālat al-Islām/RI*, the publication of which was initiated in 1949, indicate a great deal of sense of mission regarding the JT's concerns.[57] He occasionally even went so far as to portray his own role and the society's activity as the very first of their kind and absolutely without precedence. At the same time, he avoided as much as possible any reference to prior attempts at bringing Sunnism and Shiism into a dialogue.[58] Gradually Qommī became in a way a synonym for the JT, and it is hardly surprising that after the deaths of Salīm in 1954 and ʿAllūba in 1956,[59] their respective posts went unfilled and were silently eliminated.

The naming of the organization was programmatic in two respects. In contrast to the predominant majority of the neo-Salafi groupings that had arisen in the two previous decades, the JT did not adopt the actual Arabic word for "association" (*jamʿiyya*). Instead, the far more comprehensive formulation *jamāʿa* was given preference, which is usually applied to describe the entire Muslim community. Evidence for the term in this context can already be found in early Islamic sources where it is used in diametric opposition to *fitna* (literally "temptation"), which is associated more than any other expression with the schism in Islam between Sunnis and Shiites.[60] In this case *jamāʿa* was not meant as a replacement for the general expression *umma*, but rather marked a kind of inner 'basic consensus' among Muslims,

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[55] Printed in *al-ʿIrfān* 33/8 (Jun. 1947), 969f.; see also *al-ʿIrfān* 37/6 (Jun. 1950), 708; 38/5 (Apr. 1951), in 511; regarding Aḥmad ʿĀrif al-Zayn's attitude toward the JT, see below, pp. 205ff.

[56] This may be inferred from a formulation in his just-mentioned letter to the *ʿIrfān:* "*wa-bi-ṣifatī al-ʿuḍw al-mumaththil li-l-shīʿa al-imāmiyya fī l-jamāʿa (. . .)*", loc. cit., 969.

[57] For example, in *RI* 3/1951/35–39; 4/1952/147–51; 5/1953/146–51, 377–84; 6/1954/365–70; 8/1956/38–42; 9/1957/20–24; 10/1958/16–21; 13/1962/243–50.

[58] *RI* 11/1959/359.

[59] Obituaries in *RI* 6/1954/431–36 and 8/1956/216, respectively.

[60] Regarding the first *fitna* (in the year 656), see above, p. 11; concerning the second *fitna* around 683 and the Meccan anti-caliphate of ʿAbdallāh b. al-Zubayr, detailed information is found in G. Rotter: *Die Umayyaden und der Zweite Bürgerkrieg (680–692)*, Wiesbaden 1982; on the contrast between *fitna—jamāʿa* cf. Sirri: *Religiös-politische Argumentation*, 55ff.

which still left room for internal disagreement.[61] This last-mentioned connotation, as will be shown later in this book, corresponded exactly to the self-image that the *taqrīb* community emphasized in a credo-like manner. According to this asseveration, unswerving unanimity existed among all Muslims as far as the principles of the religion were concerned, whereas differences over issues beyond these principles were absolutely admissible, and in fact even desirable.[62]

A second striking point about the JT's self-designation is its use of the word *madhāhib* for all participating groups. Heretofore it had been usual to identify only the four Sunni legal schools as such, while Sunnis and Shiites regularly referred to each other as *ṭā'ifa* (pl. *ṭawā'if*) or *firqa* (pl. *firaq*). The call to recognize Shiism as a *madhhab* (and thus set their exegesis on par with the Sunni teachings) was in itself not new: As already shown above, Nādir Shāh had sought Ottoman recognition of Shiism in terms of a fifth *madhhab* (albeit as a means to subjugate the Shiite *'ulamā'* and therefore against their will), and ʿAbd al-Ḥusayn Sharaf al-Dīn had likewise—again of course with a very different intention—demanded it in his *Murājaʿāt*.[63] But it was only the activity of the JT that in fact made this matter heard. The impetus for this step came from Maḥmūd Shaltūt: completely in line with the previously mentioned *taqrīb* credo and in view of the *per definitionem* minimal difference in secondary domains, he suggested henceforth to speak solely of the Shiite *madhāhib*.[64] From the very beginning, however, there was no question for all participants of the organization that this extension of the terminology was to be

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[61] Noth: "Früher Islam", 98; see also the articles "Djamāʿa" and "Djamʿiyya", *EI*² II/411f. (L. Gardet) and 428f. (A. Hourani); "al-Rābiṭa al-islāmiyya", *EI*² VIII/359–61 (R. Schulze). Of the 29 groups that Heyworth-Dunne: *Trends*, 90f. mentions by name, no less than 22 bear the appellation *jamʿiyya*, whereas only two are called *jamāʿa*: the already discussed *Jamāʿat al-ukhuwwa al-islāmiyya* and the *Jamāʿat anṣār al-sunna al-muḥammadiyya*, established in Cairo in 1926 by Muḥammad Ḥāmid al-Fiqī, a disciple of Rashīd Riḍā; regarding them, see Schulze: *Internationalismus*, 137 note 436.

[62] For the manner of argumentation applied by the JT, cf. below, Chapter VII.

[63] *al-Murājaʿāt*, no. 4; about Nādir Shāh cf. above, pp. 29ff.

[64] Qommī in *RI* 14/1964/191; *OM* 28/1948/126; Abraham: *Shaltūt*, 116 note 3; Shaltūt himself used this formulation consistently, cf. for example his book *Muqāranat al-madhāhib* or his famous *fatwā* of July 1959; nevertheless, Shaltūt was well aware of the negative connotations of the term *madhhab*: his very first contribution to the ecumenical journal *RI* warned of the "political and sectarian fanaticism" (*ʿaṣabiyyāt madhhabiyya wa-siyāsiyya*) by which the *arbāb al-madhāhib* had extended their communal strife after Muḥammad's death onto the understanding of the Koran: *RI* 1/1949/16; this issue will be discussed in more detail below, pp. 229–32.

restricted exclusively to the only two groups among the Shia that were recognized as legitimate: the Twelver Shiite Imāmiyya and the Zaydiyya, while the countless other manifestations of Shiism were explicitly and deliberately excluded. This attitude as well will be the subject of later discussion.[65]

The goals whose achievement constituted the JT's *raison d'être* were laid down in the second article of its statutes (*al-qānūn al-asāsī*). Beginning in the second volume of the *Risālat al-Islām*, they were printed in nearly every issue as a constant reminder. In detail they included:

a) working toward an agreement among the followers of the Islamic legal schools, 'the Islamic confessional communities' (*ṭawā'if*), among whom issues not fundamental to the articles of faith have caused discord,
b) disseminating Islamic principles in the various (Muslim) languages and demonstrating the extent of these principles' necessity in human society,
c) striving to put an end to any conflict between two Muslim nations or denominational groups (*shaʿbayn aw ṭā'ifatayn*) and mediating between them.[66]

The means envisaged for use were outlined in article three as follows:

a) the publication of books and (other) writings,
b) the propagation (*daʿwa*) of religious concepts by means of newspapers, lectures and radio broadcasts,
c) the exchange of publications with the religious and cultural communities (*jamāʿāt*) in the various Islamic bodies (*hay'āt*),
d) the convocation of general Islamic conferences where the leaders of the Islamic peoples would meet to discuss religious and social matters,
e) striving to insure that Islamic universities everywhere teach the laws of all Islamic legal schools so that they become general institutes of higher Islamic education.[67]

But it was not only these declarations of intent that ensured the JT being more successful than preceding initiatives. The most important factor was the resolution in article four of the statutes stipulating that an institute called *Dār al-taqrīb bayn al-madhāhib al-islāmiyya* was to be affiliated with the association. It its library, books and

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[65] Cf. below, pp. 238–40.
[66] *RI* 1/1949/8; English translation in Abraham: *Shaltūt*, 116f.; cf. also al-Ṣūfān: "Nash'at", 168ff.
[67] *RI* 1/1949/39.

source texts of all the legal schools represented in the JT were to be collected and made accessible for public use.[68]

In this way, another matter was to be taken into account that was among the fundamental convictions of the *taqrīb* idea and also constantly emphasized in the articles of the *RI* as well as in other scholarly ecumenical statements. This was the demand no longer to allow the judgements of the various Islamic denominations to be grounded on the traditional heresiographic literature, based as it was on errors and insinuations against the opposing side, but to refer instead to the writings of the group in question itself, and to study these in detail.

Inner-Islamic conflicts were mainly put down to the Muslims' inadequate knowledge of each other, which in the eyes of the *taqrīb* activists had made them susceptible to the subversive activities of colonialist and other forces hostile to Islam. Therefore the JT took it as one of its most urgent tasks to help overcome this ignorance and thus smooth the path toward the believers' treating each other with mutual tolerance and understanding.[69] Since of course it was hardly necessary to introduce the four Sunni legal schools in Egypt, Qommī's principal goal in seeking the establishment of the *Dār al-taqrīb* in Cairo[70] was to make Shiism known outside of its traditional areas. This unconcealed objective, however, immediately earned him bitter reproach from among the opponents of any form of rapprochement. They insisted that he actually wanted to continue the centuries-old, readily observable attempt to make demands on the Sunnis, and that he had founded a propaganda centre in the home of the Azhar for this purpose.[71]

But neither such expressions of ill will nor the admittedly sluggish construction of the library—the process of procuring Shiite literature obviously proved more difficult than expected[72]—could divert Qommī

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[68] Ibid., 81 and 215.

[69] Cf., inter alia, the articles of ʿAbd al-ʿAzīz Muḥammad ʿĪsā in *RI* 1/1949/281–85; Maḥmūd Fayyāḍ ibid., 286–92; Muḥammad Ṣādiq al-Ṣadr ibid., 358–64; Moḥammad Taqī Qommī ibid., 258–62 and 3/1951/35–39; Muḥammad Yūsuf Mūsā ibid., 63–69.

[70] The exact address was 19 Shāriʿ Aḥmad Ḥishmat Pāshā in the Zamālik neighbourhood; ʿAbd al-ʿAzīz Muḥammad ʿĪsā was director of the Institute.

[71] Cf. for example al-Mallāḥ: *Tārīkhunā l-qawmī*, 91–100 (with special reference to the conference under Nādir Shāh).

[72] In a call printed in the Tehran cultural journal *Yādgār*, the JT asked its readers to send the Institute (Twelver) Shiite works from all theological and legal disciplines, after the resonance to a preceding appeal to send books had produced only those from the Sunni legal schools as well a few from the Zaydiyya; see *Yādgār* 4/7 (Mar.–Apr. 1948), back title page.

from his long-term goal of achieving greater importance for Shiite law at the Azhar. Indeed at this educational institution so steeped in tradition, the role of Shiism at the time of the JT's appearance was next to nothing. An overview of the holdings of the library published in 1943 in the Azhar journal identified the discipline *fiqh al-shīʿa* in 47th place (out of a total of 58), far behind engineering and natural sciences, and comprising a paltry 27 books.[73] Because correcting this blatant disparity at the Azhar overnight appeared hopeless (especially in such a sensitive field), the JT took the first step in making Shiite books accessible to the general public at least in their own library. From the beginning, though, they held the hope that one day it would also be possible to study legal schools other than the four Sunni ones at the Azhar.[74]

Apart from this function as a repository for Shiite books, the *Dār al-taqrīb* fulfilled two more important purposes. On the one hand, it served as a venue for the official sessions of the JT[75] and was also a meeting point for Shiite scholars who happened to be in Cairo.[76] In the years preceding the Revolution of July 1952, politicians visiting Egypt occasionally used to pay a side visit to the JT. The most prominent among them was the Iranian Prime Minister, Moḥammad Moṣaddeq, who met with ʿAllūba and Salīm in November 1951 and was apprised of the organization's goals.[77] Finally, even more significant for the dissemination of the *taqrīb* idea was the fact that the Institute produced the JT's publications, which will be examined in greater detail in the next section of this chapter.

Some of the tasks undertaken by JT were assigned to committees created especially for the purpose. Organizational activities such as the preparation of individual sessions were incumbent on what was called the "Preparatory Committee" (*lajna taḥḍīriyya*),[78] and things

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[73] Abū l-Wafāʾ al-Marāghī: "Kalima tārīkhiyya ʿan al-maktaba al-azhariyya", *MA* 14/1943/373–76; to compare: Ḥanafiyya: 6948 books, Shāfiʿiyya: 4879, Mālikiyya: 4130 and Ḥanbaliyya: 1698.

[74] *RI* 1/1949/90f.; regarding the discussion held ten years later about establishing an independent professorship in Shiite law at the Azhar, see below, pp. 295ff.

[75] Photographs of some of these internal conferences are printed in al-Shīrāzī: *al-Waḥda al-islāmiyya*, 16f., 23–25.

[76] *RI* 3/1951/105 (concerning a visit of the Iraqi scholar Muḥammad Riḍā al-Shabībī); also, al-Khāliṣī: *at-Tawḥīd wa-l-waḥda*, 3ff. (about his own stay in Cairo).

[77] *RI* 4/1952/108f.; further examples: *RI* 3/1951/99f.: Faẓlur Raḥmān (Pakistani Minister of Education); ibid., 106: his Iranian counterpart Jazāʾerī.

[78] Cf. *RI* 3/1951/108.

related to publication activities were the domain of the Cultural Committee (*lajna thaqāfiyya*).[79] Besides these permanent bodies, ad-hoc committees were also formed in particular situations in order to solve problems of a more immediate nature. An example was the *lajnat al-iḥṣā'*, whose job it was to prepare statistics regarding the population of the Muslim World.[80]

The question of its finances was a particularly sensitive issue about which the *taqrīb* organization maintained persistent silence throughout its existence. The topic was never discussed on the pages of its journal *Risālat al-Islām*, and also references found elsewhere are extremely scanty. Nevertheless, they do provide clues that permit the conclusion that both the Egyptian and Iranian governments provided discrete support, at least from the middle of the 1950s onwards. Anwar al-Sādāt, later President of Egypt, seems to have been a kind of *éminence grise* in this respect. Although the JT never mentioned his name anywhere in connection with its activities, in 1979, ʿAlī ʿAbd al-ʿAẓīm wrote in his collection of biographies of all *Shuyūkh al-Azhar* that at the time when al-Sādāt was director of the newly established Cairo branch of the Islamic Conference (that is, after 1954),[81] he gave considerable support of both material and ideological nature to the organization. During a Cairo visit of some Iranian *'ulamā'*, about whom no other information is given, al-Sādāt is said to have declared that he had literally convinced them to join the ranks of *taqrīb*.[82] Also the efforts of the JT in the field of publication, which occasionally occurred in cooperation with the Ministry of Religious Endowments (*awqāf*), are an indication that the organization had the blessing of the Cairene government and presumably also its financial backing.

On the other hand, Tehran was likewise interested in the JT's work and ready to support the society. In an early article, the Shah was

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[79] Ibid., 110; see also the preface to al-Muḥaqqiq al-Ḥillī: *al-Mukhtaṣar al-nāfiʿ* (regarding this edition, see the next section of this chapter), p. ṭ; the responsible members of this committee are listed there as: Muḥammad Muḥammad al-Madanī, ʿAbd al-ʿAzīz Muḥammad ʿĪsā, and ʿAbd al-Jawād al-Bannā; cf. *RI* 2/1950/186 (note preceding the article beginning there).

[80] *RI* 5/1953/219f.; upon completion, the statistics appeared in RI 7/1955/217–21 (in this regard, cf. Aḥmad Ādharī: "Sokhanī chand bā newīsandegān-e mā wa āmār-e moslemīn-e jahān", *Maktab-e tashayyoʿ* 1/1378hq, 1338sh [= 1959]/88–98).

[81] Cf. *OM* 34/1954/349, 418; 39/1959/298f.; regarding al-Sādāt's activity in the area of political pan-Islamism, see Schulze: *Internationalismus*, 117f.; cf. also below, p. 277.

[82] ʿAbd al-ʿAẓīm: *Mashyakhat al-Azhar*, II/119 and 189.

praised for his efforts toward rapprochement of the Islamic states, alongside the Iraqi Regent ʿAbd al-Ilāh, the Egyptian King Fārūq, and the Pakistani Prime Minister Khwaja Niẓāmuddīn.[83] Moreover, Moḥammad Taqī Qommī, who resided every now and then in Iran,[84] met there with the ruler, whom, as is well known, he had already escorted at his wedding. Finally, the grave results that the Iranian recognition of Israel[85] had for the JT after 1960 may also be considered as a piece of evidence that there were closer ties between Qommī and the Shah than were publicly admitted.[86] For the opponents of the JT, though, this question was not for serious debate anyway. In their eyes, the financing by the Iranian government was taken for granted and adequate proof of the Shiites' underlying propagandistic aims.[87]

Both the organizational and content-related focus of the *taqrīb* organization lay in Cairo; only one single attempt was made to push for the establishment of a unit in another Islamic country. At the end of November 1948, immediately before Allūba's departure to undertake his ambassadorial post in Pakistan, in the presence of emissaries from the Pakistani embassy in Cairo, the JT commissioned its president to found a section in Karachi. However in a message of greeting that the *RI* sent him shortly thereafter, there was already no more mention of it, and later, too, any office of this kind was absent from the agenda.[88]

Further suggestions to establish similar groupings in other countries were not subjected to serious discussion by the JT either in its journal or other publications. They therefore remained announcements

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[83] ʿAbd al-Ḥalīm Āl Kāshif al-Ghiṭāʾ: "Taqrīb al-aqṭār al-islāmiyya", *RI* 4/1952/45–48, on 48 (reprinted in al-ʿAlāyilī: *Masʾalat al-taqrīb*, 55–59); the author (born 1916) is one of the sons of Muḥammad al-Ḥusayn Āl Kāshif al-Ghiṭāʾ; see *MMI* II/234; *RF* III/1044.

[84] *al-ʿIrfān* 37/6 (Jun. 1950), 708; *RI* 3/1951/330; 4/1952/109, 218; see also al-Bāqūrī: *Baqāyā al-dhikrayāt*, 186–89.

[85] Cf. below, pp. 313ff.

[86] An interesting defence of these contacts comes from Ḥoseyn ʿAlī Montaẓerī, who in his memoirs takes Qommī's part by saying that during this time, practically everybody who wanted to work in foreign countries was obliged to collaborate with the Iranian government; the *ḥowze-ye ʿelmiyye* had neither the financial means nor the power to act on its own; Montaẓerī: *Matn-e kāmel-e khāṭerāt*, 81.

[87] Al-Khaṭīb: *al-Khuṭūṭ al-ʿarīḍa*, 6, 26; ʿAbd al-Laṭīf al-Subkī: "Ṭawāʾif: bahāʾiyya wa-baktashiyya—thumma jamāʿat al-taqrīb", *MA* 24/3 (Nov. 1952), 283–87, on 286; cf. also Huwaydī: *Īrān min al-dākhil*, 330.

[88] *RI* 1/1949/102f., 327; interestingly enough, the JT hid the fact that ʿAllūba resided in Karachi as an Egyptian envoy.

that were enthusiastically commented upon, but without having further consequences.[89] Beyond this, the JT had contacts only in Iran, but here too, the existence of a truly organized branch was never confirmed.[90]

At no point in its existence was the *Jamāʿat al-taqrīb* a mass movement. Thanks, however, to Qommī's tireless commitment and the cooperation of numerous renowned scholars from the ranks of the Azhar as well as from among the Shiite clergy, it became the first truly effective organization in the field of inner-Islamic ecumenical discussion. The fact alone that a Shiite *ʿālim* had succeeded in founding and keeping this type of association alive in Cairo, the seat of the Azhar, against all opposition[91] secured for it far greater attention than was the case with all its neo-Salafi predecessors. For these the call to pan-Islam had always been only one part of their programme, and they never made a serious effort to come to terms with representatives of the Shia.

That the inner-Islamic dialogue of the denominations took place at the Azhar was not unusual since the time of al-Zanjānī's appearance there. But the essential difference now was that with the JT, for the first time, there was an attempt at doing away with the isolated endeavours of individual scholars, which had a record of being short-lived, and at creating instead an independent institutional framework that would make it possible for *ʿulamāʾ* on both sides to come in

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[89] *RI* 1/1949/101: an announcement, albeit from a second-hand source, about the successful founding of a branch in Iraq that had allegedly already occurred; *RI* 3/1951/107f.: Muḥammad Aḥmad al-Jaʿār's suggestion sent to the address of the Azhar (!) to set up two committees for Iraq and Syria/Lebanon; al-Jaʿār was a university lecturer at the *Sharīʿa* Department at Fārūq I University in Beirut from whose ranks the founders of the above-mentioned *Dār al-inṣāf* had previously emerged.

[90] Ḥasan "Imām al-Jumʿa" was described as envoy of the organization in Tehran (see *RI* 1/1949/312 note 1; according to Akhavi: *Religion and Politics*, 73, the discussion concerns one Ḥasan Emāmī, who had earned a Ph.D. in Law in Geneva in the 1930s, and who was appointed by the Shah to succeed his late father as *Imām al-Jumʿa* in 1945; he remained absolutely aloof from the religious-political debates of his time, see Akhavi, 103). Muḥammad Abū l-Majd acted as a representative of the JT and the Islamic Conference (Cairo) in Qom, where he also met with Āyatollāh Borūjerdī; see Dawwānī: *Zendegānī*, 172; Ṣāliḥ al-Shahrastānī: "Qum wa-jāmiʿatuhā (. . .)", *al-ʿIrfān* 56/7 (Dec. 1968), 729–60, esp. 743f.; *MA* 32/2 (Jul. 1960), 231; see also "Iṣlāḥ, ii: Iran", *EI*[2] IV/165b; according to Jawād Moṣṭafawī: "Etteḥād wa hambastegī yā tafāhom-e shīʿe wa sonnī dar Nahj ol-balāgha", *Mishkāt* 2/1362sh/25–60, on 50, there were supposed to have been meetings of the JT in Cairo, Qom, and Mashhad.

[91] There are even mentions of a legal complaint against the existence of the JT, see Ende: "Sunniten und Schiiten", 198f.

contact with each other at any time and undertake joint projects.

Without the active support of some high-ranking Azharis, the JT would have hardly survived its foundation or would have been relegated to a dismal existence, unnoticed by the Islamic public. Nevertheless, one should avoid dismissing it as a mere appendage of the Azhar. It was, as will be seen, individual scholars who carried it and not the Azhar as an institution. In fact for a while, the official position of the Azhar was actually clearly against rapprochement with Shiism.

Qommī himself never missed an opportunity to insist upon the self-sufficiency of his organization and its independence from existing religious and political institutions.[92] His contentions to the contrary notwithstanding, he was forced to cooperate with both spheres in order to achieve his aims but did so without publicly admitting it. This tightrope walking, remarkably successful for more than a decade, finally resulted in the JT (and many of the scholars involved in it) falling between all stools, as will be traced in detail in the following chapters. A main reason for the attention that the organization attracted to a large extent, and at the same time an important concomitant of its "golden age", was its intense publishing activity, which, therefore, is to be presented first.

Publishing and editorial activity

In January 1949, exactly two years after the foundation of the organization, the first issue of its journal *Risālat al-Islām* was released; within a brief period it was to become by far the JT's most important mainstay in making the *taqrīb* concept known.[93] Since *al-ʿUrwa al-wuthqā*, put out by al-Afghānī and ʿAbduh in Paris in 1884, the *RI* was the first periodical established with the express goal of realizing

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[92] *RI* 6/1954/367; 11/1959/354; 14/1964/192.

[93] In Najaf in the 1960s, a journal that also bore the name *Risālat al-Islām* was published by Shiite scholars of the *Kulliyyat uṣūl al-dīn*, but it had nothing to do with that of the JT and was not in any recognizable way related to it; its chief editor was Muḥammad al-Sāʿidī (born 1923; see *MMI* III/175; *RF* II/659f.); see Zāhida Ibrāhīm/ʿAbd al-Ḥamīd ʿAlwachī: *Kashshāf al-jarā'id wa-l-majallāt al-ʿirāqiyya*, Baghdad 1976, 253; also Wiley: *The Islamic Movement of Iraqi Shiʿas*, 158; after the assumption of power of the Baʿth Party (Jul. 1968) the journal was apparently forbidden; see T.M. Aziz: "The Role of Muhammad Baqir al-Sadr in Shi'i Activism in Iraq from 1958 to 1980", *IJMES* 25/1993/207–22, on 211.

a pan-Islamic unity of the Muslims. The JT was definitely conscious of this tradition and sought to follow it by producing its own journal.[94]

Most *taqrib* groups that preceded the JT had not considered having their own regularly appearing press organ. Others, such as the *Jamāʿat al-ukhuwwa al-islāmiyya*, had announced such an intention[95] but then did nothing to make the plan become reality, both of which options might have been the result of the relatively small number of their active supporters. In contrast, the JT, helped by the backing of the Azhar scholars and thanks to the tireless campaigning of its Secretary-General, had managed soon after its creation to attract a relatively great number of authors who were willing to contribute regularly, and therefore deemed the risk of founding a journal justified.

Already the publication's subtitle, *Majalla islāmiyya ʿālamiyya*, showed clearly the intention of the JT for it to be a worldwide ecumenical forum for all Muslims, both with regard to the topics it dealt with and its contributing authors. The majority of the articles in fact were written by Egyptians that were recruited for the most part from the ranks of the Azhar. But from the outset, the editors made efforts to fulfil their international expectations. In the first volume, the journal therefore included items from seven Islamic countries representing all three confessions: Sunnism, Shiism and Zaydism.[96]

Editorial responsibility for the *RI* was in the hands of two Azhar scholars. The inspector (*mufattish*) and later dean of the Department of *Sharīʿa*, Muḥammad Muḥammad al-Madanī[97] became editor in chief (*raʾīs al-taḥrīr*), and ʿAbd al-ʿAzīz Muḥammad ʿĪsā, who taught in the same department, took over the post of editorial staff director (*mudīr al-majalla*).[98] During the twenty-three years of its existence, seventeen volumes of the *RI* were published. The first eleven and a half of these (including vol. 12/2 of April 1960) appeared on a precise quarterly schedule, each issue having 112 pages.[99] With an annual

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[94] al-Madanī's editorial to *RI* 1/1949/106–10, on 109f. (in issue 2).

[95] *OM* 18/1938/22.

[96] Cf. *RI* 1/1949/3f. (editorial to issue 1) as well as ʿAllūba's introductory article, ibid., 5–8, esp. 8.

[97] Died in 1968; obituaries in *MA* 40/3 (Jun. 1968), 236–38 and in *Minbar al-Islām* 27/3 (May 1969), 29–32.

[98] According to *Maktab-e Eslām* 3/5 (Jun. 1961), 65, ʿAbd al-Raḥmān al-Sāʾiḥ and Muḥammad ʿAbd al-Hādī were also members of the editorial staff.

[99] The very first issue contained 104 pages; issue 3–4 of the 12th volume (Jul.

output of 448 pages, however, the *RI* lagged far behind other Islamic journals. The *Majallat al-Azhar* or the Lebanese *ʿIrfān*, for instance, were three times as large. The initial plan to increase the number of issues to ten beginning in the second year of publication in order to put the *RI* on par with the two just-mentioned periodicals was retracted without a reason being given.[100]

In the wake of the turbulence of 1960, no edition of the *RI* came out in the following year. Publication resumed in January 1962 with number 13 marked "second series" (*majmūʿa thāniyya*), and from that point on, the enumeration of the issues continued consecutively, that is, the first fascicle of the thirteenth edition was number 49. However, already one year later, a second and this time permanent decline of the *RI* began to be evident. The instalments, mostly having the format of double numbers, were put out now only annually, and after fascicle 58,[101] publication had to be temporarily stopped altogether. The last two numbers, which were added in September 1969 and October 1972 (59 and 60, which were simultaneously volumes 16 and 17) were not able to revive the journal back onto a regular schedule. ʿAlī al-Jundī,[102] who following al-Madanī's death became responsible for these last two issues, did not allocate a single syllable to elucidating the causes of the interruptions, but left it at a highly general reference to "obstacles" (*ḥawāʾil*).[103] Number 60, an anniversary edition in celebration of the twenty-five years of the JT's existence, marked the journal's final act.[104]

A remarkable detail regarding of the *RI* as long as it was available on a regular basis was its orientation toward the Gregorian calendar:

1960) was a double issue; the price of a single issue was kept unchanged over the years at 50 Egyptian piasters.

[100] *RI* 1/1949/4 and 2/1950/7.

[101] A precise dating of this volume is not possible. The Gregorian date, usually given, is missing; the Muslim date mentioned (Muḥarram 1384, corresponding to May/June 1964) is probably wrong since numbers 55–56 had already appeared at that time.

[102] Regarding him (1900–1973), see Muḥammad Muḥammad al-Madanī's preface to al-Jundī's *Quṭūf*, Cairo 1390/1971, 7–10; further *MDA* IV/191–94, al-Ziriklī IV/293, and Kaḥḥāla M/489.

[103] *RI* 16/1969/3f.

[104] On the website of the Iranian *taqrīb* organization *al-Majmaʿ al-ʿālamī li-l-taqrīb bayn al-madhāhib al-islāmiyya* (see below, pp. 383f.), the issues of the *RI* may be consulted online; the URL is <http://www.taghrib.org/arabic/nashat/esdarat/kotob/arabic/books/resalatalislam/>.

the quarterly editions were always dated January, April, July, and October of the respective year.[105] For a pan-Islamic publication that frequently argued against the non-Muslim public, this may be seen as an unusual step to say the least, and one that set the *RI* in contrast to almost all other Islamic periodicals. These adhered strictly to the Islamic chronology in the rhythm of their publication schedule and enumeration of the issues.

An editorial written by al-Madanī (*kalimat al-taḥrīr*) was a fixed feature of every number of the *RI*. This usually took the form of a general comment about Islam or an explanation of a specific Koranic verse and only on rare occasions referred to current events.[106] Maḥmūd Shaltūt's serialized Koran commentary comprised another integral part of most of the volumes.[107] This work, divided into a total of 50 instalments, dealt with Suras 1 to 9 and 11. In the last three volumes, the *tafsīr* was composed by al-Madanī and was once again devoted to the sixth Sura. Beginning in volume two, it was accompanied by a "lexicon of words occurring in the Koran" (*Muʿjam alfāz al-qurʾān al-karīm*), produced in cooperation with the Arab language academy in Cairo and its president, Aḥmad Luṭfī al-Sayyid.[108] This lexicon appeared irregularly and ultimately comprised 34 sections.

A customary place in the periodical was also allocated to the column *Ṣawt al-taqrīb*, which was simply called *Anbāʾ wa-ārāʾ* beginning

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[105] For this reason, there is no mention of individual issues when citing *RI* in the present work.

[106] These exceptions were *RI* 2/1950/3–7 (pilgrimage with participation of JT activists); ibid., 339–42 (quarrel between the politicians of the Najd and the scholars in the Ḥijāz); 3/1951/3–6 (Salīm's appointment as *Shaykh al-Azhar*); ibid., 115f. (criticism of the Saudi government); ibid., 227–30 (nationalization of the oil industry in Iran); 11/1959/3f. (Shaltūt's efforts for *taqrīb*); only two issues appeared without the editorial preface: in 6/1954/3–9, there was an interim state-of-the-organization article by ʿAbd al-Majīd Salīm that discussed the previous activity of the JT, and in 11/1959/227f., Shaltūt's *fatwā* was printed.

[107] Part of this work appeared in book form under the title *Tafsīr al-qurʾān al-karīm. al-Ajzāʾ al-ʿashara al-ūlā*, Cairo [1]1379/1959, [11]1988 (review in *MA* 32/1 [Jun. 1960], 112–15); see also Muḥammad al-Bahayy: "Naqd wa-taʿrīf. Tafsīr al-qurʾān li-l-ustādh al-akbar al-shaykh Maḥmūd Shaltūt", *MA* 31/9 (Mar. 1960), 1013–17; cf. also Jansen: *Interpretation*, 14f., 89f.; Abraham: *Shaltūt*, 126ff.; Zebiri: *Shaltūt*, 150–80; the introduction printed in *RI* 1/1949/13–21 is also found in al-Madanī: *Daʿwat al-taqrīb*, 317–25.

[108] *RI* 2/1950/435–37; regarding Luṭfī al-Sayyid (1872–1963), who was Rector of the Egyptian University (later *Jāmiʿat al-Qāhira*) from 1925–41, see al-Ziriklī I/200; *MDA* III/582–87; Kaḥḥāla M/84 and *EI*[2] V/838f. (C. Wendell); obituaries in *MA* 34/9–10 (Apr./May 1963), 1021–24 and in *MEA* 14/1963/169–72.

in volume 3. It contained correspondences between Sunni and Shiite scholars, letters from *ʿulamāʾ* who were in favour of *taqrīb*, reviews, as well as general news about the organization and its activities. On a few (rare) occurrences, even debates with authors who took a sceptical view of the idea of rapprochement were to be found on these pages. There was, for example, the case of the Najafi scholar ʿAbd al-Ḥusayn al-Rashtī,[109] who refused to grant much of a prospect of success for the JT's plans, the Sunni and Shiite viewpoints of the qualities of God being too far apart from each other. From his objections, a lively discussion of anthropomorphism arose between the JT and him that was carried out over several issues of the *RI*.[110]

Such debates, however, were the clear exception because a general forum for letters to the editor and the possibility to request *fatwā*s were immediately and definitively ruled out in the *RI*, in contrast to the Azhar journal and the *ʿIrfān*, where these features had existed already for a long time and were immensely popular. The reasons for this step, so clearly representative of the JT's approach to dealing with history, are to be discussed more fully elsewhere.[111]

Over its seventeen years, the *RI* published a total of approximately 650 articles (including the Koran commentary), about a hundred of them penned by Shiite authors. Only a good 20 per cent of all essays were directly concerned with the question of rapprochement between Sunnis and Shiites, but nevertheless, the feedback that the JT received referred primarily to these articles that formed the actual *raison d'être* of the *RI*. The other fields covered in the journal ranged from general considerations regarding the role of Islam in state and society and its confrontation with the West, to Islamic philosophy, and extended as far as various aspects of the Arabic language, literature, and cultural history. There were also several articles that dealt with the relationship between natural science and religion.[112] Considerable space was allotted to remarks that may be summed up under the rubric "Shiite self-image". In them, Shiite *ʿulamāʾ* presented their school's

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[109] Regarding him (1875–1953), see *MMI* II/227f.; *ṬASh* I.3/1064–67; *RF* II/598f.; *Dharīʿa* XIV/34; his book *Kashf al-ishtibāh* was among the Shiite replies to the attacks on Mūsā Jārallāh; *MMN* 157 quotes his Persian-language work entitled *Khaṭābe dar khoṣūṣ-e ettehād-e eslāmiyye*, which was published in Najaf in 1329/1911.

[110] *RI* 1/1949/320–25, 429–39; 2/1950/106–10.

[111] *RI* 3/1951/108f.; cf. also below, pp. 210f.

[112] Their author was Muḥammad Maḥmūd Ghālī, a nuclear physicist who earned his Ph.D. at the Sorbonne.

point of view in selected theological,[113] legal,[114] or general questions of intellectual history.[115]

In articles about Islamic law, controversial issues between the denominations were generally avoided to a large extent. Instead authors either limited their presentations to one of the two sides[116] or treated topics over which there were no fundamental differences.[117] Among the subjects that were thus unlikely to stir heated debates was also the concept of *ijtihād*[118] because this legal principle had ceased to be a taboo for the Sunnis with the advent of Islamic modernism.

On the other hand, the *RI* displayed a striking disregard for those questions that were of particular importance to the inner-Islamic tensions and their desired resolution: investigations of incidents from early Islamic history were almost completely absent from its pages,[119] as were current political events. Always keeping in mind its self-prescribed restraint regarding anything related to governmental politics of whichever provenance, the *RI* passed in stubborn silence over all of the upheavals that occurred in the Islamic countries at the time, although some of these were of supreme significance, e.g. the Egyptian Revolution of 1952, the Algerian War from 1954 onward, and the military coups in Iraq in 1958 and 1963.[120]

Even the pan-Islamic interest in more remote regions such as Indonesia or Pakistan, which could be felt at the outset, clearly decreased after a few years.[121] The only exception to this was a short article by

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[113] Tawfīq al-Fukaykī in *RI* 3/1951/292–302 (*iʿjāz al-qurʾān*); Abū l-Qāsim al-Khūʾī in *RI* 10/1958/186–89 (*taḥrīf*); Ṣadr al-Dīn Sharaf al-Dīn in *RI* 7/1955/384–90 (miracles of the Prophet); Muḥammad Jawād Mughniyya in *RI* 9/1957/364–70 (relationship between God and man).

[114] Mughniyya in *RI* 13/1962/136–41 (law of inheritance); Ṣadr al-Dīn Sharaf al-Dīn in *RI* 11/1959/417–29; Mughniyya in *RI* 12/1960/257–61 (*qiyās*); idem in *RI* 11/1959/146–51; idem in *RI* 7/1955/403–05 (the law of marriage); idem in *RI* 9/1957/141–43 (foundations of the *sharīʿa*).

[115] ʿAbd al-Ḥalīm Kāshif al-Ghiṭāʾ in *RI* 1/1949/421–25 (religion—philosophy—science); Mughniyya in *RI* 12/1960/139–44 (Imāmiyya—Ashʿariyya—Muʿtazila).

[116] Muḥammad ʿArafa in *RI* 12/1960/28–32, 135–38, 251–56 (Sunni law of inheritance); Muḥammad al-Shāfiʿī al-Labbān in *RI* 1/1949/154–61; ʿAbd al-ʿAzīz al-Marāghī ibid., 263–67 (both articles about political law).

[117] al-Madanī in *RI* 10/1958/412–47 (polygamy); ʿAbd al-ʿAẓīm Sharaf al-Dīn in *RI* 14/1963/140–47 (on drinking wine); al-Fukaykī in *RI* 2/1950/51–65 (protection of animals); Mughniyya in *RI* 10/1958/256–59 (artificial insemination).

[118] Partially reprinted in al-Shīrāzī: *al-Waḥda al-islāmiyya*, 270–332.

[119] For a full discussion, cf. below, pp. 208ff.

[120] In very few cases, the JT stepped outside its journalistic reserve in *RI*, e.g. in December 1952, when it protested against the French actions in northern Africa, see *OM* 32/1952/300.

[121] Aḥmad Muḥammad ʿĪsā in *RI* 1/1949/206–12; Muḥammad ʿAbd al-Laṭīf

Muḥammad al-Ghazzālī about the 1963 Sunni-Shiite clashes in Pakistan.[122] In the succeeding period, the authors found it sufficient to praise in glowing colours the advantages of Muslim unity without referring to the political situation around them and to advance a rapprochement of the legal schools, a prerequisite of which was their becoming more acquainted with each other.

The self-praise of the editor in chief, Muḥammad Muḥammad al-Madanī, who insinuated that the *RI* was the only Islamic journal in which Sunnis and Shiites could have their say and thus add to the exchange of ideas between Najaf and the Azhar, Yemen and Indonesia,[123] did not conform completely with the facts.[124] Nevertheless the JT managed to create an impressive forum in which representatives of both sides repeatedly professed their unwavering will to reach an agreement. That some of the activists were among the most prominent scholars of both denominations gave a considerable boost to the prestige of the *RI* and was certainly one of the main reasons why its opponents reacted so vehemently and polemically to it. Their comments demonstrate that the voice of the *RI*, despite the non-committal nature of its articles, was heard to a far greater degree in the Islamic world than the isolationists of both sides would have liked. Its final failure was not the result of the efforts of its enemies but occurred because of its instrumentalization by the very politics from which it so assiduously professed to remain aloof. Until then, however, the journal remained the most effective pillar in the dissemination of the *taqrīb* concept.

But it was not the only one. An essential feature of the efforts of the JT that was already made manifest in the foundation of its institute *Dār al-taqrīb* was based on the conviction that any aspiration to

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Darāz in *RI* 2/1950/18–20 (Indonesia); ʿAllūba in *RI* 4/1952/20–23; Aḥmad Muḥammad ʿĪsā in *RI* 1/1949/74–81 (Pakistan); also *RI* 4/1952/108f. (demonstration of solidarity with Palestine) and 110 (proclamation of the Libyan monarchy); 3/1951/227–30 (nationalization of the oil industry in Iran), 339–42 (attack against the UN and Israel); 5/1953/433f. (Sunni-Shiite conflict in Baḥrayn; also see in this regard, Mughniyya: *Tajārib*, 380 and Steppat: "Schiʿa und Sunna", passim).

[122] *RI* 14/1963/130–33; cf. also al-Ghazzālī: *Difāʿ ʿan al-ʿaqīda wa-l-sharīʿa*, 336; regarding the author, see below, p. 183 note 148; regarding Sunni—Shiite relations in Pakistan cf. D. Khálid: "Pakistan und Bangladesh", in: Ende/Steinbach (eds.): *Der Islam in der Gegenwart*, 274–307, esp. 284–87, and below, pp. 396f. note 76.

[123] Editorial in *RI* 9/1957/339f. and 10/1958/3f.

[124] For example, in the *ʿIrfān*, Aḥmad ʿĀrif al-Zayn repeatedly and without hesitation gave Sunni authors the opportunity to express themselves, and his journal was literally read as far away as Indonesia; cf. for example an Indonesian Shiite's obituary for ʿAbd al-Ḥusayn Sharaf al-Dīn, *al-ʿIrfān* 46/1 (Sep. 1958), 94.

rapprochement of the legal schools had to be combined with the study and circulation of the relevant textual sources. Faced with the small number of Shiite books to be had in Cairo, the JT took it upon itself to change this state of affairs by publishing important Shiite works in the fields of theology and jurisprudence. The first book of the JT was a commentary on the Koran, *Majmaʿ al-bayān fī tafsīr al-qurʾān*, by the Shiite scholar al-Faḍl b. al-Ḥasan al-Ṭabrisī (or al-Ṭabarsī; d. 1153), who hailed from Ṭabaristān at the southern coast of the Caspian Sea.[125] Since already available editions of this book had found favour with Sunni scholars such as Muḥammad Rashīd Riḍā,[126] it appeared especially suitable for *taqrīb* purposes because there was no need to fear any accusation of missionary activity. At the behest of ʿAbd al-Majīd Salīm,[127] the edition was printed under the authority of the Azhar by the *Jamāʿat al-Azhar li-l-nashr wa-l-taʾlīf* in 1951, the preface being written by Maḥmūd Shaltūt.[128]

Six years later, the appearance of a classical Shiite legal compendium created a stir even outside the usual *taqrīb* circles. The volume in question was *al-Mukhtaṣar al-nāfiʿ* by Abū l-Qāsim Jaʿfar b. al-Ḥasan "al-Muḥaqqiq" al-Ḥillī (1205–77), who was from Ḥilla on the Euphrates.[129] The attention given to the book owes to the fact that

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[125] Regarding him, see *EI*[2] X/40f. (E. Kohlberg); *GAL* I/513f. and SI/708f.; al-Ziriklī V/148; concerning his *tafsīr*, see *Dharīʿa* XX/24 (there and in Brockelmann under the title *Majmaʿ al-bayān li-ʿulūm al-qurʾān*); Musa O.A. Abdul: *The Quran. Shaykh Tabarsī's Commentary*, Lahore 1977; cf. also H. Gätje: *Koran und Koranexegese*, Zurich, Stuttgart 1971, 59 and 314ff.; Meir M. Bar-Asher: *Scripture and Exegesis in Early Imāmī Shiism*, Leiden 1999, 22f., 75f.

[126] In a review of the edition of this work by Aḥmad ʿĀrif al-Zayn, Rashīd Riḍā expressed himself extremely positively and called the Koran commentary "the best that we know in this view (from Shiism)", see *al-Manār* 33/5 (Sep. 1933), in 391; cf. also *al-ʿIrfān* 23/1 (May 1932), in 171; 23/2 (Oct. 1932), 284–86 as well as 9/6 (Mar. 1924), after 320.

[127] His letter of July 26, 1952, in this regard is printed in ʿAbdallāh al-Qommī: *Daʿwat al-taqrīb*, 207; al-Raḍawī: *Fī sabīl al-waḥda al-islāmiyya*, [7] and in idem: *al-Burhān*, 297–300.

[128] Muḥammad Yūsuf Mūsā in *RI* 3/1951/63–69; in addition *RI* 4/1952/221 and 11/1959/109; al-Madanī in *RI* 11/1959/383f.; ʿAbdallāh al-Qommī: *Daʿwat al-taqrīb*, 209–14; Shaltūt's preface is printed in *RI* 10/1958/229–41; also in al-Raḍawī: *Fī sabīl al-waḥda al-islāmiyya*, 46–58 as well as in idem: *al-Burhān*, 301–16; in Persian translation in *Maktab-e Eslām* 5/5 (Jan. 1964), 45–51; 5/6 (Feb. 1964), 9–12 and in *Mishkāt* 30/1370sh/13–25; finally, cf. also Ḥusayn Karīmān: *Ṭabarsī wa Majmaʿ ol-bayān*, Tehran 1361sh, II/26–29.

[129] Regarding the author, see *GAL* I/514f. and SI/711f.; Halm: *Die Schia*, 84f.; Löschner: *Dogmatische Grundlagen*, 33, 142, 160–62; the work cited is a condensed version (actual title: *al-Nāfiʿ fī mukhtaṣar al-sharāʾiʿ*) written by the author himself of his more comprehensive treatise *Sharāʾiʿ al-islām fī masāʾil al-ḥalāl wa-l-ḥarām*; regarding it, see

its publication was not the result of JT's efforts alone but was achieved in cooperation with the Egyptian Ministry for Religious Endowments. The responsible Minister, Aḥmad Ḥasan al-Bāqūrī, wrote the preface and saw to it that the new edition became public outside Egypt's borders.[130] Not least thanks to very positive reactions from the Shiite side, particularly from Āghā Bozorg al-Ṭehrānī and ʿAbd al-Ḥusayn Sharaf al-Dīn, it became such a success that an expanded reprint appeared only a year later.[131]

The Ministry of *Awqāf* was not the only partner of the JT in the release of classical texts. In collaboration with the publishing house *Maṭbaʿat al-najāḥ* that belonged to Murtaḍā al-Raḍawī[132] and had branches in Najaf and Cairo, another Shiite *fiqh* work was brought out. It was *Wasāʾil al-shīʿa* by Muḥammad b. al-Ḥasan al-Ḥurr al-ʿĀmilī (d. 1632)[133] from the south-Lebanese Jabal ʿĀmil, which was accompanied by the supplementary work *Mustadrak al-wasāʾil* by Ḥusayn Taqī al-Nūrī al-Ṭabrisī.[134] The prefaces were written by Qommī himself and the Azhar-scholar Muḥammad ʿAbd al-Munʿim al-Khafājī.[135]

Dharīʿa XIII/47–50, XX/213 (s.v. *al-Nāfiʿ*) and XIV/57–61 (s.v. *Sharḥ al-mukhtaṣar al-nāfiʿ*); bibliographical information about the editions and translations of the book, as well as about more than 36 comments on it, are found in Hossein Modarressi Tabātabāʾi: *An Introduction to Shiʿi Law. A Bibliographical Study*, London 1984, 65f.

[130] Cf. the announcement in *OM* 37/1957/384; al-Bāqūrī (regarding him, see below, p. 184 note 151) was Minister of *Awqāf* from September 1952 until February 1959 (*OM* 32/1952/263f. and 39/1959/124); his preface is reprinted in al-Raḍawī: *al-Burhān*, 273–76. The *Mukhtaṣar* was not the only cooperation between the JT and the Ministry: a book by the Azhar philosophy lecturer Sulaymān Dunyā entitled *Bayn al-shīʿa wa-ahl al-sunna* was also published: RI 10/1957/219f.; see also al-Raḍawī: *Ārāʾ al-muʿāṣirīn*, 85ff.; idem: *Fī sabīl al-waḥda al-islāmiyya*, 72–74 and idem: *Maʿa rijāl al-fikr*, 156–64; also *RI* 14/1384hq/208.

[131] Regarding the JT's edition, see *Dharīʿa* XIII/50 and XX/213; *RI* 9/1957/216–21, 331–33; 10/1958/221; see also al-Ḥakīm: *Fikrat al-taqrīb*, 3–6, 18; Najāt: *ʿAwl wa taʿṣīb*, 600; ʿAlī: *al-Imām Sharaf al-Dīn*, 53f.; shortly before his death, Sharaf al-Dīn wrote a letter to al-Bāqūrī in which he explicitly thanked him for his help in the publication of the *Mukhtaṣar, al-ʿIrfān* 45/4 (Jan. 1958), 391f.; *RI* 10/1959/109; in contrast, a clearly more distanced judgement from the Sunni point of view is found in al-Sālūs: *Athar al-imāma*, 5f.

[132] Five volumes, 1957–61; *RI* 10/1958/217–19; cf. also al-Raḍawī: *Ārāʾ al-muʿāṣirīn*, 25f., 31–37, 43f., 69–77, 135–37, 141–47, 190–93, idem: *Fī sabīl al-waḥda al-islāmiyya*, 68f. and idem: *Maʿa rijāl al-fikr*, 52–56, 214–19; Enayat: *Islamic Political Thought*, 49; regarding al-Raḍawī, see below, pp. 368ff.

[133] Regarding the author, who is primarily known for his biographical dictionary *Amal al-āmil fī tarājim ʿulamāʾ Jabal ʿĀmil*, see *EI*² III/588f. (G. Scarcia); *EIr* I/917f. (J. van Ess); regarding the work *Wasāʾil al-shīʿa ilā taḥṣīl masāʾil al-sharīʿa*, see *Dharīʿa* IV/352–55.

[134] *Dharīʿa* XXI/7f.; regarding the author, see above, p. 24 note 90.

[135] Born 1915; see al-Raḍawī: *Maʿa rijāl al-fikr*, 286–99; *al-ʿIrfān* 51/1 (Jul. 1963),

The last editorial endeavour to be mentioned here was never completed. It was to have been a truly mammoth project which the organization set about at the beginning of the 1960s: the collection of all *ḥadīth*s about which Sunnis and Shiites concurred, along with their textual sources, scheduled to appear volume after volume. The venture, in which numerous *'ulamā'* from various countries were intended to participate, did not get past the preparatory phase, however, and was abandoned after Maḥmūd Shaltūt's death in 1963.[136]

36–44; MA 55/5–6 (Mar. 1983), 648–53; al-Khafājī: *al-Azhar fī alf ʿām*, new edition III/417–36 and 477–89.

[136] *RI* 13/1962/218–20; Qommī ibid., 243–50; Mughniyya in *RI* 14/1964/224–30, esp. 230; cf. also *al-'Irfān* 50/1 (Aug. 1962), 126–28 and *MA* 35/6 (Jan. 1964), 654ff.; also the project announced four years previously (*RI* 10/1958/214f.) of a biography of the Prophet, purged—as stated by the initiators—from the "slanders" of the Orientalists, never became a reality, to the best of my knowledge.

CHAPTER SIX

THE SCHOLARLY NETWORK OF THE *TAQRĪB* MOVEMENT (1947–1960)

In the years that followed the end of the Second World War, the discussion surrounding the future of Islam and its position in society was notably characterized by globalism. The attempts of individual neo-Salafi organizations, in particular the Muslim Brotherhood, to internationalize by making the bold jump beyond Egypt's borders and by establishing branches in other Islamic countries as well as the emergence of an institutionalized *taqrīb* movement have been described in the previous chapter. In addition, a lively conference activity was resumed, now placing the demand for the creation of an Islamic bloc (*al-kutla al-islāmiyya*) in the foreground.[1]

At the beginning these were what might be termed "private" initiatives of individual scholars, intellectuals or pan-Islamic associations that undertook the mission to advance the activities of the pre-War period. A case in point is the "Muslim World Congress" (*Muʾtamar al-ʿālam al-islāmī*) that convened in February 1949 in Pakistan for the first time,[2] claiming to continue two initiatives from the 1930s. On the one hand, the leader of the conference, Muḥammad Amīn al-Ḥusaynī, was to embody the extension of the Jerusalem congress of 1931, and on the other, the organization saw itself as a successor of the already well-known *Jamāʿat al-ukhuwwa al-islāmiyya*, whose renewed foundation in Karachi in 1948 ended after only a brief existence. The World Congress was established in the very same year; its initial Secretary-General was Muḥammad Iqbāl al-Shaydāʾī,[3] but the president at the meetings in the following years was al-Ḥusaynī.

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[1] Schulze: *Geschichte*, 163f.; cf. idem: *Internationalismus*, 104–22; Landau: *Politics*, 267–76.

[2] Landau, 280–82; Schulze: *Internationalismus*, 110–13 and index s.v. *Muʾtamar*; further S. Jargy: "A propos du congrès islamique de Jérusalem (25–29 janvier 1960)", *Orient* (Paris) 4/1960/13/19–29, esp. 20–22; *MA* 27/8 (Mar. 1956), 849–55.

[3] A.M. Goichon: "Le problème des chrétiens d'Orient", *L'Afrique et l'Asie* 9/1950/18–44, esp. 39; at the beginning of the 1950s al-Shaydāʾī traveled through numerous countries of the Near East with the goal—together with Muḥammad b. Muḥammad Mahdī al-Khāliṣī—of organizing a conference of Muslim scholars in Cairo; in this activity, he was supposed to have also met with leading Azhar *ʿulamāʾ*

From about 1954 the revived aim of pan-Islamism increasingly aroused the attention of various governments, who adopted it not least for the purpose of legitimising their own international claim to leadership within the Islamic world. The Egyptian revolutionary regime under Jamāl ʿAbd al-Nāṣir and the new Saudi Arabian monarch Saʿūd b. ʿAbd al-ʿAzīz (who ruled from 1953–1964) particularly distinguished themselves in this respect, giving political pan-Islam the blessing of official government policy for the first time since the days of ʿAbdülḥamīd II. The process ultimately led to the integration of Islamic internationalism into the legitimation ideologies of national governments[4] and was accompanied by the destruction of the most important neo-Salafi organization, the Egyptian Muslim Brotherhood, which fell victim to a bloody campaign of retaliation by the Egyptian government after an unsuccessful assassination attempt on ʿAbd al-Nāṣir on October 26, 1954. Pan-Islamic congresses and activities were convened from this time on at the instigation of individual governments, or at least under their patronage.

In view of the general attitude displayed by the *Ǧamāʿat al-taqrīb* in political matters, it is not surprising that they exhibited utmost restraint in this case as well. Symptomatic of this is their reaction toward international conferences: only the Muslim World Congress in Pakistan was mentioned in the columns of the *RI*. When it assembled for a second time in February 1951, ʿAbd al-Majīd Salīm, in his capacity as *Shaykh al-Azhar*, sent a message of greeting in the final paragraph of which he expressly presented himself as Vice-President of the JT and called on all Muslims, including those gathered in Karachi, to support the ecumenical idea.[5]

In February of the following year, Moḥammad Taqī Qommī in person attended the next conference of this organization as representative of the JT,[6] but the *taqrīb* organization played no special role either here or on any other occasion in the framework of a pan-Islamic congress. On the contrary, it was not long before Qommī even had to concede that the last pan-Islamic conferences had proved a

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(ʿAbd al-Majīd Salīm, ʿAbd al-Laṭīf Darāz), which led to Maḥmūd al-Mallāḥ's delivering a polemic attack against al-Shaydā'ī and the supposed naivety of the Azhar for letting itself be snared by these advances; see *al-Niḥla al-aḥmadiyya*, 27ff., 31–35.

[4] Schulze: *Internationalismus*, 121.

[5] *RI* 3/1951/134–40; cf. for this and the next conference Landau: *Politics*, 281f. (additional literature is listed therein).

[6] *RI* 4/1952/217; see also *OM* 32/1952/68f., 119f.

failure; not only was it impossible to achieve the goal of Muslim unity, but also the evil spirit of *ṭā'ifiyya* had clearly enabled the inner-Islamic points of contention to resurface in Karachi.[7]

The JT's journalistic activities gave no hint of the fact that the organization was increasingly enveloped by the policy of the Egyptian government in the following years. Even at the climax of these developments in 1959–60, the usual reserve was retained. This meant limiting the articles to general presentations of legal and theological topics without any mention of daily events, and turning the readers' attention exclusively to the network of relationships among scholars of various denominations and in numerous countries that the JT had managed to establish since its foundation. The mosaic-like picture produced by the interaction of traditional *'ulamā'*, professors and neo-Salafi activists from such different intellectual and geographic backgrounds will be discussed in what follows.

Sunnis

In describing the reaction in the Sunni countries to the foundation of the JT, two states that were actually diametrically opposed were particularly emphasized in the articles in the *RI*: secular Turkey and Wahhabi Saudi Arabia. The announcement of the *taqrīb* organization in Turkey was, to a great extent, the work of the Dean of the Department of *Sharī'a* at the University of Baghdad, Ḥamdī al-A'ẓamī,[8] who had got to know various publicists during a previous trip through the country. At the request of the editor of the journal *Sebilürreşad*, Eşref Edib,[9] he wrote a short notice about the creation and task of the JT, an Arabic translation of which was willingly adopted by the editorial staff of the *RI*.[10] In addition, several articles from the *RI* appeared in Turkish publications in translation.[11]

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[7] *RI* 6/1954/365–70, on 368f.

[8] Regarding him (1882–1971), see al-Ziriklī II/275; *MMI* I/373.

[9] Hafiz Eşref Edib Fergan (1882–1971) had already been active in Istanbul before the First World War as a journalist and publisher of the journals *Sırat-i Müstakim* (1908–12) and *Sebilürreşad* (1912–25 and 1948–53); see Adam: *Rußlandmuslime*, 36–56, esp. 39ff.

[10] *RI* 1/1949/99–101.

[11] Ibid., 326; there, a letter from the correspondent of the Turkish daily paper *Cümhüriyet* in Cairo, Ömer Riza Doğrul (see Schulze: *Internationalismus*, 111), is quoted

In contrast to Turkey, which in the succeeding period no longer played a role in the JT and was thus not mentioned in the pages of the *RI*, the organization's relations with Saudi Arabia were of longer duration, although not without differences of opinion. In the initial phases, the endeavours of the JT were clearly characterized by cordial efforts to integrate the Wahhābiyya, too, in the *taqrīb* movement. A significant example of this was the reaction to an inquiry from some Ḥijāzi scholars whether the intent of the *taqrīb* activists was to blend (*idmāj*) the various schools of law into to a single one: immediately a letter to King Ibn Saʿūd was published in which the organization's goals were explained fully. First and foremost in it was the decisive rejection of this (generally not new)[12] apprehension and the assurance that there was no intention of either distorting or assimilating Islamic law.[13]

The invitation addressed to the Wahhabi scholars to participate in the inner-Islamic ecumenical discussion, was soon accepted by one of their representatives, albeit a relatively low ranking individual: The Najdi scholar ʿAbd al-Karīm b. Juhaymān, whom the *RI* introduced as being a private tutor in the service of Ibn Saʿūd's brother, Emir ʿAbdallāh. In the very first year of the journal's existence, he published an article in which he urged all Muslims to cease calling each other disparaging names that were nothing but signs of mutual ignorance. In this context, he was especially concerned with defending Muḥammad b. ʿAbd al-Wahhāb, the founding father of the Wahhābiyya, and his supporters, who allegedly had suffered particular injustice in this regard, having even been wrongly identified as a separate *madhhab*.[14]

Half a year later, the cordial-but-cautious relations were clouded for the first time. With unusual frankness, Muḥammad Muḥammad al-Madanī commented on a complaint with which Ḥijāzi scholars had approached the JT. These scholars, with whom al-Madanī said he concurred completely, were being suppressed by the Najdi rulers and

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in which he greets the founding of the JT and reports that he was responsible for the Turkish translation of Qommī's and Salīm's articles from the first *RI* fascicle; see also *RI* 2/1950/4; and *OM* 28/1948/25f.

[12] Regarding Muḥammad al-Ḥusayn Āl Kāshif al-Ghiṭā''s remarks in his sermon during the Jerusalem conference, see above, pp. 93ff.

[13] *RI* 1/1949/97f.

[14] "Lā tanābazū bi-l-alqāb" (= Koran 49/11), *RI* 1/1949/277–80; cf. also above, pp. 18 and 30.

hindered in their scientific and religious studies, being forced to conform to the prevailing doctrine.[15]

Again six months later, al-Madanī published another editorial, this time containing an attack of a direct nature on the Saudi rulers. He accused them outspokenly of not having undertaken anything against what he saw as the catastrophic state of the Holy Places in the Ḥijāz, although the oil revenues had provided more than adequate means for this. Al-Madanī, who explicitly related this disregard to the traditionally cool Wahhabi attitude concerning the reverence of burial places, could not resist asking whether this situation, detrimental as it was both to health and belief, would ultimately not be dealt with better if these sites were under Christian or Jewish control.[16]

Despite this criticism, which left nothing to the imagination, there was not a complete break between the JT and the Wahhābiyya. When ʿAbd al-Majīd Salīm assumed the office of *Shaykh al-Azhar* in 1952 for the second time, he also received a message of congratulation from the Saudi Arabian politician Muḥammad Surūr al-Ṣabbān.[17] That he particularly emphasized Salīm's outstanding service to the cause of rapprochement of the schools of law provided a welcome reason for the *RI* to print both the letter and Salīm's reply and to celebrate it as evidence of the "new spirit" that had found its way into the Ḥijāz.[18] Also King Saʿūd's 1955 visit to Iran, during which he met, among others, with Āyatollāh Borūjerdī, received considerable attention from the JT.[19] These, however, remained isolated incidents characterized

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[15] *RI* 2/1950/342; regarding the relations between the scholars of the Ḥijāz and those of Najd, which had not been free of complications even earlier, see Schulze: *Internationalismus*, 126ff., and Steinberg: *Religion und Staat*, esp. 393–95, 511–19 and 561–68.

[16] *RI* 3/1951/115f. However, shortly thereafter, this criticism was qualified: When the Najafi *shaykh* Muḥammad Ḥasan Āl Yāsīn (born 1931; see *RF* I/74) required Moḥammad Taqī Qommī to appeal to the Saudi government in this regard, the *RI* merely appeasingly replied that this would only increase the tensions; in order not to endanger the results that had already been achieved in the mutual relations, one had to practice patience; *RI* 3/1951/331–33. Also, at the conference in Karachi (Feb. 1952) the Saudi attitude toward the Medinese Baqīʿ cemetery came to the fore: the proposal to allow the attachment of Suras to the graves was praised by the *RI* as a promising first step: *RI* 4/1952/217f.

[17] In the 1950s, al-Ṣabbān (1899–1972; cf. al-Ziriklī VI/136 and al-Maghribī: *Aʿlām al-Ḥijāz*, 222–34) held several ministerial posts and from 1962 until his death served as the first Secretary-General of the newly established Muslim World League; see Schulze: *Internationalismus*, index, s.v.

[18] *RI* 4/1952/220f.; also the Shiite scholar Khalīl Kamare'ī expressed himself approvingly regarding al-Ṣabbān; see his *Rābiṭat al-ʿālam al-islāmī*, 35.

[19] *RI* 8/1956/105–07; cf. Badeeb: *Saudi-Iranian Relations*, 52f.

by an aloof courteousness. In the 1950s, neither were Saudi scholars involved in the *taqrīb* organization or its journal, nor did the *RI* repeat its earlier effort to encourage the Wahhābiyya to participate. King Fayṣal's attempt ten years later to forge an Islamic Internationale and the Shiite response to it[20] had nothing to do with the JT.

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Another noticeable centre of Arabic and Islamic scholarship in this period was the Arab Academy in Damascus. The relations of the JT with this important institution were likewise cautious in nature and remained restricted to individual scholars. It happened, though, that the Vice-President of the Academy, ʿAbd al-Qādir al-Maghribī,[21] who had previously hardly manifested himself in the ecumenical discussion,[22] did contribute a short item dealing with a linguistic problem. In its subtitle, though, he was explicitly introduced only as a member of the *Egyptian* Language Academy.[23]

From the ranks of the Damascene Academy, only two of its Shiite members were involved in the JT: Muḥammad Riḍā al-Shabībī and Sulaymān Ẓāhir. Al-Shabībī, who was simultaneously President of the Iraqi Academy of Sciences and temporarily Iraqi Minister of Education,[24] was honoured by the JT as one of its most distinguished members.[25] Between 1949 and 1959, nine articles of his appeared in the journal, some expressly dealing with unity among Muslims and their position vis-à-vis the West.[26]

For his part, Sulaymān Ẓāhir[27] himself never wrote any articles for the *RI*, but from its inception he was closely associated with the JT

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[20] See below, pp. 342ff.

[21] Regarding him (1868–1956), see al-Ziriklī IV/47; *MDA* III/1264–68; *MMS* 490f.; Hermann: *Kulturkrise*, index s.v.; obituaries in *RAAD* 31/1956/498–501 and *al-ʿIrfān* 44/5 (Feb. 1957), 482–88 and 492–99.

[22] An exception to this was his short and relatively critical discussion of the first volume of al-Madanī/al-Zuʿbī: "al-Islām bayn al-sunna wa-l-shīʿa" in *RAAD* 27/1952/290–92.

[23] *RI* 7/1955/106–09.

[24] Regarding him (1889–1965), see al-Ziriklī VI/127f.; *MMI* III/165–67; *RF* II/718; *MDA* III/608–12; *ṬASh* I.2/745–47; *ASh* IX/287, and esp. al-Khāqānī: *Shuʿarāʾ*, IX/3–94; obituaries in *RAAD* 41/1966/542f., and *al-ʿIrfān* 53/9 (Mar. 1966), 907–12; cf. Samīr al-Ṣaffār: *al-Shaykh Muḥammad Riḍā al-Shabībī. Ḥayātuhu wa-shiʿruhu*, Beirut 1415/1995; S.K. Hamarneh: "Aš-Šabībī—Poet and Scholar", *Folia Orientalia* 14/ 1972–73/293–97.

[25] *RI* 7/1955/24; see also *RI* 3/1951/105f.

[26] *RI* 1/1949/45–47; 2/1950/21–23; 7/1955/24–28; the remaining items were devoted to language and general cultureal issues.

[27] Regarding him (1873–1960), see al-Ziriklī III/134f.; *ṬASh* I.2/828–33; Mervin:

as a corresponding member. In the very year of its foundation, he penned a passionate appeal for the *ʿIrfān* in which he urged Muslims all over the world to support the new organization and its goals.[28] At the beginning of the 1950s, he was active in the cause of the JT when he published a report about the Syrian ʿAlawis. The *RI* praised it as exemplary and combined this with a call to all *ʿulamāʾ* to support the concept of *taqrīb* through further research about this and similar communities.[29] It did not become entirely clear, however, whether the intention of the report was merely to encourage a doctrinal rapprochement or whether the ʿAlawis should be converted to "real" Shiism. At the same time, when he compiled this file, he also congratulated the Shiite preacher and activist Ḥabīb Āl Ibrāhīm, who had founded a benevolent society and several schools in ʿAlawi territory, for his effort to spread religion (which in this case meant Twelver Shiism) among them.[30]

The explanation of the reserve the JT displayed toward one of the most famous scientific organizations in the Arab World, whose membership included both Sunnis and Shiites,[31] may be found in the person of its long-time President Muḥammad Kurd ʿAlī. Perhaps more persistently than any other Arab author of the twentieth century, he worked for the rehabilitation of the Umayyads, despite his claim that in his youth he had revered ʿAlī more than Muʿāwiya.[32] From early on, he had consequently been the target of extremely vehement criticism by Shiite scholars.[33]

Un réformisme chiite, 433f. and index, s.v.; obituaries in *RAAD* 36/1962/499–501 and *al-ʿIrfān* 48/7 (Mar. 1961) 632–38; Mughniyya: *Min hunā wa-hunāk*, 56–59; see also *al-ʿIrfān* 62/4 (Apr. 1974), 424–29.

[28] *al-ʿIrfān* 33/10 (Sep. 1947), 1102f.

[29] *RI* 3/1951/109f.; cf. ibid., 331; there was no follow-up on this unusual request; also see below, p. 240; for the general background, cf. Kramer: "Syria's Alawis and Shi'ism", passim, Mervin: "Quelques jalons", passim, and eadem: *Un réformisme chiite*, 321–29.

[30] Mervin: *Un réformisme chiite*, 327; regarding Ḥabīb Āl Ibrāhīm (1886 or 1888–1965) cf. ibid., 419f. and index, s.v.

[31] In addition to the above-mentioned al-Shabībī und Ẓāhir, the Shiite members of the academy included Muḥsin al-Amīn (regarding him, see above, pp. 53f. note 14), Aḥmad Riḍā (see below, note 35), Muṣṭafā Jawād (1905–1969; see al-Ziriklī VII/230), as well as Adīb al-Taqī al-Baghdādī (1895–1945; see al-Ziriklī I/286, and the obituary in *RAAD* 21/1946/329); regarding scientific academies in general, see the article "Madjmaʿ ʿilmī", *EI*² V/1090–1101, esp. 1090–94 (J. Waardenburg).

[32] Ende: *Arabische Nation*, 64; regarding Kurd ʿAlī (1876–1953), cf. ibid., 64–75, Hermann: *Kulturkrise*, passim; al-Bayyūmī: *al-Nahḍa*, I/67–78, as well as Kurd ʿAlī's autobiography *Mudhakkirāt*.

[33] Hermann, 246–51; regarding ʿAbd al-Ḥusayn Sharaf al-Dīn's polemic, see above, p. 57; cf. also al-Raḍawī: *al-Burhān*, 11.

Also in later years, the adjustments he made to this image were of a merely cosmetic nature, such as a short passage in the sixth volume of his famous history of Syria, *Khiṭaṭ al-Shām*. There, ʿAbdallāh b. Sabaʾ, a popular figure among anti-Shiite polemicists, is dismissed as pure fiction and a reprehensible innovation based in the imagination and ignorance of those who had no idea of the true origins of Shiism. In addition, it is stated that the controversial Muḥarram customs were rejected by the Shiite *ʿulamāʾ* as a similar sort of *bidʿa*, though the faithful in many countries did not heed the scholars in this point.[34] The value of these paragraphs is reduced considerably, however, by the fact that in all probability they had not been composed by Kurd ʿAlī himself but by the Shiite scholar Aḥmad Riḍā.[35]

Furthermore, in his memoirs, Kurd ʿAlī quoted two lengthy comments by Aḥmad Riḍā and Sulaymān Ẓāhir, both of whom criticized his sympathy toward the Umayyads and defended Shiism against the accusation that it allowed its followers to practice dissimulation (*taqiyya*) and propagated antinomism. They distanced themselves unmistakably from the Shiite *ghulāt*, and Ẓāhir even concluded his defence with an allusion to the JT, requesting Kurd ʿAlī to accompany them in the front lines of their march.

Kurd ʿAlī acknowledged these comments with the exclamation how wonderful it would be if all Shiites thought this way and quoted Muḥsin al-Amīn as an additional example, calling him one of the greatest *mujtahid*s of the era. Nevertheless, he immediately qualified his conciliatory comportment when he let the known Sunni polemicist Mūsā Jārallāh have his say in a likewise lengthy quotation. In the latter's remarks, Kurd ʿAlī unrepentantly reiterated his main

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[34] Kurd ʿAlī: *Khiṭaṭ al-Shām*, VI/251–56; the last-cited contention here might be an allusion to an inner-Shiite quarrel triggered by Muḥsin al-Amīn's criticism of specific manifestations of the processions; see Ende: "Flagellations", passim, and in great detail Mervin: *Un réformisme chiite*, 236–74; as for the figure of ʿAbdallāh b. Saba', cf. below, p. 239 note 108.

[35] Ende: *Arabische Nation*, 202 note 2; al-Madanī/al-Zuʿbī: *al-Islām bayn al-sunna wa-l-shīʿa*, II/68; Muḥammad Jābir al-ʿĀmilī named Aḥmad Riḍā as the author of a *risāla makhṭūṭa fī mā bayn ahl al-sunna wa-l-shīʿa min ikhtilāf fī l-uṣūl wa-l-furūʿ*; a specimen of it was in Kurd ʿAlī's library and served as a source for his *Khiṭaṭ al-Shām*: "Ṣafaḥāt min tārīkh Jabal ʿĀmil", *al-ʿIrfān* 28/1 (Mar. 1938), 22–30 and 28/3 (May 1938), 225–31, on 22 note 1; regarding Aḥmad Riḍā (1872–1953), see al-Ziriklī I/125f.; Hānā Faraḥāt: *al-Thulāthī al-ʿāmilī fī ʿaṣr al-nahḍa. al-Shaykh Aḥmad Riḍā*, Beirut 1981; Mervin: *Un réformisme chiite*, 429 and index, s.v.; obituaries in *al-ʿIrfān* 40/9 (Jul. 1953), 976–78, 40/10 (Aug. 1953), 1095–97 and 41/5 (Mar. 1954), 513–18; see also *al-ʿIrfān* 69/5–7 (May–Jul. 1981), 112–26.

reproaches of Shiism. These included the slandering of the Prophet's companions, as well as the Shiites' alleged widespread ignorance of the Koran, which was neither recited in the mosques and nor memorized by anyone. Ẓāhir's appeal to become active in the efforts of the Islamic ecumene was left completely unanswered.[36] For the JT, Kurd ʿAlī's half-hearted words in his dealings with Shiism and his repeated apparent inclination toward polemic were adequate reason to silently declare him *persona non grata*, about whom no word was wasted in the *RI*. Other authors sympathetic to *taqrīb*, too, rarely considered Kurd ʿAlī's conciliatorily sounding utterances as a contribution to rapprochement among the Muslim denominations or judged them positively.[37]

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Kurd ʿAlī's attitude clearly indicates that the reform endeavours of individual scholars or intellectuals did not necessarily include recognition of the importance of ecumenical collaboration between Sunnis and Shiites.[38] This held true even when there was concurrence in specific items of importance with those scholars for whom both trains of thought conjoined. Thus, for example, after 1928, Kurd ʿAlī was among the most dedicated supporters of Muḥammad Muṣṭafā al-Marāghī and his reform concepts for the Azhar, sparing no criticism of al-Marāghī's opponent al-Ẓawāhirī. Kurd ʿAlī also had a long-standing friendship with Muṣṭafā ʿAbd al-Rāziq, which dated back to their student days together in pre-World War I France.[39] Neither al-Marāghī nor ʿAbd al-Rāziq, though, were able to convince Kurd ʿAlī regarding the *taqrīb* idea.

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[36] Kurd ʿAlī: *Mudhakkirāt*, III/740–45; cf. Jārallāh: *al-Washīʿa*, 24ff., 110ff., 125, 128ff.

[37] Compare, for example, Muḥammad Riḍā al-Muẓaffar's previously mentioned article from *al-Risāla* 3/1935/1612–14, or the kiss on the hand with which Kurd ʿAlī was alleged to have paid his respect to Abd al-Karīm al-Zanjānī after the latter's lecture in Damascus in December 1936; see Thābit: *al-Waḥda al-islāmiyya*, 103, as well as above, p. 104; also, Muḥammad Jawād Mughniyya cited approvingly (via Muḥammad Ḥasan al-Muẓaffar) the passage presented here from *Khiṭaṭ al-Shām* without casting any doubt on Kurd ʿAlī's authorship, see *al-Shīʿa wa-l-ḥākimūn*, 17f.

[38] The reverse thesis according to which *taqrīb* activities usually were accompanied by a general tendency to reformist thinking may be more valid if one considers the rapprochement movement as whole.

[39] Hermann: *Kulturkrise*, 48–50; his relationship to Maḥmūd Shaltūt chilled considerably after the latter committed a faux pas and wrote in a book dedication to Kurd ʿAlī, whose name he had forgotten: "As a sign of devotion to the illustrious XY"; ibid., 49 note 69; cf. also Kurd ʿAlī: *al-Muʿāṣirūn*, 373–88 (al-Marāghī) and 434–39 (ʿAbd al-Rāziq).

As far as the Azhar is concerned, after the Second World War more than a few reform-minded Azharīs found their way to the *taqrīb* movement and ultimately also to the JT and its journal. These included scholars who, since the beginning of the 1940s, had aired their dissatisfaction with al-Marāghī's flagging readiness for reform in the journal *al-Risāla*, since the *Majallat al-Azhar* had not offered them a forum for their suggestions. Prominent among them are the editor in chief of the *RI*, al-Madanī, his colleague from the management of the editorial staff, ʿAbd al-ʿAzīz Muḥammad ʿĪsā, as well as Muḥammad Yūsuf Mūsā, all of whom were among the employees at the time of the journal's founding.[40] They were joined in the course of the next few years by Muḥammad ʿAbdallāh Darāz (in 1950),[41] Muḥammad al-Bahayy (in 1951),[42] ʿAbd al-Mutaʿāl al-Ṣaʿīdī (in 1951)[43] and, a little later, Muḥammad ʿArafa (in 1955).[44] Al-Bahayy and al-Ṣaʿīdī in particular became journalistic pillars of the *RI* and with 24 and 30 articles respectively, were disproportionately represented in its columns. The former's articles were mainly of a more religio-philosophical nature, whereas the latter wrote extensively on historical topics as well as on Islamic unity.[45]

The continuous presence of the "radical reformers" on the pages of the *RI* should however, not be exaggerated, and their numerical predominance was counterbalanced by the presence of Muḥammad Farīd Wajdī among the journal's contributors. As the long-standing editor in chief and simultaneously director of the Azhar journal, he had been mainly responsible since the early 1940s for the walling-

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[40] Regarding the circle of *al-Risāla*, cf. Lemke: *Šaltūt*, 125, 149f.; concerning Mūsā (1899–1963): *MDA* IV/680–82; obituary in *MIDEO* 7/1962–63/430 and 8/1964–66/507–09; see also al-Bahayy: *Ḥayātī fī riḥāb the Azhar*, 55, 57.

[41] 1894–1958; in 1936, he was among the first group of seven *ʿulamāʾ* who were sent by the Azhar to study in France; see Lemke: *Šaltūt*, 106; in general, cf. al-Ziriklī VI/ 246; *MDA* IV/290f.; Kaḥḥāla X/212; obituary in *MA* 29/7 (Jan. 1958), 625f.; some of his *RI* articles are reprinted in al-Madanī: *Daʿwat al-taqrīb*, 77–93, 282–87, 346–67.

[42] 1905–1982; holder of various philosophy professorships at the Azhar and the Jāmiʿat al-Qāhira, he was also active in the Egyptian *awqāf* administration; obituary in *MA* 55/3 (Dec. 1982), 308–12; in general, cf. his autobiography *Ḥayātī fī riḥāb al-Azhar*, passim; al-Ṭahṭāwī: *Min al-ʿulamāʾ al-ruwwād fī riḥāb al-Azhar*, 5–42; see also Ende: *Arabische Nation*, 84f. note 5.

[43] Regarding him cf. above, p. 134 note 53.

[44] Cf. below, p. 277 note 117.

[45] A small selection of al-Ṣaʿīdī's articles is reprinted in al-Shīrāzī: *al-Waḥda al-islāmiyya*, 82–96 and 106–10, as well as in al-ʿAlāyilī: *Masʾalat al-taqrīb*, 129–47.

off of articles from reform-oriented authors.[46] However, in his articles, which had socio- and psycho-religious content,[47] there was neither a trace of these quarrels nor of the criticism aimed at al-Marāghī that had been voiced in *al-Risāla*.

In contrast to the treatment he had received in *al-Risāla*, al-Marāghī's memory was given highest honours in the columns of the *RI*, and one of his treatises was printed posthumously. In it, he had defended the legitimacy and necessity of *ijtihād* and also listed the conditions whose fulfilment was indispensable for every scholar in order to exercise *ijtihād*. In the preface to this article, al-Marāghī was acknowledged particularly because of his efforts to introduce comparative jurisprudence (*fiqh muqāran*) at the Azhar in a way that was not restricted to the Sunni *madhāhib* but also included Shiism.[48] For Moḥammad Taqī Qommī, the driving force behind the JT, the significance of al-Marāghī, who had once paved the way to the Azhar for him, was not open to debate.

It may be due to these circumstances that the *RI* was never involved in the discussion of inner-Azhari reform. Only in the first three years of its existence, a few articles even mentioned the University in their titles. These were, in fact, almost the only places in which the Azhar as an institution played any role, and here, too, it did not result in any discussion of concrete suggestions for reform.

Muḥammad ʿAbd al-Laṭīf Darāz, for instance, found it adequate to appeal to the Azhar in very general terms to do justice to its task and work for reform in the Islamic World so as to prove the consubstantiality of the words Islam, the Azhar, and *taqrīb* as they had been mentioned in the title of his article.[49] A short time later, he contended

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[46] Regarding him (1875–1954), see *MDA* III/1395–1400; al-Ziriklī VI/329 (who gives 1878 as his year of birth); Kaḥḥāla XI/126f. and M/722; obituary in *MA* 25/6 (Feb. 1954), 751; Wajdī was editor in chief of the *MA* from August 1933 to April 1952, see also Lemke: *Šaltūt*, 140 with note 2; Anwar al-Jundī: *Muḥammad Farīd Wajdī. Rāʾid al-tawfīq bayn al-ʿilm wa-l-dīn*, Cairo 1974, esp. 84–88; Muḥammad Farīd Wajdī: *Min maʿālim al-islām*, Cairo 1414/1994 (an anthology of Wajdī's articles from the *MA*, with an introduction and biographical sketch by Muḥammad Rajab al-Bayyūmī).

[47] Partially reprinted in al-Shīrāzī: *al-Waḥda al-islāmiyya*, 395–417; idem: *Eslām. Ā'īn-e hambastegī*, 154–59; al-Madanī: *Daʿwat al-taqrīb*, 98–103, 340–45; al-ʿAlāyilī: *Masʾalat al-taqrīb*, 40–43.

[48] *RI* 1/1949/347–57; reprinted in al-Shīrāzī: *al-Waḥda al-islāmiyya*, 290–301; cf. *RI* 3/1951/101–03.

[49] *RI* 1/1949/233–38 (reprinted in al-Shīrāzī: *al-Waḥda al-islāmiyya*, 492–97, and al-ʿAlāyilī: *Masʾalat al-taqrīb*, 82–86); regarding Darāz (born approx. 1900; d. between

that the University had made great headway in the modernization of its curricula since the era of Muḥammad ʿAbduh, a fact that, in his eyes, could not be said about the backward Ministry of Education. Therefore, he rigidly rejected any demand to adjust the Azhar's curricula to those of the state-supported schools.[50]

Only on one single occasion did the *RI* address a concrete matter of concern to the Azhar: ʿAbd al-ʿAzīz Muḥammad ʿĪsā proposed the establishment of a religious research institute to investigate the current situation of the various Islamic denominational groups in the Muslim countries in order to facilitate inner-Islamic interactions that were free from ignorance and fanaticism. As a fixed location for this institute that should comprise only *ʿulamāʾ* and no students, he recommended in the penultimate (!) line of his article the Azhar. It appeared to him best suited for this task, though given the existence of the JT and its affiliated *Dār al-taqrīb*, this request appears somewhat strange.[51]

The case of ʿAbd al-Majīd Salīm makes it possible to follow the subtle change that occurred in the *taqrīb* organization's relations with the Azhar. When Salīm, who was generally acknowledged as one of the JT's founding fathers, was appointed *Shaykh al-Azhar* for the first time in October 1950,[52] this step also marked a provisional climax of the organization's activities. In an editorial, Muḥammad Muḥammad al-Madanī not only extended the JT's obligatory congratulations to him, but at the same time, revealed the hope that some of Salīm's renown would also rub off on the organization.[53]

Salīm fulfilled these expectations immediately when he identified Islamic unity and reformist efforts in general as the Azhar's most important tasks. He further stressed that in the process of creating the conditions for these endeavours, i.e. the promotion of the mutual understanding (*tafāhum*), he viewed the mission of the JT as being in unison with the Azhar's.[54] He did not merely leave it, though, at well-

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1962 and 1967; cf. Crecelius: *The Ulama and the State*, 345), see Lemke: *Šaltūt*, 91 note 1, and Schulze: *Internationalismus*, 260.

[50] *RI* 2/1950/357–63; in a similar sense, al-Madanī, in *RI* 2/1950/186–92 (reprinted idem: *Daʿwat al-taqrīb*, 212–18), feared that adaptation to Western culture would ultimately lead to undermining Muslim tradition, which was why the Islamic scholars of former centuries should always stand at centre stage of the Azhar syllabi, though neither unconditionally nor uncritically.

[51] *RI* 1/1949/281–85 (reprinted in al-ʿAlāyilī: *Masʾalat al-taqrīb*, 113–17).

[52] *OM* 30/1950/184.

[53] *RI* 3/1951/3–6.

[54] Ibid., 22–25.

meaning statements of intent but made it possible for the organization, of which he was Vice-President, to receive broad approval and recognition by consciously linking both of his offices, thus putting rapprochement of the denominations under the Azhar's protective wing.[55]

Salīm's dismissal after only eleven months in office was the result of a quarrel with the court[56] and caused a perceptible caesura in the relations between the JT and the Azhar. The *RI* commented on the course of events, which *en passant* had made the JT aware of its own lack of influence on the Azhar's fate, with an unmistakable undertone that was full of praise for Salīm for having stayed loyal to his principles and not having become corrupted. With his "sacrifice" (*taḍḥiya*), the *RI* maintained, he had turned a new page in the Azhar's history and brought long-buried virtues back to light which every religious scholar should possess.[57]

Indirectly, these words were meant, of course, as a reproach for the rest of the Azhar establishment for having behaved opportunistically; henceforth, the JT kept itself at a greater distance from the Azhar as an institution and its official line. Salīm's second term of office as *Shaykh al-Azhar*, which was even shorter (Feb.–Sep. 1952)[58] than the first, was only acknowledged indirectly and tangentially.[59] Apart from occasional positive comments,[60] the *taqrīb* organization became increasingly critical of the Azhar in the succeeding years, particularly after autumn 1952, when anti-Shiite tendencies became noticeable in the Azhar's official journal.[61]

Among the very earliest JT activists, Maḥmūd Shaltūt was another high-ranking Azhar representative who achieved considerable repute in the inner-Islamic rapprochement.[62] In 1927, after completing his

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[55] Cf. the *RI*'s notices, previously cited, on the occasion of the visit of the Pakistani Minister Faẓlur Raḥmān in Cairo (*RI* 3/1951/99–101) and Salīm's message of greeting at the Karachi conference in February 1952 (ibid., 134–40); see also *MA* 22/1950–51/after 288; ʿAbd al-ʿAẓīm: *Mashyakhat al-Azhar*, II/118–20; al-Khafājī: *al-Azhar*, I/188f.; Qommī in *RI* 14/1964/191.

[56] *OM* 31/1951/213; al-Bahayy: *Ḥayātī fī riḥāb al-Azhar*, 58f.; al-Ṣaʿīdī: *Tārīkh al-iṣlāḥ*, II/4f.; Lemke: *Šaltūt*, 157.

[57] *RI* 3/1951/444–46.

[58] *OM* 32/1952/50f. and 266; al-Ṣaʿīdī: *Tārīkh al-iṣlāḥ*, II/7f.

[59] *RI* 4/1952/220f.; cf. Muḥammad Ḥilmī ʿĪsā in *RI* 4/1952/250–55, esp. 253. Also the printing of a comment of the Azhar *fatwā* committee regarding the question of women's participation in parliamentary elections (*RI* 4/1952/314–23) is to be seen in this connection; regarding the background of this *fatwā*, cf. Skovgaard-Petersen: *Defining Islam*, 177–79.

[60] For example *RI* 9/1957/106 (summaries of some lectures by ʿAlī al-Khafīf).

[61] Cf. in this regard below, chapter VIII.

[62] Concerning him (1893–1963), see al-Ziriklī VII/173; *MDA* IV/387–89; Kaḥḥāla

studies and his first teaching assignment at the Azhar annex in Alexandria, he came to the main campus in Cairo, where from the outset he emerged as one of the most energetic followers of al-Marāghī's reform efforts. The bond of mutual trust that he shared with ʿAbd al-Majīd Salīm for a quarter of a century also originated from this period.[63]

Because of his disappointment over al-Marāghī's waning zeal for reform, in 1941, Shaltūt followed the example of many other younger *ʿulamāʾ* and joined the journal *al-Risāla* as a regular contributor. In November of that year, he made his first public appearance with comprehensive reform ideas of his own.[64] Many points of his program identified him clearly as a scholar whose view went beyond both the Azhar and his own school of law. Among these, for example, was a demand to set criteria that would make it possible to classify illicit innovations (*bidaʿ*), the goal being to overcome existing disagreements. Yet another was the suggestion aimed directly at the Azhar to establish ties to Islamic organizations in other countries. His activity also extended to the area of comparative jurisprudence and resulted in the writing of a textbook on the subject in collaboration with the Professor of *Sharīʿa*, Muḥammad ʿAlī al-Sāyis. An obviously earlier version of the work *Muqāranat al-madhāhib fī l-fiqh*, which appeared in print for the first time in 1953, had, according to Muḥammad Muḥammad al-Madanī, already been in use in Azhar lectures since 1936.[65]

In later years, Shaltūt himself mentioned with some pride that he had delved into Shiite law from early on, and that in the field of jurisdiction, particularly in issuing *fatwā*s on civil status law, he willingly accepted its regulations.[66] Shaltūt's engagement in the JT, to

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M/774, *EI*² IX/260f. (W. Ende); ʿAbd al-ʿAẓīm: *Mashyakhat al-Azhar*, II/181–243; moreover, the three biographies by M.D. Abraham, W.D. Lemke and K. Zebiri.

[63] During the period when al-Ẓawāhirī served as Rector, Shaltūt had to pay for his support of al-Marāghī with his dismissal from the Azhar, which was immediately reversed, however, after al-Marāghī's return to office; see Lemke: *Šaltūt*, 54–65, 89–95; a personal remembrance of Shaltūt as his teacher comes from Maḥmūd al-Sharqāwī: "Shaykhī Maḥmūd Shaltūt", *MA* 35/6 (Jan. 1964), 678–82.

[64] Shaltūt's contribution (*al-Risāla* 9/1941/1415f.) is reviewed in detail by Lemke: *Šaltūt*, 134–41; cf. also al-Madanī in *MA* 35/6 (Jan. 1964), 651–56, esp. 651f.

[65] al-Madanī in *RI* 11/1959/381; cf. also Shaltūt/al-Sāyis: *Muqāranat al-madhāhib*, 6; Nuṣayr: *al-Kutub al-ʿarabiyya (. . .) 1926–1940* gives no evidence for the contention made in *RI* 3/1951/102 note 1 that the book was printed in 1936.

[66] *RI* 11/1959/108f.

which he belonged since its foundation, focused in the early years primarily on the writing of his Koran commentary which appeared regularly in the *RI*. Later, he also became active in the editing of Shiite works.[67]

In contrast with Salīm and Shaltūt, another high-ranking member of the Sunni Egyptian clergy was merely briefly involved in the *taqrīb* organization. Ḥasanayn Muḥammad Makhlūf,[68] who served as Egyptian State Muftī from 1946 to 1950 and from 1952 to 1954, contributed only a single short article to the *RI* that appeared on the occasion of his second appointment to the post[69] and in which he stressed the importance of the five Pillars of Islam in very general terms. However, he demonstrated no further interest in Shiite-Sunni rapprochement, not even mentioning it by name. This fact is not really surprising, given his apparent willingness to cooperate with Wahhabi scholars—in 1962 he was among the founding members of the Muslim World League in Mecca—as well his attitude toward the proper behaviour at the graves of saints,[70] which though not overtly so, was clearly critical of Shiism. It is therefore not far-fetched to view his piece in the *RI* as a rather non-committal message of greeting prompted by politeness more than by deep commitment to the ecumenical cause.[71]

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[67] Besides this, he penned only one single *fatwā*, which discussed the legality of offerning a monetary payment as a substitute for the ritual sacrifice during the pilgrimage; *RI* 1/1949/365–68; regarding this, cf. Shaltūt: *al-Fatāwā*, 166–75; concerning the role he played in the ecumenical discussion in general and the JT in particular from 1957, first as Vice-Rector and then as *Shaykh al-Azhar*, see below, chapter IX.

[68] 1890–1990; regarding him, see Skovgaard-Petersen: *Defining Islam*, 170–80; Schulze: *Internationalismus*, index s.v., esp. 123 with note 361, *al-Fatāwā al-islāmiyya min Dār al-iftā' al-miṣriyya*, vol. 7, Cairo 1982, 2686–88; obituary in *MA* 63/5 (Nov.-Dec. 1990), 566–71; 63/6 (Dec. 1990-Jan. 1991), 682–85; 63/7 (Jan.-Feb. 1991), 764–68; cf. also Yūsuf: *Tatimmat al-aʿlām*, I/140–42. Between Makhlūf's two terms of office, ʿAllām Naṣṣār (1891–1966) served as Muftī—the only Muftī who never went to the Azhar and never published any books or studies; cf. Skovgaard-Petersen, 171f.

[69] *RI* 4/1952/141–46; reprinted in al-Shīrāzī: *al-Waḥda al-islāmiyya*, 51–56 and idem: *Eslām. Ā'īn-e hambastegī*, 41–49; cf. *OM* 32/1952/95.

[70] Schulze: *Internationalismus*, 124f., 192.

[71] Makhlūf maintained, however, a relatively tolerant attitude also after 1952; at a time when Shiism was mentioned in the Azhar journal in anything but friendly terms, he clearly identified the Zaydis and Imamis as followers of a school of law in an article in the *MA*, putting them on par in this regard with the Sunni *madhāhib* (including the Ẓāhiriyya); see Makhlūf: "Zawāj al-muslim bi-l-kitābiyya", *MA* 26/1 (Aug. 1954), 14–18, esp. 16ff.; regarding the criticism of the JT he expressed at an advanced age, see below, pp. 373f.

Toward the end of the 1940s, the Azhar had begun to dispatch instructors to Beirut and Sidon, who, equipped with the official mandate of the Cairene university, were to lecture at certain religious institutes.[72] Initially four, their number was increased to 27 within a decade.[73] The isolated initiatives of some of them wrote an odd chapter on the margins of the story of the *taqrīb* movement as organized in the JT because during their Lebanon sojourns, some of these Azharīs were also, so to speak, incidentally involved in the field of inner-Islamic rapprochement.

One of the first envoys of the Azhar in Sidon was ʿAbd al-Ghanī ʿAwaḍ al-Rājiḥī who arrived there in December 1947 and immediately contacted the locally published journal, *al-ʿIrfān*. In the period that followed, its editor, Aḥmad ʿĀrif al-Zayn, allowed al-Rājiḥī to publish numerous articles that introduced the Azhar and its current activities to the Shiite reading public.[74] This included a brief dispute between al-Rājiḥī and the Shiite jurist and JT member Muḥammad Jawād Mughniyya, who had accused the Azhar (and, by the way, its Shiite counterpart Najaf) of religious fanaticism (*taʿaṣṣub*) and bemoaned the mutual ignorance of Sunnis and Shiites. Al-Rājiḥī flatly rejected this attack and referred to the activities of al-Marāghī, as whose disciple he identified himself, and the JT. He further declared that the differences of opinion among the followers of the individual denominations did not comprise the fundamental elements of the religion and were thus innocuous.[75]

Another Azhar emissary who briefly expounded the cause of Islamic unity was Muʿawwaḍ ʿAwaḍ Ibrāhīm. Together with his colleague Ibrāhīm al-Waqfī, he met with a series of Shiite scholars (among them ʿAbd al-Ḥusayn Sharaf al-Dīn) and discussed with them the convening of a conference to promote interconfessional rapprochement as well as other topics.[76] All of these endeavours were, as stated,

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[72] In Sidon, the *Kulliyyat al-maqāṣid al-islāmiyya* was the educational institution selected.

[73] Wizārat al-awqāf: *al-Azhar—tārīkhuhu wa-taṭawwuruhu*, Cairo 1964, 604f.; according to it, the number of members of the Azhar mission in Lebanon was as follows: 1952–54: 4; 1954/55: 7; 1955–57: 12; 1957/58: 13; (. . .) 1962–64: 27.

[74] Al-Rājiḥī in *al-ʿIrfān* 34/4 (Feb. 1948), 510–12 and 36/3 (Mar. 1949), 265–70 (about the Azhar activity in Lebanon); idem in *al-ʿIrfān* 35/6 (May 1948), 847–50 (about the newly appointed *Shaykh al-Azhar*, Muḥammad Maḥmūd al-Shinnāwī).

[75] Mughniyya in *al-ʿIrfān* 35/9 (Sep. 1948), 1348–52; al-Rājiḥī's reply in *al-ʿIrfān* 36/1 (Jan. 1949), 33–36; Mughniyya's subsequent retort in *al-ʿIrfān* 36/2 (Feb. 1949), 147–49 (reprinted in idem: *Maqālāt*, I/131–35); see also Ḥasan al-Amīn in *al-ʿIrfān* 36/3 (Mar. 1949), 310f., and ʿAbd al-Majīd Qadarī ibid., 312f.

[76] Ibrāhīm in *al-ʿIrfān* 45/9 (Jun. 1958), 817–22, esp. 821; also idem in *al-ʿIrfān*

personal initiatives with no real significance for the JT's development. Nevertheless they illustrate on how many not necessarily interrelated levels the dialogue between Sunni and Shiite scholars was carried out and how many activists of varying persuasions participated in this mosaic in one way or another.

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The commitment of the *'ulamā'* mentioned heretofore for the cause of *taqrīb* has never been seriously called into doubt. Depending on the eye of the beholder, their activities have either met with unanimous approval (from supporters of rapprochement) or have been equally unequivocally eschewed (by its enemies). In contrast, things are more ambiguous as far as the scholar to be discussed now is concerned; here the lines between supporters and sceptics of the ecumenical concept begin to blur. Muḥammad Abū Zahra, judge and professor of Islamic law at Cairo University,[77] was claimed by members of both groups as one of their own, whereas others complain about him just as vehemently. With his first article appearing only in autumn 1955, Abū Zahra joined the contributors to the *RI* relatively late, although he had previously commented on Sunni-Shiite relations in discussion venues not related to the JT.[78] His serialized pieces in the *taqrīb* journal dealt with socio-religious[79] and ethical[80] topics, the problem of an Islamic economic system,[81] as well as with the question

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47/1 (Sep. 1959), 64–68; cf. idem in *Minbar al-Islām* 28/11 (Jan. 1971), 65–70 and 29/4 (Jun. 1971), 137–39. Muṣṭafā al-Rāfi'ī (b. 1923), an Azhar-trained Lebanese judge who joined the JT immediately after its founding falls into the same category; cf. *Islāmunā*, 5–8; al-Ba'thī: *Shakhṣiyyāt islāmiyya*, 221–65; after the Iranian Revolution, he attempted to revive the *taqrīb* debate with the book *Islāmunā fī l-tawfīq bayn al-sunna wa-l-shī'a* and became an apologist for Iranian *taqrīb* politics; see *al-Imām al-sayyid*, 281–95, as well as his book *al-Imām al-Khumaynī. Labina asāsiyya fī sūsyūlūjiyyatihi wa-saikūlūjiyyatihi wa-siyāsatihi wa-fiqhihi*, Beirut 1414/1994.

[77] Regarding him (1898–1974), see al-Ziriklī VI/25f.; *MDA* IV/19–21 (in which his date of birth is given as 1888; in addition, al-Ḥilla al-Kubrā [sic!] is inadvertently cited as his birthplace instead of al-Maḥalla al-Kubrā); Kaḥḥāla M/585f. (which omits his works that explicitly refer to Shiism); obituary in *MA* 46/4 (May 1974), 464–66; further 'Abd al-Razzāq: *Abū Zahra*, passim.

[78] Cf. the minutes of debates arranged by the editors of the journal *Liwā' al-Islām* and printed in the issue 7/8 (Dec. 1953), 495–507 and 9/6 (Sep. 1955), 389–93.

[79] "al-Mujtama' al-qur'ānī", *RI* 7/1955/365–78; 8/1856/29–37, 129–38, 245–52, 357–65.

[80] "al-Khulq al-islāmī", *RI* 9/1957/31–37, 129–34, 241–46, 355–63.

[81] "al-Iqtiṣād al-islāmī", *RI* 11/1959/23–31, 125–40, 240–54, 360–72; 12/1960/16–27.

of Islamic unity.[82] In addition, in a string of individual articles, he presented his views regarding rapprochement of the denominations, the central points of which may be summarized as follows:[83]

1. It is of fundamental importance to distinguish between inner-Islamic feuds (*khuṣūma*) and the differences of opinion (*ikhtilāf*) among the jurists regarding specific points.[84] Referring to Jaʿfar al-Ṣādiq, Abū Zahra vehemently rejected the former for being an expression of religious fanaticism, while equally emphatically defending the latter, terming it a "proof of the intellectual liveliness" of Islamic law.[85]

2. The differences between Sunnis and Shiites are by no means greater than those among the individual Sunni legal schools.[86]

3. This means that Shiism is a *madhhab* like the others, and its progenitor and sixth Imam Jaʿfar stands on par with the founders of the Sunni legal schools. Consequently, Abū Zahra concluded that certainly not everything related about Jaʿfar—including some inconsistent traditions or even his deification—or everything ascribed to him by Shiism was to be accepted. As a neologism for the newly revised relations between the Sunnis and the Shiites, he proposed the use of the term *madhhabiyya* instead of *ṭāʾifiyya*, that is, a kind of patriotism toward the legal schools[87] instead of sectarianism.

4. Under no circumstances, though, was rapprochement of the legal schools to be striven for, as this would inevitably lead to the loss of their identity and ultimately result in their fusion. Abū Zahra categorically rejected both the establishment of a single, united *madhhab* and the complementary tendency to withdraw totally from the concept of the legal schools (*lā-madhhabiyya*). He regarded a completely homogeneous interpretation of Islamic legal norms as neither possible nor even desirable if only due to the Muslims' geographical diversity, since the common welfare toward which jurisdiction is to be oriented varied from region from region. Rather, the goal was to be the rapprochement of the Muslims, which meant unifying them in the spirit of the Islamic culture, which he understood as uniform and indivisible.

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[82] "al-Waḥda al-islāmiyya", *RI* 10/1958/28–35, 138–45, 242–50, 352–61; parts 1, 2 and 4 are reprinted in al-Shīrāzī: *al-Waḥda al-islāmiyya*, 111–40; this series of articles also formed the basis for his book of the same name that was first published in 1971.

[83] Regarding points 1–4 of the following list, cf. Abū Zahra: *al-Mīrāth*, 1–13, and idem: *al-Imām al-Ṣādiq*, 3–21; concerning the first-mentioned work, see also the remarks of Muḥammad Bahjat al-Bīṭār in *RAAD* 30/1955/648–51.

[84] "Ikhtilāf", *EI*² III/1061f. (J. Schacht).

[85] Abū Zahra: *al-Imām al-Ṣādiq*, 7.

[86] Concerning this argument in detail, cf. below, pp. 235ff.

[87] The basic meaning of *madhhabiyya*, commonly rendered as "sectarianism" (cf. e.g. Wehr's *Dictionary of Modern Written Arabic*, s.v. dh-h-b), does not do justice to Abū Zahra's intentions.

The *taqrīb* idea was thus to be elevated from a merely juristic level to a general cultural-philosophical one.[88]

5. As a final goal of this development, Abū Zahra was explicit in saying that he was not arguing in favour of the establishment of a homogeneous Islamic state encompassing all Muslims. Instead, he pleaded for the founding of an Islamic League (*jāmiʿa islāmiyya*) in which the individual, sovereign Muslim states should cooperate in political, economic and cultural areas so as to help forge a psychological unity (*ittiḥād al-mashāʿir al-nafsiyya*)[89] that was preferable to an ethnic (*ʿunṣūrī*) one. As essential elements of what he termed "comprehensive brotherhood" (*al-ukhuwwa al-shāmila*), he focused on the political significance of the pilgrimage, which in his vision should be accompanied by an annual conference, as well as on the promotion of the Arabic language as the constituting cultural feature of Muslim unity.[90] Given his reticence in involving the existing schools of law in the rapprochement process, he could also do without discussing them in the confederation of states that he was sketching.

The reaction that Abū Zahra, who with proper justification may be considered one of the foremost Sunni experts on Shiism of the twentieth century, provoked with his writings on Shiite Islam[91] and ecumenism was controversial from the outset and has remained so to this day. He was absolutely conscious of this fact and, in a certain manner, even seems to have approved of it. Muḥammad Jawād Mughniyya recalls in his memoirs how, at a conference in Damascus in 1960 about the philosopher al-Ghazzālī (d. 1111), he met with Abū Zahra and how, during a long conversation, the latter confided to him his problems with the representatives of both denominations: "When I wrote the book *al-Imām al-Ṣādiq*, I was sure that I would equally

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[88] Abū Zahra: *al-Mīrāth*, 8–12; cf. *Liwāʾ al-Islām* 7/8 (Dec. 1953), 502. It is noteworthy that he also interpreted the JT's activity exactly in this sense; *al-Mīrāth*, 9 note 1: "From its program, it is clear that it is not working for a fusion of the schools of law, but rather rapprochement of the Muslims." See also Abū Zahra: *al-Waḥda al-islāmiyya*, 276–79.

[89] Abū Zahra: *al-Waḥda al-islāmiyya*, 238; regarding this section in general, cf. ibid., 237–44; *RI* 10/1958/31ff., 356–61; *Liwāʾ al-Islām* 7/8 (Dec. 1953), 500–02; Z.I. Ansari: "Contemporary Islam and Nationalism. A Case Study of Egypt", *WI* 7/1961/3–38, esp. 13–15.

[90] *RI* 10/1958/353f. and *al-Waḥda al-islāmiyya*, 335f. (pilgrimage) and 283–93 (Arabic language); already in 1952 Muḥammad ʿAlī ʿAllūba had stressed in the *RI* that only Arabic could be the common language of Muslims and in this connection even argued for the Arabization of Pakistan; see *RI* 4/1952/20–23.

[91] Besides the works mentioned so far, his studies of Shiite law also include *Muḥāḍarāt fī uṣūl al-fiqh al-jaʿfarī* and *Tārīkh al-madhāhib al-islāmiyya*, esp. I/10–64 and II/47ff.

annoy both Sunnis and Shiites because I said neither what the former had hoped to hear nor everything the latter expected."[92]

Some (in the majority Shiite) scholars who through their own publications identified themselves as advocates of inner-Islamic rapprochement did not hesitate to include Abū Zahra among their own number and categorically credit him with being an author who had achieved a great deal for the ecumenical idea.[93] The reactions of those closer to the JT, though, were more differentiated. Whereas the Iraqi *ʿālim* Muḥammad Ṣādiq al-Ṣadr did not spare his criticism and defended himself against supposed allegations by Abū Zahra (earning the approval of the editorial staff in the process),[94] the lawyer Tawfīq al-Fukaykī, likewise from Iraq, was at least prepared to acknowledge Abū Zahra's immense scholarship. Even if his comments about Twelver Shiism contained numerous mistakes and wrong interpretations and thus were liable to criticism, al-Fukaykī claimed, he was nonetheless a "brilliant person" (*jahbadh*) who had thoroughly examined Shiite law.[95] Finally, even Muḥammad Jawād Mughniyya became critical of Abū Zahra in two lengthy book reviews without, however, resorting to polemic.[96]

In contrast to these, there were other authors who not only criticized the Egyptian jurist for some alleged misjudgements but who counted him specifically among those responsible for deepening the rift between Sunnis and Shiites. Murtaḍā al-Raḍawī described Abū Zahra, whom he obviously did not know personally, as "arrogant"[97]

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[92] Mughniyya: *Tajārib*, 298.

[93] Examples of these exclusively positive judgements include al-Bahnasāwī: *al-Ḥaqāʾiq al-ghāʾiba*, 8f. and 65f.; Ibrāhīm: *al-Sunna wa-l-shīʿa*; 22; Mūsā ʿIzz al-Dīn: "Ḥawl al-waḥda al-islāmiyya", *al-ʿIrfān* 47/5 (Jan. 1960), 412–16, esp. 415f.; Najāt: *ʿAwl wa taʿṣīb*, 600; Salām: *al-Waḥda al-ʿaqāʾidiyya*, 35f.; Shirrī: *Shīʿe wa tohmathā-ye nā-rawā*, 115.

[94] *RI* 1/1949/358–64, esp. 362 and 364; regarding al-Ṣadr (b. 1915), see *MMI* III/189f.; *GAL* SII/808; *Dharīʿa* XIV/271 (no. 2548); al-Madanī / al-Zuʿbī: *al-Islām bayn al-sunna wa-l-shīʿa*, I/131f.

[95] al-Fukaykī in *RI* 12/1960/65–73, esp. 69; cf. *RI* 2/1950/304–10; concerning al-Fukaykī, see below, note 197.

[96] *RI* 10/1958/36–49 (about *Muḥāḍarāt fī uṣūl al-fiqh al-jaʿfarī*); *al-ʿIrfān* 48/7 (Feb. 1961), 656–62 and 48/8 (Mar. 1961), 765–69 (about *al-Imām al-Ṣādiq*); both reviews were reprinted in Mughniyya: *Min hunā wa-hunāk*, 244–59 and 158–63; another critical voice from this group is al-Ḥakīm: *Fikrat al-taqrīb*, 16.

[97] In order to justify his judgement to his readers, he chose the form of a dream narrative. During a Cairo sojourn in 1958, Abū Zahra appeared to him in a dream and asked what the Shia actually thought of him. Al-Raḍawī answered that the Shiites considered him arrogant (*mukābir*) and fanatic (*mutaʿaṣṣib*), since he did not give adequate consideration to the comments of Shiite scholars. An anonymous Sunni scholar to whom he related his dream later confirmed that Abū Zahra was, in fact, arrogant; al-Raḍawī: *Maʿa rijāl al-fikr*, 27f.

and put him on a list of personalities from past and present who in his view had appealed for sectarian thinking (*ṭā'ifiyya*).[98]

The most critical assessment of Abū Zahra, though, was made by the south Lebanese Shiite scholar Ḥusayn Yūsuf Makkī al-ʿĀmilī. In an apologetic of almost 400 pages, he drew a sharp distinction between the Imamite doctrine of belief and Abū Zahra's interpretation of Shiism. In particular the Egyptian's above-mentioned view that Jaʿfar al-Ṣādiq had been nothing but a *mujtahid* on par with the founders of the Sunni legal schools enraged al-ʿĀmilī and brought him to place particular emphasis on the doctrine of the infallibility of the Imams.[99]

Scholars of Sunni origin commented on Abū Zahra's books about Shiism comparatively rarely. In a biography put out by the Muslim Brotherhood's Cairo publishing house (*Dār al-iʿtiṣām*) in the middle of the 1980s, Shiism was skipped over completely with conspicuous silence. Instead, in the chapter "Abū Zahra and the call for Islamic unity", the author, Abū Bakr ʿAbd al-Razzāq, chose to concentrate exclusively on describing Abū Zahra's pan-Islamic comments as a struggle against Western imperialism.[100] Even within the *taqrīb* discussion proper, i.e. in the articles of the *RI* and independent publications by authors close to the JT, this topic was also not covered in any greater detail.[101]

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[98] Idem: *al-Burhān*, 11f.; other prominent scholars in this enumeration (whose attitude vis-à-vis the Shia was generally even more unambiguously polemical) are Ibn Ḥazm, Ibn Taymiyya, Muḥammad Kurd ʿAlī, Mūsā Jārallāh and Muḥibb al-Dīn al-Khaṭīb.

[99] al-ʿĀmilī: *ʿAqīdat al-shīʿa*, passim, esp. 12ff.; regarding this book, see *al-ʿIrfān* 51/1 (Jul. 1963), 104–08 and Arkoun: "Remembrement", passim; another Shiite refutation (that has not been available to me) is ʿAbdallāh al-Subaytī: *Maʿa Abī Zahra fī kitābihi al-Imām al-Ṣādiq*, s.l., s.d.; Abū Zahra's Sunni critics were also not appeased by his heaping particular praise on those reform Shiite theologians who opposed the practice of cursing the Prophet's companions (*sabb al-ṣaḥāba*); see *al-Imām al-Ṣādiq*, 12.

[100] ʿAbd al-Razzāq: *Abū Zahra*, 210–15.

[101] Somewhat of an exception to this was Maḥmūd Abū Rayya, who inserted a retort to Abū Zahra in the third edition of his book about Abū Hurayra, which appeared in 1969, after Abū Zahra had written a positive review of a pamphlet penned by Muḥammad ʿAjjāj al-Khaṭīb entitled *Abū Hurayra rāwiyat al-Islām* (Cairo 1962); this book, in turn, dealt with Abū Rayya's controversial work *Aḍwā' ʿalā al-sunna al-muḥammadiyya*; see Abū Rayya: *Shaykh al-maḍīra*, 274ff., 293–98; cf. Juynboll: *The Authenticity of the Tradition Literature*, 40; Ḥusayn Yūsuf Makkī al-ʿĀmilī, cited above, described Abū Rayya as, up to that point (i.e. to 1963), the only positive exception among Sunni commentators on the *ḥadīth*, in contrast particularly to Abū Zahra, who abused Shiism; *ʿAqīdat al-shīʿa*, 9; the Shia themselves were not directly mentioned in Abū Rayya's reply to Abū Zahra; regarding the reaction of Azhar scholars to Abū Rayya's book, see below, p. 356.

Moreover, even among those writers who openly expressed their animosity toward rapprochement with the Shia, the assessment of Abū Zahra's role in the *taqrīb* debate is far from uniform. Maḥmūd al-Mallāḥ attacked him sharply for having participated in an ecumenical discussion at which Abū Zahra had given positive expression to the possibility of *taqrīb*, especially since the reasons for the Islamic rift had been overcome in the meantime.[102] On the other hand, ʿAlī Aḥmad al-Sālūs gave him credit for an almost diametrically opposed intent: it was Abū Zahra who had finally confirmed his judgement that ʿAbd al-Ḥusayn Sharaf al-Dīn's *al-Murājaʿāt* was little more than a crude slander of the Azhar *shaykh* Salīm al-Bishrī.[103]

Abū Zahra's engagement in the JT lasted, as was the case with many other well-known activists, only until the organization's crisis in 1960/61. In the following years, he increasingly turned his attention toward the Saudi-founded Muslim World League in whose aims he saw his idea of Islamic unity more clearly reflected and in whose journal he was from now on frequently represented.[104] In these contributions, the dialogue with Shiism was no longer on the agenda.

Similar to the situation of Abū Zahra, the participation of the Egyptian historian Aḥmad Amīn[105] in the *taqrīb* organization and its journal was also highly controversial. In the first four years of the *RI* he contributed twelve items, thus becoming one its most active authors.[106] This is all the more remarkable as approximately two decades earlier he had caused one of the most famous inner-Islamic controversies of the twentieth century after having voiced some casual, yet unmistakably critical remarks against Shiism. In just a few pages of his 1928 work *Fajr al-Islām*, in which he dealt with early Islamic intellectual history, he had vigorously taken issue with the Shiite

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[102] al-Mallāḥ: *al-Ārāʾ al-ṣarīḥa*, 89–96; as to the reason for his polemic, see *Liwāʾ al-Islām* 9/6 (Sep. 1955), 389–93.

[103] al-Sālūs: *ʿAqīdat al-shīʿa*, in 180; cf. Ende: "Azhar", 317f.

[104] Schulze: *Internationalismus*, 358.

[105] Regarding him (1886–1954), see al-Ziriklī I/101; *MDA* II/135–40; Kaḥḥāla I/168, XIII/357 and M/41; *EI*^{2} I/279 (H.A.R. Gibb); *OM* 34/1954/291; detailed obituary in *OM* 35/1955/76–89 (U. Rizzitano); Perrin: "Le creuset", passim; W. Shepard: *The Faith of a Modern Muslim Intellectual. The Religious Aspects and Implications of the Writings of Ahmad Amīn*, New Delhi 1982, as well as his important autobiography *Ḥayātī*, which has been translated into English and Spanish (cf. below, bibliography).

[106] In this respect, the sentence D. Khalid wrote about Aḥmad Amīn: "Moreover he never worked for any pan-Islamist organization", must be revised; "Aḥmad Amīn—Modern Interpretation of Muslim Universalism", *Islamic Studies* 8/1969/47–93, on 64.

Imamate doctrine, the belief in the Mahdī, and the figure of ʿAbdallāh b. Saba and had come to the conclusion that Shiism strictly speaking was nothing but a motley collection of Jewish, Christian, and Zoroastrian inventions. Even worse:

> In fact Shiism (*al-tashayyuʿ*) has been a refuge for all those intent on the destruction of Islam out of enmity or hatred who wanted to introduce doctrines of their Jewish, Christian, Zoroastrian or Indian forefathers and who were bent on the independence of their country and on attacking the (Islamic) empire; they all used the love of *ahl al-bayt* as a veil behind which they could arbitrarily place their fabrication.[107]

These few key sentences sufficed to cause an outright tempest of indignation among the Shiite clergy that burst forth in an unprecedented series of more or less extensive refutations. The most important and influential apologetic among them was Muḥammad al-Ḥusayn Āl Kāshif al-Ghiṭāʾ's previously cited *Aṣl al-shīʿa wa-uṣūluhā*,[108] published in 1932.

A year earlier, during a visit to Iraq, Amīn had experienced the emotions of the Iraqi Shiites for himself when, in his presence, the address of a Baghdādi preacher named Kāẓim al-Kāẓimī incited the reported 4000 listeners in the Ḥusayniyya of Karkh in Baghdad in a way that almost cost Amīn his life.[109] In Najaf, Amīn met with Muḥammad al-Ḥusayn, and in reply to the latter's reproach attempted to excuse his anti-Shiite invectives by remarking that he had not been able to study the Shiite sources adequately, only a small selection having been accessible to him. His Shiite interlocutor took this evasion as a welcome reason to complain about the Sunnis' general

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[107] Amīn: *Fajr al-Islām*, 266–78, quotation 276, repeated confirmation 278.

[108] Cf. above, pp. 100ff.; other Shiite replies come from Muḥsin al-Amīn: *ASh* I/46–69; Muḥammad Ṣādiq al-Ṣadr: *al-Shīʿa*, Baghdad 1933 (see *Dharīʿa* XIV/271); ʿAbdallāh al-Subaytī: *Taḥt rāyat al-ḥaqq*, Sidon 1933 (see idem: *al-Mubāhala*, 13–16 as well as *al-ʿIrfān* 24/3 [Oct. 1933], 328 and 33/7 [May 1947], 830; Dāwūd: *Nazarāt*, 163–87); al-Amīnī: *al-Ghadīr*, III/310; al-Fukaykī: *al-Muʿa*, 19, 33; Najāt: *ʿAwl wa taʿṣīb*, 164–72; al-Mīlād: *Khiṭāb al-waḥda al-islāmiyya*, 24–27; cf. also Ende: *Arabische Nation*, 125ff.; Enayat: *Islamic Political Thought*, 43ff., and D. Khalid: "Some Aspects of Neo-Muʿtazilism", *Islamic Studies* 8/1969/319–47, esp. 336–41.

[109] Cf. Amīn: *My Life*, 173f.; al-Shīrāzī: *Eslām. Ā'īn-e hambastegī*, 27f.; Kāmil Muḥammad Muḥammad ʿUwayda: *Aḥmad Amīn. al-Mufakkir al-islāmī al-kabīr*, Beirut 1415/1995, 109–11; the preacher alluded to might be Kāẓim Āl Nūḥ, mentioned in *MMI* III/26f. and *ASh* IX/10 (1885–1959), a scholar from Kāẓimiyya who recited a *qaṣīda* in the Ḥusayniyya and who dealt with Sunni criticism of the Shia also on other occasions; cf. Ende: *Arabische Nation*, 143 note 4.

ignorance of Shiism, which he wanted to put an end to with his book once and for all.[110]

The conversation of the two opponents did not lead to any reduction in the distance of their points of view, and in the period that followed, positive comments of Shiite scholars about Aḥmad Amīn remained extremely rare. Only Muḥammad Riḍā al-Muẓaffar acknowledged Amīn's words of praise for Abū ʿAbdallāh al-Zanjānī's book *Tārīkh al-qurʾān*,[111] as this had cast a mitigating light on previous contentions.[112] Also, the *ʿulamāʾ* of the ecumenical movement did not appear particularly inclined to consider the Egyptian historian as a comrade-in-arms in their debate.[113]

The negative reactions caused by his previous comments, however, did not by any means keep Aḥmad Amīn from becoming actively involved as a member of the JT from the very beginning. In doing so, he failed to see any contradiction to the attitude represented in *Fajr al-Islām* because, the way he viewed it, he had never sought to hurt the feelings of the Shiites by publishing this book. In his opinion the entire episode was a misunderstanding caused by his critics' not having distinguished between a scientific investigation (as intended by him) and the religious convictions of the legal schools (*al-ʿaqāʾid al-madhhabiyya*). He demanded that both Sunnism and Shiism had to be open to research regardless of the possible results, and he pointed out that in his work, he had also not spared criticism of the Sunni position.[114]

His regular contributions to the *RI* were mostly devoted to general

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[110] *Aṣl al-shīʿa*, 82–84; al-Khāqānī: *Maʿa al-khuṭūṭ al-ʿarīḍa*, 23f., found Amīn's excuse more repulsive than his comments themselves; regarding Amīn's visit in Najaf, during which he was accompanied by ʿAbd al-Wahhāb ʿAzzām, see A.M.H. Mazyad: *Aḥmad Amīn (Cairo 1886–1954). Advocate of Social and Literary Reform in Egypt*, Leiden 1963, 28; ʿAlī: *al-Imām Sharaf al-Dīn*, 32f.; al-Khāqānī: *Shuʿarāʾ*, VIII/104–12; Sāṭiʿ al-Ḥuṣrī: *Mudhakkirātī fī l-ʿIrāq*, Beirut 1968, II/64–80, esp. 68f.; Ṣāliḥ al-Jaʿfarī: "al-Jāmiʿa al-miṣriyya fī l-Najaf", *al-ʿIrfān* 21/3 (Mar. 1931), 308–16; *al-ʿIrfān* 36/9 (Sep. 1949), 358.

[111] Cf. *Dharīʿa*, III/275; regarding the author, see above, p. 104 note 84.

[112] *al-Risāla* 3/1935/1612–14, esp. 1612.

[113] Cf. al-Madanī's and al-Zuʿbī's assessment that Amīn's comments (alongside Muṣṭafā Ṣādiq al-Rāfiʿī's book *Iʿjāz al-qurʾān*) were the very worst kind of "rāfiḍite illness" that had been dumped upon the Shia; *al-Islām bayn al-sunna wa-l-shīʿa*, II/91; regarding al-Rāfiʿī (1880–1937), see Ende: *Arabische Nation*, 125 note 5; Muṣṭafā al-Shakʿa: *Muṣṭafā Ṣādiq al-Rāfiʿī kātiban ʿarabiyyan wa-mufakkiran islāmiyyan*, Beirut 1970.

[114] Interview with Amīn by the Lebanese journalist Salwā al-Ḥawmānī, *al-ʿIrfān* 40/8 (Jun. 1953), 854–56, esp. 854f.; see also Amīn: *My Life*, 173.

topics like "the task of religion in society"[115] and the Islamic civilization's relations with the West. Yet at the same time, he did not seek to avoid the conflict between Sunnis and Shiites. In an article about Islamic tolerance, he identified this dispute as one caused exclusively by politics, which was not altered by the fact that from time to time propagandists from destructive denominations cropped up and struck a religious tune. But religion, he concluded, was not to be made responsible for the crimes of politics.[116]

The reaction of the Shiite participants in the *taqrīb* discussion to Amīn's JT role was minimal and ambivalent. Muḥammad Ṣādiq al-Ṣadr, in his above-mentioned criticism of Abū Zahra, remained totally unmoved by Amīn's latest remarks and referred instead to his own 1933 work directed at Aḥmad Amīn.[117] On the other hand, Muḥammad Jawād Mughniyya temporarily made himself the advocate for Amīn's putative *volte-face* and, embellishing it with a benevolent comment, quoted the central sentences from Amīn's *RI* essay of 1949 in the *ʿIrfān*.[118] He also immediately applauded Amīn's demand, which soon followed in the *taqrīb* journal, that (Sunni) Muslims should once again push wide open the door of *ijtihād*, which in earlier times they themselves had closed.[119] Amīn's later work *Yawm al-Islām* finally, once and for all, convinced Mughniyya that the author had now recognized the error of his ways in past years, when he had irresponsibly quarreled with the Shia and started an unnecessary fight.[120]

The break between Aḥmad Amīn and the JT came in 1952. Its background had already been laid one year earlier with the publication of Amīn's book *al-Mahdī wa-l-mahdawiyya*[121] in which he repeated and reinforced the criticism he had expressed previously about the Shiites' belief in the Mahdī. Once again, the result was an energetic

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[115] This was also the title of his first piece in *RI* 1/1949/26–29; reprinted in al-Madanī: *Daʿwat al-taqrīb*, 94–97; regarding this and two other contributions (al-Madanī, 300–03 and 414–16), see Fleischhammer: "*Daʿwat al-taqrīb*", 39–41.

[116] Amīn in *RI* 1/1949/244–49; cf. al-Ghazzālī: *Ẓalām min al-gharb*, 276f.

[117] *RI* 1/1949/363f.; see above, note 94.

[118] *al-ʿIrfān* 36/10 (Oct. 1949), 1030–32, esp. 1031f.; reprinted in Mughniyya: *Min hunā wa-hunāk*, 187–90; cf. idem: *Tajārib*, 208f.

[119] Amīn in *RI* 3/1951/146–49, esp. 149; comment by ʿAlī ʿAbd al-Rāziq ibid., 246f.; Mughniyya in *RI* 4/1952/28–31; see also Göbel: *Moderne schiitische Politik*, 120f.

[120] Mughniyya: "Aḥmad Amīn yaʿtarif fī ayyāmihi al-akhīra", in: idem: *al-Shīʿa fī l-mīzān*, 70–74; a protest against this article is in Ḥammū: *Aḍwāʾ ʿalā l-shīʿa*, 50–52.

[121] Cairo 1951.

protest from Iraqi Shiite scholars, foremost of whom were Muḥammad Amīn Zayn al-Dīn[122] and Muḥammad ʿAlī al-Zuhayrī.[123]

The editor of the *Irfān*, Aḥmad ʿĀrif al-Zayn, dealt things a final blow when, infuriated, he remarked in a brief review of al-Zuhayrī's book that the Shiites were gradually getting fed up with continually being slandered by Aḥmad Amīn and those of his ilk such as Muḥammad Kurd ʿAlī and Aḥmad Ḥasan al-Zayyāt. In this connection he also referred smugly to Amīn's affiliation with the *taqrīb* organization.[124]

After the appearance of Amīn's book, even Muḥammad Jawād Mughniyya felt forced to dissociate himself from his temporary defence of the author again and accused Amīn, despite his having joined the JT, of actually having remained a *kātib ṭaʾifī*. This was already demonstrated in Amīn's relying mainly on the works of Sunni authors when making his judgements and not taking Shiite works into adequate consideration. With this stubborn ignorance, Mughniyya closed embitteredly, he had remained true to the approach used in all his former writings about Shiism.[125]

The JT could not, or did not want to, stand firm in the face of this amount of pressure despite a letter of appeasement to the *ʿIrfān*;[126] it was Moḥammad Taqī Qommī himself who immediately published an appropriate article in the *RI*. Without mentioning Aḥmad Amīn by name even once and leaving it at the euphemism "a known author", he attacked him harshly and blamed him in particular for working with Orientalist, ergo non-Islamic, and ultimately hostile methods. As on former occasions, according to Qommī, he had again excused his disregard of Shiite sources by claiming that he only had a small number at his disposal. In sum, the book contained nothing

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[122] *Maʿa al-duktūr Aḥmad Amīn*, Najaf 1951; see *MMN* 325 (no. 1419); review in *al-ʿIrfān* 39/2 (Jan. 1952), 272f. and 39/9 (Aug. 1952), 1138; regarding the author (b. 1915), see *MMI* III/104, and *RF* II/650; see also his piece about Aḥmad Amīn in *al-Hādī* 2/2 (Sep. 1972), 125–33.

[123] *al-Mahdī wa-Aḥmad Amīn*, Najaf 1950; see *MMN* 356 (no. 1601); the preface to this book was written by Muḥammad al-Ḥusayn Āl Kāshif al-Ghiṭāʾ, Amīn's main opponent in 1931; regarding the author (1915–1965), see *MMI* III/215; *RF* II/647.

[124] *al-ʿIrfān* 39/3 (Feb. 1952), 403; in the same issue, he also published a letter of protest from a group calling themselves "the Brethren of the spiritual renaissance in Iraq" (*Ikhwān al-nahḍa al-rūḥiyya fī l-ʿIrāq*) and furthermore requested that the JT fulfil its supreme duty and combat those instigating division among the Muslims; ibid., 393

[125] Mughniyya: *ʿAqliyyāt islāmiyya*, 472–77.

[126] *al-ʿIrfān* 39/10 (Sep. 1952), 1268.

of benefit for the *umma* but rather stirred up the dark forces of enmity and hatred amongst Muslims.[127]

Although Qommī made the effort to end on a conciliatory note and keep open the possibility for Aḥmad Amīn to continue collaborating with the JT, the latter presumably did not see any basis for further cooperation. After having made contributions in 12 of the first 13 issues, he abruptly stopped his activity for the *RI* and appears to have left the JT altogether.[128]

As might be expected, Amīn's intermezzo in the *taqrīb* organization did not have a positive effect on his reputation among the Shiites, last but not least due to its unpleasant end. Until today his name pops up repeatedly whenever Shiite authors have reason to refer to those whom they consider dogged slanderers of their denomination in the twentieth century.[129] On the other hand, those very passages of Amīn's works that came under crossfire from the Shiite *'ulamā'* still serve the needs of present-day Sunni polemicists as welcome ammunition for their own attacks against any inner-Islamic rapprochement.[130]

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[127] Qommī in *RI* 4/1952/147–51, esp. 149ff.

[128] At any rate, his remark in the *'Irfān* interview quoted in note 114 may be interpreted as saying that he "had been" (*kuntu*) a member of what he called *Lajnat al-taqrīb bayn al-sunna wa-l-shī'a: al-'Irfān* 40/8 (Jun. 1953), 855.

[129] Moḥammad Ḥosayn Ṭabāṭabā'ī: "Shī'e", *Maktab-e Tasayyo'* 2/Mai 1960/passim, esp. 13–16 (alongside Mūsā Jārallāh and Muḥammad Thābit); 'Alī: *al-Imām Sharaf al-Dīn*, 48f. (alongside al-Sibā'ī, al-Khaṭīb, Kurd 'Alī, al-Nashāshībī and al-Nuṣūlī); Fashshāhī's preface to Kamare'ī: *Payām-e Īrān*, 8; al-Raḍawī: *al-Burhān*, 11; Ja'far al-Muhājir: "al-Ḥiwār al-islāmī—al-islāmī (. . .)", in: *al-Imām al-sayyid 'Abd al-Ḥusayn Sharaf al-Dīn*, 157–65, esp. 164 (with al-Nashāshībī and Rashīd Riḍā); see also the two al-Anṭākī converts: *Li-mādhā ikhtart*, 13, and al-Tījānī: *Thumma ihtadayt*, 28f.; an exception to this general attitude is held by Moḥammad Wā'eẓ-Zādeh, the Secretary-General of the *Majma'-e taqrīb* founded in Tehran in 1990; in a short history of the ecumenical movement, he includes Aḥmad Amīn among those who supported *taqrīb* from the very beginning; see *Mishkāt* 28/1990/7; regarding the Iranian *Majma'-e taqrīb*, see below, pp. 382f.

[130] The first step was taken by Maḥmūd al-Mallāḥ when he defended Amīn (who had already passed away) against Qommī's criticism in the *RI*; *Tārīkhunā l-qawmī*, 56ff.; further idem: *al-Ārā' al-ṣarīḥa*, 38, and *al-Niḥla al-aḥmadiyya*, 66ff.; two more recent examples are Gharīb: *Wa-jā'a daur al-majūs*, 152, and Daqs: *al-Ftidā'āt al-bāṭiniyya*, 10, which both cite the above-quoted passage from *Fajr al-Islām* approvingly. On the other hand, criticism of Amīn by Sunni authors is relatively rare; cf. Huwaydī: *Īrān min al-dākhil*, 323f.; Dāwūd: *Naẓarāt*, 165–87 (a quote of his preface to 'Abdallāh al-Subaytī's *Taḥt rāyat al-ḥaqq*), as well as idem: *Ma'a Aḥmad Amīn fī fuṣūl min kitābihi Fayḍ al-khāṭir: naqd wa-ta'līq wa-taḥlīl*, Cairo 1375/1955.

What the personalities cited above have in common is that they openly acknowledged their affiliation with the JT and were prominent journalistically in its causes, regardless of how controversial their engagement may have been in particular cases. Besides them, though, there are individual activists either whose membership in the JT—or at least whose presence at the organization's meetings—are indeed documented, but who were never publicly mentioned by the JT. The most prominent examples are some of the followers of the Muslim Brotherhood as well as the former Muftī of Jerusalem, Muḥammad Amīn al-Ḥusaynī.

The JT's attempt to integrate the leadership of the neo-Salafiyya has been mentioned briefly in the context of the discussion of its President, Muḥammad ʿAlī ʿAllūba.[131] Understandably, these efforts focused on the relations of the *taqrīb* scholars with the founder and charismatic leader of the Egyptian Muslim Brotherhood, Ḥasan al-Bannā,[132] who had already distinguished himself with pan-Islamic comments in the 1930s. Al-Bannā not only cooperated with ʿAllūba outside the JT—it may be recalled that both participated in the foundation of the "Nile Valley Committee" for the support of Palestine—but also from the outset maintained close contacts to the JT, even taking part in its sessions.[133] Qommī, in turn, is reported to have been a guest in the headquarters of the Muslim Brotherhood in the 1940s.[134] For the Sunni *taqrīb* opponents, this step was a transgression of a particular type inasmuch as al-Bannā's intellectual foster father had been no one less than Muḥibb al-Dīn al-Khaṭīb, who from 1947 on became one of the most vehement and most influential polemicists against rapprochement with Shiism.[135]

The climax of al-Bannā's *taqrīb* activities in the brief remaining period of his life before his assassination on February 12, 1949, was the pilgrimage of 1367 (October 1948) when he encountered Āyatollāh Abū l-Qāsim al-Kāshānī in Mecca and reportedly discussed

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[131] Cf. above, pp. 132f.

[132] Cf. above, pp. 123f. note 11.

[133] A photo showing al-Bannā at a JT meeting is printed in al-Shīrāzī: *al-Waḥda al-islāmiyya*, 17; cf. ibid., 10, and idem: *Eslām. Ā'īn-e hambastegī*, 229; cf. also the list of *taqrīb* supporters in Sharīʿatī: *Tashayyoʿ-e ʿalawī*, 76f., in which al-Bannā is unhesitatingly included; similarly, al-Sharqī: *Naqsh-e Eslām*, 538; *Mishkāt* 2/1362sh/49f.

[134] ʿUmar al-Tilmisānī: *Dhikrayāt lā mudhakkirāt*, Cairo 1985, 249f.; cf. al-Aḥsā'ī: *al-Ṭā'ifiyya*, 419f.; al-Ṣūfān: "Nash'at", 164.

[135] Regarding the relations between al-Bannā and al-Khaṭīb, see Mitchell: *Society*, 5–8, 322f.; cf. also al-Mallāḥ: *al-Ārā' al-ṣarīḥa*, 100.

the improvement of the relations between Sunnis and Shiites with him.[136] That al-Bannā's choice happened to be a scholar who was then both a political activist and agitator[137] (and who exerted considerable influence on Khomeynī's political formation)[138] shows that in his eyes, the process of rapprochement could not be brought to fruition by legal or theological discussions alone. Instead it demanded concrete, politically oriented cooperation with the other side. Al-Kāshānī was all the more suitable as an interlocutor because of the links he maintained to the *Fedā'iyyān-e Eslām* and their leader Nawwāb-e Ṣafawī, a terror organization that did not shy away from attempting to assassinate its opponents.[139]

Apparently, however, no direct communications between the *Fedā'iyyān-e Eslām* and the Muslim Brotherhood were established until 1954, five years after al-Bannā's death. The occasion was a visit by Nawwāb-e Ṣafawī to Cairo during which he met with ʿAbd al-Nāṣir, among others, and publicly assumed a position favourable to the Muslim Brotherhood.[140] Occasionally even Qommī was accused of

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[136] al-Jabrī: *Li-mādhā ughtīla Ḥasan al-Bannā?*, 32; al-Wardānī: *al-Shīʿa fī Miṣr*, 157f.; al-Ṣūfān: "Nash'at", 165; al-Mīlād: *Khiṭāb al-waḥda al-islāmiyya*, 56; Kamare'ī: *Payām-e Īrān*, 22 (Kamare'ī, too, seems to have been in Mecca in 1948 but does not mention having personally met al-Bannā; see *Manāzil al-waḥy*, 55f.); Akhavi: "The Impact of the Iranian Revolution", 140; Matthee: "Egyptian Opposition", 256 and note 22.

[137] Regarding al-Kāshānī (d. 1962), see *EI*² IV/495f. (H. Algar); *GD* I/267–71; *ṬASh* I.1/75f.; Dawwānī: *Nahżat-e rūḥāniyyūn-e Īrān*, II/227–341; obituary in *Maktab-e Eslām* 4/3 (Apr. 1962), 59–61; Kedourie: *The Iraqi Shi'is*, 151f., as well as Mottahedeh: *The Mantle of the Prophet*, index s.v.

[138] Moin: *Khomeini*, 63f.; Y. Richard: "Ayatollah Kashani: Precursor of the Islamic Republic?", in: N.R. Keddie (ed.): *Revolution and Politics in Iran. Revolution. Shi'ism from Quietism to Revolution*, New Haven 1983, 101–24, esp. 123; cf. also Montaẓerī: *Matn-e kāmel-e khāṭerāt*, 76–78.

[139] Their most prominent victim was the journalist and writer Aḥmad Kasrawī, who was shot to death in March 1946 in the Tehran Palace of Justice; see Mottahedeh: *The Mantle of the Prophet*, 105; Nawwāb-e Ṣafawī (executed in January 1956) was the *nom de guerre* of Mojtabā b. Jawād Mīr Lūḥī; see Schulze: *Internationalismus*, 113f.; his memory was revived to a large degree after the Islamic Revolution; see *GD* VIII/278–91; *RF* III/1301–03; Mottahedeh, 382; cf. Akhavi: *Religion and Politics*, 67f., Göbel: *Moderne schiitische Politik*, 162–69, and Buchta: *Die iranische Schia*, 53f. (who maintains that pan-Islamism was only a tactical means for al-Kāshānī and Ṣafawī in their political fight against British imperialist policy).

[140] Schulze: *Internationalismus*, 114; also *EI*² II/882f. (N.R. Keddie/A.H. Zarrinkub); "Fedā'īān-e Eslām", *EIr* IX/470–74 (F. Kazemi); Y. Richard: "L'organisation des Fedā'īyān-e Eslām, mouvement intégriste musulman en Iran (1945–1956)", in: O. Carré/P. Dumont (eds.): *Radicalismes islamiques*, Paris 1985, I/23–82, esp. 51f. (according to whom Ṣafawī also met with Yāsīr ʿArafāt); F. Kazemi: "Religion and Politics in Iran: the Fada'iyān-i Islām", *Folia Orientalia* 22/1981–84/191–205, esp. 197 and 204 note 20; S.M.A. Taghavi: " 'Fadaeeyan-i Islam': The Prototype of Islamic Hard-

proximity to the *Fedā'iyyān-e Eslām* because of these associations, but there is no clear basis for this assertion. Given his generally visible devotion to the Shah, it appears at least not very likely that he would have maintained contacts with a group engaged in an armed struggle against the Tehran regime.[141]

The relations between the JT and the Muslim Brotherhood continued after al-Bannā's violent death. Immediately preceding ʿAbd al-Nāṣir's prohibition of the organization in 1954, the Iraqi Shiite scholar Muḥammad b. Muḥammad Mahdī al-Khāliṣī reports his meeting in the *Dār al-taqrīb* with the leader of the Brotherhood at the time, Ḥasan al-Huḍaybī.[142] Al-Khāliṣī complained to him about the hostile attitude of the Iraqi Muslim Brotherhood toward the Shia, whereupon al-Huḍaybī distanced himself from the Iraqi grouping and promised al-Khāliṣī to send a representative to Baghdad in order to explain the pan-Islamic aims of the Egyptian "mother organization" as they had been laid down by its founder al-Bannā.[143]

This episode is instructive in two respects. First, it proves that the *Egyptian* Muslim Brotherhood until immediately before its provisional disbanding had contact with the *taqrīb* organization, even on the level of its leadership. Second, it shows that already at the beginning of the 1950s, the *Iraqi* brotherhood (*Jamʿiyyat al-ukhuwwa al-islāmiyya*), probably under the influence of a tense domestic political climate marked by sectarian power struggles,[144] had turned away from pan-

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liners in Iran", *MES* 40/2004/151–65; I.M. Husaini: *The Moslem Brethren*, Beirut 1956, 134; Dawwānī: *Nahżat-e rūḥāniyyūn-e Īrān*, II/203–05; al-Wardānī: *al-Shīʿa fī Miṣr*, 121f.; idem: *Miṣr . . . Īrān*, 142; al-Ṣūfān: "Nash'at", 165; al-Mīlād: *Khiṭāb al-waḥda al-islāmiyya*, 56f.; Huwaydī mentions a meeting between Ṣafawī and Muṣṭafā al-Sibāʿī in Damascus in 1953: *Īrān min al-dākhil*, 331.

[141] al-Bahnasāwī: *al-Sunna al-muftarā ʿalayhā*, 57; Ibrāhīm: *Mawqif ʿulamā' al-muslimīn*, 13f., 16ff.; idem: *al-Sunna wa-l-shīʿa*, 15ff. (with reservations; see also the German translation, 7ff., and the French version, preface p. 5, text pp. 10ff.); Ibrāhīm actually even identifies himself as a member of the JT, *Mawqif*, 34. It cannot be excluded that these contentions (all from works defending the Islamic Revolution) might be connected to the post-1979 attempt to downplay Qommī's relations with the Shah and to assign the JT what might be termed a place of honour among the Revolution's forebears. Regarding the complicated relations between the Muslim Brotherhood and Khomeynī, see Matthee: "Egyptian Opposition", esp. 251–65; Akhavi: "The Impact of the Revolution Iranian", 144–48; cf. Kh. Samir: "Khomeini e i 'fratelli musulmani'. Un ritorno integral alle radici dell'Islam", *Civilità Cattolica* 131/1980/445–58; also, see below, pp. 379f.

[142] Regarding him (1891–1973), see al-Ziriklī II/225 as well as Mitchell: *Society*, 85ff. and index, s.v.

[143] al-Khāliṣī: *al-Tawḥīd wa-l-waḥda*, 3f.; cf. Ende: "Erfolg und Scheitern", 123.

[144] E. Kedourie: "Anti-Shiism in Iraq under the Monarchy", *MES* 24/1988/249–53.

Islamism and assumed a clearly anti-Shiite posture. Al-Khāliṣī's complaint was especially nettlesome because one of the heads of the Iraqi Muslim Brotherhood, Amjad al-Zahāwī, had joined al-Bannā in attending the first meetings of the JT.[145]

Al-Bannā and al-Huḍaybī were not the only members of the Muslim Brotherhood who had relations with the JT, but they were the most important and also did so *ex officio*. Other activists and supporters of the JT were at least temporarily active in the Muslim Brotherhood and, it can be assumed, came thence to the *taqrīb* organization also for this reason. Among them, Muḥammad al-Ghazzālī and al-Sayyid Sābiq, both JT members from its founding, deserve mention.[146] Al-Ghazzālī left the Muslim Brotherhood in discord: in December 1953, he and three other members were expelled after an attempted putsch against al-Huḍaybī.[147] In later years, he was to become one of the most prominent Islamically oriented authors in Egypt and the Muslim world in general. In 1992 he gained a somewhat dubious fame when he acquitted the assassins of the secular intellectual Faraj Fūda on the grounds that the latter was to be considered an apostate and therefore deserved capital punishment.[148] As far as al-Sayyid Sābiq is concerned, he was regarded as the spiritual head behind the assassination of Prime Minister Nuqrāshī Pāshā in December 1948.[149] As a scholar, he made a name for himself as the author of a three-volume survey of Sunnite law, *Fiqh al-sunna*, that appeared for the first time in the late 1940s, with a preface by Ḥasan al-Bannā. In *taqrīb* matters his attitude may be described as

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[145] The photo mentioned above in note 133 shows him to the right of ʿAbd al-Majīd Salīm; regarding al-Zahāwī (1881–1967), see *MMI* I/147; Muḥammad Maḥmūd al-Ṣawwāf: *al-ʿAllāma al-mujāhid al-shaykh Amjad al-Zahāwī shaykh ʿulamāʾ al-ʿIrāq al-muʿāṣirīn 1300–1387h*, Cairo 1988, and Schulze: *Internationalismus*, 106 with note 283; also see above, p. 127 note 26.

[146] ʿAbd al-ʿAẓīm: *Mashyakhat al-Azhar*, II/119.

[147] Mitchell, 124; the others were Ṣāliḥ ʿAshmāwī, Muḥammad Sulaymān and ʿAbd al-ʿAzīz Jalāl.

[148] A. Hasemann: "Zur Apostasiediskussion im modernen Ägypten", *WI* 42/2002/72–121, on 72f.; regarding al-Ghazzālī (1917–1996), see al-ʿAlāwina: *Dhayl al-aʿlām*, 193f.; Abāẓa/al-Māliḥ: *Itmām al-aʿlām*, 260; Ende: *Arabische Nation*, 99–103; Schulze: *Internationalismus*, 107 note 294; list of publications until 1961 in *REI* 29/1961/S.A. 1937f. (Nos. 1402–22); obituary in *Arab News*, March 11, 1996, pp. 2, 10; Yūsuf al-Qaraḍāwī: *al-Shaykh al-Ghazzāli kamā ʿaraftuhu. Riḥlat niṣf qarn*, al-Manṣūra 1417/1997 (pp. 37–43 on his relations to al-Huḍaybī); regarding his role in the JT, see Ibrāhīm: *Mawqif ʿulamāʾ al-muslimīn*, 20, 22f., and Kamareʾī: *Rābiṭat al-ʿālam al-islāmī*, 32ff.

[149] Mitchell: *Society*, 74.

ambigious; characteristically enough, he made no attempt in his principal work to bring about an alignment of the differences with Shiism. On the contrary, in many chapters he allotted a prominent place to the statements of Ibn Taymiyya and other Ḥanbalite-inspired jurists.[150]

The previously mentioned Aḥmad Ḥasan al-Bāqūrī underwent a similar experience as al-Ghazzālī when, on the day of his appointment as Minister of *Awqāf*, he was removed from the ranks of the Brotherhood.[151] In later years he participated in the edition of Shiite works through the JT and caused a furour through, among other things, his demand that Sunni scholars reconsider their categorical prohibition of the temporary marriage (*mutʿa*).[152] Al-Bāqūrī, who claimed he had refused the office of *Shaykh al-Azhar* on several occasions because it was surrounded by too many intrigues,[153] earned unlimited praise from the Shiites for his activity in the field of the inner-Islamic ecumene, in sharp contrast to Abū Zahra or Aḥmad Amīn.

In the publications of the JT, and particularly in its journal, all connections to the Muslim Brotherhood were consistently passed over in silence. The activity of the neo-Salafi brotherhood was much too political for the *taqrīb* organization to be able to acknowledge it publicly without making its official principle of staying out of politics look ludicrous. The domestic power struggle between the Muslim Brotherhood and the Egyptian government, during which both sides ultimately resorted to assassination, led in December 1948 to the organization's being banned for the first time. This made it impossible for the JT to mention it in the *RI* which began to appear in the following year. Not a single line of an obituary was devoted to the *murshid ʿāmm*

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[150] Also, in the passage on *mutʿa*, he unmistakably adopted the conviction that it was forbidden by the Prophet and later on by ʿUmar; cf. *Fiqh al-sunna*, Beirut 1407/1987, II/38ff.; on al-Sayyid Sābiq (1915–2000), cf. the belated obituary in *Arab News*, Jun. 4, 2001.

[151] *OM* 32/1952/263f.; Mitchell: *Society*, 107f.; according to I.M. Husaini: *The Moslem Brethren*, Beirut 1956, 114, Ḥasan al-Bannā is, moreover, supposed to have designated him as his successor in 1949; regarding al-Bāqūrī (1909–1985), cf. al-ʿAlāwina: *Dhayl al-aʿlām*, 24; Abāẓa/al-Māliḥ: *Itmām al-aʿlām*, 24; Yūsuf: *Tatimmat al-aʿlām*, I/30; see also Zeghal: *Gardiens*, 87–90; M. Behrens: *Ein Rebell unter dem Turban? Zur Biographie des ägyptischen Theologen, Muslimbruders und Politikers Aḥmad Ḥasan al-Bāqūrī (1909–1985)*, unpubl. M.A. thesis, Univ. of Freiburg 1999; al-Raḍawī: *Maʿa rijāl al-fikr*, 52–56, as well as esp. his autobiography until 1964, *Baqāyā al-dhikrayāt*.

[152] Regarding these publication activities, cf. above, pp. 149ff.; concerning al-Bāqūrī's demand for a revision of the *mutʿa* prohibition, cf. Ende: "Ehe auf Zeit", 38–40.

[153] al-Bāz: *al-Bāqūrī*, 103.

Ḥasan al-Bannā when he was murdered in February 1949. After the Muslim Brotherhood had been crushed by ʿAbd al-Nāṣir in 1954, this attitude paid off in that the JT did not have to justify compromising contacts that would have become dangerous in the meantime.

Similar to the case of the Muslim Brotherhood, the unambiguously political motives of Muḥammad Amīn al-Ḥusaynī's pan-Islamic presence might have caused the JT to handle his contribution to the *taqrīb* debate with the greatest reservation. Since the Jerusalem conference, al-Ḥusaynī had repeatedly shown activities that could be seen on a superficial level as being in relation to Sunni-Shiite rapprochement. But their political purpose—the struggle against Zionism and the domination of the Western mandate—was always to be felt, and al-Ḥusaynī himself never denied the connection between the two objectives.

Examples of such events include his invitation of ʿAbd al-Karīm al-Zanjānī to visit Palestine in 1936[154] and the famous *fatwā* he issued the same year in which he declared the ʿAlawis, the religious community resident mainly in then-French-administered Syria, to be legitimate and full-fledged members of the Muslim community.[155] Fleeing from the British after the Second World War, the majority of which he had spent in Berlin under the protection of the National Socialists,[156] he arrived in Cairo in 1946 and was granted asylum at the behest of the Muslim Brotherhood.[157]

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[154] Cf. above, p. 117 note 133; al-Zanjānī clearly understood the objectives of his host and soon adopted them: on December 28, 1936, he delivered a blistering address in Tel Aviv in front of a group of Zionist colonizers which gave cause for the Grand Muftī to fear for the life of his guest; see Thābit: *al-Waḥda al-islāmiyya*, 127–31; al-Daftar: *Ṣafḥa*, 162.

[155] P. Boneschi: "Une fatwà du Grand Muftī de Jérusalem Muḥammad ʿAmīn al-Ḥusaynī sur les ʿAlawītes", *Revue de l'Histoire des Religions* 122/1940/42–54, 134–52; in passing al-Ḥusaynī's *fatwā* was also directed against Ibn Taymiyya's famous condemnation of the ʿAlawis; see S. Guyard: "Le fetwa d'Ibn Taimiyyah sur les Nosairis", *Journal Asiatique*, VI[e] sér., 18/1871/158–98; for the short history of the ʿAlawi state that was formally independent from Syria between the World Wars cf. Halm: *Die islamische Gnosis*, 288f.

[156] Regarding this controversial period in al-Ḥusaynī's life, see A.R. de Luca: "'Der Grossmufti' in Berlin. The Politics of Collaboration", *IJMES* 10/1979/125–41; K. Gensicke: *Der Mufti von Jerusalem. Amin el-Husaini und die Nationalsozialisten*, Frankfurt/M. 1988; an assessment of al-Ḥusaynī's image in Western literature is given by G. Höpp: "Der Gefangene im Dreieck. Zum Bild Amin al-Husseinis in Wissenschaft und Publizistik seit 1941. Ein bio-bibliographischer Abriß", in: R. Zimmer-Winkl (ed.): *Eine umstrittene Figur: Hadj Amin al-Husseini, Mufti von Jerusalem*, Trier 1999, 5–23; G. Höpp (ed.): *Mufti-Papiere. Briefe, Memoranden, Reden und Aufrufe Amin al-Husainis aus dem Exil, 1940–1945*, Berlin 2001.

[157] Mitchell: *Society*, 56; cf. also *al-ʿIrfān* 32/1 (Dec. 1945), 9f.

Although al-Ḥusaynī was among the founding members of the JT in January 1947,[158] he neither participated subsequently in its journal nor demonstrated any other public engagement in its cause. In the *RI*, in turn, his support of the *taqrīb* concept was acknowledged inconspicuously and only at the very beginning.[159] Al-Ḥusaynī's attempt to return to the top of political pan-Islamism as president of the Islamic World Congress that reconvened in 1949 in Pakistan appears to have sent a signal to the JT, which was still a participant at the time of the 1951/52 meetings in Karachi, that it was time for a cautious disengagement. This became even more the case when in the following years al-Ḥusaynī gradually fell in line with the Saudi-sponsored congress idea and finally, in 1962, became one of the founding members of the Muslim World League. Khayr al-Dīn al-Ziriklī even mentions in passing that al-Ḥusaynī was granted Saudi Arabian citizenship.[160]

In spite of this, and precisely at this later point in time, he also received unlimited praise from the Shiite side. Khalīl Kamare'ī, for instance, recalled a meeting with al-Ḥusaynī during the pilgrimage in 1382 (April/May 1963) and paid particular tribute to the former Muftī's friendly comments about Shiism.[161] On another occasion he was named as the principal Sunni witness to the Shiite struggle against Israel.[162]

Muḥammad al-Khāliṣī was the only notable exception. In the previously mentioned report about his meeting with al-Huḍaybī, he intimated that his efforts to persuade the *murshid ʿāmm* to try to temper the Iraqi Muslim Brotherhood were thwarted by a Sunni scholar who was present at the meeting. Al-Khāliṣī does not mention a name here, but his remark that this individual's known fanaticism and stubbornness had led to the loss (*taḍyīʿ*) of Palestine gives rise to the supposition that the object of his reproach was, in fact, Muḥammad Amīn al-Ḥusaynī.[163] Also, in the same period (1954), Moḥammad

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[158] *al-ʿIrfān* 33/9 (Jul. 1947), 1084; in the photograph printed in al-Shīrāzī: *al-Waḥda al-islāmiyya*, 17, al-Ḥusaynī completes the triumvirate of politically problematic cases in the JT that also included al-Bannā and al-Zahāwī.

[159] al-Madanī in *RI* 2/1950/6; 'Abd al-Ḥalīm Kāshif al-Ghiṭā' in *RI* 4/1952/48.

[160] al-Ziriklī VI/46; Schulze: *Internationalismus*, 183ff.

[161] Kamare'ī: *Rābiṭat al-ʿālam al-islāmī*, 29; cf. ibid., 172f. and idem: *Manāzil al-waḥy*, 62; regarding Kamare'ī's open-minded attitude toward the Saudi pan-Islamism of the 1960s, which is evident esp. in the last-mentioned work, see below, pp. 343f.

[162] Bahiyya et al.: *Naqd wa-taʿlīq*, 34.

[163] al-Khāliṣī: *al-Tawḥīd wa-l-waḥda*, 4; cf. Ende: "Erfolg und Scheitern", 123; some of the Muftī's comments on early Islamic history aroused the indignation of Shiite authors; regarding one of Muḥsin al-Amīn's replies, cf. Ende: *Arabische Nation*, 201.

Taqī Qommī's disappointment at the lack of success of the last Islamic conferences, some of which took place under al-Ḥusaynī's leadership,[164] can be seen in this context and viewed as oblique criticism of al-Ḥusaynī.

Shiites

In order for a union whose declared goal was a settlement between Sunnis and Shiites to succeed in Cairo, and thus far afield from the Shiite heartland and centres of scholarship, it was of great importance to attract the Shiite clergy to the concept of the JT and prompt them to active participation. Even a superficial stocktaking of the *RI*'s contributing authors and articles indicates that the Shiite *'ulamā'* were nowhere near as willing as their Cairene colleagues from the Azhar and the Cairo University to use the journal of the *taqrīb* organization as a public forum.

Only 24 authors (plus four Zaydis)[165] out of a total of 111 whose articles appeared on the *RI*'s pages came from the ranks of the Shia. This resulted in more than five sixths of all items being written by Sunni authors. And as merely seven out of those two dozen Shiite scholars penned more than two pieces, there can be no question of a lively exchange of ideas let alone a long-term discussion. Furthermore, the Shiites were mainly corresponding members and were thus essentially represented at a comparatively detached level. In the good fifteen years during which the JT was able to stake its claim as an institutionalized *taqrīb* forum, only a few Shiite *'ulamā'* actually found their way to Cairo, and even they, the most important of whom were al-Khāliṣī, al-Shabībī and Mughniyya, paid only a brief visit to the JT. The physical presence of the Shia in the ecumenical society was limited primarily to the person of Moḥammad Taqī Qommī.

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[164] Cf. above, pp. 154f.

[165] The Yemeni Zaydis represented in the JT were 'Alī b. Ismā'īl al-Mu'ayyad, (d. 1970; cf. al-Waǧīh: *A'lām al-mu'allifīn al-zaydiyya*, 660; he was not among the four contributors to the *RI*), Muḥammad b. 'Abdallāh al-'Amrī (d. 1960/61; cf. ibid., 919; he and al-Mu'ayyad were founding members), al-Ḥasan b. 'Alī b. Ibrāhīm (who was introduced as *Wazīr al-dawla bi-l-mamlaka al-mutawakkiliyya al-yamaniyya*), 'Abdallāh al-Jarāfī al-Ṣan'ānī (d. 1980/81; ibid., 595), and Muḥammad b. Ismā'īl al-'Amrānī (b. 1921/22; ibid., 873f.); none became more deeply involved in the *taqrīb* debate; cf. also Muḥammad 'Abdallāh Māḍī: "al-Da'wa ilā l-taqrīb fī tārīkh al-imāma al-zaydiyya", *RI* 10/1958/177–85.

As far as the active participation of Iranian *ʿulamāʾ* in the *RI* is concerned, their response to the foundation of the *taqrīb* organization among is to be called reserved at best. Besides Qommī, only three Iranian authors, none of whom can be counted among the most prominent of the country's Shiite theologian class, wrote articles—one each—in the journal: Muḥsin Ṣadr, who in November 1943 played a role in the attempt to reform the Education Law of 1911, but undertook no further public activity, contributed an article about the theological aspects of Avicenna's and Averroes's philosophy;[166] ʿAbd al-Ḥusayn Ibn al-Dīn, a scholar from Qom who resided in Tehran, again refuted the contention that the proponents of the *taqrīb* concept were only trying to bring about a unification (*tawḥīd*) of the existing legal schools;[167] and Kerbala-born Muḥammad Ṣāliḥ al-Ḥāʾirī al-Māzandarānī examined in detail the question of how Imamate and caliphate could be reconciled. His piece, one of the most extensive ever to appear in the *RI*, is of particular interest because it was among the very few that explicitly and frankly addressed a direct point of contention between Shiism and Sunnism.[168]

Other than these three articles, the reaction among Iranian Shiites as it was manifested in the columns of the *RI* was limited to a few communications from Qom. The two Āyatollāhs Ṣadr al-Dīn Ṣadr and Moḥammad Taqī Khʷānsārī sent short congratulatory letters written in an exceedingly amicable tone, and excerpts from them were quoted.[169]

The comments of the two scholars, brief as they were, are nonetheless significant since both were among the leadership of the *Ḥowze-ye ʿelmiyye*, the theological seminary in Qom founded by ʿAbd al-Karīm

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[166] *RI* 5/1953/39–43; regarding this reform, see Akhavi: *Religion and Politics*, 61f.

[167] *RI* 8/1956/366–69; concerning Ibn al-Dīn (1905–70), see Moshār III/Sp. 720f.; *ASh* MII/154; obituary in *al-ʿIrfān* 58/2 (Jun. 1970), 270f.; regarding this argument, cf. below, pp. 229ff.

[168] About this, cf. below, pp. 224ff.; regarding the author (1880–1971), see Moshār III/cols. 517f.; *ṬASh* I.3/936f.; *RF* III/1140; Khiyābānī: *ʿOlamā-ye moʿāṣerīn*, 221–23; ʿImād al-Dīn Ḥusayn Iṣfahānīʾs preface to al-Māzandarānīʾs reply to Ibrāhīm al-Jabhān: *Kalimāt al-ḥujaj al-ʿāmira*, pp. *a–d*; ʿAlī Sharīʿatī: *Tashayyoʿ-e ʿalawī*, 76 even honoured him with the title *Marjaʿ al-taqlīd*.

[169] *RI* 1/1949/101f.; a third letter came from the Isfahani scholar Ismāʿīl Najafī; see also *RI* 2/1950/110f.; regarding Khʷānsārī (1887–1952), see *ṬASh* I.1/246f.; *GD* I/321–26; *RF* II/546; Khiyābānī: *ʿOlamā-ye mōʿāṣerīn*, 211–13; al-Gharawī: *Maʿa ʿulamāʾ al-Najaf*, 373f.; as well as *EI*² IV/1028 (A.H. Hairi); concerning Ṣadr (1882/83–1953), see *ṬASh* I.3/943–49; *GD* I/326–29; *RF* II/804f.; obituaries in *al-ʿIrfān* 41/3 (Jan. 1954), 357, and 41/5 (Mar. 1954), 482f.

al-Ḥā'irī in March 1922[170] that established Qom as the important centre of Shiite scholarly life in the twentieth century on a par with Najaf. After al-Ḥā'irī's death in February 1937, the leadership of the *Ḥowze* was taken over for some time by a committee composed of three scholars.[171] Within a few years after his arrival at the end of December 1944, though, Āyatollāh Borūjerdī consolidated both his leadership over the *Ḥowze* and his personal position, becoming the sole *marjaʿ al-taqlīd* of the Shiite world.

The letters from Qom to the JT therefore indeed were to be understood as programmatic because Āyatollāh Ḥoseyn Ṭabāṭabā'ī Borūjerdī in person was the Shiite *éminence grise* of the in the *taqrīb* movement and retained this role until his death in March 1961.[172] In Western secondary literature, too, references to the efforts of this great scholar in the name of inner-Islamic rapprochement are ubiquitous but do not go into greater detail.[173] The extent to which Borūjerdī was actively involved in the JT is not absolutely clear. Even Maḥmūd Shaltūt only mentioned the Iranian *marjaʿ al-taqlīd* as one of those scholars who had "joined forces with" the cause of *taqrīb* (*inḍammū ilā l-taqrīb*).[174] That Borūjerdī took part in the JT's founding at least indirectly and that Moḥammad Taqī Qommī actually even went to Cairo at his behest—a contention made from time to time by several Shiite authors[175]—does not seem to be too far fetched. Ḥoseyn ʿAlī

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[170] Regarding him, see above, p. 81 note 115; also Halm: *Der schiitische Islam*, 142–46.

[171] That is by the just mentioned Āyatollāhs Khʷānsārī and Ṣadr; the third person in the alliance was Āyatollāh Ḥujjat Kūhkamare'ī (1892/93–1951/52; see *GD* I/305–21); see Akhavi: *Religion and Politics*, 62 as well as—from the Shiite viewpoint—Bakhshayeshi: *Ten Decades*, 169–74; idem: *Kīfāḥ*, 344–50.

[172] 1875–1961; often the date of his death is incorrectly given as 1962; March 30, 1961, is correct; Moin: *Khomeini*, 70; see the obituaries in *RI* 13/1962/101–06; *al-ʿIrfān* 48/9 (Apr. 1961), 918f.; *Maktab-e Eslām* 3/3 (Apr. 1961), passim and 3/5 (Jun. 1961), 62–67; for general information about him (b. 1875), cf. further *ṬASh* I.2/605–09; *ASh* VI/92–94; *EI*² S/157f. (A.H. Hairi); *EIr* IV/376–79 (H. Algar); Moshār II/cols. 805–07; *GD* I/344–56; *RF* I/231f.; Khiyābānī: *ʿOlamā-ye moʿāṣerīn*, 248–51; Ṣāliḥ al-Shahrastānī: "Qum wa-jāmiʿatuhā l-ʿilmiyya al-dīniyya wa-sayyiduhā l-marjaʿ al-akbar al-Burūjirdī", *al-ʿIrfān* 56/7 (Dec. 1968), 729–60.

[173] Akhavi: *Religion and Politics*, 98f.; Algar: "The Oppositional Role", 243; idem: "Religious Forces in 20th Century Iran", 747; Bagley: "Religion and State", 38; Fischer: *Iran*, 178f.; Göbel: *Moderne schiitische Politik*, 171; Momen: *Introduction*, 254; S.A.A. Rizvi: *Iran. Royalty, Religion and Revolution*, Canberra 1980, 236; "Iṣlāḥ, ii: Iran", *EI*² IV/165b (H. Algar); Wiley: *The Islamic Movement of Iraqi Shiʿas*, 125.

[174] Shaltūt in *RI* 14/1964/199.

[175] Cf. for example Sharīʿatī: *Tashayyoʿ-e ʿalawī*, 250; al-Anṣārī: *al-Fuqahāʾ ḥukkām ʿalā l-mulūk*, 206; Muhaddith: *Conspiracies*, 13f., as well as the article about Borūjerdī in *Dāʾerat ol-maʿāref-e tasayyoʿ*, III/197–99, on 198; cf. also al-Mīlād: *Khiṭāb al-waḥda*

Montaẓerī, in the 1980s temporary successor elect to Khomeynī, in his memoirs recalls how he once participated in a session that lasted for three hours, during which Qommī reported in detail on his activities in Cairo and Borūjerdī gave him instructions.[176]

During ʿAbd al-Majīd Salīm's first term of office as Rector, in mid-1951, direct contacts between Borūjerdī and the *Shaykh al-Azhar* were established in the form of a correspondence that extended over several months; it had been arranged by Qommī, who spent an extended period in Iran at this time.[177] Essentially, the correspondence was a mere exchange of courtesies in so far as both were mainly emphasizing their mutual respect and the importance of Islamic reform and unity. Yet it also consolidated the inclusion of the high-level Shiite clergy in the ecumenical discussion and was therefore viewed by the Shiite side as a noteworthy document of rapprochement.[178]

Furthermore, many a Shiite writer indicates that the editing of Shiite works by the JT and Egyptian Ministry of *Awqāf* owed a great deal to the involvement of Borūjerdī. During a visit by Aḥmad Ḥasan al-Bāqūrī to Iran, the Shiite scholar is said to have proposed the idea behind this practical means of agreement for the first time. Al-Bāqūrī, for his part, does not say anything about this in his memoirs.[179] Finally, Borūjerdī also corresponded with Maḥmūd Shaltūt following the latter's assuming the office of Azhar Rector. After the publication of the *taqrīb fatwā* in 1959, he even especially dispatched a delegation of Iranian scholars to Cairo who brought Shaltūt his thanks and recognition for this step.[180]

In order to illustrate the extent of Borūjerdī's interest in the Islamic

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al-islāmiyya, 105–07; al-Fayyūmī: *Fī manahij*, 143–56 does not contain anything new or specific in this regard.

[176] Montaẓerī: *Matn-e kāmel-e khāṭerāt*, 79; asked whether the JT was founded on Qommī's own initiative or on Borūjerdī's instigation, Montaẓerī answered "I don't know. I think on his own initiative, but perhaps Borūjerdī was also involved"; ibid., 80.

[177] The letters appeared in *RI* 3/1951/328–30 and 4/1952/218–20; cf. al-Madanī's praise that stressed the exemplary role of the correspondence, *RI* 4/1952/227f.

[178] Dawwānī: *Zendegānī-ye (. . .) Borūjerdī*, 170f.; Ṭabāṭabā'ī: *Khāṭerāt*, 118; cf. also the Iranian condolences quoted in *RI* 7/1955/91 upon Salīm's death.

[179] Dawwānī: *Zendegānī-ye (. . .) Borūjerdī*, 171; Ṭabāṭabā'ī: *Khāṭerāt*, 118f.; regarding al-Bāqūrī's relations to Borūjerdī, see al-Bāqūrī: *Baqāyā al-dhikrayāt*, 187; according to Ṣāliḥ al-Shahrastānī, al-Bāqūrī is supposed to have said that Borūjerdī was "the greatest personality that I have seen in my life": *al-ʿIrfān* 56/7 (Dec. 1968), 729–60, on 744.

[180] Dawwān, ibid.; *Nedā'ī az sar-zamīn-e bayt ol-moqaddas*, 142–44; Kamare'ī: *Payām-e Īrān*, 9; Ṭabāṭabā'ī: *Khāṭerāt*, 121 called it Borūjerdī's greatest achievement to have achieved the issuance of this *fatwā*; also cf. ʿAbdallāh al-Qommī: *Daʿwat al-taqrīb*, 198; Sobḥānī: preface to al-Ṣāfī: *Lamaḥāt*, 13f.; see also below, pp. 290 and 293f.

ecumene until its very end, some Shiites tend to refer to his reaction to the rupture of the Egyptian-Iranian diplomatic relations after the row surrounding the Iranian recognition of Israel. On his deathbed, according to the oft-cited account, which verges on an apotheosis, Borūjerdī, drifting in and out of a coma, insisted that Moḥammad Taqī Qommī, who was then visiting Iran, return as quickly as possible to Cairo in order to help to repair the damage between both countries (and both denominations). The dying *marjaʿ al-taqlīd* himself allegedly wanted to write Shaltūt a letter to accelerate the process and expedite Qommī's re-entry into Egypt.[181]

At the time of its initial appearance in a biography published shortly after Borūjerdī's demise in 1961, the purpose of such a depiction was surely to mitigate the tenseness of the atmosphere. The possible embellishment of this scene notwithstanding, his support as such of the JT is, however, beyond any doubt. His engagement ranged from what might be called "semi-official" favourable remarks in his lectures at the *Ḥowze* to financial aid for the organization, though the latter has never been corroborated.[182] Moreover, he is also reported to have protested energetically against the defamation of the Sunni caliphs by Shiite authors or scholars: A collection of verses on legal matters in which Abū Bakr and ʿUmar were denigrated met his strongest disapproval, as did ʿAbd al-Ḥusayn al-Amīnī, the author of the well-known *ghadīr* encyclopaedia, who delivered some strongly anti-Sunnite sermons in Isfahan in 1956.[183]

It is striking that in none of his *RI* articles did Qommī mention Borūjerdī's name let alone refer to his role. He exercised this restraint even where the history of the *taqrīb* organization was specifically under discussion, although the connection to the *marjaʿ al-taqlīd* would have certainly added to Qommī's prestige. Other authors displayed the same reserve,[184] and in the obituary written by al-Madanī, the

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[181] This scene is described in detail in Dawwānī, 171f.; also in Bakhshayeshi: *Ten Decades*, 125; idem: *Kīfāḥ*, 200f.; *Shāmel-e sharḥ-e zendegānī wa khadamāt-e bar jaste-ye Āyatollāh Borūjerdī* (= *Maktab-e Tashayyoʿ*, vol. 3), Qom 1961, 26f.

[182] Moḥammad Wāʿeẓ Zādeh in *Mishkāt* 17/1990/12; Wāʿeẓ Zādeh (b. 1925 or 1930), the Secretary-General of the Tehran *taqrīb* organization *Majmaʿ-e taqrīb*, reports this from personal experience: he had studied with Borūjerdī at the *Ḥowze-ye ʿelmiyye* in the 1950s; see *Mishkāt* 28/1990/8; Buchta: *Die iranische Schia*, 252f.

[183] Montaẓerī: *Matn-e kāmel-e khāṭerāt*, 80.

[184] One of the few exceptions is ʿAbd al-Ḥalīm Kāshif al-Ghiṭāʾ, who mentions Borūjerdī (and al-Kāshānī as well) in his enumeration of helpers of the JT: *RI* 4/1952/48.

Āyatollāh's ecumenical views played a relatively insignificant part. On the other hand, Borūjerdī abstained from designating Qommī as leader of the delegation he sent to Cairo in 1959. Instead, he chose Maḥmūd Ṭāleqānī and Khalīl Kamare'ī, a pair of Tehran clerics who had far fewer scruples than Qommī to register their opinion regarding political issues.[185]

It does, however, not appear sufficient to surmise that the reason for Borūjerdī's move was Qommī's friendly and, in the Āyatollāh's opinion, overly "political" attitude toward the Shah which made it impossible for the *marjaʿ al-taqlīd* to stand behind the Secretary-General openly.[186] This even less so because Borūjerdī himself, despite his basically quietist outlook, made no secret of his approval of the monarchy as an institution and the Shah as a person. His emissary Kamare'ī, too, was unremarkable in this respect and made no improper anti-government comments.[187] Thus in explaining Borūjerdī's behaviour, it seems more probable to assume that the scholar had a two-pronged strategy. He certainly knew about the vulnerability of the JT and the main criticism levelled at it: that it was a Shiite propaganda organization on Sunni territory. Therefore, he went to great lengths to keep his support as discreet as possible in order to evade providing additional fuel for this accusation.

In the image specifically cultivated for the public, the JT remained independent of the Shiite *marjaʿ al-taqlīd*. On the rare occasions when Borūjerdī did take the initiative and became active in the field of pan-Islam, he did so with the aid of scholars who had no close, direct association with the JT. Accordingly, Kamare'ī and Ṭāleqānī were assigned the task of serving as his official special envoys for

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[185] Schulze: *Internationalismus*, 150; H.E. Shehabi: *Iranian Politics and Religious Modernism. The Liberation Movement of Iran under the Shah and Khomeini*, London 1990, 162; regarding Ṭaleqānī (1910–1979), see *EI*[2] X/158f. (R. Badry); *OE* IV/181f. (H.E. Chehabi); *GD* IV/510f. and VIII/57–77; Mottahedeh: *The Mantle of the Prophet*, 323–26, and Dabashi: *Theology of Discontent*, 216–72; concerning Kamare'ī (b. 1899/1900) see *GD* IV/535–40; *ṬASh* I.2/704f.; Moshār III/cols. 32–35; a photo showing Kamare'ī with Shaltūt at the Azhar is printed in Kamare'ī: *Payām-e Īrān*, 190.

[186] *Pace* Akhavi: *Religion and Politics*, 99: "Qummī was too 'political' and overly identified with the Court".

[187] Kamare'ī did not have any objection against designating Iran as "our fertile Kingdom" (*mamālek-e ḥāṣelkhīz-e mā)* and calling Moḥammad Reżā Pahlawī by his honorary title *shāhanshah;* see *Payām-e Īrān*, 21 and 29; regarding Borūjerdī's relations with the Shah, see Mottahedeh: *The Mantle of the Prophet*, 230f., 239ff.; *al-ʿIrfān* 56/7 (Dec. 1968), 750, contains a photo in which the Shah is among the participants at a funeral service for Borūjerdī.

Islamic unity, and in this capacity they also led the Iranian delegation during the international Islamic conference in Jerusalem in January 1960.[188] Simultaneously, Qommī was able to continue surreptitiously his *in situ* involvement in the issues of the JT. For its part, the *taqrīb* organization played the game in this cooperation perfectly and limited mention of Borūjerdī to a few unexposed occasions.[189] Borūjerdī's death in 1961 not only produced a lively discussion about his successor within the Shiite clergy[190] but deprived the JT of its last Shiite integrating symbol of great renown.

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Measured by the number of articles in the *RI*, the JT sparked off its liveliest reaction among the Shiites within the group of reform theologians who taught in the Iraqi *ʿatabāt*. Najaf in particular repeatedly became the organization's focus of attention, and in this case, even quoting individual sceptical voices was not avoided.[191]

In the early years, Muḥammad al-Ḥusayn Āl Kāshif al-Ghiṭā', who was closely associated to the JT as a corresponding member up to his death, stood unambiguously at the centre of the Iraqi *taqrīb* activists.[192] He had the honour of being the very first Shiite author to be allowed to publish in the *RI*, which he used immediately to clarify one of those points that was to become the general credo of the ecumenical discussion in the following years: namely, the sharp and uncompromising distinction between the Imāmiyya and the Zaydiyya—who were not yet addressed in this article—as the "good" and legitimate

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[188] *Nedā'ī az sar-zamīn-e bayt ol-moqaddas*, passim, esp. 39ff.; the other Iranian emissaries were Moṣṭafā Kāshefī Khūnsārī, Moḥammad ʿAlī Ṣadrā'ī Aṣhkūrī, Jalāl al-Dīn Rathīfānī and Jalāl Majdpūr (ibid., 107f.); cf. Schulze: *Internationalismus*, 149f.

[189] *RI* 8/1956/105–07 (about Borūjerdī's meetings with King Saʿūd on the occasion of the latter's visit to Iran); the brief but vehement article against the Bahā'īs, in which they are literally excommunicated (*RI* 7/1955/89f.) can be viewed as unspoken approval of Borūjerdī's open support of the persecution of the Bahā'īs in the mid-1950s (see Mottahedeh: *The Mantle of the Prophet*, 238f., and Moin: *Khomeini*, 66f.); see in addition *Nedā'ī az sar-zamīn-e bayt ol-moqaddas*, 143, regarding the visit of the "Kamare'ī delegation" to the JT.

[190] Lambton: "Reconsideration", passim, gives a summary of this debate.

[191] Cf. the above-mentioned discussion, p. 147, between ʿAbd al-Ḥusayn al-Rashtī and the editors of the *RI*; regarding Najaf, cf. also *RI* 2/1950/329f. (about Murtaḍā Āl Yāsīn) and *RI* 3/1951/103–05 (letter of Muḥammad Kāẓim al-Kafā'ī, in which he draws a portrait of the intellectual life of Najaf).

[192] Obituary in *RI* 6/1954/333; cf. also *al-ʿIrfān* 41/10 (Aug. 1954), 1209–11, 42/1 (Nov. 1954), 113–15 and 42/5–6 (Mar.–Apr. 1955), 694–702.

forms of Shiism, and the extreme Shiite grouping of the *ghulāt*. Faced with the anti-Shiite polemics interspersed with rumours and suspicions that referred either to traditional opponents of Shiism such as Ibn Khaldūn and Ibn ʿAbd Rabbih or modern Orientalists, Muḥammad al-Ḥusayn strongly advised turning to the Imami Shiite writings themselves, rather than lumping them together with the extremists and making premature judgements.[193]

In a second contribution, which reads like his intellectual testament for the future of the *taqrīb* debate, he frankly admitted that the question of the Imamate still represented an important bone of contention between Sunnism and Shiism, but if success were ever achieved in the renunciation of hostile passions (*ʿaṣabiyyāt*), even this problem could be solved in the spirit of brotherliness. His treatment of the traditional Shiite practice of cursing the first caliphs was particularly noteworthy: aside from this being the opinion of only a few Shiites, according to Muḥammad al-Ḥusayn, it was no grounds for declaring anybody an infidel (*takfīr*) and should not even be considered a sin when it happened as a result of *ijtihād*. He concluded the article by alluding to his own contribution to the cause of rapprochement and with a call to Muslim scholars to support the work of the JT.[194]

The magnitude of the respect this Shiite *ʿālim* enjoyed within the *taqrīb* organization becomes clear in a rather casual remark: in a short reminiscence on the occasion of the 50th anniversary of the death of Muḥammad ʿAbduh, the *RI* did not hesitate to put Muḥammad al-Ḥusayn alongside the Azhar Rectors al-Marāghī, ʿAbd al-Rāziq and Salīm in identifying him as one of ʿAbduh's intellectual disciples.[195]

Muḥammad al-Ḥusayn was not the only Iraqi Shiite of rank to become involved with the JT by contributing articles. Other promi-

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[193] *RI* 1/1949/22–25; reprinted in al-Madanī: *Daʿwat al-taqrīb*, 73–76; on Ibn Khaldūn's (d. 1406) opinion, cf. his *Muqaddima*, English translation by F. Rosenthal, New York 1958, I/385ff.; on Ibn ʿAbd Rabbih (d. 940) cf. *EI*² III/676f. (C. Brockelmann).

[194] *RI* 2/1950/268–73; reprinted in al-ʿAlāyilī: *Mas'alat al-taqrīb*, 20–25; cf. Nizār al-Zayn in *al-ʿIrfān* 42/2 (Dec. 1954), 235f.; in stating that the custom of cursing the caliphs was only encouraged by a few, he was clearly playing down its historical role, especially during the Ṣafavid era; cf. J. Calmard: "Shiʿi Rituals and Power II: The Consolidation of Safavid Shiʿism: Folklore and Popular Religion", in: Charles Melville (ed.): *Safavid Persia (. . .)*, London, New York 1996, 139–90; cf. also above, p. 27 and below, p. 221.

[195] *RI* 7/1955/325f.; also cf. Shaltūt's words of praise in *RI* 12/1960/400.

nent names include his son, ʿAbd al-Ḥalīm Kāshif al-Ghiṭāʾ,[196] the jurist and parliamentarian Tawfīq al-Fukaykī,[197] the historian ʿAbd al-Razzāq al-Ḥasanī,[198] the scholar Muḥammad Ṣādiq al-Ṣadr[199] as well as the president of the Iraqi Academy of Sciences, Muḥammad Riḍā al-Shabībī.[200] The two important theologians Hibat al-Dīn al-Shahrastānī and Abū l-Qāsim al-Khūʾī, each of whom submitted an article, also made themselves known to the readers of the *RI*.[201]

The last Iraqi Shiite scholar to be mentioned here is Muḥammad b. Muḥammad Mahdī al-Khāliṣī, a truly tragic figure, though not only in the context of the Iraqi *taqrīb* discussion.[202] He constantly attempted to support rapprochement of the denominations through a relatively extensive and consistent inner-Shiite modernism and to eliminate some specifically Shiite practices. But although some of these conventions, which were common at the popular level (e.g. the third part of the Shiite call to prayer) were not uncontroversial even

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[196] Born in 1915; see *MMI* II/234; *RF* III/1044; Āl Kāshif al-Ghiṭāʾ: *Aṣl al-shīʿa* (10th edition), 4 (ʿAbd al-Ḥalīm's letter to Murtaḍā al-Raḍawī).

[197] Regarding him (1903–1969), see al-Ziriklī II/92; *MMI* I/218f.; *MDA* III/980–82; *ṬASh* I.1/271–73; Khalīlī: *Hākadhā ʿaraftuhum*, III/43–70; ʿAbdallāh al-Jubūrī: *Tawfīq al-Fukaykī: Dirāsāt wa-nuṣūṣ, 1900–1969*, Baghdad 1971; regarding this, Göbel: *Moderne schiitische Politik*, 12–63; al-Fukaykī was not unknown in the inner-Islamic debate: his book about temporary marriage (*al-Mutʿa wa-atharuhā fī l-iṣlāḥ al-ijtimāʿī*, see *Dharīʿa* XIX/64 and *al-ʿIrfān* 27/6 [Nov. 1937], on 577) was directed against Mūsā Jārallāh's and Muḥammad Thābit's anti-Shiite comments.

[198] Concerning him, see above, p. 101 note 71.

[199] Cf. above, p. 172 note 94; see also his preface to Abū ʿAlam: *Ahl al-bayt*, I/13–31, esp. 20.

[200] Regarding him, see above, p. 158 note 24.

[201] *RI* 10/1958/186–89 (al-Khūʾī) and 1/1949/250–53 (al-Shahrastānī); al-Khūʾī (1899–1992) was of Iranian origin but already came to Najaf to study before the First World War and he remained there for the rest of his life; after the death of Muḥsin al-Ḥakīm in 1970, he became one of the most supreme religious leaders of the Shia even beyond the Iraqi borders; cf. particularly A.A. Sachedina: "Al-Khūʾī and the Twelver Shīʿites", in: Al-Sayyid Abū al-Qāsim al-Mūsawī al-Khūʾī: *The Prolegomena to the Qurʾan. Translated with an Introduction by A.A. Sachedina*, New York, Oxford 1998, 3–22; an auto-bibliography is contained in his *Muʿjam rijāl al-ḥadīth*, Najaf 1981, XXII/17–21; see also the article written by his grandson Yūsuf al-Khoei: "Abū ʾl-Qāsim al-Ḥūʾī", *OM* N.S. 18 (= 79)/1999/491–500; *ṬASh* I.1/71f.; *MMI* I/64; *RF* II/532f.; *GD* II/3–9 and VII/273f.; obituaries in *The Independent*, 10.8.1992 (Ch. Mallat), *Mishkāt* 35/summer 1371sh/210–15, as well as *al-ʿIrfān* 76/7 (Sep. 1992), 123–26 and 76/8 (Oct. 1992), 63–66; ʿAlī al-Bahādilī: *Wamḍāt min ḥayāt al-imām al-Khūʾī*, Beirut 1413/1992; cf. *RI* 10/1958/215 (review of his Koran commentary *al-Bayān fī tafsīr al-qurʾān*). Regarding al-Shahrastānī, see above, p. 42 note 69.

[202] 1890–1963; see al-Ziriklī VII/86; *MDA* IV/258–61; *MMI* III/235–39; Moshār V/cols. 449–53; his early career is described by Luizard: "Shaykh Muḥammad al-Khāliṣī", passim.

among Shiite theologians, he failed across the board and experienced ill will from all sides from the late 1940s.[203]

Sunni polemicists attacked al-Khāliṣī more frequently with greater vehemence than any other Shiite theologian of his time. The most critical of them was Maḥmūd al-Mallāḥ who came to mention al-Khāliṣī sooner or later in almost all of his writings, never sparing any malice.[204] Yet the latter's Shiite brethren-in-belief did not come to his defence. On the contrary, spurred by al-Khāliṣī's modernist views, they even wrote diatribes, the tone of which was absolutely on par with that of al-Mallāḥ's.[205]

Al-Khāliṣī's sphere of activity was not limited to Iraq. Already in the first line of the first volume of his principal work, *Iḥyāʾ al-sharīʿa fī madhhab al-shīʿa*, he designated Islamic unity as a goal of his endeavour, a subject on which he also wrote several separate works.[206] Moreover, he was a permanent critic of the anti-Shiite leanings that were to be observed in the Azhar journal after Muḥibb al-Dīn al-Khaṭīb assumed the post of editor in chief. But here, too, in his quarrel against al-Khaṭīb and those of his ilk, he saw himself as a solitary soldier left to his own devices by the other Shiites.[207]

The relations between al-Khāliṣī and the JT were presumably established on the occasion of his stay in Cairo in the autumn of 1954, which has already mentioned in connection with the Egyptian and Iraqi Muslim Brotherhood.[208] During this stay he also paid a visit to ʿAbd al-Majīd Salīm on his deathbed. The only essay al-Khāliṣī penned for the *RI* was published in the same year. It was a comparatively long piece about the confessional quarrels in Iraq as well as his father's[209] and his own roles in the fight against British colonialism.

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[203] About this, cf. Ende: "Erfolg und Scheitern", passim; Haim: "Šīʿite Clerics and Politics", 168; cf. also Arjomand: "Ideological Revolution", 187ff.

[204] Characteristic of this is his remark, when al-Khāliṣī crosses the street, his *ijtihād* changes from pavement to pavement; al-Mallāḥ: *al-Ārāʾ al-ṣarīḥa*, 102.

[205] Ende gives some examples: "Erfolg und Scheitern", 126.

[206] al-Khāliṣī: *Iḥyāʾ al-sarīʿa*, I/8; cf. idem: *al-Waḥda al-islāmiyya—azhār wa-awrād*, Baghdad 1950/51 (see *al-ʿIrfān* 38/4 [Mar. 1951], 458f.) and idem: *al-Tawḥīd wa-l-waḥda*, Baghdad 1954 (see *al-ʿIrfān* 42/5–6 [Mar.-Apr. 1955], 788).

[207] The reproach he expressed in his letter in *al-ʿIrfān* 41/4 (Feb. 1954), 450–52, directed at Aḥmad ʿĀrif al-Zayn because of the latter's silence about al-Khaṭīb's accusations can be understood in this way; also, see below, p. 272.

[208] al-Khāliṣī: *al-Tawḥīd wa-l-waḥda*, 6; cf. above, pp. 182f.

[209] Regarding Muḥammad Mahdī al-Khāliṣī (1861–1925), see al-Ziriklī VII/115; *MMI* III/250; *MDA* III/357f.; *RF* II/475f.; Khiyābānī: *ʿOlamā-ye moʿāṣerīn*, 134–36, as well as Luizard: *La formation de l'Irak contemporain*, 516 (there 1855–1926); cf. Wiley: *The Islamic Movement of Iraqi Shiʿas*, 19, and Nakash: *The Shiʿis of Iraq*, 75ff.

At the end of the article, he warned against those seeking to divide the *umma* but whose efforts his joining the ecumene was meant to thwart. Although al-Khaṭīb and al-Mallāḥ remained unnamed, they were easily to be identified as the target of his sideswipe.[210]

After this, the ways of al-Khāliṣī and the JT seem to have parted. He never again appeared in the columns of the journal, and in his other comments on rapprochement, which became less and less frequent, resignation began to set in after the attacks from all sides resulted in the numbers of his supporters dwindling.[211] In his philosophical-religious testament, he was forced to acknowledge with disillusionment how difficult it was to bring about confessional agreement among Muslims. He lamented that he had striven his entire life for this cause, but the conflicts had become even more frequent and more bitter. His fatalistic judgement was that thousands of reformers like him had failed in their attempts to help the *sharīʿa*—and therefore unity—regain its former status, and as a result it was impossible to preclude that one day there might be a complete abolition of religious law.[212]

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In his short introduction to the history of the rapprochement movement, written at the beginning of the 1960s,[213] Maḥmūd Shaltūt cited an Iranian, an Iraqi, and a Lebanese scholar as outstanding Shiite supporters of the JT. The last-mentioned was no one less than ʿAbd al-Ḥusayn Sharaf al-Dīn, the well-known author of the *Murājaʿāt*.[214] His contacts to the *taqrīb* association had indeed already existed since the era of its foundation and continued until his death at the end of December 1957.

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[210] al-Khāliṣī in *RI* 6/1954/51–60. He was, incidentally, the only Shiite scholar addressed with the title "Āyatollāh" in the *RI*; for an earlier comment in the *RI* concerned about the relations of the denominations in Iraq, see *RI* 4/1952/220; regarding his criticism of al-Khaṭīb and the Azhar journal see below, pp. 271ff.

[211] Cf. the preface to the second volume of al-Khāliṣī's *Iḥyāʾ al-sharīʿa* by ʿAbd al-Rasūl al-Khaṭīb, in which he reported the mainly negative responses to volume 1; ibid., pp. *a–t*; cf. Ende: "Erfolg und Scheitern", 124f.

[212] al-Khāliṣī: *Waṣiyyatnāme*, 36–45, esp. 43; the announcement of his death in the *ʿIrfān* shows how alone al-Khāliṣī was in the Islamic World at the end: it consisted of just of a single line; 51/6 (Dec. 1963), 648.

[213] *RI* 14/1964/194–202.

[214] Ibid., 199; the other two Shiites were Borūjerdī and Muḥammad al-Ḥusayn Āl Kāshif al-Ghiṭāʾ.

In March 1948, only a year after the JT's first meeting, Sharaf al-Dīn published an item in the Lebanese journal *al-Maʿhad*[215] in which he explicitly praised the ongoing pan-Islamic efforts. At the same time, however, he expressed concern that the polemics of the opponents of confessional reconciliation might find undue following because they were not being sufficiently heeded by the ecumenical side and also not being refuted decisively enough by the reform-oriented scholars.

As an example of the threatening danger, he quoted some passages from the Egyptian journal *al-Fatḥ* (published by Muḥibb al-Dīn al-Khaṭīb) in which various aspects of the Shiite belief in the Mahdī were attacked vociferously and made to appear ludicrous.[216] Sharaf al-Dīn firmly emphasized that whoever remained silent in the face of these reproaches made himself an accomplice of this "trumpet of colonialism".[217]

> The natural result is that the silent scholar is measured against the talking fool as soon as the scholar, by keeping his silence, shows his approval of the fool's words.[218]

The pessimism re-emphasized at the end of the article that Moḥammad Taqī Qommī and his JT could fall victim to a *fitna* brought about by those polemics caused Qommī to become active in order to allay his counterpart's fears. In the issue of the *Maʿhad* that appeared the very next month, he thanked Sharaf al-Dīn, with whom he had obviously not had prior contact, for his support. At the same time, though, he remarked that the opponents of the *taqrīb* were actually a small, isolated and thus ineffective group whose scandal sheet was not known to or read by anyone. There was no reason for the JT to be timorous since the great scholars and reformers would hear its message.[219]

ʿAbd al-Ḥusayn Sharaf al-Dīn's three contributions to the *RI* contained neither a discussion of rapprochement strictly speaking nor any further defence of the ecumene against ongoing polemic criticism, which continued to exist despite Qommī's wishful thinking in the

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[215] Printed in ʿAlī: *al-Imām Sharaf al-Dīn*, 163–68.
[216] Ibid., 165f.; see also below, pp. 258ff.
[217] Ibid., 165.
[218] Ibid., 166.
[219] Qommī's reply is found ibid., 168–71; also in his contributions in the *RI*, Qommī's usual style of argumentation was to play down the attacks of his opponents and even reinterpret them in a way that strengthened the position of the JT; cf. *RI* 6/1954/366f.; 8/1956/41f.; 11/1959/355f.

opposite direction. Also his own role in the history of *taqrīb*, in the form of his *Murāja'āt*, was, as already demonstrated, not a topic for the JT; the association was possibly aware of the problematic origin of the work and its doubtful authenticity. Of equally little interest was the fact that Sharaf al-Dīn himself occasionally became the target of barbed comments penned by Sunnis.[220] Instead, he limited himself to basic theological research and devoted all three articles to minor details of the ritual prayer.[221] Nonetheless, he personally followed the progress of the debate attentively and even wrote on the subject from time to time.[222]

Shortly before his death, on the occasion of the edition of al-Muḥaqqiq al-Ḥillī's legal compendium *al-Mukhtaṣar al-nāfi'*, which was produced by the Egyptian Ministry of *Awqāf* in cooperation with the JT, Sharaf ad-Dīn raised his voice in favour of an inner-Islamic rapprochement for the last time. In letters to al-Bāqūrī and Qommī, he thanked both of them for this work and in particular for their prefaces to it. He even expressed to al-Bāqūrī the Shiite expectation that the Ministry of *Awqāf* would now push forward the rallying (*ḍamm*) of the Imāmiyya and Zaydiyya with the four Sunni legal schools.[223] The excellent reputation of 'Abd al-Ḥusayn Sharaf al-Dīn within the JT is demonstrated by a letter Muḥammad Muḥammad al-Madanī sent in the autumn of 1959 to his son, Ṣadr al-Dīn Sharaf al-Dīn, who was himself one of the *RI* authors.[224] In it, al-Madanī informed him that the Azhar had decided to include the study of the life and works of his father into the curriculum of the Department

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[220] Cf. for example Aḥmad Muḥammad Shākir in *MA* 25/5 (Jan. 1954), 551f., a criticism, *inter alia*, of Sharaf al-Dīn's book about Abū Hurayra and the rejection it contained of the *ḥadīth*s transmitted by him; cf. Ende: *Arabische Nation*, 94–96.

[221] *RI* 5/1953/264–74; 7/1955/148–57 and 8/1956/139–42; cf. his similar contributions in *al-'Irfān* 36/6–8 (Jun.–Aug. 1949), 564–71, 677–84, and 789–95.

[222] E.g. in 1951 in his epilogue to al-Madanī/al-Zu'bī: *al-Islām bayn al-sunna wa-l-shī'a*, II/114–18.

[223] Portions of Sharaf al-Dīn's letter to Qommī were published within the framework of the latter's obituary in *RI* 10/1958/109f.; the letter to al-Bāqūrī is found in *al-'Irfān* 45/4 (Jan. 1958), 391 (al-Bāqūrī's reply ibid., 392); see also Hādī Faḍlallāh: "al-Jānib al-iṣlāḥī 'ind al-sayyid 'Abd al-Ḥusayn Sharaf al-Dīn", in: *al-Imām al-sayyid 'Abd al-Ḥusayn Sharaf al-Dīn*, 253–80, on 262.

[224] Regarding him (1912–1970), see al-Ziriklī III/202; *RF* II/738f.; *MMI* II/140; al-Khāqānī: *Shu'arā'*, IV/372–75, and esp. Sharaf al-Dīn: *Bughyat al-rāghibīn*, II/383–410; obituary in *al-'Irfān* 57/9–10 (Jan.–Feb. 1970), 1420; Ṣadr al-Dīn Sharaf al-Dīn published five items in the *RI* in total, among them an investigation about the Prophet's companion 'Ammār b. Yāsir: *RI* 6/1954/303–18 (reprinted in al-Madanī: *Da'wat al-taqrīb*, 127–43 and al-Shīrāzī: *al-Waḥda al-islāmiyya*, 118–35).

of *Sharīʿa*, of which al-Madanī was then Dean, in the advanced courses of the subject history of law leading to the Ph.D.[225]

There is a certain irony in the fact that ʿAbd al-Ḥusayn Sharaf al-Dīn's relationship with the second most important representative of the Lebanese Shia in the JT, Muḥammad Jawād Mughniyya, already cited on several occasions, was not always free from tensions,[226] although both would not let it show publicly.[227] After having finished his theological studies in Najaf, Mughniyya returned to his south-Lebanese native region in 1936 and later served as a judge in Beirut. Over the years, he developed into an extraordinarily prolific author, even when measured against other Shiite writers in the twentieth century, who as a group produced publications in profusion. In addition to a large number of books, he composed innumerable articles that were distributed by newspapers and journals throughout the Islamic world and also frequently accumulated into anthologies.[228] From early on, he had begun to demonstrate in his works an interest in the relations between Sunnis and Shiites as well as for the possibility and problems of rapprochement of the denominations.[229]

Beginning in 1950, the second year of the *RI*'s existence, he regularly wrote items for the journal and in the course of the next two decades became its most industrious author with a total of 32 pieces, keeping faith with the journal until the very last issue in 1972. His contributions were predominantly short, comprehensive essays of a mere three or four pages that contained general calls for tolerance

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[225] ʿAlī: *al-Imām Sharaf al-Dīn*, 160f.

[226] Regarding Mughniyya (1904–1979), see *MDA* IV/657–59; *ASh* IX/205; *GD* III/272; al-Khāqānī: *Shuʿarāʾ*, VII/ 432–36; Faḍlallāh: *Muḥammad Ǧawād Mughniyya*, passim (with a fully annotated list of publications pp. 385–419); obituary in *al-ʿIrfān* 68/1–2 (Jan.–Feb. 1980), 117–20 and 68/3–4 (Mar.–Apr. 1980), 220–32; further Mughniyya's autobiography *Tajārib Muḥammad Ǧawād Mughniyya* (published by his son ʿAbd al-Ḥusayn Mughniyya); among Western sources, cf. Göbel: *Moderne schiitische Politik*, 65–139; Richard: *L'Islam chi'ite*, 158–62, and Mallat: *Shi'i Thought*, 16–25.

[227] Cf. Mughniyya's obituaries of Sharaf al-Dīn, the tone of which was absolutely friendly and in which the subtle criticism is to be looked for between the lines: *al-ʿIrfān* 45/8 (May 1958), 738f. and 47/10 (Jun. 1960), 938f.; cf. Göbel, 83–86.

[228] Some of these anthologies have been—and are still being—compiled into works of several volumes, so that it is not uncommon to find a single item in three or four places; I avoid listing cross-references and instead summarily refer here to the works *Maʿa ʿulamāʾ al-Najaf*, *al-Shīʿa fī l-mīzān* (which includes *al-Shīʿa wa-l-tashayyuʿ* and *Maʿa al-shīʿa al-imāmiyya*), *al-Ǧawāmiʿ wa-l-fawāriq bayn al-sunna wa-l-shīʿa*, as well as *Maqālāt* (consisting *of Min dhā wa-dhāk*, *Min hunā wa-hunāk*, *Ṣafaḥāt yūqat al-farāgh*, and *Falsafāt islāmiyya*); see in addition the collections of *RI* articles compiled by al-Madanī, al-Shīrāzī, and al-ʿAlāyilī.

[229] Cf. for example *al-ʿIrfān* 28/6 (Nov. 1938), 577–79; Göbel, 89–91.

and unity and explanations of Shiite self-perception. Most of his considerations referred to questions of religious law and its sources,[230] but unlike the majority of the other *RI* authors, he also did not shy away from openly addressing controversial points that had repeatedly given cause for mutual polemic.[231] Of course, in the brief format he had chosen, he was not always able to deal with these problems exhaustively, but the fact alone that he mentioned them at all was noteworthy when compared to the prevailing practice in the *RI*.

Mughniyya candidly admitted that his goal was apologetic in nature: the Sunni readers were to be exposed to the Shiite point of view, which was not questioned seriously at any point. But he did not aim, as he himself qualified, to prove a putative superiority of Shiism and a concomitant error on the part of the Sunnis but rather to promote fairness and mutual understanding in cases of controversies.[232] For him there was no doubt whatsoever that this form of tolerance was possible since in the essence of the religion imposed upon every Muslim, Shiites and Sunnis were in agreement: the unity of God (*tawḥīd*), Muḥammad's prophethood (*nubuwwa*), and the belief in the Hereafter (*maʿād*). Everything beyond these articles of faith was not part of religion proper but related to the respective legal schools, not touching one's identity as a Muslim, but merely defining him as a Sunni or a Shiite.

Mughniyya explicitly classified the contentious issue of the Imamate, like al-Marāghī and al-Zanjānī had done before him, as belonging to these *ḍarūrāt al-madhhab*.[233] The Sunni polemic reaction was not long in coming and took a predictable tone. In an article, the title of which provides an example of his considerable skill at making sarcastic puns, Maḥmūd al-Mallāḥ exploited Mughniyya's opinion of the Imamate to relegate him across the board among the practitioners of *taqiyya*.[234]

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[230] *RI* 2/1950/278–89; 3/1951/158–61; 4/1952/28–31, 366–70; 7/1955/403–05; 8/1956/260–63; 9/1957/141–43; 10/1958/362–66.

[231] *RI* 5/1953/164–66 (about the *ʿiṣma* and other things); 6/1954/379–81 (*ghulāt*); 11/1959/261–65 (*ʿāshūrā'*); 14/1963/39–43 (*taqiyya*); 14/1964/224–30 (Shiite *ḥadīth*).

[232] *RI* 5/1953/392–95 (with the programmatic title "al-Khilāf lā yamnaʿ min al-inṣāf").

[233] *RI* 2/1950/387–89; similarly in *RI* 8/1956/148–51; more general ibid., 48–50; see also *al-ʿIrfān* 43/6 (Mar. 1956), 607–09.

[234] al-Mallāḥ: *al-Ārā' al-ṣarīḥa*, 62–66, esp. 65f.; the pun in the title *Aghānī* ("The Songs . . .) *Mughniyya/mughanniyya* (مغنية) is based on the theoretically possible reading of Mughniyya's name as *mughanniyya* (. . . of a songstress").

More than other Shiite authors, Muḥammad Jawād Mughniyya demonstrated a keen interest in the Shia's relations with the Azhar, and he accompanied the University's internal development with comments which while sometimes critical were never insulting. Thus, for example, he joined in the debate caused by the book *Min hunā nabda'* by the Azharī Khālid Muḥammad Khālid with whom he sided, as he had done during Khālid's discussion of reform with the *Shaykh al-Azhar*, ʿAbd al-Raḥmān Tāj in 1954.[235] He also criticized textbooks or other publications by Azhar scholars in which Shiite beliefs and ideas were, in his opinion, misrepresented.[236] At that time, however, Mughniyya still remained silent vis-à-vis the open polemic of Muḥibb al-Dīn al-Khaṭīb, the editor in chief of the Azhar magazine; he only began his crusade against him in the 1960s, after al-Khaṭīb had been relieved of his duty. When Maḥmūd Shaltūt's assumption of the rectorship at the end of the 1950s changed the atmosphere prevailing at the Azhar in favour of the Shiites, Mughniyya emerged as the staunchest supporter of this development and consistently defended Shaltūt and the JT against the Sunni resistance that immediately followed in 1960.[237]

The main concern behind his Azhar-related pieces was the demand for a reform of the curricula, which to him meant consideration and ultimately inclusion of Shiite law in the courses of legal studies at the University. It was with this in mind that he had devoted several monographs and numerous shorter contributions to comparative law, the study of which he felt was a goal worth striving for.[238]

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[235] *al-ʿIrfān* 38/3 (Feb. 1951), 275–78; 41/1 (Nov. 1953), 32–39: a critical but positive review of Khālid's book; 41/6 (Apr. 1954), 647–50: a discussion between Khālid and Tāj; concerning Khālid Muḥammad Khālid, cf. his autobiography *Qiṣṣatī maʿa al-ḥayāt*, Cairo 1993; also al-Raḍawī: *Maʿa rijāl al-fikr*, 148–54; Mohamed Nawar: *Wandel der islamischen Staatsidee von der Mitte des 19. Jahrhunderts bis heute, dargestellt am Beispiel Ḫālid Muḥammad Ḫālid*, Cologne 1983; regarding his partial renunciation of his former views about 30 years later, cf. R. Wielandt: "Zeitgenössische ägyptische Stimmen zur Säkularisierungsproblematik", *WI* 22/1982–84/117–33, esp. 129ff.

[236] *al-ʿIrfān* 40/3 (Jan. 1953), 283–86 (against the book *Tārīkh al-tashrīʿ al-islāmī* written by ʿAbd al-Laṭīf al-Subkī, Muḥammad ʿAlī al-Sāyis, and Muḥammad Yūsuf al-Barbarī, because of their description of the Shiite doctrine of the Imamate) and 41/4 (Feb. 1954), 447–50 (against Saʿd Muḥammad Ḥasan's *al-Mahdiyya fī l-Islām*).

[237] *al-ʿIrfān* 46/7 (Mar. 1959), 608–10; *RI* 12/1960/33–36 (interestingly, this was the only item published on this subject in the *RI*); *al-ʿIrfān* 48/3 (Nov. 1960), 294–96; cf. Mughniyya: *Tajārib*, 300f.; idem: *Min hunā wa-hunāk*, 130f., and idem: *Faḍā'il al-imām ʿAlī*, 183f.

[238] Above all, his book *al-Fiqh ʿalā l-madhāhib al-khamsa*, Beirut 1960 has to be men-

Mughniyya by no means limited both his request to the *ʿulamāʾ* to pay more attention to reform-oriented ideas and to open the schools of law for each other, and his criticism of the scholars' sluggishness in complying with these demands to the Azhar. The latter's Shiite counterpart, Najaf, with which Mughniyya was extremely familiar from his student days, also repeatedly came into his crosshairs and was subjected to the same relentless examination and criticism where he deemed it necessary.[239]

Even though he had been writing for the *RI* since 1950 and, according to his own statement, had been in touch with Maḥmūd Shaltūt for more or less the same period of time, he did not pay his first personal visit to Cairo and the Azhar until October 1963, merely weeks before Shaltūt's death. And only on the very last day of this journey did he meet the *Shaykh al-Azhar*, to whom he nonetheless paid high tribute for his longstanding commitment to rapprochement among Muslims which found its climax in the *fatwā* of 1959.[240]

Mughniyya had spent the previous nine days in the city wandering incognito through mosques, bookshops, and universities in order to find out the opinion of the local Sunnis regarding Shiism. Some things disappointed him—for instance, that the Azhar was not nearly as large as he had imagined—, other observations provoked him into sharp-tongued remarks. Thus he discovered that the very practices of pious Shiites at the holy sepulchres in Najaf and Kerbela, for which they were frequently criticized by Sunnis, were nothing other than what he observed Ḥusayn Mosque or at the tomb of Sayyida Zaynab in Cairo.

What outraged Mughniyya most, however, was the widespread ignorance and ineradicable prejudices about Shiism he encountered. For example, a black African *shaykh* whom he met at the Azhar described

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tioned here; cf. *al-ʿIrfān* 48/1 (Sep. 1960), 89; Persian translation entitled *Feqh-e taṭbīqī-ye madhāheb-e panjgāne*, Tehran 1984; cf. Mughniyya's discussion of a work on comparative law (*al-Uṣūl al-ʿāmma li-l-fiqh al-muqāran* by Muḥammad Taqī al-Ḥakīm, Beirut 1963, ²1979) in *al-ʿIrfān* 51/5 (Nov. 1963), 421–28.

[239] Cf., for example his debate with al-Rājiḥī, outlined above, p. 168, instigated by Mughniyya's accusation of *taʿaṣṣub* against the Azhar and Najaf; see also Mughniyya: *Maʿa al-shīʿa al-imāmiyya*, 145–52, as well as his articles devoted exclusively to Najaf in *al-ʿIrfān* 45/1 (Oct. 1957), 22–24; 49/7 (Mar. 1962), 622–24, and 51/2 (Aug. 1963), 135–37.

[240] Regarding it, as well as Mughniyya's entire Cairo visit, see his notes in *Min hunā wa-hunāk*, 121–31 and *Tajārib*, 300f., 357–64; cf. also his general presentation of Cairo's significance to the Shia in *al-ʿIrfān* 45/9 (Jun. 1958), 891–93; cf. al-Wardānī: *al-Shīʿa fī Miṣr*, 125f.

the Shiites as "deviationists" (*zā'ighūn*). When asked how he had reached this conclusion, all he could reply was "that's what they say" (*hākadhā yuqāl*).[241] This was the straw that broke the camel's back, reversing Mughniyya's readiness to discuss, as he had done with known critics such as Muḥammad Abū Zahra and Aḥmad Amīn, and pushing him to polemic attacks against the authors of such thoughts. He composed a diatribe specifically directed against the Wahhabis, whom he perceived as particularly pernicious in their anti-Shiite dogmas, and in his other works he always described with unconcealed satisfaction how in personal confrontations with scholars, booksellers, etc. who held these opinions he had been able to silence them and make them look ridiculous.[242]

Without actually wanting to, in his report about the ignorance he had come across in Cairo, Mughniyya in fact also presented a bleak commentary on the relatively insignificant impact the activity of the JT and the ecumenical discussion in general had had on the *'ulamā'* and intellectuals. Only four years after Shaltūt's *fatwā* and still within the latter's lifetime, nothing of the spirit of rapprochement or reconciliation between Sunnis and Shiites was to be felt, even at the Azhar itself. The JT, characteristically, never showed up anywhere in Mughniyya's account.

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Finally, in addition to the *taqrīb* proponents reviewed so far, two other prominent Syrian-Lebanese Shiites have to be named because precisely their abstention from openly declaring their support for the JT gave rise to a range of speculation: Muḥsin al-Amīn, one of the most important representatives of the Syrian-Lebanese Shia, and Aḥmad 'Ārif al-Zayn, the founder and editor of the *'Irfān*. In fact, the former neither took a position on the JT immediately after its founding nor did he indicate any type of willingness to cooperate with it.

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[241] Mughniyya: *Min hunā wa-hunāk*, 124.

[242] Examples are found ibid., 64ff., 74 (under the ironic heading "With the flowing robes": *Ma'a al-ardiya al-faḍfāḍa*); ibid., 123–25, 126f. (in Cairo); *al-Shī'a fī l-mīzān*, 257 (against a nagging Azhar *shaykh* in Tyre); *Tajārib*, 219f., 360, 362; *Hādhihi hiya al-wahhābiyya*, 18f. (against a Meccan bookseller); regarding Mughniyya's relations to the Wahhābiyya, see the last-mentioned work, passim (Persian translation entitled *Īn ast ā'īn-e wahhābiyyat*; the Arabic original was reprinted in Tehran after the clashes during the pilgrimage in 1987); cf. *Tajārib*, 367–76, and Göbel: *Moderne schiitische Politik*, 91–94.

Muḥibb al-Dīn al-Khaṭīb considered this silence as clandestine opposition and immediately added fuel to the fire. He had heard, he wrote in the introduction to his 1947/48 new edition of ʿAbdallāh al-Suwaydī's report about the conference of Najaf in 1743, that Muḥsin al-Amīn "disapproved of this rapprochement in the strongest way" (*ashadd inkāran li-hādhā l-taqrīb*) and anyway, so far only few trustworthy Shiite figures had become active in the JT.[243] It was comments like these that led ʿAbd al-Ḥusayn Sharaf al-Dīn to put down on paper his previously mentioned article in which he judged the prospects of the organization rather pessimistically. Thus it is not to be ruled out that the dig contained in his comment "it's beneath our models to protest against (this) prattle,"[244] was also intended to include Muḥsin al-Amīn.

In contrast there are also authors who, being themselves aligned with the *taqrīb* movement, clearly rank al-Amīn among those reformists who originally initiated the impulse for the efforts to reach a doctrinal rapprochement. Muḥammad ʿAlī al-Zuʿbī, for instance, named him in the same breath with Jamāl al-Dīn al-Afghānī, Jamāl al-Dīn al-Qāsimī and Muḥammad al-Ḥusayn Āl Kāshif al-Ghiṭā'.[245] The *taqrīb* organization itself did not take al-Amīn's silence as a sign of animosity. In a letter to Āyatollāh Borūjerdī in 1952, ʿAbd al-Majīd Salīm wrote that he had recently learned of Muḥsin al-Amīn's death with great dismay and extended his condolences to the Shiite *ʿulamā'*.[246]

Possibly, as far as Aḥmad ʿĀrif al-Zayn is concerned, his reserve might have been related to his feeling personally offended due to the perception that he had not been treated fairly and had merely been used as a vehicle for the announcement of the JT. Only in the first few years after the organization's creation, did Moḥammad Taqī Qommī repeatedly turn to the *ʿIrfān* to inform the Muslim World of its existence and activities.[247] With the establishment of its house organ, the *RI*, he apparently held further cooperation to be

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[243] al-Suwaydī: *Muʾtamar al-Najaf*, introd., p. 57; cf. Ende: *Arabische Nation*, 118.

[244] ʿAlī: *al-Imām Sharaf al-Dīn*, 165.

[245] al-Zuʿbī: *Lā sunna wa-lā shīʿa*, 199; cf. also al-Madanī/al-Zuʿbī: *al-Islām bayn al-sunna wa-l-shīʿa*, I/97, 131 and II/5; further *ASh* X/393, 411 and 432f.; regarding al-Qāsimī's relations with the Shia, see Commins: *Islamic Reform*, 84f.

[246] *RI* 4/1952/219f.

[247] *al-ʿIrfān* 33/8 (Jun. 1947), 969f.; 37/6 (Jun. 1950), 708; 38/5 (Apr. 1951), 511; cf. also Sulaymān Ẓāhir in *al-ʿIrfān* 33/10 (Sep. 1947), 1102f.; notices of the *Irfān* editors about the JT and its journal are in *al-ʿIrfān* 33/8 (Jul. 1947), 952; 36/4 (Apr. 1949), 435; 38/1 (Dec. 1950), 94f.

unnecessary, perhaps for reasons of competition. Furthermore, the fact that Muḥibb al-Dīn al-Khaṭīb, who had attacked the JT vehemently in the Azhar journal shortly before, was nonetheless identified by the *ʿIrfān* as "an old friend and great author" in a comment in its December 1952 issue[248] must have been taken by Qommī as a personal affront. With only one single exception,[249] the renowned Lebanese magazine was completely ignored by the *RI* in the following years. Although he provided extensive exposure for *taqrīb* exponents[250] and even permitted the reproduction of some *RI* articles,[251] al-Zayn extracted revenge by personally remaining completely out of the debate, for which he was even prepared to accept al-Khāliṣī's reproach.

The fact that al-Zayn allowed a critical Azharī like Muḥammad ʿAbd al-Munʿim al-Khafājī and the Azhar representatives in Lebanon ʿAbd al-Ghanī al-Rājiḥī and Ibrāhīm al-Waqfī to publish in the *ʿIrfān* also fits in well with this picture.[252] At the end of 1957, Muḥammad Abū l-Majd, who was active for the JT in Qom, attempted to ease the tensions between the editor of the *ʿIrfān* and the *taqrīb* society during a visit to Lebanon. Al-Zayn reported it briefly, ostensibly praising the initiative of Qommī and the other JT *ʿulamāʾ*, but clearly maintained the existing distance between the organization in Cairo and himself with the casual remark that the *ʿIrfān* (and thus al-Zayn in person) had already been calling for this type of agreement among Muslims for fifty years. An almost defiant final sentence ended a comment that was hardly suitable for improving relations between the two scholars:[253]

> This is our article about rapprochement; it is the article of every honest Muslim who is close to us. Concerning those who are dishonest, we do not want to have anything to do with them and leave them in their state of error and delusion (*sādirīn*).

It was not before Maḥmūd Shaltūt's assumption of the office of *Shaykh al-Azhar* that Aḥmad ʿĀrif al-Zayn finally renounced his reser-

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[248] *al-ʿIrfān* 40/2 (Dec. 1952), 228; the comment came from Aḥmad ʿĀrif al-Zayn's son Nizār; in fact, the *ʿIrfān* had reprinted an article by al-Khaṭīb about the Palestine question from *al-Fatḥ* a long time previously, *al-ʿIrfān* 28/4 (Jun. 1938), 361f.

[249] *RI* 6/1954/332f.

[250] Mughniyya in *al-ʿIrfān* 42/7 (May 1955), 818f.; ʿAbbās Abū l-Ḥasan al-Mūsawī in *al-ʿIrfān* 44/9 (Jun. 1957), 989–91.

[251] *al-ʿIrfān* 43/3 (Dec. 1955), 331f. (Muḥammad ʿArafa); 43/9 (Jun. 1956), 1004 (al-Madanī); cf. also al-Madanī in *al-ʿIrfān* 43/5 (Feb. 1956), 465–76.

[252] al-Khafājī in *al-ʿIrfān* 44/1 (Oct. 1956), 21–26.

[253] *al-ʿIrfān* 45/4 (Jan. 1958), 306f.

vations and took up correspondence with Shaltūt, and while he expressly praised his efforts on behalf of ecumenism, he carefully avoided any mention of the JT.[254] Al-Zayn's death the following year—he died at the end of 1960 during a stay in Mashhad[255]—tragically prevented continuation of these contacts. Nevertheless, the tireless endeavours toward the unity of all Muslims that he had demonstrated by publishing and editing his journal were particularly emphasized at the funeral ceremonies.[256]

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The years 1949 and 1960 delimit the period in which the JT actually managed to lead the discussion about inner-Islamic rapprochement, the Rectorships of ʿAbd al-Majīd Salīm (1950/51 and 1952) standing out as an early peak. Under the protection of the head of the Azhar, it seemed at this stage for the first time that Moḥammad Taqī Qommī's attempt to create an organization from what had previously been a loose dialogue between individual scholars and to make the *taqrīb* association an institution known and respected internationally might be crowned by success.

Soon, however, it turned out that the intention of limiting the ecumenical discussion to a purely legal and theological reconciliation of the Islamic denominations encountered obstacles. The truly impressive list of *ʿulamāʾ* who, by contributing to the *RI*, became openly involved in the efforts of the JT or those, as in the case of Borūjerdī, who had secretly supported it, cannot conceal the fact that its achievements hardly corresponded to the organization's expectations. The Azhar generally remained passive, and following Salīm's dismissal, vacillated over the years from indifference to outright hostility. Also within the *taqrīb* society, maintaining the discourse fell to individuals. The institutions from which they came, the Azhar, Najaf, and Qom, were not nearly united and determined enough to follow them.

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[254] *MA* 30/10 (Apr. 1959), 904–06; Shaltūt's letter (that mentioned the JT) was also printed in *al-ʿIrfān* 46/8 (Apr. 1959), 706f.

[255] *al-ʿIrfān* 48/3 (Nov. 1960), 202f. as well as the double issue *in memoriam suam* 48/5–6 (Jan.–Feb. 1961), 401–608; no obituary was granted to him in the *RI*.

[256] Cf. for example *al-ʿIrfān* 48/9 (Apr. 1961), 818; see Zuhayr Marīdīnī in *al-ʿIrfān* 69/8–10 (Oct.–Dec. 1981), 7–17.

CHAPTER SEVEN

SCOPE AND LIMITS OF THE ECUMENICAL DEBATE

On the uses and disadvantages of history for ecumenical thinking

The JT's claim expressed on more than one occasion that it followed in Muḥammad ʿAbduh's footsteps was of double significance to the organization's self-perception. On the one hand, he was the epitome of the Egyptian reformer, and actually of the Muslim reformer, of the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries and the reference point for entire generations of subsequent modernists everywhere in the Islamic World. In particular, his attempts to adapt the Azhar to the changing realities of the modern age through a reorganization of the curricula and general administrative reforms assured him an indelible place in the (Sunni) reform movement.[1] In this context, ʿAbduh's importance and influence on the *ʿulamāʾ* active in the JT were also repeatedly referred to within the *taqrīb* society.[2]

On the other hand, Muḥammad ʿAbduh embodied the combination of reformist ideas with the aspiration toward pan-Islamic goals in an almost archetypal manner, which was recognized within the ecumenical movement by both Shiite and Sunni scholars alike.[3] Thus it was only logical that the journal *al-ʿUrwa al-wuthqā*, published by ʿAbduh and his friend and teacher Jamāl al-Dīn al-Afghānī in 1884 during their exile in Paris, became the model the *RI* sought to emu-

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[1] Lemke: *Šaltūt*, 31–33; "Iṣlāḥ, i: The Arab World", *EI*² IV/141–63 (A. Merad); Kerr: *Islamic Reform*, passim, esp. 209ff.; cf. also above, chapter II; a much less friendly portrait of ʿAbduh (and also of al-Afghānī and Rashīd Riḍā) was depicted by J.J.G. Jansen: *The Dual Nature of Islamic Fundamentalism*, Ithaca 1997, 40, who describes them as the founding fathers of twentieth-century fundamentalism.

[2] Muḥammad ʿAbd al-Laṭīf Darāz in *RI* 2/1950/357f.; ʿUthmān Amīn in *RI* 3/1951/303–06 (Amīn also earned a name for himself as ʿAbduh's biographer; cf. for example *al-ʿIrfān* 32/5 [Apr. 1926], 409–14; *MA* 14/1943/494–97, 15/1943–44/30–32 as well as, primarily, his book *Muḥammad ʿAbduh*, Cairo 1944); see also Aḥmad Amīn in *RI* 3/1951/26–29; *RI* 6/1954/434 (obituary Salīm), 14/1964/337 (obituary Shaltūt), and 7/1955/325f. (on the 50th anniversary of ʿAbduh's death).

[3] Muḥammad al-Ḥusayn Āl Kāshif al-Ghiṭāʾ is the best known example on the Shiite side, cf. *RI* 2/1950/272; the JT expressed its gratitude by clearly identifying him as an intellectual disciple of ʿAbduh's; see *RI* 7/1955/326.

late. The necessity for Muslims to reunite and regain their former strength in order to successfully defy European colonialism in their lands, emphasized repeatedly at the end of the nineteenth century, still appeared absolutely topical to the ecumenical *'ulamā'* around the middle of the twentieth century. Right from the beginning, Muḥammad Muḥammad al-Madanī articulated his hope that the *RI* might become a kind of "*al-'Urwa al-wuthqā* of our times".[4] As it turned out, the reference to a supposedly ongoing external threat from the "enemies of Islam" developed into what unquestionably was one of the most important leitmotifs of the ecumenical argumentation.[5]

To the activists of the *taqrīb* movement, it was clear from the outset that in their intention to create an institutional framework for inner-Islamic ecumenism for the first time in history, they were treading on rocky and uncharted territory. Faced with the many sensitivities and polemics that had burdened mutual relations between the two denominations for centuries, a rapprochement or even reconciliation regarding the most important disputes was naturally not to be expected from one day to the next. In order to prevent the initiative from failure and to preclude the emergence of further mutual attacks, the scholars participating in the JT would have to proceed cautiously and, whenever possible, exclude delicate issues. The *taqrīb* organization did not regard the scrutiny of the points of contention, their origin, and their modern implications as its primary task because this—as was repeatedly stressed—would only sow renewed discord and create cause for future polemic. Instead, the common ground was to be emphasized in order to make the readers aware of the fact that ecumenical rapprochement was not only necessary but could also be achieved without undue difficulty.

Indicative of this attitude was the debate about the "correct" treatment of Islamic history, or rather the one-sidedness of this discussion. Only in the beginning were a few voices heard suggesting that the study of history should not be neglected and that attention should be devoted to those very events that had caused the division of the *umma*. One of the most ardent advocates of this view was the historian Maḥmūd Fayyāḍ, who taught at the Azhar. In several essays he reflected on the issue of dealing with history and contended that

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[4] *RI* 1/1949/110; cf. also above, pp. 143f.

[5] Cf. the listing of the most customary patterns of argumentation in the next section of this chapter; regarding *al-'Urwa al-wuthqā*, see above, pp. 34f.

it should not simply be ignored, all the more so since both ancient and modern historians shared the blame for the alienation among Muslims. As a consequence, he expressly demanded a revision of the study and writing of history that henceforward was to remain free from the pernicious spirit of fanaticism (*taʿaṣṣub*) and falsehood (*zayf*) that had characterized previous historiography.[6]

Just as early, however, there was also the opposing opinion of those who favoured giving the past short shrift. For example, the Iraqi Shiite scholar Muḥammad Ṣādiq al-Ṣadr stated in regard to the problem of the caliphate that since it was impossible to undo the past, it would be better to forget it or at least pretend to do so (*an natanāsā l-māḍī*).[7] This was obviously the more convenient way for all involved: the discussion was intended to stress what Sunnis and Shiites had in common, and an investigation of the past would have naturally revealed far more divisiveness. This appeasing and ahistorical attitude quickly prevailed, and from around the beginning of the 1950s, the demand for a critical study of history was no longer to be heard.

Already in 1951 the editorial staff of the *RI* made no secret on which side its sentiments lay by rejecting the creation of a forum for readers to request *fatwā*s or to submit letters. The reasons given may be seen as characteristic of the JT's sensitivities regarding the confrontation with history:

> This topic has already been considered in the past. The editors follow with interest the questions and requests for *fatwā*s sent to the journal so that it is able to assess the topics (*amrahā*) and to recognize their prevailing character. It has been noticed that a great number of them refer to disputes (*masāʾil jadaliyya*) or to investigations where there is no unambiguous and obvious evidence, but which are mainly based upon hearsay, on weak or baseless traditions, or on those whose correctness

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[6] Fayyāḍ in *RI* 1/1949/286–92 (reprinted in al-ʿAlāyilī: *Masʾalat al-taqrīb*, 44–50), on 286; similarly in 2/1950/413–20 (reprinted ibid., 33–39, and in al-Shīrāzī: *al-Waḥda al-islāmiyya*, 97–104); cf. ʿAbd al-Laṭīf Darāz in *RI* 2/1950/357–63, on 359f., who described it as important for the *qawmiyyat al-umma* (to be translated roughly as "national identity of the Muslim community") to create a consciousness of the past; also Muḥammad Ḥilmī ʿĪsā casually called on Muslims to recollect history: *RI* 1/1949/130–39, on 139; cf. also *RI* 2/1950/111. An article that shared Fayyāḍ's opinion was contributed by ʿAbd al-Mutaʿāl al-Ṣaʿīdī, who examined ʿAlī's behaviour toward the first three caliphs and characterized him as exemplary in his selflessness, since he was not lacking in loyalty, although it was his opinion that his claim to the caliphate was the more legitimate; see *RI* 3/1951/434–38 (reprinted in al-Shīrāzī: *al-Waḥda al-islāmiyya*, 237–42); similarly idem in *RI* 5/1953/73–78.

[7] al-Ṣadr in *RI* 1/1949/358–64, on 359.

> is contended by only *one* group but not others (*ṭā'ifa dūn ṭā'ifa*). Furthermore the editors have discovered that other requests are for *fatwā*s in legal matters where it is easily possible for anyone to reach a conclusive judgement by studying the appropriate books.
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> Among the things the JT especially seeks to avoid is raising points of contention and distracting readers with diatribes. Rather, it works toward casting the cloak of forgetting (*thawb al-nisyān*) over many of the inherited controversies and polemics, and therefore does not strive to burden its readers with questions of the former kind and believes it owes them the advice to ignore (*iġhḍā'*) these issues and rather to engage in useful scholarship and practice.
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> Also, since the *RI* is a journal for the educated elite (*al-khāṣṣa*), and since they and the journal are too intent on maintaining a high scientific level as to give merely a cursory look at the details of the legal schools (*al-furūʿ al-fiqhiyya al-madhhabiyya*) or at *fatwā*s about inheritance law, marriage, pious endowments, or similar things as some other journals usually do, for this reason we must regretfully decline requests for acceptance of questions of this kind.
>
> Therefore, it is satisfactory when we expand upon those subjects on which we believe our readers focus their emotions and intellect and those that bring the excellence of Islam to the fore, as well as the topics that guarantee mankind happiness and stability, with God's help.[8]

From about this moment, meticulous avoidance of any discussion of history and the declared goal of simply forgetting the past as a main element of Islamic inter-confessional relations became part of the JT's fundamental *modus operandi*. The decisive reason for this may be seen in the gradually growing number of opponents to rapprochement and in the desire not to let an internal feud work to their advantage.

In fact, shortly after the JT had issued this announcement, the controversy over Aḥmad Amīn's above-mentioned work about the Mahdī made manifest where preoccupation with divisive details of history could lead, i.e. to a new quarrel with Shiism that was exploited by the adversaries of ecumenism. Moḥammad Taqī Qommī had good reason to open the article in which he subjected the Egyptian historian to a vehement criticism with the passionate call to Muslims finally to let the reasons for antagonism disappear behind a "thick curtain of forgetting and disregard" (*sitār ghalīẓ min al-nisyān wa-l-ihmāl*) and to avoid anything that might fan frictions anew.[9] In an

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[8] *RI* 3/1951/108f.

[9] Qommī in *RI* 4/1952/147–51, esp. 148; regarding the quarrel surrounding Amīn's book, see above, pp. 177ff.; Qommī expressed himself in similar tones in *RI* 6/1954/365–70, esp. 370; Muḥammad Yūsuf Mūsā likewise demanded to let

appeal to all who wrote about inner-Islamic discord, the *RI* made it even clearer, urging them to practice "a type of censorship" (*lawn min al-raqāba*) and to base their arguments solely upon traditions that were absolutely reliable.[10]

Muḥammad ʿAbdallāh Muḥammad finally raised complete amnesia in the field of history to the rank of a Basic Law for inner-Islamic reconciliation: "Forgetting, which the ecumene (*al-taqrīb*) demands from the supporters of the various legal schools, is indispensable for any true peace."[11] Accordingly, one of the main reproaches the JT had cast against the anti-Shiite comments of the Azhar journal was its complaint that discussing topics like these (the particular article dealt with the religiousness of ʿAlī's father Abū Ṭālib) were of no benefit to Muslims and re-opened old wounds.[12]

The explicit demand not to touch the dark pages of history and to let the contentious points fade into total oblivion is as old as the ecumenical discussion itself. From the earliest days of the modern *taqrīb* efforts, Muḥammad Rashīd Riḍā had argued in this vein in the first volume of his *Manār*. The *Jamʿiyya islāmiyya* which he proposed should produce a book about the common religious bases of all confessions for the sake of standardizing the Muslim creed. However, it should "mention nothing of the questions of particular controversy between the Islamic groupings."[13] In those early years, when Rashīd Riḍā himself spoke out in favour of rapprochement between Sunnis and Shiites, he generally did not consider it as the task of his journal to go into the details of the points of contention. As was to be seen, his criticism of ʿAbd al-Ḥusayn Sharaf al-Dīn's book *al-Fuṣūl al-muhimma* was mainly founded upon the latter's not letting go of the issues about which there had always been disagreement.[14]

"these pages of history" fall into oblivion: *RI* 4/1952/295–99, esp. 298, whereas only a year earlier, with the publication of al-Ṭabrisī's Koran commentary *Majmaʿ al-bayān*, he had stressed the importance of bearing those events in mind that had turned Muslims into Sunnis and Shiites: *RI* 3/1951/63–69, esp. 66.

[10] *RI* 5/1953/318–25, esp. 318f.; praised as exemplary in this respect were the works *ʿAlī wa-banūh* by Ṭāhā Ḥusayn and *Fāṭima al-Ẓahrāʾ wa-l-Fāṭimiyyūn* by ʿAbbās Maḥmūd al-ʿAqqād, of which an excerpt from each was printed; regarding Ḥusayn (1889–1973) and his writings about early Islamic history, cf. Ende: *Arabische Nation*, 192–96; concerning al-ʿAqqād, see below, pp. 286f. note 10.

[11] Muḥammad in *RI* 14/1964/203–11, on 211.

[12] *RI* 7/1955/86–89.

[13] *al-Manār* 1/39 (Dec. 1898), 764–71, on 767; cf. above, p. 40.

[14] *al-Manār* 7/5 (May 1904), 182f. and 16/10 (Sep. 1913), 791 (regarding the last-cited article, also see above, pp. 57f.); in the 1920s, after his "conversion" to

Another precursor with whom the JT was in accord concerning this tricky question was Muḥammad Riḍā al-Muẓaffar. In an article about the relations between Shiism and Sunnism that appeared in the October 1935 edition of the Cairene journal *al-Risāla*, he likewise wanted to see a "thick veil" (*ḥijāb kathīf*) spread over the distant past.[15]

While the ecumenical organization, as expected, had to swallow its opponents' criticism,[16] the demand to let the past be once and for all developed into a thread that has run through the ecumenical debate down to the present with only a few exceptions.[17] The motive *taqrīb* advocates cite for their opinion, if they deem it necessary to do so at all, is that people today derive no benefit from dealing with the events surrounding ʿAlī and Muʿāwiya and from discussing the differences between the confessions. Instead, they confirm, it is only logical to be concerned with present-day problems, to emphasize the common ground, and to keep away from the sectarian strife that is the inevitable result of endlessly exhuming history.[18]

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the Wahhābiyya, he had fewer scruples about naming what he saw as controversial topics, which had the well-known consequences for his relations to the Shia.

[15] al-Muẓaffar: "al-Sunniyyūn wa-l-shīʿa", 1614.

[16] An example is Muḥammad Rashād Sālim's preface to Ibn Taymiyya's *Minhāj al-sunna*, 51, at the end of which (52–58) he enclosed a list of all controversial issues that were unacceptable in the eyes of Sunni *taqrīb* opponents. Incidentally, every polemic brought against the existence of the JT and its goals was of course also directed against its selective historiography, since it necessarily focused on those controversies that still existed and, in the view of the polemicists, were insurmountable.

[17] For example, cf. Muḥammad Taqī al-Ḥakīm, who demanded coming to terms with the past rather than repressing it, and characteristically referred to ʿAbd al-Ḥusayn Sharaf al-Dīn's *al-Murājaʿāt* as well as to his own preface to the latter's *al-Naṣṣ wa-l-ijtihād* as examples of the correct way of dealing with history; *Fikrat al-taqrīb*, 14; Sharaf al-Dīn's work can also be used, however, as proof of the opposite: Hādī Faḍlallāh praised the Lebanese scholar specifically for his attitude of *tanāsī l-māḍī*, see *al-Imām al-sayyid*, 261.

[18] This was more or less the argumentation in ʿAlī: *al-Imām Sharaf al-Dīn*, 19; al-ʿĀmilī: *ʿAqīdat al-shīʿa*, 21f.; Hādī Faḍlallāh: "al-Jānib al-iṣlāḥī ʿind al-Sayyid ʿAbd al-Ḥusayn Sharaf al-Dīn", in: *al-Imām al-Sayyid ʿAbd al-Ḥusayn Sharaf al-Dīn*, 253–80, on 260f.; al-Niʿma: *Rūḥ al-tashayyuʿ*, 485; idem in *al-ʿIrfān* 49/1 (Aug.-Sep. 1961), 7–13; al-Rāfiʿī: *Islāmunā*, 32; Salām: *al-Waḥda al-ʿaqāʾidiyya*, 29ff.; al-Subaytī: *Ilā mashyakhat al-Azhar*, 7; al-Zuʿbī: *Lā sunna wa-lā shīʿa*, 231f.; in a slightly diluted form: al-Ghazzālī: *Ẓalām min al-gharb*, 265; also al-Ḥakīm/al-Āṣifī: "Asās wa-minhaj al-taqrīb", 114; Jawād Moṣṭafawī praised the *RI* explicitly for not having expanded on the contentious points excessively: *Mishkāt* 2/1362sh/25–60, on 51; al-Aḥsāʾī made a similar comment: *al-Ṭāʾifiyya*, 361; Moḥammad Wāʿeẓ Zādeh quoted Āyatollāh Maḥmūd Hāshemī, who described the examining of questions such the dispute among the caliphs as useless (*bī thamar*) since it was linked to the past: *Mishkāt* 28/1990/1–15, on 4.

The practical consequence of this self-perception for the *RI* was the general absence of thorough articles about early Islamic history.[19] But even when individual authors broke this pattern in passing, the picture that emerged was usually ephemeral and selective. Since the causes of the confessional disputes were not gone into, the discussion of those events of the early period that forged both the Shiite and Sunni identities was necessarily omitted. The writers limited themselves to a sterilized and standardized presentation of history that looked approximately as follows: After Islam had done away with the widespread chaos of ceaseless tribal warfare during the *Jāhiliyya*, an exemplary period of unity predominated during the Prophet's lifetime. Following Muḥammad's death, the Muslim community fell victim to frictions. Initially these could be contained in a spirit of brotherliness. Subsequently, however, they degenerated into enmity that resulted in a relapse into the conditions prevalent earlier, which were characterized by fanaticism (*ʿaṣabiyya* or *taʿaṣṣub*). Politics in general and colonialism and the enemies of Islam in particular ultimately exploited this situation and thus managed to play Muslims off against each other, which deepened the rift in the *umma* even more. In order to find the way out of the deplorable current situation, it is necessary for the believers to recall their common interests and as a result return to the harmony that formerly prevailed.[20]

A characteristic example of this viewpoint, which is supported by both Sunni and Shiite authors, is an article by the Egyptian scholar Muḥammad Muḥyī al-Dīn ʿAbd al-Ḥamīd. With reference to the Mamluk historian al-Maqrīzī,[21] he described in detail the early Islamic unity that lasted throughout the whole first century(!), if one disregards the few generally known hypocrites.[22] In attempting this, he was

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[19] Only three essays dealt with this era *expressis verbis: RI* 2/1950/311f.; ʿAbd al-Mutaʿāl al-Ṣaʿīdī in *RI* 3/1951/434–38 (both about ʿAlī b. Abī Ṭālib); Ṣadr al-Dīn Sharaf al-Dīn in *RI* 6/1954/303–18 (about the Prophet's companion ʿAmmār b. Yāsir).

[20] Detailed examples of this view of history, which is presented here in extremely abbreviated form, can be found in ʿAllūba in *RI* 1/1949/5–8; Darāz ibid., 233f.; Amīn ibid., 244–49; Fayyāḍ ibid., 286–92 and 384–91; Makhlūf in *RI* 4/1952/145f.; al-Shabībī in *RI* 7/1955/24–28; cf. al-Shakʿa: *Islām bi-lā madhāhib*, 27–33; al-Rāfiʿī: *Islāmunā*, 11–16.

[21] 1364–1442; see *EI*² VI/193f. (F. Rosenthal).

[22] *RI* 4/1952/289–94; ʿAbd al-Ḥamīd (1900–1972; see al-Ziriklī VII/92 and al-Khafājī: *al-Azhar fī alf ʿām*, new edition III/174 and 445–49) was one of the editors of the classical work *Nahj al-balāgha*, a collection of speeches and sermons ascribed to ʿAlī; see Kornrumpf: "Untersuchungen", 5 and passim.

caught in the paradox of describing a state of affairs that actually never existed—one need only think of the events of the first civil war, the assassination of the three caliphs, or the clash of Kerbela—but which nevertheless had to be (re-)created in this idealized form. At the same time, he succeeded in dismissing the division of Muslims into Sunnis and Shiites (the very mention of whose name ʿAbd al-Ḥamīd circumvents) as the work of some schemers and unbelievers.

The only era about which critical statements were to be read in a few cases was not—as might be expected—that of the Umayyads, who were the source of so many controversies in the twentieth century, but the Abbasid period. In the eyes of the *taqrīb* authors, it was they who transplanted what had formerly been political strife between individual groups onto the religion and in doing so, intensified discord in the *umma*.[23]

Generally speaking, in the rare ventures into historiography there was almost never explicit naming of Sunnis or Shiites. Even, or especially, when writers wanted to display the devastating results of dissention to the readers, many did not refer directly to *the* split in Islam as such, but rather resorted to platitudes or sought refuge in more innocuous incidents simultaneously intended as warnings against the suppression of Islam by non-Muslims. For instance, Muḥammad ʿArafa evoked the Andalusian *Mulūk al-ṭawāʾif*, whose endless intriguing facilitated the Christian Reconquista of Spain,[24] and Muḥammad Riḍā al-Shabībī employed the Byzantines, who exploited the enmity between Umayyads and Abbasids.[25]

Even an advocate of turning to history like Maḥmūd Fayyāḍ appeared content with an ultimately non-committal exhortation for modern historians to combat the curse of fanaticism. He clarified

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[23] Cf. Amīn in *RI* 1/1949/244–49, esp. 247; Fayyāḍ ibid., 286–92, esp. 289; Qommī in *RI* 5/1953/377–84; al-Ṣaʿīdī in *RI* 7/1955/35–39, esp. 36.

[24] ʿArafa in *RI* 8/1956/146f. and 253–59; cf. "Mulūk al-Ṭawāʾif", *EI*² VII/551–54 (M. Morony/D.J. Wasserstein); for a similar argumentation cf. already Muṣṭafā al-Ghalāyinī in *al-ʿIrfān* 3/16 (Aug. 1911), 640–48, on 645; the opponents of *taqrīb* also employed this symbolic argument: for instance Maḥmūd al-Mallāḥ compared the Shiitization of Iran with the Christian Reconquista in Spain: *al-Mujīz ʿalā l-wajīz*, 107 note 2. The reference to the loss of Andalusia and the related warning not to let it happen again are frequently found in other contexts, such as in dealing with the Palestine problem or in connection with the war in the Balkans in the 1990s: cf., for example Muḥammad Jamīl Bayhum: *Filasṭīn Andalus al-sharq*, Beirut 1365/1946 (see *al-ʿIrfān* 32/7 [Jun. 1946], 703 f.) and Akram Rizq Muḥammad Nūr: *Ḥattā lā taḍīʿ al-Būsna wa-l-Harsak kamā ḍāʿat al-Andalus*, Riyadh 1413/1993.

[25] al-Shabībī in *RI* 7/1955/24–28, on 26.

immediately what he considered to be an "unprejudiced" contemplation of history: By proclaiming the real course of history an affliction of politics having no relationship whatsoever to religion, an argument yet to be discussed, it was easy for Fayyāḍ to put the blame for the split in the *umma* on non-Muslims, whose efforts were abetted by the Muslims' indifference.[26] This interpretation effectively amounted to purging Islamic history of its inner ruptures and contradictions that were understood as contravening the Koranic commandment for Muslim unity and therefore as un-Islamic.

Fayyāḍ's criticism that Muslims in general and the *'ulamā'* in particular had neglected their duty and thus thrown open the doors to confessional disagreement was among the recurring elements of the conception of history as advocated by the *RI*.[27] The resulting demand to recall their own culture, the "true" Islam as prescribed in the Koran and to a degree sharply distinguished from the West,[28] was neither a new argument nor one limited to the Islamic ecumene. Rather, this warning that attempts to explain and rationalize the actual or perceived inferiority of the Muslim World vis-à-vis the West had been an essential feature of Islamic modernism since the nineteenth century.[29] Therefore it is not surprising that the *RI*, too, occasionally resorted to the old familiar cliché that contrasted the materialistic West with the Orient as the cradle of spirituality.[30]

The intention to circumvent controversies as much as possible could not always be implemented as strictly and uncompromisingly as it had been formulated. In order to make the eventuality of rapprochement and the necessity of its own existence plausible, it was sometimes unavoidable for the JT to address points of contention at least peripherally if only to reduce their significance or to negate it completely.

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[26] *RI* 1/1949/286–92, on 292.

[27] Cf. Salīm in *RI* 1/1949/9–12 and in *RI* 2/1950/129–32, esp. 131; Fayyāḍ in *RI* 2/1950/413ff.; Qommī in *RI* 8/1956/38–42; 'Arafa in *RI* 7/1955/381ff. and 9/1957/135–40.

[28] al-Madanī in *RI* 2/1950/186–92; Qommī in *RI* 7/1955/143–47; al-Shabībī in *RI* 1/1949/45–47, and idem in *RI* 2/1950/21–23.

[29] Cf. Radtke: "Auserwähltheitsbewußtsein", 73ff.

[30] Aḥmad Amīn in *RI* 2/1950/364–67; al-Bahayy in *RI* 4/1952/38–44, 9/1957/162–72, 10/1958/ 392–405, and 11/1959/285–92; regarding this cliché, which primarily became famous through Tawfīq al-Ḥakīm's novel *'Uṣfūr min al-sharq*, cf. in detail Wielandt: *Das Bild der Europäer*, 314–85.

This was usually done in general terms and without concrete reference to specific subjects, as demonstrated in several statements by Moḥammad Taqī Qommī. His procedure was to present a list of complaints he claimed were repeatedly put forth by sceptics—in the manner "there are some who postulate that rapprochement between Shiites and Sunnis is impossible due to the existence of fundamental differences, and others who allege that the JT is striving for a fusion of the existing legal schools in order to eliminate them, etc."—and then to "rectify" them in the sense of ecumenism. In doing so, however, he was always careful not to name the controversies too clearly and left it at sweeping replies to similarly vague objections.[31]

Dealing with controversial questions, however, was not restricted exclusively to platitudes. The attacks of its opponents as well as the aspiration to improve the legal schools' knowledge of each other spurred some authors, albeit rarely, to delve in more detail into topics that had been the subject of mutual polemic for a long period. The way these points were addressed in the *taqrīb* organization's journal clearly indicates the boundaries inner-Islamic ecumenical endeavours encountered as soon as they exceeded the general scope of its *raison d'être* and turned to the topics of the dissention.

It is striking but not really surprising that Shiite scholars focused much more on the points of contention than their Sunni counterparts. In this area, the former's presence almost reversed the general relation of their participation in the journal. This fact is certainly due to the Shiite contributors finding themselves in the position of those who had to react and defend themselves against Sunni accusations, and this in a publication based in a Sunni country. Their efforts, though, were not primarily rebuttals of the Sunni diatribes aimed at the JT from outside, but rather "corrections" of what in the Shiites' opinions were incorrect views held by their Sunni colleagues within the ecumenical movement.[32] At the same time, covering these controversial topics also afforded the Shiite authors the opportunity to explain the standpoint they wanted spread in the Sunni world. This conformed with the argument (to be analysed below) that an essential

[31] Qommī in *RI* 3/1951/35–39, esp. 35f.; *RI* 5/1953/146–51 and 377–84; *RI* 6/1954/365–70; *RI* 8/1956/41f. (cf. al-Shīrāzī: *al-Waḥda al-islāmiyya*, 57ff.).

[32] For example in comments by Muḥammad Ṣādiq al-Ṣadr directed at ʿAbd al-Wahhāb Khallāf and Abū Zahra (1/1949/358–64), by Qommī at Aḥmad Amīn (4/1952/147–51), and by al-Fukaykī at Abū Zahra (*RI* 12/1960/65–73).

element of the ecumenical dialogue consisted in increasing knowledge of the diverse denominations among Muslims.

The Shiite *'ulamā'*'s attitude in these articles was unswervingly apologetic. In no point of contention did they call their own tradition seriously into question, though all made an obvious effort to soften the tone of the debate. By interpreting the controversies that had hindered rapprochement between Shiites and Sunnis for centuries in the light of Shiite modernism, they sought to mitigate their consequences for present-day confessional coexistence wherever possible. Though they did not have to lower their sights significantly regarding the matters themselves, this process meant an accommodation in mutual contacts that was palatable to ecumenically oriented Sunnis.

In the rare cases when Sunni authors turned to issues in dispute, they often approvingly quoted the Shiite argumentation or presented similar points of view. Three patterns or methods of argumentation used in dealing with the differences can be distinguished in the relevant articles in the *RI* and in the related ecumenical literature:

i) In some cases, contentious points were unceremoniously declared obsolete. Once the circumstances that had favoured their emergence and promoted their propagation were declared invalid, the controversies themselves were also claimed to be no longer current and thus ceased to present an ongoing obstacle to rapprochement. For example, Maḥmūd Fayyāḍ found that in view of modern nationalism, an Imamate that encompassed all Muslims was not even an issue of secondary significance between Sunnism and Shiism.[33]

This style of argumentation was particularly and repeatedly applied to the issue of *taqiyya*. Muḥammad Jawād Mughniyya was the only contributor to the *RI* who made dissimulation the specific subject of an investigation, thus breaking the journal's general taboo on the topic. His treatise is an excellent example of a Shiite apologetic: following a full explanation of the denomination's position, he waited until the very end to term the entire topic a thing of the past. After several pages of references to the Koran, *ḥadīth* and, last but not least, Sunni authorities such as al-Ghazzālī and al-Suyūṭī[34] that indi-

[33] *RI* 2/1949/417.

[34] Regarding Abū Ḥāmid al-Ghazzālī (d. 1111), see *EI*[2] II/1038–41 (W.M. Watt); *GAL* I/535–46 and SI/744–56; concerning al-Suyūṭī (b. 1505), see *EI*[1] IV/620–22 (C. Brockelmann); *GAL* II/180–204 and SII/178–98; E. Sartain: *Jalāl al-dīn al-Suyūṭī*, I–II, Cambridge 1975.

cate the permissibility of *taqiyya* and in fact even establish the duty of the individual believer to conceal his belief in certain circumstances, Mughniyya closed with the following words:

> As a result, *taqiyya* existed among the Shiites in earlier times of oppression and tyranny. Today, however, with Shiites obviously no longer being subjected to oppression because of their belief, *taqiyya* has become obsolete (*fa-qad aṣbaḥat al-taqiyya fī khabar kān*).
>
> In 1960, the United Arab Republic organized an international commemorative event in Damascus in honour of al-Ghazzālī, at which I was present and gave a lecture. Suddenly an Egyptian philosophy professor addressed me and said: 'You are Shiite and therefore profess *taqiyya*'. I responded to him: 'May God curse them who forced us to do that in the past! But go today to any Shiite country, and you will find absolutely nothing of *taqiyya*. If it were a fundamental religious or legal aspect of our faith, that is valid in every situation, it would have been preserved just as the religion and the principles of the *sharīʿa* have been preserved'.[35]

The allusion to the persecutions the Shiites were forced to endure in the course of history in particular fulfilled a double function in the ecumenical debate. On the one hand, it guaranteed historical legitimacy, obviating any need to cast doubt on their own tradition, and on the other, it enabled the respective writers to play down the contemporary significance of *taqiyya*. Though numerous Sunni and Shiite authors outside the JT registered their concurrence with Mughniyya's opinion,[36] this point has remained controversial within Shiism, even among renowned *taqrīb* proponents. For example, Muḥammad b. Muḥammad Mahdī al-Khāliṣī claimed concisely and clearly that *taqiyya* is one of God's commandments that only those who contradict the Koran would deny.[37]

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[35] *RI* 14/1964/39–43 (on 43); reprinted in al-Shīrāzī: *al-Waḥda al-islāmiyya*, 248–52, and in Mughniyya: *al-Shīʿa fī l-mīzān*, 48–52; cf. ibid., 345; the article, which had not originally been written for the *RI*, was taken from Mughniyya's book *al-Shīʿa wa-l-tashayyuʿ*; for a similar argumentation cf. al-Raḍawī: *Maʿa rijāl al-fikr*, 280.

[36] Cf. primarily al-Zuʿbī: *Lā sunna wa-lā shīʿa*, 99–103; idem in *al-ʿIrfān* 47/8 (Apr. 1960), 758–60; Tuffāḥa: *al-Muslimūn*, 100f.; al-Bahnasāwī: *al-Ḥaqāʾiq al-ghāʾiba*, 77; al-Ṣāfī was a bit more cautious in his argumentation when condemning the contemporary use of *taqiyya*: *Maʿa al-Khaṭīb*, 33–40; Salām: *al-Waḥda al-ʿaqāʾidiyya*, 263–86, esp. 281f.; al-Aḥsāʾī: *al-Ṭaʾifiyya*, 380–82; al-Rāfiʿī: *Islāmunā*, 131–41; al-Khunayzī: *Nasīm wa-zawbaʿa*, 340ff., and Āl-Kāshif al-Ghiṭāʾ: *Aṣl al-shīʿa*, 233–37 (in this regard, see Kohlberg: "Some Imāmī-Shīʿī Views on *Taqiyya*", 401); in contrast, unambiguous disapproval of *taqiyya* is expressed in al-Shakʿa: *Islām bi-lā madhāhib*, 175f.

[37] al-Khāliṣī: *Iḥyāʾ al-sharīʿa*, III/449; cf. also Ṭabāṭabāʾī: *Shiʿite Islam*, 223–25; al-Khāqānī: *Maʿa al-Khuṭūṭ al-ʿarīḍa*, 31–33.

In addition to *taqiyya*, ecumenical scholars—though outside the JT—occasionally also scrutinized the Shiite practice of temporary marriage (*mutʿa*) from what might be called a historicizing angle. Again it was Mughniyya, who this time followed in Muḥsin al-Amīn's tracks and declared *mutʿa* as being basically allowed but claimed that it was no longer practiced.[38] As with the question of *taqiyya*, one finds among Shiite scholars both "relativists" as well as apologists of the traditional opinion regarding *mutʿa*.[39]

ii) A second possibility to reduce the volatility of contentious points arose out of the distinction between the fundamental obligations of the religion (*dīn*) and those of the legal school (*madhhab*). The issues in question could thereby be relegated to the sphere of the latter and were declared as being among the *uṣūl madhhabiyya*. They could be seen from that moment on as separate from the *uṣūl al-dīn* (regarding which total unity and consensus were postulated) and placed within the realm of legitimate *ijtihād*. Muḥammad Muṣṭafā al-Marāghī and ʿAbd al-Karīm al-Zanjānī had already taken advantage of this casuistry in their conversations when they discussed the reinstitution of the caliphate.[40]

Correspondingly, all discussions in the field of Islamic law in the JT were dominated by the topic of *ijtihād*, a fact that is testified by the sheer number of articles written on it.[41] This became possible after the advent of the Islamic renewal movements in the nineteenth century

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[38] "al-Mutʿa ʿind al-shīʿa", *al-ʿIrfān* 37/10 (Oct. 1950), 1095f.; reprinted in his books *Maʿa al-shīʿa al-imāmiyya*, 128–30, and *al-Shīʿa fī l-mīzān*, 373f.; cf. also idem: *Min hunā wa-hunāk*, 229–36, and idem: *Tajārib*, 219f.; on this topic, as well as regarding Muḥsin al-Amīn's argumentation, see Ende: "Ehe auf Zeit", 16f.; ʿAbd al-Qādir Maḥmūd criticized Mughniyya's opinion on *mutʿa* in *MA* 38/7 (Dec. 1966), 704–10, esp. 709.

[39] Among the former was al-Zuʿbī: *Lā sunna wa-lā shīʿa*, 95–98; cf. idem in *al-ʿIrfān* 50/10 (May 1963), 932–35; also Tuffāḥa: *al-Muslimūn*, 98–100; already in 1909 in his reply to anti-Shiite comments in the *Manār* (see above, pp. 89f.) Munīr ʿUsayrān had brought forward the argument that the practice of *mutʿa* was being despised: *al-ʿIrfān* 1/10 (Oct. 1909), 492–94, on 493f.; among the apologists for *mutʿa* are Kāshif al-Ghiṭāʾ: *Aṣl al-shīʿa*, 167ff.; al-Kafāʾī: *Bayn al-Najaf wa-l-Azhar*, 188ff. and 205ff. (about ʿAlī Kāshif al-Ghiṭāʾ); Ṭabāṭabāʾī: *Shiʿite Islam*, 227–30; al-Ḥakīm: "al-Zawāj al-muwaqqat", in: idem: *Fikrat al-taqrīb*, part four; al-Shakʿa: *Islām bi-lā madhāhib*, 173f., preferred in contrast not to take an unambiguous position and left it at the conclusion that the problem was likely never to be solved.

[40] Cf. above, pp. 109f.

[41] The most important of these articles are reprinted in al-Shīrāzī: *al-Waḥda al-islāmiyya*, 270–332; among them is also (291–301) a posthumously published treatise of Muḥammad Muṣṭafā al-Marāghī, which had first appeared in *RI* 1/1949/347–57; cf. also al-Rāfiʿī: *Islāmunā*, 99–105 as well as below, pp. 234f.

had re-admitted in principal (among Sunni jurists, too) independent legal interpretation and reopened the *bāb al-ijtihād* that, according to orthodox doctrine, had been closed in the tenth and eleventh centuries.[42] Nevertheless, differences remained in regard to the concept of the "correct" *ijtihād* in individual cases.[43] When disputed issues arose, however, authors only rarely resorted to this method, although (or perhaps because) the application of *ijtihād* explicitly encompassed the possibility of committing an error without recrimination.[44]

On only one occasion was the tricky problem of *mutʿa* treated in this manner in the *RI* and interestingly enough, it was done by a Sunni scholar. Muḥammad Muḥammad al-Madanī considered it, along with varying opinions about Koranic rules of slaughtering animals and the proper ways to wash the feet before prayer, among the legal issues the differing assessments of which were innocuous, as they belonged to the realm of *ijtihād*.[45] When divisive themes were dealt with in this way, it generally occurred in passing. For example, Moḥammad Taqī Qommī emphasized the merit of the *RI* for having clarified to Muslims that additional *uṣūl madhhabiyya* such as the Shiite supplement to the prayer call that honours ʿAlī (*walāya*) did no harm.[46] Muḥammad al-Ḥusayn Āl Kāshif al-Ghiṭāʾ even went so far as to excuse the Shiites' contemptuous attitude toward the first caliphs if it was the result of *ijtihād* because Ṭalḥa and Zubayr had also justified their action against ʿAlī similarly.[47]

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[42] R. Peters: "Erneuerungsbewegungen im Islam vom 18. bis zum 20. Jahrhundert und die Rolle des Islams in der neueren Geschichte", in: Ende/Steinbach (eds.): *Der Islam in der Gegenwart*, 91–131, esp. 110f.; L. Wiederhold: "Das Manuskript Ms.orient A 918 der Forschungsbibliothek Gotha als Ausgangspunkt für einige Überlegungen zum Begriff '*iǧtihād*' in der sunnitischen Rechtswissenschaft", *ZDMG* 143/1993/328–61; Kerr: *Islamic Reform*, 209ff.; regarding the discussion of the (alleged) closing of the "door of *ijtihād*", see T. Nagel: *Die Festung des Glaubens. Triumph und Scheitern des islamischen Rationalismus im 11. Jahrhundert*, Munich 1988; W.B. Hallaq: "Was the Gate of Ijtihad Closed?", *IJMES* 16/1984/3–41; A. Turki: "*Aggiornamento* juridique: continuité et créativité ou fiction de la fermeture de la porte de l'Ijtihad?", *SI* 94/2002/5–65.

[43] Jansen: *Interpretation*, 86ff.

[44] Cf. for example Salīm in *RI* 1/1949/9f.; al-Ṣaʿīdī in *RI* 6/1954/382; the attitude of the Sunnis was praised repeatedly by the Shiite side: Kāshif al-Ghiṭāʾ in *RI* 1/1949/243; Thābit: *al-Waḥda al-islāmiyya*, 85.

[45] *RI* 8/1956/172–87, on 180ff.; cf. also Kamareʾī: *Manāzil al-waḥy*, 63f.; ʿAlī al-Khafīf, who also treated *mutʿa* briefly, avoided a direct comment, *RI* 9/1957/107–09.

[46] Qommī in *RI* 11/1959/357; see Falaturi: "Die Zwölfer-Schia", 77f.

[47] Kāshif al-Ghiṭāʾ in *RI* 2/1950/271; he was not, however, the first to think along these lines: already Muḥammad Rashīd Riḍā had viewed the dissent regarding the judgement of the *ṣaḥāba* as justified; cf. *al-Manār* 1/39 (Dec. 1898), 767. In

It was natural that the Shiite *ʿulamāʾ* had a particularly intense interest in combating the reputation of being heretics and in depicting their minority position in Islam as a legitimate idiosyncrasy of their *madhhab*. But even among them there was by no means always unity over exactly what was meant by the basic principles of the legal school. As demonstrated above, Muḥammad Jawād Mughniyya reduced the religious principles every Muslim is obliged to acknowledge to the unity of God (*tawḥīd*), Muhammad's Prophethood (*nubuwwa*), and the belief in the Hereafter (*maʿād*). At the same time, he described the Imamate merely as a "principle of the Shiite *madhhab*" (*aṣl li-madhhab al-tashayyuʿ*) and as belonging to the "requirements of the (Shiite) legal school" (*ḍarūrāt al-madhhab*), obviously in order to diminish the significance of this contentious issue. Anyone rejecting the Imamate while accepting the other three principles was, according to his logic, not a Shiite but could certainly be considered a Muslim.[48]

Mughniyya's legal construction may have been intended as a reply to Muḥammad al-Ḥusayn Āl Kāshif al-Ghiṭāʾ, who in the immediately preceding issue of the *RI*, in precisely the same article in which he also exonerated the slanderers of the *ṣaḥāba*, had made a contention that differed from Mughniyya's in a decisive detail. In the view of the Iraqi scholar, the Imamate was the only really significant difference between Sunnis and Shiites, but it was on par with monotheism and belief in Prophethood (*radīfat al-tawḥīd wa-l-nubuwwa*) and also based on the command (*naṣṣ*) of God and His Prophet. Muḥammad al-Ḥusayn's only move to soften this point of view, which came considerably closer to the historical genesis of the inner-Islamic schism than Mughniyya's interpretation, was in stating that despite this deviation, the Shia did not excommunicate anyone who would not acknowledge the Imamate (*"kallā wa-maʿādha llāh"*), and that all this did not alter the duty of brotherly mutual interaction.[49]

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former centuries, there were statements of individual scholars who even attempted to dismiss the fundamental quarrel between ʿAlī and Muʿāwiya as merely a mistake resulting from *ijtihād*: F. Meier: "Zum vorrang des glaubens und des guten denkens vor dem wahrheitseifer bei den muslimen", *Oriens* 32/1990/1–50, on 21f., quotes the Naqshbandī Aḥmad al-Fārūqī al-Sirhindī (d. 1624) in this sense; in recent years, the *Shaykh al-Azhar*, Sayyid Ṭanṭāwī, also declared Muʿāwiya's upheaval against ʿAlī as resulting from *ijtihād*; cf. *Rūz al-Yūsuf* Sep. 23, 1996, 74; cf. also below, p. 391.

[48] Mughniyya in *RI* 2/1950/387–89; see also al-Ṣaffār: *al-Taʿaddudiyya wa-l-ḥurriyya fī l-islām*, 167ff.; al-Daftar: *Ṣafḥa*, 38f., 46f., 72, 472.

[49] Kāshif al-Ghiṭāʾ in *RI* 2/1950/270f.; cf. also al-Subaytī: *Ilā mashyakhat al-Azhar*,

iii) There were good reasons why only relatively few references were made to *ijtihād* with regard to the points of contention, for resorting to the principle of independent reasoning posed a twofold problem. On the one hand, as just demonstrated, even within Shiism, unanimity was virtually non-existent on the question of where the borderline between the bases of the religion and those of the legal school should be drawn, and also which points were actually to be counted among the latter category and could insofar be put up for consideration under certain circumstances. On the other hand, reaching varying results when applying *ijtihād* meant confirmation—and to a degree approval—of the existence of those points of contention.

A possibility for Shiite authors to circumvent this danger while nonetheless bringing controversial views up for discussion consisted in presenting their own opinion in a way that made it compatible with that of the Sunnis or at least did not contradict it. This third method used in the ecumenical debate was of particular necessity where divergence itself had to be ruled out, for instance in the issue of the authenticity of the Koranic text. Whenever this point was mentioned in the *RI*, it was stated emphatically that alluding to the accusation of the Shiites not recognizing the text of the Koran in its present form and their further claiming the Sunnis had forged the original revelation were acts of malicious insinuation.[50]

Two attempts were made to reinterpret the *taḥrīf* theory beyond the general stereotyped rejections and according to the spirit of ecumenical rapprochement. Tawfīq al-Fukaykī defended Shiism against Abū Zahra's contention that the Shiite "Church Father" al-Kulaynī (d. 940/41) had agreed with the opinion that the Koran had been forged.[51] On the contrary, after citing numerous classical and modern authorities, al-Fukaykī came to the conclusion that all *ḥadīth*s in which the authenticity of the Koran is questioned had themselves been forged. In reality, al-Kulaynī had only cited the false traditions hinted at by Abū Zahra in order to prove their nullity.[52]

41ff.; Moḥammad Taqī Qommī avoided a determination in this question and limited himself to the observation that every denomination could easily keep its convictions as long as they did not provoke followers of other legal schools; see *RI* 6/1954/368 and 9/1957/22.

[50] Qommī in *RI* 11/1959/350f. and 13/1962/247; al-Madanī also concurred with this opinion: *RI* 11/1959/382–84.

[51] Regarding al-Kulaynī, see below, p. 333 note 184; on his importance for the *taḥrīf* discussion, cf. Brunner: *Die Schia und die Koranfälschung*, 6 and index, s.v.

[52] al-Fukaykī in *RI* 12/1960/65ff.

Abū l-Qāsim al-Khūʾī examined this problem even more fully and unambiguously in an effort to reconcile the varying viewpoints. His essay was actually a section from his Koran commentary *al-Bayān fī tafsīr al-qurʾān*[53] and not an article written specifically for the *RI*. Al-Khūʾī's argumentation was far more than a simple denial of the accusation of forgery. Instead, he endeavoured to interpret the Shiite concept in a way that made it unassailable for Sunnis. He did not flatly dispute the theoretical possibility of additions in ʿAlī's version of the Koran, but stressed that these had not been a part of the revelation that had later been suppressed but rather explanations of an exegetical type:

> To summarize, even if it is correct that there were additions in the text of ʿAlī, they were not part of the Qurʾan and not part of what the Messenger of God was commanded to convey to the community. To maintain, on the basis of such additions, that his text contained additional revelations is merely an opinion without evidence and definitely it is false. All the previously discussed evidence in relation to the absence of alteration (*taḥrīf*) provides irrefutable proof in this connection, too.[54]

A last example of the method to bring together completely irreconcilable points of view came from Muḥammad Ṣāliḥ al-Ḥāʾirī al-Māzandarānī, who wrote about the issue of legitimate governance.[55] He attempted to avoid the dilemma of the different conceptions of history associated with the two institutions Imamate and caliphate by declaring both forms of authority as separate domains that neither competed with nor contradicted each other in any way.

> The basis of Sunnism that is free from fanatic excesses is the legitimacy of the confessional caliphate (*al-khilāfa al-milliyya*). It is neither denying the divinely decreed Imamate (*al-imāma al-samāwiyya al-manṣūṣa*) nor breaking with the scholarship of the *ahl al-bayt*, their traditions, and their *fatwā*s. Likewise, the basis of perfect Shiism is the conviction that ʿAlī and eleven of his descendants were designated as Imams

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[53] Cf. the review in *RI* 10/1958/215–17.

[54] Ibid., 186–89, on 189 (following Sachedina's English translation *The Prolegomena to the Qurʾan* cited above, p. 195 note 201, 135–77, on 155); reprinted in al-Shīrāzī: *al-Waḥda al-islāmiyya*, 243–47; al-Khūʾī: *al-Bayān fī tafsīr al-qurʾān*, Najaf [2]1385/1966; 218, 241–45; regarding al-Khūʾī's commentary cf. also M. Ayoub: "The Speaking and the Silent Qurʾān. A Study of the Principles and Development of Imāmī Shīʿī *tafsīr*", in: A. Rippin (ed.): *Approaches to the History of the Interpretation of the Qurʾān*, Oxford 1988, 177–98, esp. 190–92; Brunner: *Die Schia und die Koranfälschung*, 88–93.

[55] al-Māzandarānī in *RI* 3/1951/403–33; reprinted in al-Shīrāzī: *al-Waḥda al-islāmiyya*, 205–36, and al-ʿAlāyilī: *Masʾalat al-taqrīb*, 209–27.

> and that they are to be obeyed in the religious sciences. However, it is not the abolition of the caliphate of he who guards the state treasury (*bayt al-māl*) for the welfare of the *umma* with justice, asceticism and reliability so that the designated Imam can be satisfied when this serves the general well-being and helps avoid discord.
>
> In the early Islamic era, the situation was as follows. Denying the divine Imamate that was especially designated for its office-holders was not a condition for the legitimacy of the governmental caliphate (*al-khilāfa al-jumhūriyya*). Likewise, it was not a condition for the Imamate, which is based on designation, infallibility, and the miracle (*al-muʿjiz*), to deny the legitimacy of the caliphate whose holder, without being Imam, administered it to the satisfaction of the *umma* and the Imam(!). That is true all the more, since the Prophet ordered that the designated Imam might not take up or perform the duties of his office until the people paid him homage and came to him obediently. Thus the Imamate and caliphate are two independent topics that must neither ignore each other nor make mutual accusations. In reality, however, it soon resulted in injustice and strife between them, and the way to preserve peace between the two institutions was not maintained, and ultimately those who made a distinction between them wreaked tremendous damage on the *umma*.[56]

Already at the time of the first three caliphs, he contended, different people occupied the two offices, with ʿAlī as Imam and Abū Bakr, ʿUmar, and ʿUthmān as caliphs, which rendered it possible for Sunnis and Shiites alike to recognize both institutions also today. Al-Māzandarānī even went a step further when he formulated a kind of "division of labour" between the two officials: "The caliph is the guardian of the treasury of the Earth, while the Imam is the guardian of the treasury of the sciences of God and His messenger."[57]

The implications of al-Māzandarānī's statements are double-edged. On the one hand, the proposed coexistence of Imam and caliph covertly supported the Shiite claim to leadership and incidentally degraded the caliphate to a mere temporary exercise of authority. On the other hand, the article is first and foremost to be read as a

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[56] *RI*, loc. cit., 408.

[57] Ibid., 420; comparable with this interpretation of the Imamate is what Mughniyya had to say about the sinlessness (*ʿiṣma*) of the Imams: it merely meant that the infallible individual does what is prescribed although he could refrain from doing it, and refrains from doing what is prohibited although he could do it; *RI* 5/1953/164–66, on 166; see also al-Zuʿbī: *Lā sunna wa-lā shīʿa*, 104–09; al-Bahnasāwī: *al-Sunna al-muftarā ʿalayhā*, 61; idem: *al-Ḥaqā'iq al-ghā'iba*, 70ff.; on the other hand, al-Jabrī bitingly mocks the concept of *ʿiṣma*: *Ḥiwār maʿa al-shīʿa*, 210–13.

manifestation of sincere ecumenical conviction and an attempt to cut the Gordian knot that ties up the legitimate wielding of power.

No matter how far the essay went in accommodating the Sunni view of this issue, it produced no results. Neither within the JT nor in other ecumenical writings was a discussion of it set in motion. Only years later, at the climax of the *taqrīb* activities in the wake of Shaltūt's *fatwā* in 1959, did Muḥammad Muḥammad al-Madanī remember it and expressed some words of praise.[58] He may not have found this too difficult considering the political background—still to be discussed below—which had led to the *fatwā*. Regarded from this angle, al-Māzandarānī's recommendation comprised a political dimension that went beyond the ecumene and can *also* be interpreted as a vindication of the exercise of temporal authority by the Shah (who here assumes the role of the caliph), which the clergy thus had no grounds to oppose. One may therefore justifiably contend that al-Māzandarānī belonged to that faction of Iranian Shiite *'ulamā'* who in the dispute over the role of Islam in politics chose the side of the ruler.[59] Moreover, al-Māzandarānī on other occasions had no qualms about addressing the Iranian ruler in the most deferential terms, calling him "*Jalālat al-malik shāhanshāh ḥaḍrat al-sulṭān Moḥammad Reżā al-Fahlawī (sic!) al-baṭal al-'ālim al-fāḍil al-muḥiqq li-l-ḥaqq wa-l-mubṭil li-l-bāṭil.*"[60]

Looking at the rare articles in which contentious issues were addressed, it becomes clear how narrow the limits of the ecumenical efforts in fact were, even and particularly when efforts were undertaken to reconcile the various viewpoints. An expression of the obvious impossibility to reach anything but superficial rapprochement can be seen in the especially sensitive sub-topics that were *not* dealt with in the analysis of the respective problems. For example, none of the pieces that touched on the forgery of the Koran devoted a single line to the fact that as late as the end of the nineteenth century, the Shiite scholar Ḥusayn b. Nūrī al-Ṭabrisī vigorously maintained the validity of the *taḥrīf* theory. The same holds true for the question of the Imamate: despite the length of al-Māzandarānī's arti-

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[58] al-Madanī in *RI* 11/1959/373–88, on 386f.

[59] As did Akhavi: *Religion and Politics*, 225 note 51.

[60] Māzandarānī: *Risālat kalimāt al-ḥujaj al-'āmira*, 14; according to *RF* III/1140, though, his relations with the government were not unproblematic: after (or because of?) his interference in politics, al-Māzandarānī was sent into exile.

cle, and also despite its being casually mentioned elsewhere, one searches in vain for any reference to the belief in the Mahdī, which is inextricably bound up with the Shiite perception of history. It is hardly a coincidence that this very theme resulted in all connections between the JT and Aḥmad Amīn being severed after the Egyptian historian (albeit outside the ecumenical society) spoke critically about it and thus perpetrated a grave violation of a taboo.

Also, the depiction of the related doctrine of the Imams' infallibility amounted to nothing more than a mere paragraph that Muḥammad Jawād Mughniyya devoted to it in passing.[61] The same author offers another example of selective perception: In an article in which he defended the importance of *ʿāshūrā'* and Ḥusayn's martyrdom for Shiism, he simply skipped the Muḥarram customs, which are even disputed among Shiites and considered a blameworthy innovation (*bidʿa*) by numerous Sunnis, including those with moderate tendencies.[62]

Finally, particularly striking is the complete omission of an issue that perhaps engendered more anti-Shiite diatribes than any other in the twentieth century: the behaviour of the Prophet's companions and the attitude toward them. In view of the concept of history propagated in the *RI* that primarily consisted of warnings against an overly intense preoccupation with the subject, this is a necessary rather than a surprising consequence. It was viewed as enough to convey the impression that there had been complete unity among the Muslims in the first century, and that it collapsed only later under external influence.

Closely related to the assessment of the *ṣaḥāba* is the theme of the "authenticity of the *ḥadīth*", an area that has caused considerable controversy between Shiism and Sunnism, but also among Sunnis themselves, down to the present.[63] It was therefore only logical that this topic was also avoided to a large degree in order to preclude

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[61] Cf. above, note 57.

[62] Mughniyya in *RI* 11/1959/261–65; Mughniyya's interpretation is noteworthy in that he not only termed Ḥusayn as "a symbol of bravery, humanity and hope", but also called his antagonist Yazīd a "symbol of corruptness, arbitrariness, shamelessness and depravity" (p. 263); regarding inner-Shiite controversies related to the Muḥarram ceremonies, cf. Ende: "Flagellations", passim.

[63] Cf., for example the quarrel surrounding the reliability of the *ḥadīth*s handed down by the Prophet's companion Abū Hurayra in which Maḥmūd Abū Rayya played an outstanding role for the Sunnis and ʿAbd al-Ḥusayn Sharaf al-Dīn for the Shiites; they both rejected the genuineness of these *ḥadīth*s; see Juynboll: *The Authenticity of the Tradition Literature*, 62–99.

controversies breaking out. Apart from occasional general references to *ḥadīth* falsifiers, who were held responsible for a major portion of the inner-Islamic dissention but otherwise remained unidentified,[64] there was no attempt to intervene in the quarrel or even to establish independent criteria for the use of Prophetic traditions. The project of a concordance of the *ḥadīth*s recognized by both denominations, announced only in 1962, never got beyond the planning stage.

The result of all this was a somewhat strange and paradoxical situation for the ecumenical society: It sought to reconcile the historically based dispute between the two groups without being able to go into the historical background, since doing so would have meant sowing new discord. Despite—or rather because of—the constant call to set the past to rest once and for all, squaring the circle of making history fall into oblivion was doomed to failure. There were indeed attempts to historicize the conflict, but they remained rudimentary and never went much beyond the half-heartedly expressed view that the divisive topic at hand was actually no longer current—after it had been defended over several pages, just like Mughniyya had done in regard to *taqiyya*.

bi-llatī hiya aḥsan?—*Standardized arguments and stereotypes*

Because the JT forwent a historical, and with it to a degree, historicizing perspective, ecumenical authors were forced to come up with justification for the possibility and necessity of rapprochement (and the legitimization of their own endeavours) based on other arguments. However, it was crucial here as well to avoid the impression that significant problems might prevent an understanding so as not to lend credence to the opponents' arguments through the back door as it were, that focused on the differences between Sunnis and Shiites. The authors who wrote in the *RI* on behalf of the *taqrīb* concept therefore made tangible attempts to stress how united those involved already were and how minimal the effort required to close the distance that remained between Muslims would be. Toward this goal they resorted to a range of repeatedly recurring, quasi-standardized

[64] Cf., for example Darāz in *RI* 1/1949/233–38, on 235f.; al-Madanī in *RI* 2/1950/198–92, on 192; Mughniyya ibid., 387–89, on 389; cf. idem in *RI* 14/1964/224–30.

arguments in the articles of the journal and related literature. These included the following:

i) *The emphasis on the general tolerance of Islam in dealing with followers of other religions*. According to this view, throughout history Muslims had always exhibited great open-mindedness, especially toward Christians and Jews, upon whom they conferred the epithets *ahl al-kitāb* and *ahl al-dhimma*. Even marriage between Muslims and non-Muslims was not prohibited, and there was no question of Islam having been spread by the sword as described by some Orientalists.[65] ʿAbd al-Mutaʿāl al-Ṣaʿīdī posited the reason for this tolerant attitude as being Islam's forging of not only a religious connection between people but also a patriotic link (*rābiṭa waṭaniyya*), which created a common homeland for Muslims and non-Muslims alike.[66] From this, Muḥammad Jawād Mughniyya drew the obvious conclusion for the ecumenical debate that in view of the foregoing, other Muslims who shared the same religious foundation must not be declared unbelievers, given that some Sunni *ʿulamāʾ* had even made the Khārijites beneficiaries of Islamic tolerance.[67]

ii) *The asseveration that at issue was the rapprochement of the legal schools exclusively and not their unification, degradation, or elimination*. Sometimes indeed it was effusively contended that in the truest sense of the word, every Sunni was at the same time Shiite because he revered the *ahl al-bayt* and every Shiite likewise Sunni because he followed the Prophet's *sunna*.[68] Nevertheless, it was usually clarified in the very same breath that this in no way implied an intended Shiitization of the Sunnis or Sunnitization of the Shiites.

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[65] ʿAlī ʿAbd al-Wāḥid Wāfī in *RI* 17/172/43–48; somewhat more differentiated is Aḥmad Amīn in *RI* 1/1949/244ff.

[66] al-Ṣaʿīdī in *RI* 6/1954/382–87, on 386; cf. also idem in *RI* 10/1958/83–88; concerning the JT's attitude toward Arab nationalism, see below, pp. 281ff.

[67] Mughniyya in *RI* 5/1953/392–95, esp. 392f.; similarly, al-Tījānī al-Samāwī: *al-Shīʿa hum ahl al-sunna*, 65. It may be that Mughniyya was alluding here to attempts by Ibāḍi and Salafi scholars to reconcile their viewpoints. Many of the patterns of argumentation heard in the course of this debate were reminiscent of the comments by ecumenically oriented *ʿulamāʾ* cited in the present work; cf. P. Shinar: "Ibāḍiyya and Orthodox Reformism in Modern Algeria", in: U. Heyd (ed.): *Studies in Islamic History and Civilization*, Jerusalem 1961, 97–120.

[68] Qommī in *RI* 5/1953/146–51, on 148f.; al-Madanī/al-Zuʿbī: *al-Islām bayn al-sunna wa-l-shīʿa*, I/95f.; ʿAbd al-Ḥusayn Sharaf al-Dīn in: ibid., II/117; ʿAbdallāh al-Qalqīlī in *al-ʿIrfān* 41/9 (Jul. 1954), 999–1002; al-Rāfiʿī: *Islāmunā*, 15f.; al-Zuʿbī: *Lā sunna wa-lā shīʿa*, 231f.; idem in *al-ʿIrfān* 42/1 (Nov. 1954), 9–11, on 9, and idem in *al-ʿIrfān* 48/4 (Dec. 1960), 343–48.

Moḥammad Taqī Qommī insisted indefatigably that the disappearance of the legal schools was as impossible and undesirable as their merger (*tawḥīd, idmāj*) into a unified *madhhab*. Rather, the initiative intended nothing but coexistence between Shiites and Sunnis as legal schools and granting mutual recognition.[69] Muḥammad Abū Zahra was the principal Sunni proponent of this opinion. He warned repeatedly of the dangers of what he referred to as *lā-madhhabiyya*.[70] Indeed, the debate whether or not a Muslim was strictly obliged to adhere to a specific *madhhab* has long since been a concomitant of the larger discussion about the re-opening of the *bāb al-ijtihād*. Muḥammad Rashīd Riḍā explicitly disapproved of any blind holding to a single school of law as being in contradiction to the spirit of reform. He and other reformers pleaded for the abolition of the traditional *madhāhib*; later generations preferred speaking of their merging in order to make it clear that the ultimate goal was not arbitrary freedom for everybody but the creation of a kind of universal *madhhab*. This inner-Sunnite discussion was far from unanimous, and the warning of the dangers of *lā-madhhabiyya* always loomed large.[71]

The background for the origin and continuous repetition of this argument within the ecumenical debate was the relentlessly circulated accusation by Sunni opponents of this discussion that the foundation of the JT served above all as propaganda for the benefit of Shiism. From its inception, the JT was driven by the concern that these antagonistic voices might fall on fertile ground. Accordingly, at the very beginning of a letter the organization sent to King Ibn Saʿūd was the assurance that it neither sought to "corrupt" nor to assim-

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[69] Qommī in *RI* 1/1949/258–62, esp. 260; idem in *RI* 3/1951/35–39, esp. 37; idem in *RI* 5/1953/148f.; idem in *RI* 6/1954/365–70, esp. 366; idem in *RI* 9/1957/20–24, esp. 22; idem in *RI* 11/1959/348–59, on 352; cf. also: ʿAbd al-Ḥusayn Ibn al-Dīn in *RI* 8/1956/366–69; al-Māzandarānī in *RI* 3/1951/408, 410, 424; Muḥammad Ṣādiq al-Ṣadr in *RI* 1/1949/358–64, esp. 360; Muḥammad al-Ḥusayn Āl Kāshif al-Ghiṭāʾ in *RI* 2/1950/268–73, esp. 269; al-Ṣaʿīdī in *RI* 7/1955/35–39, esp. 35; Muḥammad ʿAbdallāh Muḥammad in *RI* 14/1964/203–11, esp. 203ff. and in 15/1964/11–19, esp. 11; see also *al-ʿIrfān* 28/8 (Jan. 1939), 769–76, esp. 771; al-Madanī: *Daʿwat al-taqrīb*, 4–7; al-Rāfiʿī: *Islāmunā*, 32, 59–65; Ḥāmid Maḥmūd Ismāʿīl in *al-ʿIrfān* 47/6 (Feb. 1960), 537–41, esp. 539; al-Mutaʿāfī: *Lajnat tawḥīd al-madhāhib*, 6f.; al-Ṣaffār: *al-Taʿaddudiyya wa-l-ḥurriyya fī-l-islām*, 95.

[70] Abū Zahra: *Muḥāḍarāt fī l-mīrāth*, 9ff.; idem: *al-Waḥda al-islāmiyya*, 276–79; idem: *al-Imām al-Ṣādiq*, 13.

[71] Cf. Wild: "Muslim und maḏhab", passim, as well as "Salafiyya, 2b: Syria", *EI*[2] VIII/908 (W. Ende); an earlier example is discussed by A. Hofheinz: "Transcending the *madhhab*—in Practice: The Case of the Sudanese Shaykh Muḥam-mad Majdhūb (1795/6–1831)", *Islamic Law and Society* 10/2003/229–48.

ilate the legal schools.[72] The argument itself was as old as the rapprochement endeavours: the Iraqi *ʿulamāʾ* who had turned to the public before the First World War with an appeal for unification had particularly emphasized the necessity to preserve the independence of the individual legal schools.[73] And when Muḥsin al-Amīn wrote his brief ecumenical sermon in 1914, he, too, deemed it appropriate to begin with the declaration that this was not a question of converting the Sunnis to Shiism or *vice versa*.[74]

From a historical point of view, it was not self-evident that this demand concurrently also expressed the Shiites' request to be recognized as equal alongside the four Sunni *madhāhib*. For instance, Nādir Shāh's attempt to reunite Sunnism and Shiism, which aimed precisely at achieving this same result, was in reality propelled by the objective of breaking the independence of the Shiite scholars, who understood this ulterior motive and saw to the failure of the 1743 Najaf conference. During the twentieth century, in contrast, the Shiite request was no longer interpreted negatively; in fact it was expressly supported as a desirable end to the dialogue with the other side. Apart from the aforementioned Iraqi scholars, ʿAbd al-Ḥusayn Sharaf al-Dīn is to be cited in this context first and foremost, having made it clear from the outset that he had written his *Murājaʿāt* in order to establish Shiism as the fifth *madhhab*.[75]

In order to avoid the suspicion that they were merely involved in a pure propaganda activity among the Sunnis, the Shiite *ʿulamāʾ* felt compelled to stress simultaneously that their concern was *taqrīb* alone and had nothing to do with *tawḥīd*. In the sermon he delivered in Jerusalem in 1931, Muḥammad al-Ḥusayn Āl Kāshif al-Ghiṭāʾ already expressed himself unambiguously on this issue.[76] Within the framework of the JT, the Sunni scholars fully endorsed this interpretation. This

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[72] *RI* 1/1949/97; re-emphasized ibid., 315ff.

[73] *al-ʿIrfān* 3/4 (Feb. 1911), 160 and *RMM* 13/1911/2/384–87; cf. *RI* 1/1949/100; also see above, p. 43; Abū l-Ḥasan Mīrzā Shaykh al-Raʾīs had explicitly pointed this out even earlier: *Ettefāḍ-e Eslām*, 38.

[74] al-Amīn: *Ḥaqq al-yaqīn*, 3.

[75] Sharaf al-Dīn: *al-Murājaʿāt*, no. 4; cf. Hādī Faḍlallāh: "al-Jānib al-iṣlāḥī ʿind al-Sayyid ʿAbd al-Ḥusayn Sharaf al-Dīn", in: *al-Imām al-Sayyid ʿAbd al-Ḥusayn Sharaf al-Dīn*, 253–80, on 260ff.

[76] Kāshif al-Ghiṭāʾ: *al-Khuṭba al-tārīkhiyya*, 7; cf. also Mughniyya in *al-ʿIrfān* 28/6 (Nov. 1938), 577–79; on the other hand Aḥmad ʿĀrif al-Zayn in the 1920s once demanded the introduction of a *madhhab ʿāmm* for all Muslims; see *al-ʿIrfān* 11/2 (Oct. 1925), 128–33, on 132.

was a major shift from al-Marāghī's time, when the tendency had been to consider the unification of the legal schools as desirable, rapprochement being accepted only as a kind of makeshift.[77] However, as shown above, the conclusion drawn by Muḥammad Abū Zahra to base treatment of the Shiite Imam Jaʿfar al-Ṣādiq on the analogy of the founders of the four Sunni legal schools and thus "degrade" him to a mere *mujtahid* was not accepted by the Shia without protest.[78]

iii) *Stressing the essential necessity to provide Muslims with better knowledge of each other in order to enable them to consider the other denominations from their own experience and without prejudice.* An important aspect of the litany of Shiite apologetic writing included the accusation that Sunnis did not know anything, or at least not enough, about Shiism, made no effort to change this state of affairs, and therefore spread slanders and half-truths either intentionally or through negligence. One need only recall Muḥammad al-Ḥusayn Āl Kāshif al-Ghiṭā''s refutation of Aḥmad Amīn's anti-Shiite comments at the beginning of the 1930s.[79]

Under the influence of this kind of Sunni polemic, a type of "instructional cliché" found its way into many writings of Shiite scholars occupied with relations between the denominations in the modern age. This consisted of an stereotyped description of conversations in which the author (or someone else, usually a famous *ʿālim*) encounters unnamed Sunnis who insult Shiism in a way that manifests both ignorance and intransigence. The Shiite is almost always effortlessly able to bring his opponent to see the light, and the scene not infrequently concludes with the Sunni's conversion to Shiism.[80]

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[77] Muḥammad Farīd Wajdī in *MA* 8/1938/642–44, on 644; cf. al-Nimr: *al-Ijtihād*, 298.

[78] For Ḥusayn Yūsuf Makkī al-ʿĀmilī's reaction, see above, p. 173.

[79] Cf. above, pp. 175f.; see also Kāshif al-Ghiṭā': *Aṣl al-shīʿa*, 23f., 32ff.; al-Māzandarānī in *RI* 3/1951/412, 427; Muḥammad Jawād Mughniyya ascertained that Shiites had frequently gone to the Azhar or Damascus in order to study Sunni law, a fact that did not hold true for the opposite case to the same degree; *al-ʿIrfān* 48/8 (Mar. 1961), 765–69 (a review of Abū Zahra's book *al-Imām al-Ṣādiq*).

[80] Cf. Muḥsin al-Amīn: *Riḥalāt*, 63–65; Kamare'ī: *Payām-e Īrān*, 24ff.; idem: *Manāzil al-waḥy*, 55f.; idem: *Rābiṭat al-ʿālam al-islāmī*, 101f. (about Muḥsin al-Amīn); Ḥasan al-Qummī: *Muḥāwara madhhabiyya*, *al-ʿIrfān* 50/6–7 (Jan.-Feb. 1963), 591–98; al-Shīrāzī: *Monāẓarāt-e Āyatollāh Shīrāzī dar Makke wa Madīne*, passim, esp. 17–22; al-Aḥsā'ī: *al-Ṭā'ifiyya*, 403ff.; al-Tijānī: *Kull al-ḥulūl*, 229–38; regarding Muḥammad Jawād Mughniyya's numerous descriptions of such situations, see above, p. 204 note 242; the book *Li-mādhā ikhtart madhhab al-shīʿa* by the convert Muḥammad Marʿī al-Amīn al-Anṭākī, a section of which (319–64) consists exclusively of this cliché, has

Thus it is not surprising that Shiite authors in particular addressed this topic repeatedly in the *RI* and stressed that an important, if not the most important, condition for rapprochement of the denominations was the growing acquaintance with one another and, in the case of the Shia, the effort to make Sunni readers more familiar with Shiite views (*taʿrīf, taʿāruf*). ʿAbd al-Ḥusayn Ibn al-Dīn, who criticized Rashīd Riḍā for indiscriminately accepting rumours about Shiism, agreed with this demand as did Moḥammad Taqī Qommī, who added the complaint that Muslims were more familiar with non-Islamic cultures like that of ancient Greece than with the *madhāhib* of other Muslims.[81]

Actually, though, from the very beginning, both the Shiite participants in the ecumenical debate and their Sunni counterparts were in agreement about the need to improve the Muslims' knowledge about each other. Already in the inaugural article of the very first volume of the *RI*, Muḥammad ʿAlī ʿAllūba, President of the JT, identified helping to eradicate their ignorance in this regard, which he named as the main cause of the inner-Islamic dispute, as the single most important task of the *taqrīb* organization. Authors both within the JT and outside of it adopted this argument,[82] and the association attempted to fulfil this self-imposed responsibility to the best of its ability. The articles in which Shiite scholars commented on individual controversial issues and swept them under the carpet more or less apologetically were an expression of these efforts, not unlike the editorial efforts of the JT which sought to aid in the distribution of Shiite works in Egypt. However, the Shiite *taqrīb* activists' main demand in this area—the establishment of a chair for Shiite law at the Azhar—

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likewise already been discussed above, p. 71; for a rare case in which a Sunni author resorted to this method, cf. al-Ghazzālī: *Difāʿ ʿan al-ʿaqīda*, 327.

[81] Ibn al-Dīn in *RI* 8/1956/366–69, esp. 368f.; Qommī in *RI* 6/1954/365–70, esp. 369; cf. also idem in *RI* 1/1949/262; 3/1951/36, 8/1956/241–44; Mughniyya in *RI* 5/1953/164–66; from time to time Shiites even appeared more knowledgeable about the Sunni legal schools than the Sunnis themselves; this was for example the case when Muḥammad Jawād Mughniyya mockingly reported (though not in the *RI*) how he explained to a *ḥanafī shaykh* who had described himself as a *muqallid* of Abū Ḥanīfa that this was impossible since Abū Ḥanīfa had forbidden the practice of *taqlīd; Min hunā wa-hunāk*, 74; cf. Tuffāḥa: *al-Muslimūn*, 109.

[82] ʿAllūba in *RI* 1/1949/7; ʿAbd al-ʿAzīz Muḥammad ʿĪsā ibid., in 284; Fayyāḍ ibid., 292; Muḥammad Yūsuf Mūsā in *RI* 4/1952/299; Abū Zahra in *RI* 10/1958/352f.; cf. al-Ghazzālī: *Ẓalām min al-gharb*, 272–75; Ibrāhīm: *Mawqif ʿulamāʾ al-muslimūn*, 22; Mazrūʿa: *Tārīkh al-firaq al-islāmiyya*, 197; Salām: *al-Waḥda al-ʿaqāʾidiyya*, 47.

remained unfulfilled. A detailed analysis of the consequences the failure in this important question was to have for the *taqrīb* organization as a whole will be offered elsewhere in the present work.[83]

iv) *The postulation of absolute unity regarding the bases of religion and the simultaneous reduction of the conflict to subordinate religious and legal norms the judgement of which was left up to the* ijtihād *of the respective scholars*. This argument, too, was not an "invention" of the JT or the scholars close to it. ʿAbd al-Ḥusayn Sharaf al-Dīn, for instance, citing Muḥammad Rashīd Riḍā and Jamāl al-Dīn al-Qāsimī, had pointed out on various occasions that the differences among the Muslim denominations involved only secondary matters.[84] Since the conversations between al-Marāghī and al-Zanjānī, this argument had found its way into the ecumenical discussion where it soon became a *ceterum censeo*, the frequency of whose repetition did not diminish even though, as cited above, Shiite scholars sometimes differed about what exactly was to be understood by the *uṣūl al-dīn*.[85] On the whole, however, relative unity prevailed about designating the five basic religious duties of Islam and generally moral behaviour in addition to *tawḥīd*, *nubuwwa*, and *maʿād* mentioned by Mughniyya as the common denominators of the *absoluta* (*qaṭʿiyyāt*) that were not subject to controversy between Sunnis and Shiites.[86] Beyond these points, differences of opinion were not only declared permissible, but even—assuming they came about in the spirit of *ijtihād*—regarded as deeply desirable.

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[83] Regarding this, cf. below, pp. 295ff.

[84] Sharaf al-Dīn: *Ajwibat masāʾil Ǧārallāh*, 4; idem: *Ilā l-Majmaʿ al-ʿilmī*, 11; idem: Epilogue to al-Madanī/al-Zuʿbī: *al-Islām bayn al-sunna wa-l-shīʿa*, II/116; cf. also Aḥmad ʿĀrif al-Zayn in *al-ʿIrfān* 11/1 (Oct. 1930), 128–33, on 130.

[85] Ḥusayn Yūsuf Makkī al-ʿĀmilī's formulation, mentioned above, p. 222, constituted a type of middle course between Mughniyya's and Muḥammad al-Ḥusayn Āl Kāshif al-Ghiṭā"s interpretations. The difference between Sunnism and Shiism was not merely in the application of the law (*al-furūʿ al-fiqhiyya*) but comprised the "dogmatic bases" (*al-uṣūl al-ʿaqāʾidiyya*), which are, however, not identical with the principles of Islam (*uṣūl al-islām*). Among the latter—analogous to Mughniyya—he counted *tawḥīd*, *nubuwwa*, and *maʿād*, whereas he only vaguely defined the foundations of belief as "the way of presenting evidence of the judgements of the legal schools and the Sunna of the Prophet" (*al-ṭarīq ilā adillat aḥkām al-madhhab wa-ilā sunnat al-rasūl*); see *ʿAqīdat al-shīʿa*, 19.

[86] al-Madanī in *RI* 8/1956/172–87; cf. in addition Ḥasanayn Muḥammad Makhlūf in *RI* 4/1952/142–44; Fayyāḍ in *RI* 2/1950/415f.; al-Māzandarānī in *RI* 3/1951/405; al-Khāliṣī in *RI* 6/1954/58; this was also one of Moḥammad Taqī Qommī's most frequent arguments: see *RI* 3/1951/37; 5/1953/148; 6/1954/365f.; 8/1956/409/1957/21; moreover Mughniyya in *RI* 2/1950/387–89; 5/1953/164–66; idem: *al-Shīʿa fī l-mīzān*, 75f.; al-Ṣāfī: *Maʿa al-Khaṭīb*, 176.

Bearing in mind the nature of independent decision-making, which expressly admits the possibility of error,[87] they could not form the basis for broad insinuations let alone enmity.[88]

v) *Equating the Sunni-Shiite conflict with the inner-Sunni* ikhtilāf. As a result of what has just been discussed, the declaration that the differences between Shiites and Sunnis were no greater or more problematic than those among the Sunni legal schools themselves emerged almost automatically in the *taqrīb* debate. In fact, a particular relationship of affinity was said to exist between Shiism and the other legal schools that ultimately went back to the behaviour of the founders of the Sunni *madhāhib*, who had had no fear of contact with Shiite or Muʿtazilite scholars; on the contrary, there were even many teacher-student relationships among them.[89]

Both within the JT and in other ecumenical discussions, this argument was used repeatedly to demonstrate how small the difference between the denominations actually was.[90] Maḥmūd Shaltūt pointed this out explicitly in his much discussed interview of July 1959, which led to his famous *fatwā* in favour of confessional rapprochement.[91] Presumably also aware that well into the modern period relations among the Sunni legal schools were not always without friction, Muḥammad

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[87] Cf. ʿAbd al-Mutaʿāl al-Ṣaʿīdī's formulation: "Wa-l-mujtahid in akhṭaʾa fa-huwa maʿdhūr, wa-in aṣāba fa-huwa maʾjūr", *RI* 6/1954/382.

[88] Muḥammad Jawād Mughniyya pointed out that because of the principle of *ijtihād*, it would be impossible to attribute to the Shia as a group the views of an individual *ʿālim: RI* 5/1953/164f.; cf. also al-Madanī/al-Zuʿbī: *al-Islām bayn al-sunna wa-l-shīʿa*, II/48–65; Sharaf al-Dīn: *al-Murājaʿāt*, no. 4.

[89] Abū Zahra: *Muḥāḍarāt fī l-mīrāth*, 8f.; idem: *al-Imām al-Ṣādiq*, 3; al-Ḥakīm: *Fikrat al-taqrīb*, 8–10; Ḥamza: *al-Taʾāluf*, 279; al-Madanī/al-Zuʿbī: *al-Islām bayn al-sunna wa-l-shīʿa*, I/56f. note 2; al-Rāfiʿī: *Islāmunā*, 12, 21, 29; al-Shakʿa: *Islām bi-lā madhāhib*, 485–87; foremost to be mentioned in this context are Abū Ḥanīfa as a student of Zayd b. ʿAlī, to whom the Zaydiyya trace their origins, who in turn was a student of the Muʿtazilite Wāṣil b. ʿAṭāʾ, as well as Mālik b. Anas, who was a student of Jaʿfar al-Ṣādiq.

[90] Fayyāḍ in *RI* 2/1950/416; Qommī in *RI* 3/1951/38; *RI* 9/1957/218; Abū Zahra: *al-Imām al-Ṣādiq*, 12f.; al-Daftar: *Ṣafḥa*, 45; al-Aḥsāʾī: *al-Ṭāʾifiyya*, 419; al-Ghazzālī: *Difāʿ ʿan al-ʿaqīda*, 339; Niʿma: *Rūḥ al-tashayyuʿ*, 472; Thābit: *al-Waḥda al-islāmiyya*, 31; Wāfī: *Bayn al-shīʿa wa-ahl al-sunna*, 22; Māridīnī: *al-Thawra al-īrāniyya*, 94; al-Bāqūrī: Preface to al-Muḥaqqiq al-Ḥillī: *al-Mukhtaṣar al-Nāfiʿ*, Tehran 1387/1967–68, p. *d*; al-Sarrāj: *al-Imām Muḥsin al-Ḥakīm*, 165. With reference to legal peculiarities and features referring to worship, yet at the same time restricted to these, the argument is also found in the Western secondary literature; cf. Halm: *Die Schia*, 175; Linant de Bellefonds: *Le droit imāmite*, 184.

[91] *MA* 31/2 (Aug. 1959), 241; cf. also *RI* 11/1959/217ff.; concerning the *fatwā* and its background, see below, pp. 284ff.

Jawād Mughniyya added that differences of opinion were to be seen among the four *madhāhib* in virtually all aspects of Islamic law. Occasionally, these varying viewpoints would even remain irreconcilable. As examples he cited the partially inconsistent views of Mālik, al-Shāfiʿī, Abū Ḥanīfa and Aḥmad b. Ḥanbal about specific commandments regarding dietary law and purity as well as details of the law of inheritance and the ritual prayer.[92]

In fact, particularly the last-mentioned topic still played a considerable role among Sunni scholars in the twentieth century. At the end of 1903, when a South African Muslim turned to the former Supreme Muftī of Egypt, Muḥammad ʿAbduh, eliciting the now-famous "Tansvaal *fatwā*", one part of his request concerned the question whether a Shāfiʿī is allowed to pray behind a Ḥanafī and vice versa.[93] Similarly, the Azhar was asked in August 1934 whether it is permissible for a Mālikī to pray behind a Shāfiʿī.[94] In both cases a positive reply was given.

In view of the Sunni practice of permitting dissent in the application of Islamic law, the JT placed great emphasis on the need to put the confessional quarrel with Shiism on a comparable basis. In all areas considered outside the *uṣūl al-dīn*, the authors of the *RI* spoke in favour of differences of opinion, which were regarded as good and beneficial, and which were denoted by the same word, *ikhtilāf*, that was applied to inner-Sunni divergences of opinion.[95]

As an example of this attitude, Moḥammad Taqī Qommī referred to Mālik b. Anas, who had talked the caliph al-Manṣūr out of the plan to make the Māliki rite the only legal one.[96] ʿAbd al-Majīd Salīm stressed that although the Koran warned vociferously of a split in the Muslim community over the immutable foundations of the belief,[97] there

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[92] Mughniyya in *al-ʿIrfān* 41/1 (Nov. 1953), 32–39, on 33f.; cf. also Tuffāḥa: *al-Muslimūn*, 8.

[93] C.C. Adams: "Muḥammad ʿAbduh and the Transvaal Fatwā", in: *The Macdonald Presentation Volume*, Princeton 1933 (reprinted New York 1968), 13–29; J.O. Voll: "ʿAbduh and the Transvaal Fatwa: The Neglected Question", in: T. Sonn (ed.): *Islam and the Question of Minorities*, Atlanta 1996, 27–39; the Arabic text of the *fatwā* is found in: Muḥammad ʿImāra (ed.): *al-Aʿmāl al-kāmila li-l-imām Muḥammad ʿAbduh*, Beirut 1974, VI/255f.; cf. also Rashīd Riḍā: *Tārīkh al-ustādh al-imām*, I.2/675–716.

[94] "al-Ṣalāt khalf al-mukhālif", *MA* (*Nūr al-Islām*) 5/5 (Aug. 1934), 395.

[95] Cf. "Ikhtilāf", *EI*[2] III/106f. (J. Schacht); Charnay: "Fonction de l'Ikhtilāf", passim; Chehata: "L'Ikhtilāf", passim; Wild: "Muslim und maḏhab", passim, deals with a modern controversy about the question of the affiliation to specific legal schools.

[96] Qommī in *RI* 5/1953/378ff.; about this idem in *RI* 3/1951/35–39.

[97] Cf. Koran 3/103ff.; 6/159; 8/46; 30/30ff.; 49/9ff.

was little argument against *ikhtilāf* in those points where Muslims were called on to apply *ijtihād*, the only condition being that the dispute should take place "in the best of manners" (*bi-llatī hiya aḥsan*, Koran 16/125 and 29/46).[98] This appeal for inner-Islamic pluralism in legal matters was a pivotal and central issue in the *RI*'s argumentation, as was on the other hand the strict rejection of any "improper" *ikhtilāf*, which led to division and discord.[99] In stating the rationale behind the support for *ikhtilāf*, references to *ḥadīth* were relatively rare, probably because either the authenticity or the interpretation of the relevant Prophetic sayings was controversial. For example Aḥmad Amīn described the famous phrase *ikhtilāf ummatī raḥma* as merely one of the "proverbs" (*aqwāl maʾthūra*) that called for tolerance.[100] Also, the equally well-known *ḥadīth* according to which the Muslim community split into 73 (or in other versions 72) groups (*firaq*)—all of whom save one destined for hell—was hardly mentioned. ʿAbd al-Mutaʿāl al-Ṣaʿīdī interpreted this saying to mean that the 72 condemned groups were those who did not adhere to the genuine *ikhtilāf* in the *furūʿ al-fiqh* (and only there), whereas ʿAbd al-Ḥusayn Rashtī had no doubt that it was the grave differences between Sunnism and Shiism in *uṣūl al-dīn* to which was being alluded.[101]

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[98] Salīm in *RI* 1/1949/9f.; al-Ṣaʿīdī in *RI* 3/1951/311; Mūsā ibid., 63; *RI* 1/1949/316; cf. Koran 17/53; also ʿAbd al-Ḥusayn Sharaf al-Dīn described the behaviour *bi-llatī hiya aḥsan* as a basic requirement of any reform effort; see *Ilā l-majmaʿ al-ʿilmī*, 5.

[99] Qommī in *RI* 10/1958/16–21; al-Madanī in *RI* 8/1956/172–87; cf. al-Rāfiʿī: *Islāmunā*, 28–33, 59–65.

[100] Aḥmad Amīn in *RI* 1/1949/244; concerning this alleged *ḥadīth* (no evidence is given in Wensinck: *Concordance*) see Paret: "Innerislamischer Pluralismus", passim; outside the *RI* the judgement of this tradition was also disputed: some scholars flatly rejected it (cf. al-Khāliṣī: *Waṣiyyatnāme*, 55; Mughniyya: Introduction to al-Khunayzī: *al-Daʿwa al-islāmiyya*, I/*k–l*), but there are also both consenting and neutral citations: al-Kawākibī: "Umm al-qurā", 354; Najāt: *ʿAwl wa taʿṣīb*, 99–125; al-Rājiḥī in *al-ʿIrfān* 36/1 (Jan. 1949), 36; Ṭabāṭabāʾī: *Rāhī be-sū-ye waḥdat-e eslāmī*, 11–22; Tuffāḥa: *al-Muslimūn*, 8; al-Aḥsāʾī: *al-Ṭāʾifiyya*, 131–33.

[101] al-Ṣaʿīdī in *RI* 3/1951/179–83; regarding Rashtī, see *RI* 2/1950/106ff.; concerning this *ḥadīth* cf. Wensinck: *Concordance*, V/136a; Goldziher: "Katholische Tendenz", 295–98 (cf. also idem: "Le dénombrement des sectes mohamétanes", *Revue de l'Histoire des Religions* 26/1892/129–37 (reprinted in idem: *Gesammelte Schriften*, Hildesheim 1968, II/406–14); al-Ḥakīmī: *Bidāyat al-firaq*, 9–140; Mazrūʿa: *Tārīkh al-firaq al-islāmiyya*, 17–26; predictably, speculation about the group to be saved caused considerable dispute: for the converts al-Anṭākī: *Li-mādhā ikhtart*, 12 and al-Tījānī: *Thumma ihtadayt*, 74f., they are the Shiites, for Kurd ʿAlī: *Khiṭaṭ al-Shām*, VI/246, the Sunnis; others favoured al-Ṣaʿīdī's middle-of-the-road approach: al-Aḥsāʾī: *al-Ṭāʾifiyya*, 418; Dāwūd: introduction to al-Ṣadr: *al-Shīʿa al-imāmiyya*, 10f.; al-Ghazzālī: *Difāʿ ʿan al-ʿaqīda*, 264–68, 290–92. Finally Maḥmūd al-Mallāḥ completely rejected the *ḥadīth*

vi) *The strict limiting of the ecumenical discussion to Sunnis, Twelver Shiites, and Zaydis as well as the exclusion of other groupings consistently designated as* ghulāt. Although the Zaydiyya played only a minor role in the *taqrīb* organization in general and the articles of the *RI*, their presence in the JT was never called into question in any way.[102] The case was very different vis-à-vis all other (extreme) Shiite groupings, including the Ismāʿīliyya, who were indiscriminately lumped under the epithet *ghulāt* ("exaggerators").[103] Despite the acknowledged admonition that Islamic brotherliness condemned calling other Muslims unbelievers,[104] the ecumenical scholars' open-mindedness quickly slammed shut on this issue.

Shiite authors in particular never tired of castigating the *ghulāt*, and other controversial groups even more so,[105] as heretics whose abom-

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on the ground that it was not possible to designate the Sunnis as *firqa: al-Ārāʾ aṣ-ṣarīḥa*, 9–14; cf. idem: *Tārīkhunā l-qawmī*, 65–70; the *ḥadīth* is critically discussed by Yūsuf al-Qaraḍāwī: "Mabādiʾ asāsiyya fikriyya wa-ʿamaliyya fī l-taqrīb bayn al-madhāhib", in: *Taqrīb bayn al-madhāhib al-islāmiyya. Abḥāth al-nadwa al-thāniyya*, 167–99, on 169ff.; cf. also Ibrāhīm al-Qaṭīfī: *al-Firqa al-nājiyya*, Beirut 1422/2001. It has to be remembered that for the Shiites, the number 72 is of special importance, as the third Imām, Ḥusayn, allegedly went to battle in Karbalāʾ with 72 companions; cf. Halm: *Der schiitische Islam*, 22; regarding the number 72 in general which is also filled with considerable symbolism in other cultures, see F.C. Endres/A. Schimmel: *Das Mysterium der Zahl. Zahlensymbolik im Kulturvergleich*, Cologne 1985, 278–82; the strikingly parallel significance of this number in occidental historiography is discussed by A. Borst: *Der Turmbau von Babel. Geschichte der Meinungen über Ursprung und Vielfalt der Sprachen und Völker*, Munich 1995 (Stuttgart [1]1957ff.), I/3–6 and passim.

[102] Qommī in *RI* 11/1959/354; al-Madanī ibid., 376f.; ʿAbdallāh al-Māḍī in *RI* 10/1958/177–85; articles particularly devoted to the Zaydiyya are found in *RI* 1/1949/198–205: regarding Zayd b. ʿAlī; 2/1950/398–404 (general survey); 3/1951/193–99: concerning the Zaydi Imam al-Hādī ilā l-Ḥaqq Yaḥyā b. al-Ḥusayn (835–911; see al-Ziriklī VIII/141); 8/1956/67–71 and 158–61: Yemen in the eleventh century of the *hijra*; for a list of the Zaydi members of the JT, see above, p. 187 note 165; viewed historically, the acceptance of the Zaydiyya by the Twelver Shia was not a matter of course: the scholar Bahāʾ al-Dīn al-ʿĀmilī, also known as al-Shaykh al-Bahāʾī (1547–1621; see *JAOS* 111/1991/563–71), considered the Zaydis, as well as the Wāqifiyya and the Kaysāniyya, among the *firaq bāṭila* and distanced himself from them vigorously; see *al-ʿIrfān* 1/7 (Jul. 1909), 352.

[103] Regarding the term *ghulāt*, see *EI*[2] II/1093–95 (M.G.S. Hodgson); Halm: *Die islamische Gnosis*, passim; W. al-Qāḍī: "The Development of the term Ghulāt in Muslim Literature with Special Reference to the Kaysāniyya", in: A. Dietrich (ed.): *Akten des VII. Kongresses für Arabistik und Islamwissenschaft*, Göttingen 1974, 295–319.

[104] Cf. for example al-Madanī/al-Zuʿbī: *al-Islām bayn al-sunna wa-l-shīʿa*, I/33–36 (with reference to ʿAbd al-Ḥusayn Sharaf al-Dīn's book *al-Fuṣūl al-muhimma*).

[105] ʿAbd al-Razzāq al-Ḥasanī devoted a two-part article to the Yazīdiyya that bore the revealing subtitle *Min al-firaq al-ḍālla*, *RI* 7/1955/181–88 and 282–90; regarding the Yazidis, see *EI*[2] XI/313–16 (P.G. Kreyenbroek); F. Meier: "Der Name der Yazīdīʾs", in: idem (ed.): *West-östliche Abhandlungen. Festschrift R. Tschudi*, Wiesbaden 1954, 244–57, and J.S. Guest: *Survival among the Kurds. A History of the Yezidis*, London 1993.

inable views should never under any circumstances be attributed to "genuine" Shiism.[106] Muḥammad Jawād Mughniyya even presumed to remark that the Imāmiyya considered the Khārijites, who had fought against ʿAlī, preferable (*afḍal*) to the *ghulāt*, who deified him. The Koranic verses 5/77 and 43/15, he contended, make it incumbent upon the Shiites to dissociate themselves from them (*wujūb al-barāʾa minhum*).[107] In both verses, exaggerating in religious matters is forbidden, as is placing a person on par with God, although the latter verse appears primarily meant to counter the claim that Jesus is the Son of God. How important it was for the Shia to escape any such suspicion is illustrated by the fact that even Moḥammad Taqī Qommī dropped his usual restraint for a moment and termed the figure of ʿAbdallāh b. Sabaʾ, often put forward in anti-Shiite polemics, as a fabrication.[108] Finally, it may hardly have been coincidental that an anti-Bahāʾī article that openly excluded them from the Muslim community appeared in 1955, exactly at the peak of the Bahāʾī persecution in Iran.[109]

There was only one attempt to expand the *taqrīb* efforts beyond the six mentioned schools of law. At the beginning of the 1950s, the

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[106] Muḥammad al-Ḥusayn Āl Kāshif al-Ghiṭāʾ in *RI* 1/1949/23f.; cf. idem: *Aṣl al-shīʿa*, 102f.; Qommī in *RI* 6/1954/366; idem in *RI* 9/1957/24; cf. also *RI* 8/1956/221 (review of Kamareʾī's book *Payām-e Īrān*); confirmations by Sunni authors include Fayyāḍ in *RI* 2/1950/418; Abū Zahra: *Muḥāḍarāt fī l-mīrāth*, 13; idem: *al-Imām al-Ṣādiq*, 3f.; Dāwūd: Preface to al-Ṣadr: *al-Shīʿa al-imāmiyya*, 11f.; ʿAbd al-Ḥalīm Maḥmūd: *Fatāwā*, I/109 (with reference to Muḥammad al-Ḥusayn Āl Kāshif al-Ghiṭāʾ); Darnīqa: *al-Sayyid Muḥammad Rashīd Riḍā*, 157.

[107] Mughniyya in *RI* 6/1954/379–81; similarly idem in *al-ʿIrfān* 41/1 (Feb. 1954), 449f.; for the Shiite concept of *barāʾa* cf. Kohlberg: "*Barāʾa* in Shīʿī Doctrine", passim; Ḥoseyn Fashshāhī was equally disparaging in his foreword to Kamareʾī's book *Payām-e Īrān* when he wrote (p. 12) that the Shia felt disgust (*tanaffor*) at such people.

[108] Qommī in *RI* 10/1958/19; cf. also the detailed analysis by al-Madanī/al-Zuʿbī: *al-Islām bain al-sunna wa-l-shīʿa*, I/102ff., who identified the *rāfiḍites* as the condemned *firaq* meant in the above-mentioned *ḥadīth* (117f.); see also ibid., II/86ff.; Ibn Sabaʾ's alleged Jewish origin already was used against the Shia by medieval polemicists; cf. in general W.M. Watt/M. Marmura: *Der Islam. II: Politische Entwicklungen und theologische Konzepte*, Stuttgart et al. 1985, 54–56; S.M. Wasserstrom: "'The Shīʿīs are the Jews of our Community.' An Interreligious Comparison Within Sunnī Thought", *Israel Oriental Studies* 14/1994/297–324; regarding the interpretation of Ibn Sabaʾ as it has emerged in the twentieth century, see Ende: *Arabische Nation*, 199–210; a recent example for the polemical reference to Ibn Sabaʾ by Sunnite authors is given by al-Ḥasanī: *Manhaj ahl al-bayt*, 169–76.

[109] *RI* 7/1955/89f.; already in 1939, ʿAbd al-Majīd Salīm had decided in his capacity at the time as Supreme Muftī of Egypt that the Bahāʾīs were not Muslims; see OM 19/1939/269f.; also cf. above, p. 193 note 189, and Skovgaard-Petersen: *Defining Islam*, 167; for the general background see J. Pink: "A Post-Qurʾānic Religion between Apostasy and Public Order: Egyptian Muftis and Courts on the Legal Status of the Bahāʾī Faith", *Islamic Law and Society* 10/2003/409–34.

RI published a report on the ʿAlawis of Latakia and a society established there by the name of *Jamāʿa khayriyya islāmiyya jaʿfariyya* to which ʿAlawi scholars also belonged. The initiative, which was friendly in tone and obviously intended to end this community's isolation, was never pursued despite the fact that contacts between Twelver Shiites and ʿAlawis existed outside the JT.[110] At around the same time, and then intensified following the events of 1959–60, there were further demands for the inclusion of other Muslim groups like the Ismāʿīliyya and the Druze in the ecumenical discussions. These were either completely ignored within the JT or answered by Qommī with the indirect comment that the organization should only be made up of representatives of the four Sunni *madhāhib*, the Zaydis, and the Twelver Shiites.[111]

vii) *The sharp distinction between religion, over which complete agreement was postulated, and politics, which was solely held responsible for the schism between Muslims and from which, therefore, distance was to be maintained.* Since a consensus existed, at least within the *taqrīb* movement, that there was no dissent between Sunnis and Shiites over religious and legal questions to justify the stridency of the dispute, another explanation had to be sought for the historical and current animosities. It was found by interpreting the conflict in a quasi-secularising way, though it was not designated and certainly not meant as such. In this approach all disagreement that could not be assigned to the area of legitimate *ikhtilāf* was ascribed to the power-political endeavours of the generations who followed the *salaf ṣāliḥ*.

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[110] *RI* 3/1951/109 and 331; Kramer: "Syria's Alawis and Shi'ism", passim; ʿAlī ʿAzīz Ibrāhīm: *al-ʿAlawiyyūn bayn al-ghuluww wa-l-falsafa wa-l-taṣawwuf wa-l-tashayyuʿ*, Beirut 1415/1995; cf. also above, p. 159 note 29, on the relations between Imāmiyya and ʿAlawiyya, and p. 185 regarding Muḥammad Amīn al-Ḥusaynī's *fatwā* concerning the ʿAlawis.

[111] Qommī in *RI* 11/1959/354; the demand for *taqrīb* beyond these six groups can be found in Dāwūd: *Naẓarāt*, 182; al-Madanī/al-Zuʿbī: *al-Islām bayn al-sunna wa-l-shīʿa*, I/9f., 96 (however at the same time, the two authors emphasized that the *ghulāt* no longer existed: ibid., I/104 and II/86ff.); al-Zuʿbī in *al-ʿIrfān* 42/1 (Nov. 1954), 9–11 and in *al-ʿIrfān* 47/4 (Dec. 1959), 373; a few years later, al-Zuʿbī stepped into the public eye with a book about Buddhism: *al-Būdhiyya wa-taʾthīruhā fī l-fikr wa-l-firaq al-islāmiyya*, s.l., 1964; al-Shakʿa went furthest: *Islām bi-lā madhahib*, 488f., he even took into consideration, in addition to the ʿAlawis, Ismāʿīlis, and Druze, including the Aḥmadiyya, after having described their founder, Mīrzā Ghulām Aḥmad al-Qādiyānī, only a few pages earlier (482), as an accomplice of the colonialists; on the Aḥmadiyya in general, cf. Y. Friedmann: *Prophecy Continuous. Aspects of Ahmadi Religious Thought and its Medieval Background*, Berkeley 1989.

This opinion was most emphatically represented by Aḥmad Amīn: With the exception of the Abbasid inquisition in the first half of the ninth century based upon al-Ma'mūn's incorrect comprehension of Islam, all the disputes of the early Islamic period were political conflicts adorned in the garment of godliness. Thus, in his opinion, it was not appropriate to blame religion for the crimes of politicians, whose intentions were nothing more than attempts to consolidate and extend their power.[112]

Numerous authors of the *RI* expressed themselves in a similar way[113] but without going into more detail about the nature, cause, or process of the political discord. This, then, was the correlate of the JT's concept of history cited above. By pinning the tag of the criminal power politics of the early Islamic rulers on the confessional conflict, it was possible to avoid a discussion of its roots within the framework of an ecumenical, theological or juridical dialogue. But opinion varied as to what the consequences of this argument for the JT's work should be. Muḥammad Ṣādiq al-Ṣadr referred to Muḥammad Rashīd Riḍā's quoting of ʿAbd al-Ḥusayn Sharaf al-Dīn in the *Manār* as having said: "Politics divided us, and politics will reunite us", and therefore desired rapprochement of the legal schools to be seen as merely a prelude (*muqaddima*) to political cooperation.[114]

Other scholars of both denominations, like ʿAbd al-Ḥalīm Kāshif al-Ghiṭāʾ or Muḥammad Abū Zahra, could also imagine the activity

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[112] Aḥmad Amīn in *RI* 1/1949/244–49, esp. 247f.; this passage is quoted approvingly by al-Ghazzālī: *Ẓalām min al-gharb*, 276f.; cf. ibid., 247; regarding the Abbasid inquisition, see J.A. Nawas: "The *miḥna* of 218 A.H./833 A.D. revisited. An empirical study", *JAOS* 116/1996/698–708; similar to Aḥmad Amīn, Muḥammad Kurd ʿAlī also argued that the dispute between Sunnis and Shiites was merely of a political nature and therefore no longer current: *al-Islām wa-l-ḥaḍāra al-ʿarabiyya*, Cairo 1950, II/69–93, esp. 70, 78.

[113] Cf. Wajdī in *RI* 1/1949/49; Darāz ibid., 235; Fayyāḍ ibid., 287ff. and in *RI* 2/1950/414; al-Māzandarānī in *RI* 3/1951/410; al-Qulaybī in *RI* 5/1953/87–90; al-Ṣaʿīdī in *RI* 7/1955/36; ʿArafa in *RI* 9/1957/135; Abū Zahra in *RI* 10/1958/33f.; cf. al-Ghazzālī: *Difāʿ ʿan al-ʿaqīda*, 262f.; Thābit: *al-Waḥda al-islāmiyya*, 31; al-Zuʿbī in *al-ʿIrfān* 47/4 (Dec. 1959), 369; regarding an earlier comment in the same vein, see Ismāʿīl Maḥmūd in *al-ʿIrfān* 20/5 (Dec. 1930), 617f.: *al-Sunna wa-l-shīʿa awjadathā al-siyāsa lā al-dīn*.

[114] al-Ṣadr in *RI* 1/1949/358ff.; Rashīd Riḍā had printed Sharaf al-Dīn's sentence in *al-Manār* 32/2 (Feb. 1932), 147; cf. also Sharaf al-Dīn: *Bughyat al-rāghibīn*, II/448; al-Ṣadr: "Qabs min ḥayāt al-sayyid al-mu'allif", 16; the argument had already played a role in the discussion between Rashīd Riḍā and Munīr ʿUsayrān 1909, cf. *al-Manār* 11/1 (Mar. 1908), 49, and *al-ʿIrfān* 1/10 (Oct. 1909), 493; see also Darnīqa: *al-Sayyid Muḥammad Rashīd Riḍā*, 155f.

of the *taqrīb* organization producing political results, and (outside the *RI*) Muḥammad al-Ghazzālī even spoke in favour of the creation of a political union on the model of the British Commonwealth(!).[115] In contrast, Moḥammad Taqī Qommī maintained a markedly isolationist attitude when he stressed that the JT did not want to have anything to do with politics and intentionally avoided it so as not to fall victim to political issues.[116] Qommī's opinion appears to have prevailed because the *RI* in fact commented on current political affairs topics only rarely and non-committally. That this did not necessarily mean, however, the fulfilment of Qommī's wish is yet to be discussed and analysed.

viii) *The reference to colonialism and other enemies of Islam as being primarily to blame for the inner-Islamic confessional schism and its effects.* In order to lend more emphasis to the foregoing points, it was frequently added that the string-pullers behind the political intrigues were non-Muslims, namely the colonialists and their accomplices. By means of continuous conspiracies, under the motto *divide et impera*—in Arabic *farriq tasud*—they pursued their only goal, which was to divide the Muslims and thus weaken them.[117] The appearance was frequently given that the confrontation between Shiites and Sunnis in the first place was actually a product of the Europeans' emergence on the scene. Again, this argument was not an invention of the newer *taqrīb* activities but belonged inseparably to ecumenical calls from the beginning: as early as 1914 Muḥsin al-Amīn had spoken of the rapacity

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[115] Kāshif al-Ghiṭā' in *RI* 4/1952/47f.; Abū Zahra in *RI* 10/1958/31ff. (see also above, pp. 169f.); al-Ghazzālī: *Ẓalām min al-gharb*, 279; cf. *Liwā' al-Islām* 7/8 (Dec. 1953), 495–507; Muḥammad Ḥilmī 'Īsā in *RI* 4/1952/250–55.

[116] Qommī in *RI* 6/1954/367 and in *RI* 11/1959/354; cf. al-Shīrāzī: *al-Waḥda al-islāmiyya*, 10, as well as idem: *Eslām. Ā'īn-e hambastegī*, 30; by maintaining this point of view, Qommī was in keeping with the tradition of Muḥammad 'Abduh and the Salafiyya, who also clearly distanced themselves from politics; see Schulze: *International-ismus*, 47f.

[117] A number of common clichés is found, e.g., in the article by Maḥmūd Shayt al-Khaṭṭāb: "Ḥāḍir al-muslimīn wa-mustaqbaluhum bayn al-umam wa-l-āmāl", *MA* 49/8 (Oct.–Nov. 1977), 1510–39; regarding the author (b. 1919), see ibid., 1540–42 and *MMI* III/276–78; as enemies of Islam he listed colonialism, Zionism, "epidemic destructive principles" (*al-mabādi' al-wāfida al-haddāma*) such as communism, Bābiyya or Bahā'iyya, also missionary activities, modern applied science—technology (!, *al-'ulūm al-taṭbīqiyya al-ḥadītha—al-tiknūlūjiyyā*), as well as internal enemies; regarding this, cf. also Radtke: "Auserwähltheitsbewußtsein", 74f.; Ende: "Sunni Polemical Writings", passim; Wielandt: *Das Bild der Europäer*, 429–89; "Conspiracy Theories", *EIr* VI/138–47 (A. Ashraf); G. Kepel: *The Prophet and Pharaoh. Muslim Extremism in Egypt*, London 1985, 110–24.

(*iftirās*) of the Western predators (*sibāʿ*) and correspondingly recalled the example of Saladin.[118]

The confrontation with European colonialism had been one of the mainsprings of pan-Islamic activists of the nineteenth century. In the ecumenical discussion, it was appreciatively taken up and associated with the call for Sunnis and Shiites to overcome their confessional cleft if for no other reason than to communally thwart further plans of the "enemies of Islam".

The stereotypical recourse to the *aʿdāʾ al-islām* was among the standard repertoire of countless comments not only in the JT's journal; in fact, it remains essential in the ecumenical literature to this very day.[119] An especially blatant example of the tone assumed by some authors came from ʿAbbās Abū l-Ḥasan al-Mūsawī: he spoke of an invasion by what was virtually a "Nazi party" (*al-ḥizb al-nāzī*) of the enemies of Islam that had caused the split among the Muslims, and the fight against whom was the JT's order of the day.[120] Characteristic of the line advocated by the *RI* is Muḥammad Riḍā al-Shabībī's argumentation; he saw in the European colonialism of the modern period the continuation of the Byzantine and Mongol conquests that had also been aided by the Muslims' feuding.[121] The Palestine conflict was also interpreted in the same way: as a result of internal disagreement only the Jews had benefited, leaving the Muslims to triumph with nothing but empty words.[122]

In the *RI* fundamental complicity in this situation was ascribed to the Orientalists. According to the general tenor of the argument, they were involved in the Islamic schism in the name of research

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[118] al-Amīn: *Ḥaqq al-yaqīn*, 3f.

[119] Cf., among others, Darāz in *RI* 1/1949/235; Amīn ibid., 248f.; Fayyāḍ ibid., 290ff. and *RI* 2/1950/417; al-Madanī ibid., 187; Salīm ibid., 130f.; Amīn in *RI* 3/1951/26–29; Qommī ibid., 37; ʿAbd al-Ḥalīm Kāshif al-Ghiṭāʾ in *RI* 4/1952/45; ʿAllūba in *RI* 5/1953/26–29; Jamīl al-Rāfiʿī ibid., 202–07; al-Khāliṣī in *RI* 6/1954/55ff.; ʿArafa in *RI* 8/1956/43–47, 143–47, 9/1957/247–50; Muḥammad ʿAbdallāh Muḥammad in *RI* 14/1964/203ff.; further al-Aḥsāʾī: *al-Ṭāʾifiyya*, passim; al-Ghazzālī: *Difāʿ ʿan al-ʿaqīda*, 292–94; Kamareʾī: *Payām-e Īrān*, 30f.; Muḥammad al-Ḥusayn Āl Kāshif al-Ghiṭāʾ: *Aṣl al-shīʿa*, 62ff.; al-Qāsim: *Ḥaqīqat al-shīʿa*, 11; al-Rāfiʿī: *Islāmunā*, 13f.; Salām: *al-Waḥda al-ʿaqāʾidiyya*, 15f., 23ff.; al-Sarrāj: *al-Imām Muḥsin al-Ḥakīm*, 164f.; al-Subaytī: *Ilā mashyakhat al-Azhar*, 1–19; Thābit: *al-Waḥda al-islāmiyya*, 39f.; al-Zayn: *al-Muslimūn man hum?*, 36f.; al-Zuʿbī in *al-ʿIrfān* 48/4 (Dec. 1960), 346; Muṣṭafā ʿAbd al-Waḥīd in *Minbar al-Islām* 30/8 (Sep. 1972), 112f.

[120] al-Mūsawī in *al-ʿIrfān* 44/9 (Jun. 1957), 989–91, on 990.

[121] al-Shabībī in *RI* 7/1955/26f.

[122] Muḥammad al-Ḥusayn Āl Kāshif al-Ghiṭāʾ in *RI* 2/1950/271f.

as henchmen of the colonialists and were attempting to foment anti-Islamic public sentiment. Here the task of the JT was to set the Orientalists straight and warn the Muslims against accepting such views.[123] For the same reason the JT regarded the Christian ecumenical movement, with which it obviously had no contacts, with unconcealed distrust, fearing that "bloc building" (*takattul*) among Christians could lead to further anti-Islamic activity and intensify their missionary activity.[124] Just how obsessive the continuous recourse to the theory of a colonial conspiracy could become is shown in a comment by Muḥammad Jawād Mughniyya, who believed that an international colonialist-Zionist plot was responsible for Shiism being systematically ignored in the plethora of existing books about Islamic law.[125]

ix) *The other side of rapprochement.* To a great extent, the assertions the Sunni opponents of rapprochement used in their attempts to torpedo the ecumenical efforts can be read as almost a mirror image of the hitherto cited comments that were used in the *RI* to win Sunnis and Shiites over to reconciliation. This means: the unshakable, basic principle of the existence of agreement over *uṣūl al-dīn* and the contention that differences existed only in regard to the *furūʿ* was countered with the argument that there was discord over the *furūʿ*, but even more so concerning the *uṣūl*. The asseveration that the point was not an attempt to merge the legal schools but rather a peaceful difference of opinion in the spirit of the *ikhtilāf* was rebutted with the claim that the goal of the *ʿulamāʾ* behaving ecumenically was to obscure the divergences and to convert the Sunnis to Shiism. Finally, the call to differentiate between the "genuine" Shiites and the *ghulāt* was parried with the comment that both groups were practically the same, as all Shiites were to be considered heretics. These and similar

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[123] Qommī in *RI* 9/1957/24, 10/1958/19f. and 11/1959/351; ʿAbd al-Wahhāb Ḥammūda in *RI* 9/1957/61–66, 173–78, 266–71, 10/1958/155–61, 311–15 and 374–78 (a series of articles entitled *Min zallāt al-mustashriqīn*; partially reprinted in al-Shīrāzī: *al-Waḥda al-islāmiyya*, 435–55); Labīb al-Saʿīd in *RI* 17/1972/63–71; further, *RI* 1/1949/364; 6/1954/102f.; 10/1958/104–08; cf. also al-Raḍawī: *Fī sabīl al-waḥda al-islāmiyya*, 109–14; al-Aḥsāʾī: *al-Ṭāʾifiyya*, 231ff.; Mughniyya: *Min hunā wa-hunāk*, 81–84; al-Ghazzālī: *Difāʿ ʿan al-ʿaqīda*, passim; al-Ṣāfī: *Maʿa al-Khaṭīb*, 71–74; regarding the response among Muslim scholars to Orientalism in general, cf. E. Rudolph: *Westliche Islamwissenschaft im Spiegel muslimischer Kritik*, Berlin 1991.

[124] *RI* 13/1962/107–09; but see also the sympathetic obituary for Pope John XXIII in *RI* 14/1963/148–52.

[125] Mughniyya: *Min hunā wa-hunāk*, 194ff.; cf. idem in *al-ʿIrfān* 46/7 (Mar. 1959), 608–10.

stereotypes from the pens of the polemicists will be returned to frequently in the following two chapters.

On the other hand, there was hardly a critic of the JT in particular or Shiism in general who proclaimed open opposition against the idea of an inner-Islamic rapprochement as such. Even in the most vehement and uncompromising attacks on Shiism, the authors seldom forgot (or forget today) to stress their basic willingness for dialogue and to emphasize the importance of Islamic unity. However, they pointed out in the same breath that this was absolutely impossible under *these* conditions, with *these* Shiites as interlocutors, since the latter's aim was solely to propagandize for their own opinions.[126]

The prime example in this regard is undoubtedly the polemic pamphlet *al-Khuṭūṭ al-ʿarīḍa* by Muḥibb al-Dīn al-Khaṭīb. In its very first sentence, he indeed praised the *taqrīb* idea as one of the greatest goals of Islam but on the following pages did everything to prove that Shiism was an independent religion that had nothing to do with (*ipso facto* Sunni) Islam.[127] Some of these authors went even a step further and presented themselves as "purified" former supporters of ecumenical thinking whose own constant efforts toward reconciliation had been shattered by the malice or at least the obstinacy of the opposite side. Muḥammad Rashīd Riḍā, for example, had resorted to this "cliché of disenchantment" in the course of his dispute with Muḥsin al-Amīn in order to justify the renunciation of his formerly much more pro-Shiite perspective.[128] Muḥammad Kurd ʿAlī's changed attitude toward Shiism is similarly well-known.[129]

Within the surroundings of the JT, as might have been expected, there were also often cases of this type of disillusionment expressed

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[126] ʿAbd al-Ḥusayn Sharaf al-Dīn's attacks on Muḥammad Kurd ʿAlī had proved that this argument served the Shiite side well, too: see above, p. 57.

[127] Regarding this work, see in detail below, pp. 331ff.; further examples in this respect are al-Daqs: *al-Ṙtidāʾāt al-bāṭiniyya*, 206; Furayj: *al-Shīʿa fī l-taṣawwur al-islāmī*, 178ff.; al-Jabrī: *Ḥiwār maʿa al-shīʿa*, 26–28; Jārallāh: *al-Washīʿa*, 107, 109 (Muḥsin al-Amīn's rebuttal to this: *Naqḍ al-washīʿa*, 6f.); al-Gharīb: *Waʿjāʾa dawr al-majūs*, 114; Mālallāh: *al-Shīʿa wa-taḥrīf al-qurʾān*, 164; Ẓahīr: *al-Shīʿa wa-l-sunna*, 8ff.; idem: *al-Radd ʿalā l-duktūr ʿAlī ʿAbd al-Wāḥid Wāfī*, 24ff.; al-Ḥasanī: *Manhaj ahl al-bayt*, 187–92.

[128] Rashīd Riḍā: *al-Sunna wa-l-shīʿa*, I/26–31; idem in *al-Manār* 31/4 (Oct. 1930), 290–99 (reprinted in idem: *al-Sunna wa-l-shīʿa*, II/109–30); cf. also above, pp. 99ff. concerning his quarrel with Muḥammad al-Ḥusayn Āl Kāshif al-Ghiṭāʾ; regarding Rashīd Riḍā's disenchantment, see also al-Gharīb: *Waʿjāʾa dawr al-majūs*, 146–48; al-Jundī: *Tārīkh al-ṣiḥāfa al-islāmiyya*, II/139; al-Ṣawābika: *Muḥammad Rashīd Riḍā*, 54f.; Ẓahīr: *al-Radd ʿalā l-duktūr ʿAlī ʿAbd al-Wāḥid Wāfī*, 22f.

[129] Cf. Hermann: *Kulturkrise*, 246.

by authors, for instance Muḥammad ʿArafa and ʿAbd al-Laṭīf al-Subkī.[130] They mentioned their transformation, however, only in passing, unlike Muṣṭafā al-Sibāʿī, temporarily leader of the Syrian Muslim Brotherhood, who rendered account for his attitude in the introduction to his book *al-Sunna wa-makānatuhā fī l-tashrīʿ al-islāmī*.[131] As late as 1952 the Shiite author ʿAbd al-Ḥalīm Kāshif al-Ghiṭāʾ had named him in the *RI* as one of the scholars who supported the cause of confessional rapprochement.[132] A year later, though, according to his own statement, al-Sibāʿī had his falling out with the Shia.[133]

According to his rendition of the events, he met ʿAbd al-Ḥusayn Sharaf al-Dīn and "some other Shiite scholars" in the latter's house in Tyre in the summer of 1953. During the conversation the necessity of rapprochement was rapidly agreed upon as well as the measures necessary for this purpose, which included holding a conference of scholars from both groups. Somewhat later, however, it had come to his ears that Sharaf al-Dīn had written a book about the Prophet's companion Abū Hurayra[134] that was "full of invective and insults". This work, which al-Sibāʿī frankly admitted he had *not* read and which he knew only from hearsay, opened his eyes and showed that the author had no "sincere desire for rapprochement and forgetting of the past" (!), but—just like the JT—wanted to take in the Sunnis.[135]

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[130] Regarding these, see below, p. 277 note 117 and 266 note 68 respectively.

[131] Regarding him (1915–1964), see al-Ziriklī VII/231f.; Kaḥḥāla M/787f.; Juynboll: *The Authenticity of the Tradition Literature*, 34–36; J. Reissner: *Ideologie und Politik der Muslimbrüder Syriens. Von den Wahlen 1947 bis zum Verbot unter Adīb aš-Šišaklī*, Freiburg 1980, 121–26 and index, s.v.; ʿAbd al-ʿAzīz al-Ḥājj Muṣṭafā: *Muṣṭafā al-Sibāʿī rajul al-fikr wa-qāʾid daʿwa*, Amman 1404/1984; ʿAbdallāh Maḥmūd al-Ṭanṭāwī: *Muṣṭafā al-Sibāʿī 1334–1384h—1915–1964m. al-Dāʿiyya al-rāʾid wa-l-ʿālim al-mujāhid*, Damascus 1421/2001.

[132] *RI* 4/1952/48; Kāshif al-Ghiṭāʾ named him here in the same breath with his father Muḥammad al-Ḥusayn, ʿAllūba, Qommī, and Borūjerdī.

[133] al-Sibāʿī: *al-Sunna wa-makānatuhā fī l-tashrīʿ al-islāmī*, 16–20.

[134] The book had already appeared seven years previously (Sidon 1946), see above, p. 56 note 26.

[135] al-Sibāʿī: *al-Sunna wa-makānatuhā fī l-tashrīʿ al-islāmī*, 18f.; al-Sibāʿī learned about the book from quotations that Maḥmūd Abū Rayya had included in his work about Abū Hurayra; al-Sibāʿī's "disenchantment" is mentioned approvingly by al-Gharīb: *Waʿjāʾa dawr al-majūs*, 149–51, and al-Turkumānī: *Taʿrīf bi-madhhab al-shīʿa al-imāmiyya*, 102–06; an early Shiite reaction to it is a two-part article by Kāmil Ḥātim in *al-ʿIrfān* 40/7 (May 1953), 817–21 and 40/8 (Jun. 1953), 944–47; see also Juynboll: *The Authenticity of the Tradition Literature*, 62; Sivan: "Sunni Radicalism", 14, and Ende: "Sunni Polemical Writings", 223; recent Sunni apologetic examples are al-Ḥasanī: *Manhaj ahl al-bayt*, 3f., 67–90, and Muḥammad ʿAbdallāh Muḥammad Ḥawwāʾ: *Abū Hurayra al-ṣaḥābī al-muftarā ʿalayhi*, Cairo 1998.

Shiites used this disenchantment cliché (that, incidentally, has experienced a real renaissance since the Iranian Revolution)[136] much more rarely. In the confrontation with what in their eyes was stubborn Sunni polemic, they preferred falling back upon the above-mentioned "instructional cliché", yet without casting any doubt on the ecumenical debate itself.

Al-Sibāʿī of course emphatically insisted that he was really a proponent of the kind of "true rapprochement" (*al-taqārub al-ṣaḥīḥ*) that he defined as "a purification (*taṣfiya*) of the past"[137] and thereby, without actually wanting to, pointed out once again the fundamental dilemma in which the ecumenical scholars found themselves. From the principal unanimity *that* rapprochement was necessary, it was a long way to reaching an understanding about *how* this could best be achieved, a distance that not all the *ʿulamāʾ* participating in the discussion were equally ready to go.

At the end of the day, the only criterion of what constituted "proper" ecumenism was the view of the particular observer, which was usually more or less based in his own tradition. Examples of this attitude whereby scholars fully confident of the correctness of the foundations of their own denomination were confounded to discover that those in the opposing camp remained convinced of their "incorrect" opinion can be found on both sides. Muṣṭafā al-Sibāʿī's conclusion that Muḥammad could not possibly have designated ʿAlī as his successor if only because the *ṣaḥāba* would never have concealed the fact[138] is the precise converse of ʿAbd al-Ḥusayn Nūr al-Dīn's argumentation. In his dispute with Muḥammad Rashīd Riḍā, he articulated his amazement that the Sunnis did not share the Shiite conviction that ʿAlī was the finest of the Prophet's companions but rather bestowed this honour on ʿUmar. If the Shiites, according to Nūr al-Dīn, remained silent about this, they would betray their basic principle. However, "when we tell the truth and help bring our opinion to the fore, resistance arises against us, and we are accused of rejection (of the caliphs; *rafḍ*), exaggeration, and fanatic partiality in favour of the foremost of the Prophet's companions."[139]

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[136] More recent examples are Furayj: *al-Shīʿa fī l-taṣawwur al-islāmī*, 8ff.; Ḥawwā: *al-Khumayniyya*, 3–8; al-Nimr: *al-Muʾāmara ʿalā l-kaʿba*, 152 f.; al-Turkumānī: *Taʿrīf bi-madhhab al-shīʿa al-imāmiyya*, 5–8.

[137] al-Sibāʿī: *al-Sunna wa-makānatuhā fī l-tashrīʿ al-islāmī*, 19.

[138] Ibid., 125.

[139] *al-Manār* 32/1 (Oct. 1931), 65.

Just how much even the scholars of the JT circle occasionally talked past each other is shown by a footnote in Ḥusayn Makkī al-ʿĀmilī's book *ʿAqīdat al-shīʿa*, which is a reply to Muḥammad Abū Zahra's presentation of the Shiite doctrine of the Imamate:

> When one looks at what Abū Zahra states on pp. 11f. in his book *al-Imām al-Ṣādiq*, one notes that he is calling for the conversion of the Shiites to Sunnism without noticing that the Imāmiyya, likewise, are calling on him and the followers of his legal school to give up their doctrine and to follow the footsteps of the Imāmiyya.[140]

The JT attempted to avoid this problem as far as possible by declaring it taboo to become involved in history. This made it possible to escape major tensions within the *RI*—an exception like Aḥmad Amīn confirming the rule—, but the result was that the organization never got beyond noncommittal requests for unity and, using standardized arguments, gave assurances of how much mutual agreement already existed.

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Besides the silence over the past, disregarding the present was of particular significance. The JT's stubborn insistence on conducting the dialogue (at least officially) while consciously ignoring the political implications deprived it of the possibility to present its goals openly at pan-Islamic conferences or collaborate with other organizations effectively. At the same time, in its own activities, the pretence of being non-political could be kept up only superficially and outwardly.

The edition of Shiite works in Cairo or Shaltūt's *fatwā*, by which he recognized Shiism as a legal school of equal status, were of a theological and legal nature only on the surface. Beneath that appeared, somewhat palimpsest-like, the respective political circumstances of the day to which the efforts of the *taqrīb* societies were subject and which occasionally confronted the organized progress of the ecumenical debate with existential problems. The following pages deal with the interaction between theological demand and political reality.

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[140] al-ʿĀmilī: *ʿAqīdat al-shīʿa*, 8 note 1; cf. Arkoun: "Pour un remembrement", 142.

CHAPTER EIGHT

POLEMICS, RAPPROCHEMENT AND REVOLUTIONARY POLITICS (1952–1957)

The Azhar and the Revolution

In the night from the 22nd to the 23rd of July, 1952, a bloodless coup brought a group of members of the Egyptian military calling themselves the "Free Officers" into power. Under the leadership of Muḥammad Najīb and Jamāl ʿAbd al-Nāṣir, with a single stroke the Revolution changed the domestic political situation of Egypt completely and in the long run would have similar far-reaching consequences on the international scene in the entire Near and Middle East.[1]

This overthrow meant inevitable change for the Azhar as well. In the decades of the monarchy, the institution had not only been an object but just as much an actor in the political debate, repeatedly standing all too clearly on the side of the monarch in the permanent conflict between King and parliament. Because of its opposition to the British and the parliament, over the years the University had gained the reputation of having become a "royalist bastion".[2] The best example of this process, which made the Azhar and its Rector important factors in Egyptian politics, is Muḥammad Muṣṭafā al-Marāghī's ten-year term of office as *Shaykh al-Azhar* during which he envisioned the restoration of the caliphate with the Egyptian King at the head of the *umma*.

The Azhar paid a high price for this. The political power struggle, the student disturbances that had increased both in number and intensity starting in the 1930s, as well as the inner-Azhar rivalries that occasionally led to literal obstructionism on the part of numerous *ʿulamāʾ*, all these things pushed any thought of a fundamental reform of the Azhar and its curricula—a demand that had been made time and again by individual scholars since the time of ʿAbduh—

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[1] Vatikiotis: *The History of Egypt*, 372ff.

[2] This was the assessment of Crecelius: "Al-Azhar in the Revolution", 32; cf. idem: "Nonideological Responses", 195–204.

into the background. In addition, after the end of the Second World War there were extremely frequent changes in the office of the Rector, which numbered no less than five between al-Marāghī's death in 1945 and the revolution; alienation between the Azhar leadership and the King gradually became perceptible.

The appointment of Muṣṭafā ʿAbd al-Rāziq, forced through by Fārūq, occurred against the explicit objection of the majority of the highest-ranking Azhar scholars, and ʿAbd al-Majīd Salīm finally resigned from his first term as Rector because of disaffection with the royal house. For the most part, though, all this had no effect on the religious establishment's reputation for unswerving loyalty, or even servility, to the prevailing politics in general, which continued to engender the accusation of opportunism against the Azhar.[3]

It was therefore quite natural that the new rulers immediately following the revolution turned their attention to the Azhar. They especially required the renown and expertise of the University's scholars in their own dispute with the Muslim Brotherhood in order to legitimize and support their political line and thus consolidate power.[4] By means of a shrewd selection policy in filling both the highest posts at the Azhar and those positions in the administration that formed the interface between the *ʿulamāʾ* and politics, such as in the Ministry of *Awqāf*, ʿAbd al-Nāṣir sought to guarantee the goodwill of the religious elite. The first personnel decision made with regard to the Azhar after the revolution is characteristic of this: the designation of Muḥammad al-Khiḍr Ḥusayn as Rector on September 17, 1952.

Initially ʿAbd al-Nāṣir had tapped his *Awqāf* Minister, Aḥmad Ḥasan al-Bāqūrī, for the job. Shortly before, al-Bāqūrī had been expelled from the Muslim Brotherhood because of what had been more or less a misunderstanding after having taken up his governmental role. However, he declined ʿAbd al-Nāṣir's offer: according to his memoirs, his reason was modesty because, as he claimed, he did not feel himself suitably qualified for this task.[5] When, at the suggestion of Bāqūrī's ministerial colleague ʿAbd al-ʿAzīz ʿAlī, the choice fell on al-Khiḍr Ḥusayn—almost eighty years old and already retired—al-

[3] Lemke quotes some examples of this: *Šaltūt*, 7 note 2; cf. ibid., 159.

[4] Warburg: "Islam and Politics", 135f.

[5] al-Bāqūrī: *Baqāyā al-dhikrayāt*, 139f.; though in other places, as already indicated, he gives reasons for his reserve that are considerably less respectful, namely the intrigues and conspiracies that would surround this office; see above, p. 184.

Bāqūrī actually had to force him to assume the office, which Ḥusayn wanted to refuse because of his frailty.[6]

Al-Khiḍr Ḥusayn was of Tunisian origin but had lived permanently in Egypt from the beginning of the 1920s onward and became an Egyptian citizen around 1938.[7] His prominence in the religious-political life on the Nile went back a long time: since 1926 he had been either president or a leading member in various neo-Salafi organizations,[8] and in May 1930, at the instigation of the then-current rector Muḥammad al-Aḥmadī al-Ẓawāhirī, he was entrusted with the assignment of editor in chief of the newly established Azhar journal *Nūr al-Islām*.[9] Subsequently, for almost two decades (until September 1951), he fulfilled the same responsibility for the journal *Liwāʾ al-Islām*.

The fact that he never demanded, or even suggested, reform of the Azhar earned him, following his appointment, devastating criticism from the University's reform-oriented scholars. ʿAbd al-Mutaʿāl al-Ṣaʿīdī, for example, went so far as to call him a reactionary only interested in his material advancement.[10] ʿAbd al-Nāṣir, however, had accomplished what he intended: a *Shaykh al-Azhar* from whom no

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[6] Muwāʿada: *Muḥammad al-Khiḍr Ḥusayn*, 123f.; cf. also *MA* 24/2 (Oct. 1952), 146–55; al-Bahayy: *Ḥayātī fī riḥāb al-Azhar*, 61f.; regarding al-Khiḍr Ḥusayn (1874 or 1876–1958), see in general the obituary in *MA* 29/8 (Feb. 1958), 736–44; al-Ziriklī VI/113f.; Kaḥḥāla M/635; *MA* 66/8 (Jan.-Feb. 1994), 1189–96; *EI*² IV/906f. s.v. al-Khaḍir (J. Majed); according to Majed, al-Khiḍr Ḥusayn wrote two refutations of ʿAlī ʿAbd al-Rāziq's theses on the caliphate, the first of which he dedicated to King Fuʾād; concerning his time in office as *Shaykh al-Azhar*, see ʿAbd al-ʿAẓīm: *Mashyakhat al-Azhar*, II/147–62; in addition, al-Khafājī: *al-Azhar fī alf ʿām*, I/195f. and Qurrāʿa: *Tārīkh al-Azhar*, 335.

[7] This was his own statement in an interview with *al-Ahrām*, reprinted in *MA* 24/2 (Oct. 1952), 149f.

[8] As President of the *Jamʿiyyat al-hidāya al-islāmiyya*, which he founded in 1926, as a leading member in *the Jamʿiyyat al-shubbān al-muslimīn* and the *Jamʿiyyat al-jihād al-islāmī*; see Heyworth-Dunne: *Religious and Political Trends*, 108; Schulze: *Internationalismus*, 91; *MA* 29/8 (Feb. 1958), 743.

[9] *MA* 24/2 (Oct. 1952), 151; the contention that al-Khiḍr Ḥusayn was an "opponent of al-Ẓawāhirī" during this time (Schulze: *Internationalismus*, 91 note 244), is at least to be qualified in this respect; see also the following note. Al-Khiḍr Ḥusayn kept this post until the end of July 1933; the journal itself acquired the name *Majallat al-Azhar* only in 1936; on the Azhar journal in general cf. Smith: *Islam in Modern History*, 122–60; Ḥasan Qarūn: "Majallat al-Azhar wa-l-Islām fī l-tārīkh al-ḥadīth", *MA* 48/10 (Dec. 1976), 1683–86; already at the beginning of the twentieth century an apparently rather short-lived attempt was made to edit a regular organ on behalf of the Azhar: *al-Muqtabas* 2/5 (Jun. 1907), 296; *MA* 33/1 (Jun. 1961), 58–62; dī Ṭarrāzī: *Tārīkh al-ṣiḥāfa*, III/77.

[10] al-Ṣaʿīdī: *Tārīkh al-iṣlāḥ*, 8–12, esp. 10 and 11; al-Ṣaʿīdī places him explicitly in opposition to al-Afghānī, ʿAbduh, or al-Marāghī.

reform experiments, which were opposed by the majority of the Azhar-*ʿulamāʾ*, were to be expected both because of his age as well as his intellectual development. Thereby a pacification of the Azhar would be achieved and assent to of the post-revolutionary political course easily secured.[11]

After al-Khiḍr Ḥusayn's retirement at the beginning of January 1954, for which both health reasons[12] and a quarrel with the government[13] have been postulated, the nomination of ʿAbd al-Raḥmān Tāj as his successor continued this line of policy. Being the first Azhar Rector to be approved by a decision of the Council of Ministers,[14] he, too, did not advance any significant reform initiatives that might have caused unrest at the University and hence would have represented a potential danger for the government. This meant that Tāj also became the object of unbridled criticism from the ranks of the reform supporters,[15] but nevertheless, this procedure paid off for the regime. During the bloody settling of accounts with the Muslim Brotherhood that reached its climax after an unsuccessful assassination attempt on ʿAbd al-Nāṣir on October 26, 1954,[16] the Azhar scholars duti-

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[11] In this context, al-Khiḍr Ḥusayn's biographer, Muḥammad Muwāʿada, speaks rather euphemistically of the "small number of relevant sources regarding this period", which make it somewhat hard to recognize clearly all of the reasons and circumstances surrounding Ḥusayn's appointment as Rector (*Muḥammad al-Khiḍr Ḥusayn*, 124). Also Muḥammad al-Bahayy, an otherwise perfectly eloquent author, prefers to be remarkably taciturn in his autobiography when dealing with this era (*Ḥayātī fī riḥāb al-Azhar*, 62–64), but he refers in passing to "regional bloc building" (*takattulāt iqlīmiyya*) within the Azhar that al-Marāghī, ʿAbd al-Rāziq, and Salīm allegedly had to contend with (ibid., 77). It can be stated generally that events within the Azhar as well as the institution's relationship to politics in the years 1952–1958 are likewise only peripheral issues in the secondary literature; see Lemke: *Šaltūt*, 158–63; Crecelius: "Al-Azhar in the Revolution", 34–37.

[12] According to the version of Muwāʿada: *Muḥammad al-Khiḍr Ḥusayn*, 126.

[13] al-Ṣaʿīdī: *Tārīkh al-iṣlāḥ*, II/11f.

[14] Ibid., II/12; regarding Tāj (1896–1975), who, among other places, studied at the Sorbonne and received his Ph.D. there, see ʿAbd al-ʿAẓīm: *Mashyakhat al-Azhar*, II/165–78; *MA* 25/5 (Jan. 1954), before p. 513; *OM* 34/1954/17; obituary in *MA* 47/5 (Jun. 1975), 621f.; Abū Bakr ʿAbd al-Rāziq: *al-Shaykh ʿAbd al-Raḥmān Tāj wa-buḥūth qurʾāniyya wa-lughawiyya*, Cairo 1990.

[15] al-Ṣaʿīdī: *Tārīkh al-iṣlāḥ*, II/12–20, esp. 13 and 15; in an article for the *ʿIrfān*, Muḥammad ʿAbd al-Munʿim al-Khafājī blamed the Azhar for reactionary laws and a dubious disregard of the youth: *al-ʿIrfān* 44/1 (Oct. 1956), 21–26, on 25; see also al-Ghazzālī: *Ẓalām min al-gharb*, 249; cf. J. Krämer: "Die Azhar-Universität in Kairo und ihre heutige geistige Bedeutung", *Zeitschrift für Religions- und Geistesgeschichte* 10/1958/364–85, esp. 380ff.

[16] The background for and process of this quarrel are meticulously described in Mitchell: *Society*, 125–62.

fully condemned the Brotherhood's behaviour as *fitna* and stood shoulder to shoulder on the side of the powers-that-be.[17]

Now resting on a firm foundation of power, in the following years the government proceeded unhindered in heeding the calls for reform at the Azhar that became increasingly loud, primarily from outside the University. Indeed by reshaping the institution in ways that conformed to the concepts of the regime, it became possible to vitiate the independence of the *ʿulamā*"s position on the whole. ʿAbd al-Raḥmān Tāj, who remained languid as Rector, was allowed to give his blessings to the first preliminary steps in this direction, which included the abolition of the *sharīʿa* courts in 1956 and the nationalization of the pious endowments (*awqāf khayriyyah*) a year later. For the enforcement of the comprehensive reorganization of the Azhar itself in 1961, ʿAbd al-Nāṣir appointed the well-known reform theologian Maḥmūd Shaltūt as *Shaykh al-Azhar* in 1958.

At first glance all these events did not have much to do with the question of rapprochement between the Islamic denominations, but this should not be taken to mean that the *taqrīb* discussion was not influenced by them. On the contrary, almost every single decision had a more or less direct effect on the debate's further progress. Even assuming that the results were initially rather of an accidental nature or at least not directly intended, it was only a matter of a few years before the Egyptian government began to recognize the value of Islamic ecumenism for its foreign policy.

The inter-confessional rapprochement, and the fate of the JT that was inextricably bound to it, became a political football following the July 1952 Revolution. Originally merely a passive object of political manoeuvring, the association later attempted to intervene as an active agent in the course of events. Both, however, were to prove equally fatal for the institutionalized form of the ecumene. In the first years free reign for polemic against the JT was unleashed, and in the second stage the association inevitably placed its destiny in the hands of a government that did not act on the basis of theological or religious-legal regards, but instead was motivated by considerations of power. The result was that after a spectacular but brief ascent into the clouds, the alliance suffered an abrupt abasement.

ʿAbd al-Majīd Salīm was again replaced as *Shaykh al-Azhar* in autumn 1952, which represented a major setback for the JT, since

[17] Ibid., 153.

he was the organization's Vice-President. There are only vague reports about the circumstances surrounding his dismissal, but it may be safely presumed that it did not relate to his having come out in favour of ecumenism. Actually it was apparently connected to a long-smouldering conflict with the Azhar scholar ʿAbd al-Laṭīf Darāz. The latter was also among the active authors of the JT during the early years, contributing five items for the *RI* between 1949 and 1951. This, however, did not hinder Salīm from demanding his dismissal from the University.

Whether Salīm was ordered into retirement by the Minister responsible for the Azhar, Fatḥī Riḍwān,[18] or whether he stepped down voluntarily because of his annoyance at the non-fulfilment of his request,[19] Riḍwān even attempting to persuade him to reconsider his decision,[20] cannot be ascertained definitively from the contemporary reports of the incident. It is, though, hardly unseemly to presume that the revolutionary government took advantage of the first occasion available to dismiss an Azhar Rector who was both prominent and self-willed, and who, at the end of his first term of office one year previously, had not shied away from confrontation with the political power holders. ʿAbd al-Laṭīf Darāz, who also acted as a member of the *Jamʿiyyat al-shubbān al-muslimīn*,[21] was immediately promoted and held one of the two newly created deputy posts under Muḥammad al-Khiḍr Ḥusayn.

Salīm's successor, on the other hand, never manifested himself in the realm of the inner-Islamic ecumene. Al-Khiḍr Ḥusayn's meeting with ʿAbd al-Karīm al-Zanjānī during the latter's Cairo visit in 1936 was the lone exception and did not lead to any type of commitment to the JT's cause. Immediately after his assumption of the Rectorate, Ḥusayn did, in fact, turn to the public in the Azhar journal with a call to convene an international Islamic conference in Cairo invoking comprehensive Islamic solidarity and cooperation. Yet he did so without displaying interest in Shiism or making any allusion whatsoever to the possibility of an inner-Islamic theological rapprochement.[22] Actually such an undertaking at this point in time (February

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[18] al-Bahayy: *Ḥayātī fī riḥāb al-Azhar*, 61.

[19] al-Ṣaʿīdī: *Tārīkh al-iṣlāḥ*, II/8.

[20] ʿAbd al-ʿAẓīm: *Mashyakhat al-Azhar*, II/109; Qurrāʿa: *Tārīkh al-Azhar*, 335, circumvents the issue by succinctly observing that the resignation took place after a good deal of wrangling (*baʿd akhdh wa-radd wa-maṭālib*).

[21] *MA* 32/2 (Jul. 1960), 232.

[22] *MA* 24/6 (Feb. 1953), 748–51.

1953) would have been quite surprising because in the meantime control of the journalistic voice of the University had passed into the hands of a man who was anything but indifferent to advances of this kind. Indeed he battled against them vehemently and indefatigably with every means at his disposal: Muḥibb al-Dīn al-Khaṭīb.

Muḥibb al-Dīn al-Khaṭīb and the Azhar journal

Like al-Khiḍr Ḥusayn, al-Khaṭīb[23] was not a native Egyptian, but he had already lived in Cairo for a very long time. Born in 1886 in Damascus, he was a member of the circle around the Ḥanbalī *shaykh* Ṭāhir al-Jazā'irī from which Muḥammad Kurd ʿAlī had also come.[24] Al-Khaṭīb's association with these two scholars brought him into early contact with the currents of Arab nationalism, just then in their formative era. In December 1906 he participated in the foundation of a secret society by the name of *Jamʿiyyat al-nahḍa al-ʿarabiyya*.[25]

In 1920 Muḥibb al-Dīn al-Khaṭīb took up permanent residence in Cairo, where he soon made a name for himself as a publicist. Like Muḥammad Rashīd Riḍā and Shakīb Arslān, he changed allegiances in the dispute between the Hashemite Sharīf of Mecca and the Wahhabis, who were on the advance at the time. During the First World War he was on the side of the former, among other things as editor of the Mecca-based newspaper *al-Qibla*, Sharīf Ḥusayn's mouthpiece.[26] From the 1920s, however, he became one of the most resolute advocates of the pro-Wahhabi neo-Salafiyya. Given his educational background, which had brought him in his youth under the influence of the writings of Ibn Taymiyya, this re-direction is not likely to have presented any great intellectual venture for him.

In Egypt he was engaged in two ways for neo-Salafi ideals. On the one hand, he was involved in some of their organizations, which

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[23] Regarding him (1886–1969/70), see al-Ziriklī V/282; *MDA* III/1139–42; *MMS* 169f.; Kaḥḥāla *M*/576f.; Ende: *Arabische Nation*, 91–110, and the literature mentioned therein; obituary in *MA* 41/10 (Feb. 1970), 776–79.

[24] Ende: *Arabische Nation*, 91f.; concerning al-Jazā'irī (1851/52–1920), see ibid., 59–63; Hermann: *Kulturkrise*, 16–39; Commins: *Islamic Reform*, 89ff.; J.H. Escovitz: "'He was the Muḥammad 'Abduh of Syria'. A Study of Ṭāhir al-Jazā'irī and his Influence", *IJMES* 18/1986/293–310.

[25] Hermann: *Kulturkrise*, 98–103; Tauber: *The Emergence of the Arab Movements*, 43–50.

[26] Cf. L. Bouvat: "'Al-Kibla', journal arabe de la Mecque", *RMM* 34/1917–18/320–28; Teitelbaum: *The Rise and Fall*, 106, 192f.

were just in the process of being formed. Foremost among these was the *Jamʿiyyat al-shubbān al-muslimīn*, which he, together with ʿAbd al-Ḥamīd Saʿīd and ʿAbd al-ʿAzīz Jāwīsh, created in 1927.[27] The founder of the Muslim Brotherhood, Ḥasan al-Bannā, may be designated as an intellectual disciple of al-Khaṭīb's, as was the case for numerous other Muslim Brothers.[28] Al-Khaṭīb was also very active as a commentator, journalist, editor, and publisher of his own periodicals, *al-Zahrāʾ* (1924–1929) and *al-Fatḥ* (1926–1948).[29] Finally, he produced editions of classical Arabic works and, as the owner of the *Salafiyya* printery (*al-maṭbaʿa al-salafiyya*), brought out not only his own books but also the writings of other authors close to the neo-Salafiyya.

There were two basic convictions that pervaded al-Khaṭīb's thinking and ultimately caused his all-consuming aversion to Shiism. Unquestionably the more important of these was the avowal of the virtue and piety of *all* of the Prophet's companions.[30] This led to his becoming an unconditional apologist of the Umayyads, in particular Muʿāwiya and his son Yazīd, to a degree even stronger than Muḥammad Kurd ʿAlī. His principal aim, therefore, was the rehabilitation not only of this particular dynasty but also and without exception of all those figures from the earliest period of Islamic history, who are judged by Shiite authors in an extremely negative light, since they are blamed for the obstruction of ʿAlī's claims to power. By this interpretation of early Islamic history bound exclusively to the status quo, al-Khaṭīb assumed an attitude that automatically brought him in direct opposition to Shiism. Whether he named the Shiites *expressis verbis* in his treatment of the *ṣaḥāba* or not made no difference; in his eyes, it was inevitably they whose endeavours were always directed towards the destruction of the Golden Age he so glorified.[31]

The second pillar of his conception of history was a strong pan-

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[27] Cf. above, p. 123 note 9.

[28] Mitchell: *Society*, 5–8, 322f.

[29] Regarding *al-Fatḥ*, see al-Gundī: *Tārīkh al-ṣiḥāfa al-islāmiyya II: al-Fatḥ*, passim; on its initial phase cf. Mayeur-Jaouen: "Les débuts", passim; besides, al-Khaṭīb was the editor of the first important publication of the Muslim Brotherhood, the *Majallat al-ikhwān al-muslimīn* that first appeared in May 1933; see Mitchell: *Society*, 185.

[30] Ende: *Arabische Nation*, 91.

[31] Cf. al-Khaṭīb's comments in his prefaces to al-Ālūsī: *Mukhtaṣar al-tuḥfa al-ithnā ʿashariyya*, pp. *j*ff. and to al-Dhahabī's summary of Ibn Taymiyya's *Minhāj al-sunna*, 3ff.; also the publication *Ḥamalat risālat al-awwalūn*, which appeared independently, is exclusively devoted to the defence of the Prophet's contemporaries.

Arab nationalism that ascribed to the Arabs the historical merit of having made the appearance of the Islam possible in the first place and promoting its expansion.[32] From this perspective Shiism logically appeared to him as a deviation from the proper path of Islam shaped in the Persian environment. When necessary, without differentiation, al-Khaṭīb included the Bābiyya and Bahā'iyya in his criticism, declaring them derivatives of Shiism.[33]

In view of this attitude, al-Khaṭīb's negative judgement right from the outset of the attempts to reach rapprochement and conciliation between Sunnism and Shiism should hardly be surprising. Any initiative in this direction was, in his eyes, completely absurd and would automatically bring about the dissolution of the Sunni identity and of Islam on the whole. Moreover, since the stimulus for the ecumenical dialogue came from the Shiite side, which was in fact the case in almost all the examples illustrated so far, this meant for al-Khaṭīb merely another expression of a repeated endeavour to divide Islam and lead the believers (who for him were always synonymous with the Sunnis) astray through proselytization.

The facets of his rejection vented via his publicist activities were numerous and varied. They ranged from the repetition (and edition) of traditional anti-Shiite diatribes and references to theological authorities of the Middle Ages like Ibn Taymiyya or Ibn Ḥazm[34] to a fairly modern political vocabulary, e.g. when he called Shiism a "fifth column" (*ṭābūr khāmis*) within Islam[35] or when he termed Communism

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[32] Cf. Gershoni: "The Arabization of Islam", who refers to statements by al-Khaṭīb in numerous footnotes; see also Dawn: "The Formation of Pan-Arab Ideology", esp. 80f.; N. Hurvitz: "Muhibb al-Din al-Khatib's Semitic Wave Theory and Pan-Arabism", *MES* 29/1993/118–34; Tauber: *The Emergence of the Arab Movements*, 44–48 and index, s.v.; Muḥammad ʿAbd al-Raḥmān Burj: *Muḥibb al-Dīn al-Khaṭīb wa-dawruhu fī l-ḥaraka al-ʿarabiyya 1906–1920*, Cairo 1990.

[33] al-Khaṭīb: *Dirāsāt ʿan al-bahā'iyya wa-l-bābiyya*, 4f., 28.

[34] Cf. the prefaces quoted above, in note 31, as well as *al-Khuṭūṭ al-ʿarīḍa*, 18; regarding Ibn Ḥazm's (994–1064) writings against Shiism (the best known of which is *al-Faṣl fī l-milal wa-n-niḥal*), cf. I. Friedländer: "Zur Komposition von Ibn Ḥazm's Milal", in: C. Bezold (ed.): *Orientalistische Studien Theodor Nöldeke gewidmet*, Gießen 1906, I/267–77 as well as idem: "The Heterodoxies of the Shiites in the Presentation of Ibn Hazm", *JAOS* 28/1907/1–80 and 29/1908/1–183.

[35] al-Khaṭīb: *al-Khuṭūṭ al-ʿarīḍa*, 28; preface to al-Ālūsī: *Mukhtaṣar al-tuḥfa al-ithnā ʿashariyya*, p. *w*; in the same sense, one of al-Khaṭīb's staunchest opponents, Abū Muḥammad al-Khāqānī, used this expression when he protested against al-Khaṭīb in a letter to the Saudi Arabian King Fayṣal: *Maʿa al-khuṭūṭ al-ʿarīḍa*, 10; see also Ende: *Arabische Nation*, 119f.

a descendant of Shiism.[36] He did not even shy from referring to European Orientalists like Theodor Nöldeke or Garcin de Tassy if their investigations happened to suit his own argumentation.[37]

The target of his attacks was both classical and modern Shiism. As with all polemicists regardless of stamp, he disregarded historical and content-related differences alike and on principle summarized any dissociation by contemporary Shiite scholars from classical positions or from the doctrines of extreme Shiite groupings (*ghulāt*) as being manifestations of *taqiyya*.[38] Consequently it presented him no problem at all to cite classical Shiite sources (and pour furious insults on their authors) in order to "refute" the opinions of modern Shiites.

For al-Khaṭīb the very foundation of the *taqrīb* organization was adequate proof of the propaganda aims of the Shiite *ʿulamāʾ*, and the fact that the JT had planted its headquarters in Cairo rather than in a Shiite city in Iran was a constant thorn in his flesh. Hence it must have been all the more infuriating to him that in the person of Ḥasan al-Bannā, the most famous and influential of his disciples made his approval of rapprochement between Sunnis and Shiites known and even participated in the JT's sessions.

How much this step hurt him is shown in his article "The Straight and Not-so-straight Talk Concerning the Fairy Tale of Rapprochement among the Legal Schools".[39] Appearing in October 1948 in the weekly journal *al-Fatḥ* that he himself put out, it voiced in public for the first time al-Khaṭīb's opposition to the JT. At the beginning, he explained the reason that had induced him to write his essay and thereby again elucidated the rift between al-Bannā's organization and him over this question: A member of the Muslim Brotherhood had inquired of the group's journal, *Majallat al-ikhwān al-muslimīn*,[40] about the Brethren's view of *taqrīb* now that on the one hand al-Bannā had joined the association whereas al-Khaṭīb, on the other, had come

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[36] al-Khaṭīb: *al-Khuṭūṭ al-ʿarīḍa*, 22f., 43f.; especially at the end of the 1950s, the pun *shīʿī-shuyūʿī* was quite popular with some anti-Shiite polemicists; cf. Naef: "*Shīʿī-Shuyūʿī*", passim.

[37] al-Khaṭīb: *al-Khuṭūṭ al-ʿarīḍa*, 13; cf. also Brunner: *Die Schia und die Koranfälschung*, 95f.

[38] For example in his preface to al-Ālūsī: *Mukhtaṣar al-tuḥfa al-ithnā ʿashariyya*, p. *d*.

[39] "Kalām ṣarīḥ wa-kalām mubham ḥawl khurāfat al-taqrīb bayn al-madhāhib", *al-Fatḥ* 18/1948/862/3–6.

[40] Concerning the newspapers and magazines of the Muslim Brotherhood, see Mitchell: *Society*, 185–87.

out with critical comments. The editors notified the questioner that al-Khaṭīb indeed regarded rapprochement of the legal schools as impossible, but that he considered cooperation for mutual benefit conceivable. For its part, the Muslim Brotherhood, in this same spirit, worked to reduce the divisive factors as much as possible in order to promote this type of cooperation.

Al-Khaṭīb, however, brusquely rejected the journal editors' interpretation and justified in detail his conviction according to which any type of rapprochement whatsoever with the Shiites remained absolutely impossible on the grounds that Sunnism and Shiism are based on different religious principles (*uṣūl al-dīn*). With the aid of numerous older Shiite works, he proceeded to present a detailed repudiation of the Shiites' beliefs concerning the Prophet's companions, the doctrine of the Imamate in general, as well as the belief in the Imams' sinlessness and in the Mahdī in particular.

Finally, he turned his attention to the "club" (*nādī*) established in Cairo by the "smart young lad" Moḥammad Taqī Qommī, which the latter had named *Dār al-takhrīb bayn al-madhāhib*.[41] Nothing could express al-Khaṭīb's disdain for the ecumenical movement more vividly than this pun on the terms *taqrīb* (rapprochement) and *takhrīb* (destruction), an adequate English translation of which could perhaps be "The House of Reproach to the Legal Schools". The organization's goal, backed by ample finances (an allusion to what al-Khaṭīb presumed was Qommī's proximity to the Shah) was the spread of propaganda designed to attract Sunnis to the heresy that he had been expatiating on.

Al-Khaṭīb also was not very circumspect about his opinion of the above-mentioned approach taken by the Muslim Brotherhood, although he avoided addressing the organization directly.

> I say with absolute clarity: rapprochement between the legal schools, which are based on two so divergent foundations, is impossible (or: absurd, preposterous—*mustaḥīl*). They must be joking when they talk about 'reducing at least in part the dividing factors as much as possible', and when they say 'the fewer the number of differences of opinion, the more cooperation becomes possible'![42]

The *taqrīb* society that claimed the same authority to modify Islamic belief as the Pope possessed in Catholicism had to disappear from

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[41] *al-Fatḥ*, 5.
[42] Ibid., 6.

Cairo and be established instead in Tehran, Isfahan, Qom or Zanjān. Only when the Shiites changed their point of view concerning the *ṣaḥāba* and let go of their doctrine of the sinlessness of the Imams, al-Khaṭīb summarized unequivocally, could rapprochement become possible.[43]

With this, al-Khaṭīb echoed the essence of a tune frequently heard at the time (and which reverberates until the present) from apologists in both camps who viewed the ecumenical idea rather sceptically. It focuses on the mutual blame of merely pretending to aim at confessional reconciliation by means of a dialogue, the true nature of which, however, was propagandistic and actually an attempt to force the respective group's own convictions onto the rest of the Muslims. This accusation is usually accompanied by the mirror-image declaration by these writers to be absolutely in favour of rapprochement, but only after the others finally abandon their fantasies and return to the fold of "true Islam", which the respective group *per definitionem* epitomized.[44]

Al-Khaṭīb's polemic against the JT is indeed interesting from yet another angle. Without much ado, he managed to reduce the *taqrīb* organization exclusively to Shiism and even to the person of Moḥammad Taqī Qommī. The Azhar on the other hand and especially those of its *'ulamā'* who were concerned about rapprochement, without whose backing Qommī's initiative would hardly have gained a hearing, were not allocated a single syllable in this context, although this circumstance could scarcely have escaped al-Khaṭīb.

It may safely be assumed that the reason for his eloquent silence was a desire to avoid a quarrel with the most powerful Islamic institution of Egypt. Primarily, however, it was probably also a proactive measure to obviate any circumstance under which his readers might get the impression that this ecumenism with the Shia, which

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[43] Ibid.; in the preface to his edition of ʿAbdallāh al-Suwaydī's report about the conference of Najaf in 1743, which appeared shortly before, he had justified his criticism with the same two points; *Muʾtamar al-Najaf*, 50–53.

[44] al-Khaṭīb was not the only one who argued in this way: likewise Muḥammad Zāhid al-Kawtharī, a theologian of Circassian origin who taught in Damascus (1879–1952; see al-Ziriklī VI/129; Kaḥḥāla X/4f.; *MDA* III/1093–97), demanded that the Shia, in internal conferences, would first have to establish the requirements for a dialogue, by which he primarily meant abandoning the four canonical *ḥadīth* works (the so-called *al-kutub al-arbaʿa*) which are of fundamental importance for Shiism. As long as this was not the case, the actions of an individual (an allusion to Qommī?) could never be successful; see al-Kawtharī: *Maqālāt al-Kawtharī*, 215f.

he had so categorically condemned, might have been initiated with the knowledge let alone the approval of the Azhar. Any admission to the contrary would have unquestionably blunted his polemic and might have even rebounded against him, since one could hardly charge the Azhar with being in league with putative heretics who wanted to ruin Islam.

On the other hand, the fact that no voice from within the Azhar was publicly raised to the defence of the *taqrīb* society sheds revealing light on the position the ecumenical idea occupied at the time among the majority of the *'ulamā'*. Even the participation of Muṣṭafā ʿAbd al-Rāziq and ʿAbd al-Majīd Salīm in the JT, two of the highest representatives of the scholarly hierarchy, obviously left no deep impression on most of their colleagues.

Muḥibb al-Dīn al-Khaṭīb's appointment as editor in chief of the Azhar journal in October 1952 confirmed the suspicion that Salīm's attempt to put the JT under the protection of the Azhar during his Rectorate was only a veneer. To all intents and purposes it peeled away as soon as Salīm was relieved from office.[45] Al-Khaṭīb's installation, which probably occurred at the instigation of al-Khiḍr Ḥusayn, with whom he shared a common past in the *Ǧamʿiyyat al-shubbān al-muslimīn*,[46] appears to have taken everyone by surprise since only a month previously his predecessor, Aḥmad Ḥasan al-Zayyāt, had been the object of almost effusive praise.[47] With this step, the new Azhar leadership acquiesced in its endorsement of his anti-Shiite invectives, thus openly and directly disavowing Salīm's efforts toward rapprochement.

The new position provided al-Khaṭīb incomparably better opportunities to deliver his articles to the Islamic public than ever before. All of a sudden his comments no longer appeared in relatively small neo-Salafi organs that had only a limited readership but in the official periodical of the Sunni world's most renowned university. He availed

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[45] Cf. his first editorial after assuming office, "Risālat al-Azhar fī l-ʿahd al-jadīd", a settlement of accounts with the old regime, combined with a word of praise for the revolution, in *MA* 24/2 (Oct. 1952), 137–40.

[46] G. Kampffmeyer: "Egypt and Western Asia", in: H.A.R. Gibb (ed.): *Whither Islam?*, London 1932, 99–170, on 105f. counts a dozen leading members of this neo-Salafi organization; cf. also al-Bayyūmī: *al-Nahḍa al-islāmiyya*, II/327.

[47] ʿAbdallāh Amīn in *MA* 24/1 (Sep. 1952), 102–05, esp. 102; al-Zayyāt, editor of the journal *al-Risāla* since 1933, had only ascended to this office in May 1952; see also Lemke: *Šaltūt*, 165f.

himself wholeheartedly of this befalling, immediately and over the succeeding years, and made the journal the most important forum for opponents of the ecumenical dialogue. Within a few months the outward impression arose that the Azhar had been transformed from a *taqrīb* stronghold into a bastion of anti-Shiite polemic.

It was only a month after al-Khaṭīb's investiture that he initiated the *volte-face* with an article concerning the transmission of *ḥadīth*s. His main interest did not focus on Shiism, but the basic thesis that the Sunnis, in contrast to all other groupings (*firaq*), also accepted *ḥadīth*s whose sources did not belong to the same legal school and did not even adhere to the Sunni rite was obviously directed against the Shiite emphasis on the Imam *ḥadīth*s. Likewise the repeatedly mentioned asseveration that the Sunni tolerance encompassed all of the transmitters as long as they met the criteria of honesty, maturity and judgement was a clear condemnation of the Shiite point of view that denies recognition to a considerable number of the Prophet's companions.[48]

Al-Khaṭīb did not linger long on such preliminaries and in the same issue penned a frontal assault on the JT and its journal. What precipitated it was a piece about the question of *ijtihād* by Muḥammad Jawād Mughniyya that had been published shortly before in the *RI*.[49] The latter had pleaded for the compatibility of belief and reason and in doing so, with reference to the Iranian scholar Moḥammad Ḥasan Āshtīyānī,[50] had had the audacity to claim that it was not incumbent on the individual believer to follow the word of the Prophet in questions not related to religion with the same submissiveness as regarding his pronouncements concerning belief.[51] Āshtīyānī's dictum, which Mughniyya adopted in the form of a direct quotation, was actually relatively easy to assail because, among other things, he mentioned the way Heaven and Earth had been created as an example of the non-religious domains.

Thus it was a simple matter for al-Khaṭīb to accuse Mughniyya (whom, following the custom of the polemicists, he avoided identifying by name) of a malicious assault on Muhammad's infallibility and his

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[48] al-Khaṭīb: "Tasāmuḥ ahl al-sunna fī l-riwāya ʿamman yukhālifūnahum fī l-ʿaqīda", *MA* 24/3 (Nov. 1952), 306–12.

[49] "Min ijtihādāt al-shīʿa al-imāmiyya", *RI* 4/1952/366–70.

[50] Died in 1901; see *ṬASh* I.1/389ff.; *Dharīʿa* III/44 (no. 98); *EIr* II/849f. (H. Algar).

[51] *"Lā yajib al-tadayyun bi-qawl al-rasūl fī ghayr al-umūr al-dīniyya"*, *RI*, loc. cit., 369f.

knowledge of the concealed. Alluding sarcastically to the disappearance of the Mahdī, he added that it was really quite strange for people who so bluntly affronted the *ʿiṣma* of the Prophet to preach simultaneously about a child "who had gone into the basement a thousand years ago".[52] Since the *RI* had not distanced itself unambiguously enough from Mughniyya's comments in his opinion,[53] al-Khaṭīb added coal to the fire and wrote a further essay on this topic in which he reconfirmed his basic rejection of any type of *taqrīb* activity.[54]

He was perceptibly gratified by the fact that Mughniyya's citation of Āshtīyānī had not earned the latter the undivided approval of the Shiite side either; he even had to accept clear censure from Nizār al-Zayn in the *ʿIrfān*,[55] which al-Khaṭīb praised immediately and quoted verbatim.[56] Al-Zayn contended that "this Āshtīyānī and his works" were virtually unknown to the Shiites and that neither his nor Mughniyya's statements were of any consequence for Shiism. While under other circumstances al-Khaṭīb would have probably dismissed these sentences as *taqiyya* (especially if combined with a call for rapprochement), he now suddenly promoted al-Zayn to the position of witness for the prosecution against the JT.

The reserve vis-à-vis the *taqrīb* union that the al-Zayns, both father and son, had revealed obviously did not escape al-Khaṭīb, and just

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[52] "Qāṣimatān khabīthatān fī majallat Dār al-taqrīb", *MA* 24/3 (Nov. 1952), 329f. (quotation 330); the second "attack" mentioned in the title referred to an article by Maḥmūd al-Labābīdī (1910–1973, see *MMS* 457) that appeared in the same fascicle of the *RI*, which dealt with the relationship between religion and politics in Islam, *RI* 4/1952/376–402.

[53] An expression of mild reprimand was contained in Muḥammad Yūsuf Mūsā's article "Fī sabīl al-qurʾān wa-l-sunna" in *RI* 5/1953/79–85, esp. 83ff.; in a comment (ibid., 85f.) the editorial staff defended Mughniyya's essay as a legitimate expression of opinion; although in fact the opinion was not one they shared, they did not consider it necessary to apologize. The journal also referred to Muḥammad Rashīd Riḍā, who in his periodical *al-Manār* also let authors whose opinions did not conform with his have their say.

[54] "Ṣadā qāṣimatay majallat Dār al-taqrīb", *MA* 24/6 (Feb. 1953), 694–700, esp. 699f.

[55] *al-ʿIrfān* 40/2 (Dec. 1952), 228; also *al-ʿIrfān* 40/8 (Jun. 1953), 937–40; Mughniyya defended himself in *al-ʿIrfān* 40/10 (Aug. 1953), 1134–36; it was not the first time that he had faced disapproval from this side: in 1950 he had received retorts from Aḥmad Riḍā and Moḥammad Taqī Qommī regarding an article with the flippant title "The Shiites' Koran Number Two", in which he dealt with the pious literature of Shiite theologians in general; regarding this, see *al-ʿIrfān* 37/5 (May 1950), 521–23 (Mughniyya); 37/6 (Jun. 1950), 692 (Riḍā); 37/7 (Jul. 1950), 819f. (Mughniyya), as well as ibid., 829 (Qommī).

[56] *MA* 24/6 (Feb. 1953), 697.

as he had interpreted Muḥsin al-Amīn's silence regarding the JT a few years earlier as a sign of criticism, he now once again set about representing the Shiite *taqrīb* proponents as controversial and isolated even within their own denomination.

Al-Khaṭīb's quarrel with the inner-Islamic ecumene was not restricted to items aimed specifically at the JT. In his writings on historical subjects, too, he occasionally placed digs at contemporary Shiites, who in his view had not moved one iota from their former positions.[57]

The reminder to remain constantly awake was also the goal of his ongoing activity in the editing of older polemic literature. His position as editor in chief of the *MA* opened completely new opportunities to him in this area as well, since he no longer had to be content with merely providing the works with a preface and somewhat extensive annotations and then publishing them in his *Salafiyya* printery. In addition, and immediately following the books' appearance, he now usually composed lengthy, positive reviews and had them appear in the Azhar journal, of which he just happened to be editor in chief.

The vehemently anti-Shiite book *Mukhtaṣar al-tuḥfa al-ithnā ʿashariyya* by the Iraqi Ḥanbali scholar Maḥmūd Shukrī al-Ālūsī deserves special mention here. Its author, like al-Khaṭīb, had maintained a relationship to the circle around Ṭāhir al-Jazā'irī.[58] The formulation chosen in al-Khaṭīb's review of the work, that in it the belief convictions of Shiism would be contrasted with those of the Muslims (!), displays yet again his contemptuous opinion of the Shiites. Further examples of al-Khaṭīb's dual role as both editor and reviewer were the announcements of Abū Bakr b. al-ʿArabī's *al-ʿAwāṣim min al-qawāṣim*[59] and al-Ḥāfiẓ Muḥammad b. ʿUthmān al-Dhahabī's *al-Muntaqā min minhāj*

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[57] Cf. for example *MA* 25/5 (Jan. 1954), 612–31 (concerning the Fāṭimids; primarily 614 note 4 and 617 note 1); *MA* 26/11–12 (Feb. 1955), 659–68 and 26/13–14 (Mar. 1955), 775–86 (about the Bahā'īs).

[58] *MA* 25/3 (Nov. 1953), 370–72; regarding al-Ālūsī (1857–1924), see al-Ziriklī VII/172f. as well as the literature cited in Ende: *Arabische Nation*, 62f.; H. Fattah: "'Wahhabi' Influences, Salafi Responses. Shaikh Mahmud Shukri and the Iraqi Salafi Movement, 1745–1930", *Journal of Islamic Studies* 14/2003/127–48; the book is an abbreviated Arabic version of the originally Persian work *al-Tuḥfa al-ithnā ʿashariyya* by the Indian scholar Shāh ʿAbd al-ʿAzīz al-Dihlawī (1746–1824; see *EI*[2] I/59; al-Ziriklī IV/14f. as well as al-Ḥasanī: *Nuzhat al-khawāṭir*, VII/ 275–83); see also al-Mallāḥ: *al-Ārā' al-ṣarīḥa*, 45–56.

[59] *MA* 24/2 (Oct. 1952), 244–46; the book first appeared in Cairo in 1371/1952 and was reprinted in Jeddah in 1967; concerning Ibn al-ʿArabī (d. 1148), see *EI*[2] III/707 (J. Robson) and *GAL* SI/632f. and 663.

al-iʿtidāl. The latter was a summary of the famous polemic *Minhāj al-sunna*, which Ibn Taymiyya had directed against al-ʿAllāma al-Ḥillī.[60]

Through Muḥibb al-Dīn al-Khaṭīb's efforts as editor in chief, the Azhar journal was transformed into a platform for anti-Shiite polemic and offered other authors the opportunity to take part in this design. The rare articles that called for unity and understanding were held in the broadest terms, and their authors made a visible effort to avoid being drawn into a compromising connection with the ecumenical discussion. Neither Shiism nor even the *taqrīb* organization ever received mention in them.[61]

On the other side, much more clearly heard were the voices of those who were irreconcilably opposed to Shiism[62] and who turned back criticism coming from outside by arguing that the most noble duties of Muslims were to maintain the integrity of the *sharīʿa*, to ensure the cultivation of the Arabic language,[63] and ultimately to further the "mission of Islam" (*risālat al-islām*). It did not demand any great fantasy on the readers' part to recognize in this last-mentioned expression an allusion to the journal of the JT, which was thereby implicitly denied any authority whatsoever to act in the name of Islam.[64] There was no intimation of any kind in these pronouncements that ecumenical dialogue was among the Azhar's concerns.

At times the authors' invective outran their expertise. Instances such as Muḥammad ʿAlī al-Najjār's calling the eleventh Imam, al-Ḥasan al-ʿAskarī, the last Shiite Imam may have led Muḥammad

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[60] *MA* 26/17–18 (May 1955), 1045f.; regarding al-Dhahabī (1274–1348), see *EI*[2] II/214–16 (M. Ben Cheneb/J. de Somogyi); *GAL* II/57–60 and SII/45–47; cf. also Muḥammad Rashād Sālim's introduction to Ibn Taymiyya's *Minhāj al-sunna*, Beirut 1962, esp. 50–59; further reviews in the *MA* of books put out by the *Salafiyya* printery that appeared while al-Khaṭīb was editor in chief are in 27/2 (Sep. 1955), 214; 27/5 (Dec. 1955), 575f. and 30/3 (Sep. 1958), 296; see also *MA* 27/7 (Feb. 1956), 816f. (a discussion of al-Khaṭīb's books *Maʿa al-raʿīl al-awwal* and *al-Bahāʾiyya*).

[61] Cf. ʿAbd al-Ḥamīd Maḥmūd al-Maslūt: "Waḥdat al-umam sabīluhā ilā l-naṣr", *MA* 24/6 (Feb. 1953), 729–31; ʿAbbās Ṭāhā's piece featured the term *taqrīb* in its title but did not deal with the topic: "Uṣūl al-islām wa-l-taqrīb bayn al-umam washarāʾiʿuhā al-mukhtalifa", *MA* 27/8 (Mar. 1956), 864–68.

[62] For example Maḥmūd al-Nawāwī: *Niẓām al-islām al-siyāsī*, *MA* 24/3 (Nov. 1952), 288–95 (a critical analysis of al-Labābīdī's *RI* article; see above, note 52); Muḥammad Fatḥī Muḥammad ʿUthmān: "Dawlat al-islām bayn al-dīn wa-l-siyāsa", *MA* 25/2 (Oct. 1953), 162–68 and 25/3 (Nov. 1953), 281–86; cf. also *MA* 25/6 (Feb. 1954), 729–32 and 25/9 (May 1954), 1082f. (both criticisms of the Iraqi Shia).

[63] Abū l-Wafā al-Marāghī in *MA* 27/1 (Aug. 1955), 22–24; cf. Riyāḍ Hilāl in *MA* 25/8 (Apr. 1954), 968f., who defended the Azhar against reproaches of unnamed origin that the institution had deviated from true belief.

[64] Muḥammad Muḥammad Abū Shuhba in *MA* 26/8 (Dec. 1954), 457–60, on 457.

al-Ghazzālī to criticize the knowledge of many Azharīs about Shiism.[65] By contrast, moderate Sunni voices were few and far between. One example was the State Muftī of Egypt, Ḥasanayn Muḥammad Makhlūf, who as a matter of course honoured the Zaydis and Twelver Shiites with the term *madhhab* and thus placed them on par with the Sunni legal schools.[66] Even these rare cases, though, proved contentious: Abū l-Wafā al-Marāghī rebuked Makhlūf with the claim that only an institution that added to the society's welfare and did not offend against generally recognized virtues and convictions could earn the designation *madhhab*. It seems reasonable to suppose that Shiism did not fulfil these criteria in his eyes.[67]

From March 1954 another obdurate opponent of compromise with Shiism, ʿAbd al-Laṭīf al-Subkī, joined al-Khaṭīb as director of the editorial staff.[68] The appointment of this Ḥanbali scholar from the ranks of the *Hay'at kibār al-ʿulamā'* meant that the management of the Azhar journal had now passed completely—and obviously with the blessing of the Rectorate—into the hands of followers of the legal school that regarded Shiism traditionally with far more scepticism than the others.[69] Al-Subkī already had some experience in dealing with the Shia: the book *Tārīkh al-tashrīʿ al-islāmī* that he had co-authored in 1936 was intensely criticized by Muḥammad Jawād Mughniyya because of the views it contained that allegedly promoted sectarianism.[70]

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[65] Muḥammad ʿAlī al-Najjār in *MA* 28/10 (May 1957), 954f.; al-Ghazzālī: *Ẓalām min al-gharb*, 249f.; however, it is not entirely to be excluded that al-Najjār's contention, in which he implicitly denied the existence of the twelfth Imam, was made with intentional malice.

[66] *MA* 26/1 (Aug. 1954), 14–18, esp. 16ff.

[67] "Madhhab wa-madhāhib", *MA* 28/4 (Nov. 1956), 356–58; this dictum, however, did not hinder Murtaḍā al-Raḍawī from including Abū l-Wafā al-Marāghī in his list of scholars who were open to mutual understanding, see *Maʿa rijāl al-fikr*, 48–50.

[68] Regarding him (d. 1969), see the obituaries in *MA* 41/2 (Apr. 1969), 88f., and *Minbar al-Islām* 27/2 (Apr. 1969), 36; al-Khafājī: *al-Azhar fī alf ʿām*, new edition, III/401f.

[69] The "Ḥanbalisation" of the *MA* stood in blatant disproportion to the traditionally small representation of this legal school in the traching at the Azhar itself; Schulze: *Internationalismus*, 40 note 90 states that, for example, in 1901 a mere 0.8 % of the teachers and 0.3 % of the pupils followed the Ḥanbalī rite; see also also the article "al-Azhar", *EI*[1] I/556a and *EI*[2] I/817a; that al-Subkī was a Ḥanbalī was stressed explicitly: *MA* 25/before fasc. 8 (Apr. 1954), 3; he was intermittently president of the *fatwā* commission of the Azhar; cf. Schulze, 432; the Rectors al-Khiḍr Ḥusayn and Tāj followed Ḥanafi practice, as did Salīm and Shaltūt.

[70] *al-ʿIrfān* 40/3 (Jan. 1953), 283–86; the other authors were Muḥammad ʿAlī al-Sāyis and Muḥammad Yūsuf al-Barbarī.

The belated date of the appearance of his comment, in January 1953 (seventeen years after the book's publication), was probably chosen by Mughniyya on purpose because two months previously al-Subkī had publicly criticized the *taqrīb* organization with an attack printed in the *MA*. In it, after having weighed the Bahā'iyya and Baktāshiyya[71] on the balances and having found them both un-Islamic (and in doing so implicitly imputing commonality between Shiism and the Baktāshiyya),[72] he put the JT in the dock for making efforts toward compromise with these sects. Al-Subkī went on to add that he himself had been a member of this group at the beginning, but now, after four years, had come to recognize that theirs was the wrong way.[73] He rejected with particular vehemence the Shiite demand for the instruction of Shiite law in Egypt alongside the Sunni legal schools. This request, as well as what for him was the purely rhetorical question of where the JT actually got the funds it was apparently able to spend so lavishly, was proof enough for al-Subkī of the hidden propaganda aims of the Shiites and the Iranian government.[74]

In view of the icy climate that prevailed in the columns of the Azhar journal since autumn 1952, at least as far as the question of *taqrīb* was concerned, it seems almost amazing that over all those years there was only very limited exchange with the second most notorious anti-Shiite polemicist of the day, the Iraqi publicist Maḥmūd al-Mallāḥ, who has already been mentioned repeatedly.[75] On merely one occasion did the *MA* print an article from the newspaper *al-Sijill* that

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[71] Cf. about the Bahā'iyya: *EI*^{2} I/915–18 (A. Bausani) and *EIr* III/438–75 (J. Cole et al.); P. Smith: *The Babi and Bahā'ī Religions: From Messianic Shi'ism to a World Religion*, Cambridge 1987; regarding the Baktāshiyya, see *EI*^{2} I/1161–63 (R. Tschudi).

[72] al-Subkī was not the first to argue in this vein. Some four years previously, in August 1949, the Muftī Ḥasanayn Muḥammad Makhlūf had also treated the Baktāshiyya and Shiism in the same breath and had come to the conclusion that the former counted among the heretics (*al-mubtadi'a*); regarding the various Shiite groups, he had, however, abstained from a judgement and limited himself to mere enumerations and descriptions; *al-Fatāwā al-islāmiyya min dār al-iftā' al-miṣriyya*, Cairo 1402/1981, IV/1473–80, esp. 1475ff.; regarding Makhlūf, cf. above, p. 167, note 68.

[73] Concerning this "disillusionment cliché", see above pp. 245ff.

[74] "Ṭawā'if: Bahā'iyya wa-Baktāshiyya—thumma Jamā'at al-taqrīb", *MA* 24/3 (Nov. 1952), 283–87; see also the comment to this article of Nizār al-Zayn in *al-'Irfān* 40/2 (Dec. 1952), 202–04, esp. 204; a bit later al-Subkī noted in a play on words (which, however, comes across as banal when compared with al-Khaṭīb's *takhrīb/taqrīb* comparison) that the *RI* had espoused "division" (*tafrīq*) and not "rapprochement" (*taqrīb*); *MA* 24/5 (Jan. 1953), 533.

[75] Regarding him (1891–1969), see *MMI* III/283f., al-Ziriklī VII/177; Kaḥḥāla M/776, Ende: "Erfolg und Scheitern", 122f.

was edited by him upon which al-Khaṭīb commented positively. The point, however, was not so much to support al-Mallāḥ, whose name was not even mentioned. Rather, al-Khaṭīb aimed at attacking the accusations by Muḥammad b. Muḥammad Mahdī al-Khāliṣī directed at the Azhar periodical which had been cited in the *Sijill* essay.[76] The main reason for this reserve, itself unusual and only abandoned for a few reviews of books by al-Mallāḥ,[77] may be seen in the fact that in his diatribes against the JT, unlike al-Khaṭīb, he did not limit his focus to the person of Qommī. Instead, he also made digs at the role of the Azhar in the ecumenical process and even went so far as to hint that in its origins, the Azhar had, after all, been "a nest of the *Bāṭiniyya*".[78]

Though al-Mallāḥ did not actually accuse the University of actively agitating against Islam, he certainly portrayed it as at least a credulous victim of the Shia. Above all, ʿAbd al-Majīd Salīm and ʿAbd al-Laṭīf Darāz were being taken in (as Nādir Shāh had been at the time) by Qommī's and al-Khāliṣī's *taqiyya*.[79] Even ʿAbd al-Raḥmān Tāj was not spared from criticism: al-Mallāḥ quoted a report from "a nationalistic Iraqi newspaper" that Tāj had sent his congratulations to Āyatollāh Borūjerdī upon the completion of the latter's monumental *ḥadīth* work and promised the author's request that the book be printed in Cairo favourable consideration. The mere suspicion that the yet-to-appear volume might deal with rapprochement between Sunnis and Shiites was, in Mallāḥ's judgement, enough to make insinuations against Borūjerdī, since it was generally known that he had close ties to Qommī, who had been "stationed" (*murābiṭ*) in Cairo—and between the lines also to implicate the Azhar.[80] Al-Khaṭīb understandably did not want to (and could not) go so far in his rejection of the JT. That is why he assiduously avoided any overt solidarity with his Iraqi "colleague", although he was the only Azharī for whom the latter spared some words of praise.[81]

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[76] *MA* 25/6 (Feb. 1954), 729–32.

[77] Ibid., 756 (about al-Mallāḥ's short biography of the Mosul poet ʿAbd al-Bāqī al-ʿUmarī al-Fārūqī [1790–1862; see *EI*² II/813 and al-Ziriklī III/271f.]); *MA* 27/2 (Sep. 1955), 216f. (about *al-Niḥla al-aḥmadiyya*); ibid., 217 (about the book *al-Bābiyya wa-l-Bahā'iyya*, Baghdad 1955).

[78] al-Mallāḥ: *al-Ārā' al-ṣarīḥa*, 8, 24; further idem: *al-Niḥla al-aḥmadiyya*, 30 note 1.

[79] Ibid., 7, 32; *al-Ārā'*, 94; *al-Mujīz ʿalā l-wajīz*, 99 note 1, 133.

[80] *al-Mujīz*, 105f.

[81] *al-Ārā'*, 45f. note 1; by contrast, in *al-Niḥla al-aḥmadiyya*, 34f. he expressed vehement criticism of al-Khaṭīb's predecessors Muḥammad Farīd Wajdī and Aḥmad Ḥasan al-Zayyāt; cf. also ibid., 62.

Maḥmūd al-Mallāḥ, on the other hand, was certainly not a person who would have needed the approval or even the patronage of the Azhar before penning his polemics. In countless attacks, interspersed with sarcastic puns[82] and barefaced insults,[83] he varied his perennial topic: the condemnation of Shiism as a heretical sect and the consistent dismissal of every attempt to reach rapprochement with them as a venture that he was only ready to perceive as an instance of *taqiyya* on a gigantic scale.[84]

The only occasions when al-Mallāḥ spoke of individual Shiites in a seemingly positive tenor were likewise not without scornful undertones. They applied exclusively to scholars like Muḥammad Ḥasan al-Muẓaffar, who also had no great use for pan-Islamic ecumenism and expressed this, for instance, in the form of polemics against the Sunnis.[85] Otherwise, as should come as no great surprise, al-Mallāḥ viewed the *taqrīb* movement as a continuation of a centuries-old plot: the enticement of Sunni Muslims in order to win them over to Shiism, which was not a legal school of Islam but an independent religion.[86] Not Cairo, but Iran would therefore have been the proper place for the JT, he claimed, drawing on an argument that already had been used by al-Khaṭīb.[87]

Considering the vehemence and persistence that Muḥibb al-Dīn al-Khaṭīb and Maḥmūd al-Mallāḥ displayed, the qualitative moderation

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[82] al-Mallāḥ, too, spoke of *takhrīb* instead of *taqrīb: al-Ārā' al-ṣarīḥa*, 36, 65, 86; further examples of this type were his derivation of the name Taqī from the word *taqiyya* (*Tārīkhunā l-qawmī*, *98*), his division of the word *taqrīb* into the putative components *taqiyya* and *murīb* ("suspicious"; *al-Ārā' al-ṣarīḥa*, 93) and his remark that the title of Qommī's article "Hadiyya min tajāribinā" (*RI* 6/1954/365–70) would have been more appropriately called . . . *min takhāribinā* (*al-Ārā'*, 93 note 1); his headline *Aghānī Mugh(a)n(n)iyya* has already been discussed; see above, p. 201 note 234.

[83] For instance, when he called the *taqrīb* activists "scatterbrains" or "charlatans" (*dajjālīn*, which also means "Antichrist"); *al-Niḥla al-aḥmadiyya*, 7, 18.

[84] He ultimately saw the entire world threatened by a "*taqiyya* army" (*jaysh al-taqiyya*) set in motion by Qommī and al-Khāliṣī; *al-Ārā' al-ṣarīḥa*, 86; cf. also Mālallāh: *al-Shīʿa wa-taḥrīf al-qur'ān*, 37.

[85] Cf. the spiteful necrology in which he called al-Muẓaffar (1884–1956; see al-Ziriklī VI/95f.; *RF* III/1215f.; *MMI* III/142; *ṬASh* I.1/431f.) *ʿālim jalīl* because the latter had not called for *taqrīb* or *waḥda* at all; al-Mallāḥ's "esteem" remained limited to this instance, for in the same book he wrote a violent diatribe against al-Muẓaffar's anti-Sunni work *Dalā'il al-ṣidq li-nahj al-ḥaqq* (*Dharīʿa* VIII/251*;* see also Ende: *Arabische Nation*, 114f.); al-Mallāḥ's comments are in *al-Ārā' al-ṣarīḥa*, 77–80 (obituary) and 58ff.; see also Ende: "Erfolg und Scheitern", 122f.; cf. al-Mallāḥ: *Tārīkhunā l-qawmī*, 93f.

[86] Ibid., 51–64, 91–100; *al-Ārā' al-ṣarīḥa*, 82–96, 99f.; *al-Mujīz ʿalā l-wajīz*, 124–26, 129–34.

[87] *al-Ārā'*, 84, 99.

and quantitative infrequency of the both the Shiites' and the *taqrīb* circles' reactions are quite remarkable. This does not necessarily mean that the ecumenical discussion was so insignificant in those years that no scholar of rank was ready to raise his voice to its defence and even less that the polemics did not find an attentive public. Rather, it was probably due to the fact that the ecumenical *'ulamā'* chose to remain cautious primarily out of concern to avoid bringing the fragile dialogue, acutely endangered since autumn 1952, even more into the line of fire through rash replies to the purposeful provocations.

It was no longer the JT that was under the protection of an Azhar Rector, but its most strident opponent, al-Khaṭīb. In the years following the Revolution, any denunciation of him would have inevitably been interpreted as an affront against the head of the Azhar. The latter, in turn, bearing in mind the procedure of his appointment and the political importance of the institution, enjoyed the backing of the government. The results of a test of strength with the Azhar would have produced predictable consequences for the JT.

Only outside of Egypt and the *taqrīb* organization, among scholars who had otherwise not been involved in the ecumenical discussion, was it possible to forego such considerations. The best example of this type of Shiite counter-polemic, which was every bit as ferocious as that of the Sunnis, originated from the pen of the south-Lebanese Shiite ʿAbdallāh al-Subaytī, who had been one of the most vociferous critics of Aḥmad Amīn roughly a quarter of a century earlier.[88] His book *Ilā mashyakhat al-Azhar*, which appeared in 1956, represents probably the most detailed and direct impungnment in the 1950s on the anti-Shiite trends within the Cairene University.

In the form of an open letter directed to the *Shaykh al-Azhar*, at the time ʿAbd al-Raḥmān Tāj (whose name does not emerge in the whole work), he used the book *al-Mahdiyya fī l-islām* by the Azhar scholar Saʿd Muḥammad Ḥasan[89] as an opportunity to settle scores with the Azhar and its leadership in a merciless manner. Through its unwill-

[88] This was with his book *Taḥt rāyat al-ḥaqq*, Sidon 1933 (see *Dharīʿa* III/375); regarding al-Subaytī (born 1896), see *MMI* II/326; Moshār III/cols. 992f.; he gained attention through, among other works, a biography of Abū Dharr that was confiscated and burnt by the Iraqi government, as it was so polemically directed against Sunnism, cf. Ende: *Arabische Nation*, 211f.

[89] Cairo 1953; see the review in *MA* 25/3 (Nov. 1953), 372f.

ingness or inability to undertake anything against what in his view were destructive attitudes, the University had submitted to the pernicious predominance of the West and now served only the machinations of the colonialists and enemies of the Islam. Basically, according to al-Subaytī, one would have to tear down the walls of the Azhar to their foundations and rebuild it from the cornerstone up.[90]

He held a complete lack of intellectual leadership to be the reason for this demise and, quoting Muḥammad Riḍā al-Shabībī, added that there were religious scholars of more than 50 years of age who constantly dipped their pens in blood, yet had never written a word about harmony and unity.[91] Al-Subaytī left no room whatsoever for doubt that he included al-Khaṭīb among these factious authors: both in his earlier journal, *al-Fatḥ*, and now in the *Majallat al-Azhar*, the latter made sure that not a single page of a single issue was free of anti-Shiite slanders. Al-Khaṭīb's editions of classical works were likewise completely unjustifiable, all the less since every one already existed in printed form.[92]

At the end of his apologetic, which he also used as requital against other "Umayyad" authors like Muḥammad Isʿāf al-Nashāshībī,[93] al-Subaytī reiterated his point about the Azhar's lack of leadership. With biting sarcasm he contended that perhaps the *Shaykh al-Azhar* was nothing more than a minor civil servant who had to hold his tongue and merely sit by and watch in order to remain in office for the sake of a mouthful of bread. Therefore he decided to turn directly to the Egyptian government with the demand that they finally order a cessation of the anti-Shiite machinations at the Azhar.[94]

Within the ecumenical movement it was considerably more difficult to formulate any type of reply that was unequivocal yet managed to avoid provocation. Muḥammad b. Muḥammad Mahdī al-Khāliṣī's

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[90] *Ilā mashyakhat al-Azhar*, 11.

[91] Ibid., 13; al-Shabībī made this comment in an *RI* article, which, however, was extremely general and did not mention any names: *RI* 7/1955/24–28, on 28.

[92] al-Khaṭīb actually had not denied this particular fact, but, for example, in the case of al-Ālūsī's *Mukhtaṣar*, he made reference to the faultiness of the Bombay edition 1315/1897–98; see his preface to the edition he acquired, pp. *yd*ff.; al-Subaytī: *Ilā mashyakhat al-Azhar*, 14–19.

[93] Ibid., 48ff.; indicative of the tone maintained by the polemicists, he called him "psychologically ill and drunk" (esp. 53 and 57); regarding al-Nashāshībī, see above, p. 98 note 62; ʿAbbās Abū l-Ḥasan al-Mūsawī was no less impolite, bluntly calling Maḥmūd al-Mallāḥ the "Umayyad idiot" (*al-maʿtūh al-umawī*), *al-ʿIrfān* 43/6 (Mar. 1956), 625.

[94] al-Subaytī: *Ilā mashyakhat al-Azhar*, 177f.

reaction is almost paradigmatic for the balancing act Shiite *taqrīb* proponents in contact with the JT had to perform as soon as they addressed the polemics of their Sunni opponents. Although in his day he was probably the *taqrīb* activist who attracted the most frequent and vehement hostility,[95] he preferred to limit his sharply worded rejoinders to brief sections in his books and articles and abstained as far as possible from identifying his adversaries by name. Only once did he drop this practice for a moment when in the *ʿIrfān* he criticized Aḥmad ʿĀrif al-Zayn's silence over al-Khaṭīb's writings.[96] But even without the explicit mention of names, al-Khāliṣī's readers of course knew exactly whom he meant, for example, with the casual remark that the Azhar was waging a war against religion in the name of religion.[97]

Between the lines of his work *al-Tawḥīd wa-l-waḥda*, which appeared toward the end of 1954, he provided the reason for his reserve and evidence of the JT's precarious position. During his voyage to Egypt in 1953–54, he had met with both the editor in chief of the *MA* and "a former" *Shaykh al-Azhar*. Al-Khāliṣī explained that al-Khaṭīb had ignored his criticism and that the latter, whom the context suggests was Muḥammad al-Khiḍr Ḥusayn, did not do anything to put al-Khaṭīb in his place.[98] By accusing, only a few pages earlier, ʿAbd al-Nāṣir's government with unusual outspokenness of having made the Azhar a playground for politics through its repressive administration, al-Khāliṣī let it be understood that the *taqrīb* society, too, had been drawn into this maelstrom.[99]

There was one short-lived exception to this general rule: Between March and August 1954, the *Jāmiʿat Madīnat al-ʿilm* in Kāẓimiyya,

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[95] Most notably, he was engaged in a feud with Maḥmūd al-Mallāḥ that lasted for years; cf. al-Mallāḥ's attacks in *al-Ārāʾ al-ṣarīḥa*, 49, 61, 70, 84, 101f.; *al-Nihla al-aḥmadiyya*, 7, 21, 27ff., 61; *Tārīkhunā l-qawmī*, 124–26, 130–32, 134–36; *al-Mujīz ʿalā l-wajīz*, 74–76, 101–04; I did not have access to the two books *al-Waḥda al-islāmiyya bayn al-akhdh wa-l-radd* (Baghdad 1951; review in *RAAD* 28/1953/608) and *Ḥujjat al-Khāliṣī. Ḥalqa min munāqashat al-Khāliṣī fī āthārihi* (Baghdad 1952).

[96] *al-ʿIrfān* 41/1 (Feb. 1954), 450–52.

[97] al-Khāliṣī: *Iḥyāʾ al-sharīʿa*, III/442; the editor of this three-volume work, ʿAbd al-Rasūl al-Khaṭīb, observed laconically that the *MA*, as was typical of it (*ʿalā ʿādatihā*), had spared nothing but lies for the first volume; introduction to *Iḥyāʾ*, II/*b*; cf. also the review in *al-ʿIrfān* 39/5 (Apr. 1952), 652.

[98] al-Khāliṣī: *al-Tawḥīd wa-l-waḥda*, 8f.; cf. ibid., 36; instead of this, during al-Khāliṣī's stay in Egypt, a direct attack against him written by al-Khaṭīb himself appeared because of al-Khāliṣī's criticism of the *ṣaḥāba*: *MA* 25/6 (Feb. 1954), 729–32.

[99] al-Khāliṣī: *al-Tawḥīd wa-l-waḥda*, 5; cf. concerning this book *al-ʿIrfān* 42/5–6 (Mar.-Apr. 1955), 788.

an institute that al-Khāliṣī originally had taken over from his father, published a journal of the same name. In several contributions al-Khāliṣī and his staff without any reservation found clear words and attacked the Azhar magazine and its editor in chief in a most direct form.[100] Al-Khaṭīb was squarely blamed for stirring up confessional din and thereby inflicting harm on the religion. As in many other respects, however, al-Khāliṣī seems to have been isolated among his Shiite readership in this regard as well and had to defend himself against the accusation, brought forward in a long letter to the editor, to have provoked al-Khaṭīb into his critical remarks against Shiism.[101] However, his endeavours in this regard were granted only a very short duration, as the licence to publish the journal was withdrawn by a newly-appointed Deputy Minister of the Interior after merely six issues. It is not clear whether the attacks on one of the most distinguished institutions of Islam played any role in this decision; al-Khāliṣī himself remained silent about what he termed "the hidden background of this arbitrary act."[102]

To his credit, the tireless al-Khāliṣī managed the feat of placing a retort to al-Mallāḥ and al-Khaṭīb—as usual, without identifying anyone by name—in the *RI* that was virtually unmistakable considering the nature of the journal. This was all the more remarkable, as his article (his only contribution to the *RI*) appeared in January 1954, when the religious-political situation had not by any means been settled in favour of the JT.

He referred to the editor in chief of the Azhar journal as one of those "would-be Egyptians" (*mutamaṣṣirūn*; as is generally known, al-Khaṭīb was of Syrian origin),[103] whom colonialism had hired in order

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[100] The director of the journal (which is extremely rare in Western libraries) was ʿAbd al-Rasūl al-Khaṭīb, who also edited al-Khāliṣī's main work, *Iḥyāʾ al-sharīʿa* (cf. note 97); the editor in chief was Muḥammad Hādī al-Daftar. Concerning the name of the institute, an allusion to a well-known Shiite *ḥadīth*, cf. Ende: "Erfolg und Scheitern", 120 and note 5.

[101] *Madīnat al-ʿilm* 1/1 (Mar. 1954), 83–86; regarding other articles against the Azhar and its journal cf. ibid., 1/1 (Mar. 1954), 28–33, 48f.; 1/2 (Apr. 1954), 128–34, 160–62; 1/4–5 (Jun.-Jul. 1954), 315–17, 362–64, 370–73, 448; 1/6 (Aug. 1954), 533, 545–48.

[102] Muḥammad b. Muḥammad Mahdī al-Khāliṣī: *Risālat Ǧāmiʿat madīnat al-ʿilm*, Baghdad 1954, 32f. (I am indebted to Prof. Werner Ende for having drawn my attention to this brochure).

[103] It was easy to understand this phrase also as a posthumous barb at Muḥammad Rashīd Riḍā, who had also immigrated to Egypt; on the *mutamaṣṣirūn* among the Egyptian historians, cf. A. Gorman: *Historians, State and Politics in Twentieth Century Egypt. Contesting the Nation*, London 2002, 174–95; the general background is described by

to foment confessional strife by circulating appropriate writings. However, during his stay in Egypt, the Iraqi scholar became convinced that contrary to his previous apprehensions, nobody knew their writings so that this plan had proven to be a total failure. At the same time, though, he had to admit that the anti-Shiite invectives in the *MA* had caused a fair amount of commotion in Iraq.

The letter to the editor he claimed to have written in this connection in which he protested against all the lies was reproduced by al-Khaṭīb only in distorted form.[104] In fact in the course of his own refutation of Mughniyya's item in the *RI*, the editor in chief of the *MA* had discussed a reply by al-Khāliṣī in detail and even quoted word for word the latter's dissociation from Mughniyya's article. The Iraqi scholar had termed this essay "a great mistake" and an example of the "prattle" (*taqawwul*) from which even the *taqrīb* association's journal was not entirely free.[105] In his own contribution to the *RI*, al-Khāliṣī understandably did not want to take the matter any further and concentrated instead exclusively on portraying al-Khaṭīb as an obsequious lackey of the colonialists and enemies of Islam, whom the Shiite scholar, too, perceived as being ubiquitous.

With this one exception, the JT in the years 1953–54 took great pains to exercise maximum restraint in its quarrel with the critics. Even an author such as Muḥammad Jawād Mughniyya, otherwise well known for his willingness to engage in argument, preferred to have his articles expressing criticism of the Azhar not appear in the *RI* but in the *ʿIrfān*.[106] In the columns of the *taqrīb* journal, in contrast, he confined himself to an extremely general appeal to Muslims to deal with each other in a civilized way under the title "Diverging Opinions Do Not Deter Allowing Justice to Prevail". The objective, according to him, could not be holding solely one's own confession as correct while considering all others wrong. Instead it should be the understanding and appreciation of each other's points of view.[107]

T. Philipp: *The Syrians in Egypt, 1725–1975*, Stuttgart 1985, esp. 96–117: "The Syrian Intelligentsia in Egypt".

[104] al-Khāliṣī in *RI* 6/1954/51–60, on 59f.

[105] *MA* 24/6 (Feb. 1953), 697ff., esp. 699.

[106] Cf. above, p. 202 notes 235ff.; also *al-ʿIrfān* 41/1 (Feb. 1954), 447–50: a vehement rejection of the book *al-Mahdiyya fī l-islām* by Saʿd Muḥammad Ḥasan, that culminated in the question whether such a miserable effort was the Azhar's message now (449).

[107] Mughniyya: "al-Khilāf lā yamnaʿ min al-inṣāf", *RI* 5/1953/392–95; reprinted in al-Shīrāzī: *al-Waḥda al-islāmiyya*, 264–68.

Most apologetic defences in the *RI* were kept in this tone or one very similar to it. Matters of substance related to accusations by al-Khaṭīb and others were handled rudimentarily and in the form of a rather symbolic juxtaposition, as was done repeatedly by Moḥammad Taqī Qommī.[108] In the end, what emerged was nothing beyond the repetition of old, well-known points of view with which al-Khaṭīb and his kind were familiar and whose "refutation" had been the principal reason for them to pick up their pens.

Qommī was presumably very conscious of his powerlessness in the face of the criticism that came up in the name of the Azhar, even if he made an effort to put a brave face on his obvious disappointment. With the foundation of the JT it became clear, he declared, that the way was long and definitely not paved with roses, but the ecumenical movement put its trust in God's assistance and kept away from politics in order to obviate being swept away by its current.[109]

The integration of the taqrīb *society into politics*

The political thaw for the JT began to become apparent in the second half of the year 1955. The suppression of the Muslim Brotherhood, which had the full backing of the Azhar and took only a few weeks to carry out,[110] eliminated a potential danger for the regime and weakened the position of the neo-Salafiyya permanently, including its standing at the Azhar.

Muḥibb al-Dīn al-Khaṭīb, who as intellectual foster father of numerous Muslim Brethren was one of the neo-Salafiyya's main representatives outside their organizations and their link to the "official" Islam of the religious establishment, could ostensibly no longer do as he pleased from the editor's chair of the *MA*. A sure indication of this is the fact that the period of persistent polemics against both the Shiites and the ecumenical movement that had appeared on the periodical's pages gradually came to an end in 1955.

Al-Khaṭīb's last gasp in this direction was a review of his own edition of the book *al-Muntaqā min minhāj al-ʿtidāl* by al-Ḥāfiẓ al-Dhahabī.

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[108] See above p. 217.
[109] Qommī in *RI* 6/1954/367.
[110] Cf. the Azhar's demonstrative support of the Revolution, *MA* 26/4 (Oct. 1954), unpaginated section after p. 256.

It already showed clearly the signs of a rearguard action and compared to previously published comments of the same type, the tone was almost unrecognizable. There was no mention whatsoever that this was a summary of one of the most famous anti-Shiite polemics. Completely bypassing the word "Shia", al-Khaṭīb, moreover and in contrast to his wont, did not insinuate that the topic of the volume had anything to do with apostates or heretics. At the end of the discussion he even stated that the work should be useful to all concerned with comparative studies of the Islamic schools' view of the foundations of religion (*al-muqārana bayn al-madhāhib fī uṣūl al-dīn*).[111] Of course this did not do anything to alter the vehemently anti-Shiite character of the book itself or of al-Khaṭīb's introduction and notes, but he could no longer exploit the *MA* as a vehicle for the purpose of bringing polemic views to the Muslim public.

The *taqrīb* organization quickly noticed the advantageous change in climate. By the beginning of 1955 the association already felt strong enough to emerge from its self-imposed isolation and to criticize the Azhar directly for the first time since the Revolution. Muḥammad b. Faḍlallāh al-Ḥārithī's scolding referred to two articles by the Azhar scholar Ṭāhā Muḥammad Sākit, published shortly before in the *MA*, in which the Azhari had cast serious doubt on the orthodoxy of the religious beliefs of Abū Ṭālib, ʿAlī's father.[112] At the very beginning of his essay, al-Ḥārithī advised the Azhar and its journal to focus once again on topics that were of benefit to Islam and to desist from making comments that sabotaged Muslim unity. After a detailed refutation of Sākit's contentions, he returned to the topic of the Azhar and spared not even its Rector, Tāj, whom he charged with bearing joint culpability for the occurrence of conflicts of this type.[113]

A short time later the *RI* intensified its criticism of some Azhar scholars when it indignantly dismissed the extremely controversial ideas of Shaykh ʿAbd al-Ḥamīd Bakhīt and viewed them as an attack on the *sharīʿa*. The scholar had questioned the absolute obligation to fast during Ramaḍān. As it turned out, though, the JT thereby kicked at an open door, since Bakhīt had been dismissed by the Azhar in the meantime.[114]

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[111] *MA* 26/17–18 (May 1955), 1045f.

[112] "Qiṣṣat Abī Ṭālib", *MA* 26/7 (Nov. 1954), 362–65 and 26/9 (Dec. 1954), 491–94; regarding Abū Ṭālib, see *EI*[2] I/152 (W. Montgomery Watt).

[113] *RI* 7/1954/86–89; cf. also the article by Muḥammad Riḍā al-Shabībī ibid., 24–28.

[114] Ibid., 326f.; regarding this affair, see "Al Azhar Discipline", *MEA* 7/1956/108–15;

It was not only more or less justified concern because of his own neo-Salafi past that compelled al-Khaṭīb to remain silent in the face of criticism by the *taqrīb* movement. An even more significant factor was a general change in the orientation of the Egyptian government, which was about to discover the utility of a foreign policy marked by international Islamic cooperation.

In the years immediately following the Revolution, the interest of the new regime focused exclusively on consolidating its power within the country, and no pan-Arab reverberations were heard in Jamāl ʿAbd al-Nāṣir's public comments. But now, half out of ideological conviction, half out of fear of diplomatic isolation in view of the politics of bloc formation being actively promoted by the West, he saw himself obliged to cast his eye beyond Egypt's borders.[115] In collaboration with the Saudi King, Saʿūd b. ʿAbd al-ʿAzīz, ʿAbd al-Nāṣir called into being a permanent organization by the name of "Islamic Conference" (*al-Muʾtamar al-islāmī*) in August 1954. Its seat was in Cairo and at its head was Anwar al-Sādāt, a close confidant of ʿAbd al-Nāṣir.[116] The Islamic Conference was relatively modest in its beginnings, and a group of scholars, some of whom had been active in the JT for years, were integrated into its work. These included Muḥammad Yūsuf Mūsā, Muḥammad ʿAbdallāh Darāz, and Muḥammad ʿArafa,[117] all of whom were assigned to the cultural department of the newly

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J. Jomier/J. Corbon: "Le Ramadan au Caire", *MIDEO* 3/1956/46–48; Hatina: "Historical Legacy", 60–62; the *RI*, however, kept a low profile in the quarrel over the no-less controversial views of Muḥammad Aḥmad Khalafallāh about the historical value of the Koranic narratives (his dissertation on this subject was refused because of the intervention of the Azhar), see *RI* 7/1954/328; cf. in detail Wielandt: *Offenbarung und Geschichte*, 134–52.

[115] Kerr: *Egypt under Nasser*, 37f.; Haddad: *Contemporary Islam and the Challenge of History*, 25.

[116] Schulze: *Internationalismus*, 116ff.; see also *OM* 34/1954/349, 418; *MIDEO* 3/1956/475, and Sindi: *The Muslim World and its Efforts in Pan-Islamism*, 134f.; the initial support by Pakistan lasted only up to its joining the Baghdad Pact in January of the following year.

[117] Regarding ʿArafa (1890–1973), see al-Ziriklī VI/25; Kaḥḥāla *M*/593; al-Khafājī: *al-Azhar fī alf ʿām*, II/105–10 (new edition III/161–69); initially he had come from the circle of the *Manār* authors; see his article "al-Iṣlāḥ al-ḥaqīqī wa-l-wājib al-azharī", *al-Manār* 28/10 (Jan. 1928), 758–65; from October 1952 until June 1953, he had been director of the Azhar journal, later, however, he seems to have fallen out with al-Khaṭīb, for according to ʿArafa's own statement, he went over to the *RI* after the *MA* had refused to print a contribution of his (*RI* 7/1955/29); cf. also below, pp. 329; concerning Mūsā (1899–1963), see *MDA* IV/680–82; al-Bahayy: *Ḥayātī fī riḥāb al-Azhar*, 55, 57; obituary in *MIDEO* 7/1962–63/430 and 8/1964–66/507–09; regarding Darāz, see above, p. 162 note 41.

created organization. Where, among other things, they were entrusted with the compilation of a popular Koran commentary.

About at the same time, Ibrāhīm al-Ṭaḥāwī and Muḥammad al-Bahayy arranged the first personal meeting between Moḥammad Taqī Qommī and ʿAbd al-Nāṣir. According to Qommī, during the encounter he succeeded in inducing the Egyptian Head of State to call off the surveillance that up to then had been imposed on the JT. In an interview in the 1970s, the Secretary-General of the *taqrīb* organization recalled proudly that he had gained the respect of ʿAbd al-Nāṣir and Muḥammad Najīb, who was also in attendance, by explaining how, at the time of the monarchy, he had refused to yield to censorship and to print King Fārūq's portrait on the title page of the *RI*, which had almost cost him the permission to put out the periodical. In this interview, though, Qommī attached the very greatest importance to the observation that even after the establishment of official contacts with the government, which involved numerous further meetings of an informal character, it had still been possible for his journal to preserve its independence. He was able to prevent a later attempt by the Ministry of the Interior to bring him into line by referring to his arrangement with ʿAbd al-Nāṣir.[118]

Thus the ice between the JT and the powers-that-be was broken for the time being. As a result, at the beginning of 1956 even the cautious Qommī found the nerve to write an article with the characteristic title "The Caravan Moves On" that made the opponents of the ecumenical discussion take note that their efforts to denounce the JT as a Shiite propaganda organization could be considered as having failed.[119] Without mentioning a single word about his newly established relationship with ʿAbd al-Nāṣir, he nevertheless continued to emphasize the *taqrīb* movement's alleged aloofness from politics.

Also outside Egypt the newly awoken pan-Islamic interest of the two governments that had been involved in the convening of the Islamic Conference led to first official discussions with representatives of the Shia. In the autumn of 1955, Anwar al-Sādāt travelled to Lebanon, where he met with Aḥmad ʿĀrif al-Zayn and others. In the

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[118] al-Shīrāzī: *Eslām. Ā'īn-e hambastegī*, 24–34, esp. 30ff.

[119] "al-Qāfila tasīr", *RI* 8/1956/38–42, esp. 41f. (see also ibid., 105); reprinted in al-Shīrāzī: *al-Waḥda al-islāmiyya*, 57–62; cf. also *RI* 11/1959/355f., where Qommī in retrospect was even able to find a positive aspect in his opponents' activity: ultimately, by virtue of the public attention they had drawn to the JT, they had actually done some advertising for the organization and increased the number of its supporters.

southern part of the country, marked by its Shiite majority, this meeting received great attention and was very warmly welcomed.[120] Furthermore, in 1956 King Saʿūd paid his respects to Āyatollāh Borūjerdī during a state visit in Iran and symbolically exchanged gifts with him. Just how important this visit was considered can be gleaned from the reaction of the *RI*, whose report was quite detailed in comparison to its usual coverage of such events. The journal even published a complete version of Borūjerdī's letter of thanks to the monarch.[121]

The Azhar could not afford to shut its eyes to the political changes. This was particularly true as the government in the meantime had purposefully taken the first steps toward reducing the independence of the *ʿulamāʾ* by abolishing the jurisdiction of the *sharīʿa* in January 1956. The Suez crisis in the autumn of the same year served a kind of catalyst function in the resumption of the University's contacts with the Shia: After its end, the rector, ʿAbd al-Raḥmān Tāj, dutifully sent a telegram to the Shah acknowledging his support of Egypt's political position over the weeks gone by, although the straightforwardness and brevity alone raise suspicions that this missive had been the product of political pressure. Together with the lengthy reply from Moḥammad Reżā Pahlawī, it was immediately included among the congratulatory correspondence that arrived from the entire Islamic world and published in the *MA*—which at this point, let it be noted, was still under al-Khaṭīb's directorship.[122]

Particularly memorable in this context is a telegram dated November 20, 1956, in which the Shiite *ʿulamāʾ* of the *Kulliyyat muntadā al-nashr* in Najaf expressed their solidarity with the Egyptian government.[123] The changes at the Azhar in regard to Shiism had definitely not escaped the Shiite scholars, and they rewarded this by openly applauding the new direction rather than dwelling on the polemic of the previous years.

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[120] *al-ʿIrfān* 43/3 (Dec. 1955), 337–39; the *RI* did not report on this.

[121] *RI* 8/1956/105–07.

[122] *MA* 28/5 (Dec. 1956), 485f.; the Shah's attitude seems to have been merely half-hearted, however; cf. "ʿArab; v: Arab-Iranian Relations in Modern Times", *EIr* II/220–24, esp. 220f. (R.K. Ramazani); further Bahiyya et al.: *Naqd wa-taʿlīq*, 35f.

[123] *MA* 28/6 (Jan. 1957), 601; regarding the Suez crisis, cf. Schulze: *Geschichte*, 190–92; concerning the *Kulliyyat muntadā al-nashr* (that came out of Muḥammad Riḍā al-Muẓaffar's *Jamʿiyyat muntadā al-nashr*, see above, p. 125) see Jaʿfar al-Dujaylī (ed.): *Mawsūʿat al-Najaf al-ashraf. Jāmiʿat al-Najaf al-dīniyya*, Beirut 1415/1995, VI/305f.; Mervin: "The Clerics of Jabal ʿĀmil", 83ff.

The year 1957 witnessed the integration of pan-Islamic aims into the Egyptian government's politics being implemented at nothing short of breakneck speed. Among these, the promotion of ecumenical contacts between Sunnism and Shiism assumed increasing significance. An initial step in this direction was an anthology of articles that had first appeared more than seventy years previously in *al-ʿUrwa al-wuthqā*, the short-lived publication of political pan-Islam's founding fathers, Jamāl al-Dīn al-Afghānī and Muḥammad ʿAbduh.[124] The date designated for the reprinting of these pieces from the late nineteenth century and the criteria for their selection, focusing on comments regarding the advance of British colonialism,[125] manifested subtle sense, coming just half a year after the Suez crisis. Furthermore, the volume, dedicated to "Arab Nationalism in its most sublime qualities" and embellished with a proper quotation from ʿAbd al-Nāṣir, appears to have been intended to support the latter's aspiration to leadership of the Islamic World. The subtitle added by the editor, *al-Thawra al-taḥrīriyya al-kubrā*, referred to the July Revolution of 1952 and was explicitly emphasized[126] so that the nationalistic coup d'état would bask in the light of pan-Islam.

ʿAbd al-Nāṣir's internationalist foreign policy met with scant approval from his partner in the Islamic Conference, King Saʿūd. In 1957 this resulted in a break between Egypt and Saudi Arabia, whose traditional monarchy must have certainly been more than unsettled by Cairo's constant calls for revolution.[127] The tense situation that resulted from this reshaping of the political order in the Middle East during the following decade has aptly been called the "Arab Cold War."[128] ʿAbd al-Nāṣir's pan-Islamic claim, however, survived the abrupt end of the Islamic Conference and in the following period turned more intensively in the direction of the Shiite Muslims. Saudi Arabia in the coming years became a rallying point for the neo-Salafi activists like the scattered remnants of the Muslim Brotherhood who had been especially persecuted in Egypt (which, following its alliance with Syria in 1958 was re-named the United Arab Republic).[129] Against

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[124] Cf. above, pp. 34f. and note 35.

[125] Almost two thirds of the entire book were devoted to this question, see *al-ʿUrwa al-wuthqā*, 153–423.

[126] Ibid., p. *z* (preface).

[127] Holden/Johns: *The House of Saud*, 191–97.

[128] Kerr: *The Arab Cold War*, passim.

[129] Schulze: *Internationalismus*, 141f.; the political background and history of the UAR is now desbribed in detail by Jankowski: *Nasser's Egypt*, passim.

this development, ʿAbd al-Nāṣir attempted through reconciliation with the Shiites to create a counterbalance in order to prevent a reinvigoration of the neo-Salafiyya.

In the practical organization of political ecumenism, the Minister of *awqāf*, Aḥmad Ḥasan al-Bāqūrī, once again played a decisive role. In October 1957 he announced the foundation of an Egyptian cultural institute in Tehran whose express purpose was to support an exchange of ideas between Sunni and Shiite scholars. The goal, however, was to remove issues from the realm of merely non-committal discussions and rather to reach a "unificazione delle dottrine".[130] The most spectacular step in this direction heretofore had certainly been made by al-Bāqūrī, possibly at Borūjerdī's behest, when he initiated the edition of classical Shiite works in Cairo, which took place in close collaboration with the JT, immediately landing the group squarely in governmental-political activity for the first time.

From this point on it was only a matter of time before the government would try to make the Azhar a component of this tactic and thus make good use of the University's theological reputation for its own political objectives. The willingness of the JT and the reform theologians of the Azhar represented in it to participate in the Islamization of ʿAbd al-Nāṣir's foreign policy under the banner of ecumenism was signalled by the radical change of the assessment of Arab Nationalism as it was expressed in those years in some articles in the *RI*.

In the first years, any form of nationalism had been viewed as absolutely negative since it obstructed Muslim unity or at least delayed it. Brought forward more than once as a warning was the pre-Islamic *jāhiliyya*, during which, according to the historian Maḥmūd Fayyāḍ in 1949, nationalistic fanaticism (*taʿaṣṣub qawmī*) had been all-pervasive. It was Islam that first succeeded in uniting the conflicting tribes and tribal loyalties and in integrating them into religion. Only an "Islamic nationalism" (*al-qawmiyya al-islāmiyya*; also the title of his article) thus generated was suited to drive forward the unity of all human beings, not only Muslims. Any other type of nationalism based on racial (*jinsī*) or ethnic (*ʿunṣurī*) principles stood in the way and had therefore to be rejected as un-Islamic.[131]

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[130] This was the wording in *OM* 37/1957/779.

[131] Fayyāḍ in *RI* 1/1949/384–91; cf. also ʿAllūba in *RI* 5/1953/26–29, esp. 29, and Khafīf in *RI* 2/1950/44–50, esp. 46.

Muḥammad Muḥammad al-Madanī, who also referred the pre-Islamic period with what was almost a contemptuous undertone, went even further. He denied that Arabism (*ʿurūba*) had any unifying capacity whatsoever and maintained it had not demonstrated any measure of historical greatness and thus was not taken seriously by non-Arab Muslims.[132]

In 1957, slightly less than two years after the just-quoted comment, and a period during which the political climate had changed, al-Madanī managed to come to a completely different assessment of Arabism. In a eulogy to Arab nationalism, he extolled the universal strength of the *ʿurūba*, which created a fertile symbiosis with Islam: commitment to Islam was virtually equated with commitment to Arabism.[133] Al-Madanī was ardently supported by the well-known Azhari reform scholar ʿAbd al-Mutaʿāl al-Ṣaʿīdī, who, in a complete reversal of the position previously taken by the *RI*, described *waṭaniyya* and *qawmiyya* as the Muslims' reaction to colonialism and a synthesis between the "two patriotisms" (*al-waṭaniyyatayn*, i.e. Islam and nationalism). Each was almost incomplete without the other, since even Muḥammad had taken pride in being an Arab from the tribe of Quraysh.[134]

All in all, the regime's change of opinion in favour of the JT (which proved to be short-lived) was of mutual benefit to both parties. The organization acknowledged the primacy of ʿAbd al-Nāṣir's nationalistic policies and in exchange was allowed to help shape the new pan-Islamic policy. The Azhar's reform-oriented *ʿulamāʾ* found themselves yet again at the interface between theology and politics, and their promotion to the highest offices received as much support as possible. That many of them belonged to the JT brought additional attention to the *taqrīb* concept.

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[132] Editorial in *RI* 7/1955/339f.

[133] Editorial in *RI* 9/1957/227f.

[134] al-Ṣaʿīdī: "al-Waṭaniyya wa-l-qawmiyya fī l-islām", *RI* 10/1958/83–88; cf. in general S. Haim: "Islam and the Theory of Arab Nationalism", WI 4/1955/124–49 and Enayat: *Modern Islamic Political Thought*, 117–20; until only a few years earlier, the *RI* had viewed every form of nationalism as an attempt directed by the colonialists to divide the Muslims; *RI* 5/1953/435f., similarly ʿAbd al-Ḥalīm Kāshif al-Ghiṭāʾ in *RI* 4/1952/47; as a qualification, it should be added that the rehabilitation of Arabism did not occur with complete unanimity: in the same issue that contained the piece by al-Ṣaʿīdī cited here, Muḥammad Abū Zahra explicitly advocated a union of Islamic states on the basis of religion, which had primacy over all ethnic and other mundane criteria; *RI* 10/1958/28–35, esp. 32; cf. Abū Zahra: *al-Waḥda al-islāmiyya*, 238f.

Both twists, the brief, meteoric rise of the ecumenical rapprochement of the Islamic denominations as well as the long-overdue structural reform of the Azhar, were closely linked with the name of Maḥmūd Shaltūt. His first reform propositions dated back to the beginning of the 1940s, and since its foundation, he had been a member in the *taqrīb* union. Thus, he appears to have been predestined to represent ʿAbd al-Nāṣir's politics both internally, i.e. during the implementation of the reforms within Egypt's religious establishment, and externally in the role of guarantor of a sincere interest in an ecumene between Sunnism and Shiism. With his promotion, it seemed possible for the first time in the twentieth century to push forward a confessional rapprochement that promised to exceed by far the previous half-hearted and to a large extent fruitless conversations among scholars and intellectuals.

CHAPTER NINE

TRIUMPH AND FAILURE OF ECUMENICAL THINKING (1958–1961)

Theology and politics: Maḥmūd Shaltūt's "fatwā" *of 1959*

On November 9, 1957, Maḥmūd Shaltūt was appointed Deputy Rector of the Azhar (*Wakīl al-Azhar*) by presidential decree. That the Azhar journal acknowledged his promotion to this previously rather insignificant office with a nine-page special supplement[1] indicates the momentousness attributed to the decision. After the enactment of the constitution of January 1956[2] and following the enormous growth of his prestige in the Arab World as a result of the Suez crisis, Jamāl ʿAbd al-Nāṣir was at the zenith of his power. He now set out to grind down one of the last remaining bastions of relative autonomy: the Azhar. Shaltūt's appointment was the first page of a completely new chapter in the history of the University, which ended less than four years later with the Azhar reform of 1961 and its *de facto* nationalization.

The Azhar's incumbent leadership reacted with restraint to Shaltūt's rise, anticipating that they were on their way out. The Rector, ʿAbd al-Raḥmān Tāj, to whom this course of events must have signalled the demise of his own power, had little to say, as did the editor in chief of the *MA*, Muḥibb al-Dīn al-Khaṭīb, who presumably suspected that his days as head of the journal were numbered. Rather, the latter left it to the secretary of the editorial staff (*sikritēr al-taḥrīr*), Ibrāhīm Muḥammad al-Aṣīl, to congratulate Shaltūt and to express the *MA*'s (surely not unanimous) joy over ʿAbd al-Nāṣir's decision.[3]

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[1] "Taḥiyyat al-Azhar li-wakīl al-Azhar", *MA*, unpaginated section preceding 29/6 (Dec. 1957), containing comments by ʿAbd al-Raḥmān ʿĪsā and Muḥammad Kāmil al-Fiqī as well as the summary of an address by Shaltūt.

[2] R. Monaco: "La nuova constituzione egiziana", *OM* 36/1956/281–88.

[3] Ibrāhīm Muḥammad al-Aṣīl: "Taḥiyya wa-tahni'a wa-amal . . .!", *MA* 29/6 (Dec. 1957), 555f.

The end for the old guard came just a year later. With ʿAbd al-Raḥmān Tāj being relegated to an insignificant post in the government of the newly established United Arab Republic, the way was cleared for Shaltūt's installation as *Shaykh al-Azhar* on October 21, 1958.[4] The Azhar journal paid tribute to this event with yet another special supplement whose scope, thirty pages, transcended anything previously put out to praise an individual's promotion to Rector.[5]

For the JT this meant that its demand for Islamic ecumenical thinking had been rehabilitated at the Azhar after a hiatus of several years' duration since the rectorate of ʿAbd al-Majīd Salīm. The political powers had already discovered the usefulness of the concept for their own motives over the preceding few years, but now it was also included on the list of the Azhar's priorities.

It is true that in the extremely critical interval after the Revolution, Shaltūt had not been among the most vociferous defenders of the JT, and in the face of the polemics of al-Khaṭīb and others he had maintained silence, at least in public. But his loyalty to the organization during this period remained steadfast, and he continued to publish his Koran commentary in the *RI* without interruption, thus making no secret of his commitment to rapprochement among the Islamic denominations. It can be assumed that Shaltūt's relatively quiet but persistent activity for the *taqrīb* society in those years was of considerably greater benefit and contributed far more to its survival than could have been achieved by him publicly attacking its critics.

It is therefore no coincidence that the previously mentioned special edition of the *MA* honouring Shaltūt's assuming the Rectorate gave particular prominence to this *tafsīr*.[6] The JT itself was of course overjoyed about his appointment. Nonetheless, among all the approval and satisfaction, in his usual editorial in the *RI*, Muḥammad Muḥammad al-Madanī could not restrain himself from pointing out that the Azhar's official attitude toward the JT had changed "time and again" (*ḥīnan baʿd ḥīn*) and that in order to attain the hoped-for

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[4] *OM* 38/1958/761, 843; al-Bahayy: *Ḥayātī fi riḥāb al-Azhar*, 64; the dating is based on the decree of ʿAbd al-Nāṣir, which was printed on p. [1] of the special edition of the *MA ʿadad mumtāz* (see following note); *OM* has October 22, ʿAbd al-ʿAẓīm: *Mashyakhat al-Azhar*, 185, October 13, 1958.

[5] *ʿAdad mumtāz*, *MA*, unpaginated section preceding 30/4 (Oct. 1958); Muḥammad Nūr al-Ḥasan became Shaltūt's successor as *wakīl*; see the likewise unpaginated supplement (two pages) to *MA* 30/6 (Dec. 1958).

[6] *ʿAdad mumtāz*, [5]; cf. al-Madanī: "Ṣafḥa bayḍā' min jihād Shaltūt (. . .)", *MA* 35/6 (Jan. 1964), 653ff.

unity, it would indeed be helpful if the University could commit itself to a single, binding direction.[7]

Maḥmūd Shaltūt got down to work immediately, swearing the Azhar to this new line and thus producing proof that the laurels that had been bestowed upon him from all sides were justified. The first step was the dismissal of Muḥibb al-Dīn al-Khaṭīb as editor in chief of the Azhar journal, which passed off without much fanfare in January 1959. Actually, the overall authority to dictate the periodical's appearance that that he had enjoyed in former years had no longer been in al-Khaṭīb's hands for quite some time. Especially on the issue of the Islamic denominations' relationship to each other, he was obliged, presumably against his will, to swallow that the tone in "his" journal became noticeably more conciliatory.[8]

In Aḥmad Ḥasan al-Zayyāt, from whom al-Khaṭīb had inherited the office six-and-a-half years earlier, Shaltūt gained an old wayfaring companion as al-Khaṭīb's successor.[9] At the new editor in chief's side stood the important author and publicist ʿAbbās Maḥmūd al-ʿAqqād, who had made a name for himself by writing historical works in which he presented a view of history favourable to the Shiites and at the same time obviously critical of the Umayyads. As a result, on several occasions he had been severely censured by neo-Salafi authors such as Fatḥī ʿUthmān, who showed themselves to be epigones of al-Khaṭīb.[10] Al-ʿAqqād's appointment may be taken as a

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[7] al-Madanī: editorial of *RI* 11/1959/3f. (quotation p. 4).

[8] A good example of how the *MA* opened up to the ecumenical attitude after Shaltūt's ascent to the uppermost floor of the Azhar is the article "Ḥurriyyat al-fikr kamā qarrarahā al-islām", in which Yāsīn Suwaylim Ṭāhā pleaded for inner-Islamic tolerance and against religious bigotry (*taʿaṣṣub*); *MA* 30/1 (Jul. 1958), 48–54; at the beginning of the 1960s, Ṭāhā also wrote regularly for the *RI*.

[9] Regarding al-Zayyāt, see above, p. 125 note 16; the assumption that in fact al-Khaṭīb, who was then 73 years old, retired out of disagreement with the Azhar's new direction (and was not simply pensioned off due to his age) is supported by the fact that his successor was one year older than he. In the 1960s al-Zayyāt became an unquestioning supporter of ʿAbd al-Nāṣir in the propagation of the latter's Islamic-socialist politics, see Vatikiotis: "Islam and the Foreign Policy of Egypt", esp. 142f.; Maḥmūd Abū Rayya claimed that a refutation he had aimed at al-Khaṭīb was ultimately one of the reasons for the latter's dismissal as editor in chief of the *MA*; see his *Shaykh al-maḍīra Abū Hurayra*, 30 note 2.

[10] Ende: *Arabische Nation*, 105–07; concerning al-ʿAqqād (1889–1964), see al-Ziriklī III/266f.; *MDA* III/ 849–64; Kaḥḥāla M/323–25; *EI*[2] S/57 (R. Allen); J. Brugman: *An Introduction to the History of Modern Arabic Literature in Egypt*, Leiden 1984, 121–38 (ibid., 382–87 about al-Zayyāt); obituary and further information in *Arabica* 11/1964/213–16 (Ch. Vial); cf. also *RI* 5/1953/318f., 323–25; there seem, however, to have been also some cases of Shiite refutations: al-Amīnī mentions a book

further indication that what was taking place was not merely a change in staff. Rather, a fundamental reorientation at all levels was initiated as the result of which the neo-Salafiyya were to be deprived of their last important avenue of expression within the Egyptian scholarly community subsequent to the prohibition of the Muslim Brotherhood.

Simultaneously to the break with the past in terms of personnel, Maḥmūd Shaltūt turned to the public in a series of programmatic newspaper interviews in order to introduce the topics to which he wanted to devote his immediate attention. The beginning comprised a pair of lengthy conversations with journalists of the two Egyptian daily papers *al-Masāʾ* and *al-Shaʿb* that appeared on January 17 and February 5, 1959, respectively.[11] Concurrently Shaltūt was very much concerned not to limit the effect of his enunciations to Egypt exclusively and offered the widely read Tehran newspaper *Eṭṭelāʿāt* a similar opportunity for a long interview.[12] In all these comments he inter alia got to talking about both the relationship between Sunnis and Shiites and the attitude of the Azhar toward this issue.

As one of his most urgent tasks in this connection, Shaltūt identified the need to establish the instruction of Shiite law on a permanent basis in the Faculty of *Sharīʿa*. He further referred explicitly to the fact that he himself had taught comparative law (*al-muqārana bayn al-madhāhib*) and had frequently applied Shiite law in his *fatwā*s, especially in the areas of divorce law and civil status law in general.[13] He also did not neglect to emphasize the importance of the JT, to whom gratitude was owed for the publication of al-Ṭabrisī's Koran commentary *Majmaʿ al-bayān*, behind which ʿAbd al-Majīd Salīm had been the driving force. His own involvement in the organization, he concluded, had also enabled him to come into contact with numerous Shiite scholars, particularly Muḥammad al-Ḥusayn Āl Kāshif al-Ghiṭāʾ with whom he had corresponded.[14]

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by a certain Taqī K-m-b-w-h al-Hindī: *Radd mā awradahu al-ʿAqqād fī kitābihi ʿAbqariyyat al-Imām*, Najaf 1375/1955 (*MMN* 196 [no. 733]).

[11] For the dating, see *al-ʿIrfān* 46/7 (Mar. 1959), 608; cf. also Ende: "Azhar", 312.

[12] The latter interview was published on 21 Esfand 1337sh (corresponding to March 12, 1959; see the reprint in *Maktab-e Eslām*, mentioned below in note 15; al-Raḍawī: *Fī sabīl al-waḥda al-islāmiyya*, 26f., also quoted from a conversation that appeared on February 15, 1959, in the Baghdadi newspaper *al-Yaqẓa*.

[13] *Ārāʾ wa-aḥādith* (see note 15), [23].

[14] Ibid., [24]; Shaltūt's contention that this correspondence was included ("after p. 56") in the tenth edition of Muḥammad al-Ḥusayn's principal work *Aṣl al-shīʿa wa-uṣūluhā*, printed in Cairo, proves incorrect, however, at least when looking at the

The reverberation Shaltūt produced with these statements was thunderous. Excerpts from the interviews of varying length and detail were immediately printed in national religious periodicals in Egypt, Iran and Lebanon. On this occasion, the Azhar journal brought out another special edition consisting of nothing but open conversations with the *Shaykh al-Azhar* that constituted what might be termed Shaltūt's "inaugural speech".[15] His constant demand that the Azhar had to be freed from religious narrow-mindedness and instead open itself to the ecumenical discussion was repeated in all his conversations, and the related announcement that he wanted to introduce Shiite law and comparative jurisprudence into the curriculum fell on sympathetic ears among the Shiites. The fine semantic distinction of Shaltūt's formulations and their consequences will be the topic of later discussion.

Muḥammad Jawād Mughniyya, who as is well known had attentively followed the Azhar's course over the previous years, quoted Shaltūt's explanations in detail in a commentary for the *ʿIrfān* calling them "the most suitable means for reaching rapprochement, harmony and solidarity among Muslims". Simultaneously, he announced his desire to take Shaltūt at his word in regard to his promise to introduce Jaʿfarī law.[16] Somewhat more reserved but by no means inimical, Nizār al-Zayn, the son and later successor to Aḥmad ʿĀrif al-Zayn as editor of the *ʿIrfān*, voiced his hope saying that through Shaltūt's work people of the likes of al-Khaṭīb, al-Mallāḥ, and "some Wahhabis" would be led in the right direction.[17]

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edition put out by Murtaḍā al-Raḍawī: in it, on p. 57, the author's preface to the second edition begins, and the name Shaltūt does not appear anywhere in the book.

[15] "Ārā' wa-aḥādīth li-ṣāḥib al-faḍīla (. . .) Shaltūt", *MA*, unpaginated section (24 pages) preceding 30/8 (Feb. 1959), there the interviews from *al-Shaʿb* [14]–[21] and from *al-Masā'* [22]–[24] are found; further quotations in *RI* 11/1959/107–09 (from *al-Masā'*); almost identical with *MA*) and 217–21 (from *Eṭṭelāʿāt*); *al-ʿIrfān* 46/7 (Mar. 1959), 610 (from *al-Shaʿb*); Majd al-Dīn Majalātī: "Yek taḥawwol-e fekrī-ye bozorg dar ʿolūm-e eslāmī", *Maktab-e Eslām* 1/5 (Apr. 1959), 58–62 (from *Eṭṭelāʿāt*, via *RI*; with Majalātī's comments of praise); based on these publications, Shaltūt's remarks are furthermore quoted in Najāt: *ʿAwl wa taʿṣīb*, 601–18 (Persian translation with the Arabic original in the notes), as well as in al-Raḍawī: *Fī sabīl al-waḥda al-islāmiyya*, 27–38; cf. also *MA* 35/6 (Jan. 1964), 653f.

[16] Mughniyya: "al-Shīʿa wa-Shaykh al-Azhar", *al-ʿIrfān* 46/7 (Mar. 1959), 608–10 (quotations 610); reprinted in idem: *Min hunā wa-hunāk*, 95–98; cf. ibid., 130f.; a letter of reply from Shaltūt dated March 7, in which he thanks Mughniyya for his kind article is printed in *al-ʿIrfān* 46/8 (Apr. 1959), 708.

[17] *al-ʿIrfān* 46/7 (Mar. 1959), 611f.

Other Shiite scholars expressed themselves by responding with positive expectation in letters sent directly to Shaltūt. Only a few years earlier, the avowed *taqrīb* supporter Muḥammad b. Muḥammad Mahdī al-Khāliṣī would have hardly had the notion to utter a kindly word about the Azhar and its leadership. On this occasion he wrote Shaltūt, whom he had met years ago through ʿAbd al-Majīd Salīm, a letter of thanks, as did Aḥmad ʿĀrif al-Zayn, who thereby dropped the reservations concerning rapprochement he had formerly articulated.[18]

At the very latest, after a short biography of Shaltūt had also been printed in the *ʿIrfān*,[19] the *Shaykh al-Azhar* had now become a known entity far beyond the boundaries of Egypt, and particularly in the Shiite world. The question of ecumenical rapprochement seemed to have become a central issue for the Azhar on a previously unknown scale, and it now produced justifiable hope for the first time in the modern era that the conflict between Sunnis and Shiites could be settled at the highest level. At a single stroke, the announcement of Shaltūt's desire to push through the instruction of Shiite law at the Azhar, which can truly be termed revolutionary, engendered greater public interest in the ecumenical movement and the JT than had ever existed in the twelve previous years of its work.

The high expectations that had been aroused in the first months of the year 1959 were not to be disappointed, at least initially. In a further interview with the correspondent of the *al-Shaʿb* newspaper, Maḥmūd Salīma, Shaltūt reinforced his ecumenical point of view and this time went even a major step further: He accepted and explicitly sanctioned the possibility of inner-Islamic conversion of Sunnis to Shiism and vice versa.

The conversation was apparently conducted on July 5, 1959 and appeared two days later in the Beirut newspaper *al-Ḥayāt* and elsewhere[20] to coincide with the beginning of the Hijra year 1379. Its decisive passages read as follows:

> 1. Islam does not oblige any of its adherents to be affiliated with a specific *madhhab*. Rather, we say: Every Muslim has, first of all, the

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[18] The correspondence is found in *MA* 30/9 (Mar. 1959), 761–64 (al-Khāliṣī) and 30/10 (Apr. 1959), 904–06 (al-Zayn; Shaltūt's letter to him was also published in *al-ʿIrfān* 46/8 [Apr. 1959], 706f.); cf. moreover *MA* 30/8 (Feb. 1959), 689.

[19] *al-ʿIrfān* 46/9 (May 1959), 811f.; the curriculum vitae was taken from the special edition *ʿadad mumtāz* of the *MA*; see above, note 5, therein pp. [4f.].

[20] Regarding the dating of the conversation, see Ende: "Azhar", 313f.

> right to follow any of the legal schools that have been properly handed down and whose rules in their specific (legal) effects are laid down in writing. A person who follows one of these schools is entitled to turn to any other without being subjected to reproach.
>
> 2. In the sense of the religious law of Islam (*sharʿan*), it is allowed to perform the divine service (*taʿabbud*) in accordance with the rite of the Jaʿfariyya, which is known as *Shīʿa imāmiyya*, in the same way as in accordance with all schools of the Sunnis.[21]

Before Shaltūt, no Sunni legal scholar of rank, let alone a *Shaykh al-Azhar*, had gone as far to recognize Shiism as a completely equal denomination. The whole quarrel that had lasted for centuries around the question of which of the two groups embodied the "true" Islam and therefore was more entitled to claim leadership of all Muslims was at once wiped away and boiled down to a choice left to the individual believer between two legal systems that did not stand in any type of mutually competitive relationship whatsoever.

The Shiite *ʿulamāʾ*, or at least those who equally favoured a settlement between Sunnism and Shiism, immediately recognized the historical chance that Shaltūt's words offered. It was obviously due to an initiative on the part of the JT that Shaltūt published the abovementioned passages of the conversation once again in the form of a legal opinion, a *fatwā*, disseminated by the *taqrīb* organization. For this purpose he added two more sections in which he merely varied what he had already stated.

In all probability, Āyatollāh Borūjerdī was the driving force behind the JT's venture. Although he did not appear publicly in the course of the discussion, his contacts with individual Azharīs that had existed from the era of ʿAbd al-Majīd Salīm as well as his role as *éminence grise* in the JT make such an assumption that is also substantiated by his biographers appear justified.[22] Āyatollāh Montaẓerī also recalls in his memoirs that Shaltūt's *fatwā* was the result of Borūjerdī's activities.[23]

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[21] Following the translation ibid., 313; see also below, notes 27 and 72.

[22] Dawwānī: *Zendegānī*, 121; Ṭabāṭabāʾī: *Khāṭerāt*, 121; *Nedāʾī az sar-zamīn-e Bayt ol-Moqaddas*, 42f.; Sharīʿatī: *Tashayyoʿ-e ʿalawī*, 250; *Dāʾerat ol-maʿāref-e tashayyoʿ*, III/198; Muhaddith: *Conspiracies*, 13f.; Fashshāhī: preface to Kamareʾī: *Payām-e Īrān*, 9; Ṣāliḥ al-Shahrastānī in *al-ʿIrfān* 56/7 (Dec. 1968), 729–60, on 742; cf. further Bagley: "Religion and State (2)", 38; Ende: "Azhar", 314; Fischer: *Iran*, 178; S.A.A. Rizvi: *Iran. Royalty, Religion and Revolution*, Canberra 1980, 236.

[23] Montaẓerī: *Matn-e kāmel*, 80.

Since triumph, as is generally known, has many begetters, it should come as no surprise that (although not until 23 years later) the Lebanese-born head of the Detroit Shiite Muslim community, Muḥammad Jawād Shirrī, publicized the contention that it was actually he who had travelled to Cairo in 1959 and convinced ʿAbd al-Nāṣir and Shaltūt—in this order—of the *fatwā*'s necessity.[24] Whether or not Shirrī's effort was an attempt to take credit for someone else's achievement, the fact remains that he must be acknowledged for having immediately sent Shaltūt a congratulatory telegram, making him one of the first (if not *the* first?) to speak explicitly of a "*fatwā*".[25]

Exactly when the step occurred at which the *fatwā* was constructed literally "with scissors and glue"[26] from these two parts of the press interview that had not been immediately consecutive cannot be ascertained. In the first comments of Lebanese Sunni and Shiite scholars published in the Azhar journal together with the text of the conversation taken from *al-Ḥayāt*,[27] the principal focus of attention was reserved for the topic of the contemplated instruction of Shiite law

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[24] Chirri: *Inquiries about Islam*, 177–81; idem: *The Brother of the Prophet Mohammad*, 7f., 378–82; a Persian translation that differs from it in detail is in Shirrī: *Shīʿe wa tohmathā-ye nā-rawā*, 117–20, where interestingly, ʿAbd al-Nāṣir's name is not noted; this last-mentioned book is a translation from the Arabic, cf. *Mishkāt* 32/1370sh/195f.; regarding Shirrī (died 1994) see the short biography in the cited book *Shīʿe*, 5–7 as well as the short obituary in *Ahl al-bayt* (London) no. 27 (Dec. 1994–Jan. 1995), p. 16; in regard to his book *al-Khilāfa fī l-dustūr al-islāmī*, which allegedly came about in response to a request by ʿAbd al-Ḥusayn Sharaf al-Dīn, see *al-ʿIrfān* 33/1 (Dec. 1946), 111; cf. in addition B.C. Aswad: "The Lebanese Muslim Community in Dearborn, Michigan", in: A. Hourani/N. Shehadi (eds.): *The Lebanese in the World (. . .)*, London 1992, 167–87, where (175f.) Shirrī's *taqrīb* contention is uncritically adopted; also L.S. Walbridge: "Confirmation of Shīʿism in America. An Analysis of Sermons in the Dearborn Mosques", *MW* 83/1993/248–62; according to her (249), Shirrī supposedly received financial support from ʿAbd al-Nāṣir; cf. also A. Sachedina: "A Minority within a Minority: The Case of the Shiʿa in North America", in: Y.Y. Haddad/J.I. Smith (eds.): *Muslim Communities in North America*, New York 1994, 3–14; "Muslimūn, 4. The so-called 'Black Muslims' or Bilāliyyūn", *EI*[2] VII/702–04 (S.v. Sicard), where (703) it is reported that the former leader of the Black Muslims, Elijah Muhammad, (also?) visited Egypt in 1959 and met with ʿAbd al-Nāṣir and Shaltūt.

[25] Printed in *MA* 31/1 (July 1959), 124 ("al-madhhab al-jaʿfarī", with the wrong name al-Sirrī given), and again 31/2 (Aug. 1959), 244.

[26] "mit Schere und Leim": Ende: "Azhar", 314.

[27] "Bayn al-sunna wa-l-shīʿa", *MA* 31/2 (Aug. 1959), 239–44 and 256; the passages from which the *fatwā* was put together are on pp. 240a, (question) and 241 (reply); the Lebanese mentioned besides Shirrī were Muḥammad ʿAlāya, Muḥammad al-Ṣādiq, Shafīq Yamūr, Muṣṭafā al-Rāfiʿī, Ḥusayn Khaṭīb, ʿAbdallāh al-Niʿma, ʿAbdallāh al-ʿAlāyilī, and ʿĀdil ʿUsayrān; in addition Muḥammad al-Madanī made a long statement (242f.); cf. al-Zuʿbī: *Lā sunna wa-lā shīʿa*, 202f.

at the Azhar. Bearing in mind Shaltūt's pronouncements on the subject during the previous few months, the commentators almost uniformly referred to the Rector's "decision" (*al-qarār*). For its part, the *MA* articulated the matter more neutrally, speaking preliminarily of "statements" (*taṣrīḥāt*). The only variance to this practice were Shirrī and ʿĀdil ʿUsayrān, who already used the term "*fatwā*".

Shaltūt's letter to the JT contained the sections from the interview, which he, too, now explicitly designated as a *fatwā*, as well as a short dedication to the *taqrīb* society, but it was left undated. Wherever the letter was reprinted in facsimile in later years, this remained the state of affairs with two exceptions, namely in anthologies of *RI* articles edited by ʿAbd al-Karīm Bī Āzār al-Shīrāzī.[28] These, however, do not help much, since the date mentioned therein is manifestly wrong: on the seventeenth of Rabīʿ al-awwal 1378 (October 1, 1958) Shaltūt had not yet been appointed Rector.[29] It is of course conceivable that this was simply a typographical error and the correct reading should be 1379 instead of 1378, which would correspond to September 20, 1959.

Ultimately the *RI* also made a prompt reversal, and in the third issue of the year 1959 (published in July according to the title page) reprinted the crucial sections of the interview. The piece was already arranged in the order of the later *fatwā*, but nevertheless the editors avoided calling the child by its name in this and the following fascicle (October), making do with unofficial, meaningless phrases such as "the historical conversation", "the important historical decision", and "the historical document".[30]

To all appearances therefore, Shaltūt did not by any means initially intend to issue a formal *fatwā* about the recognition of Shiism as a

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[28] al-Shīrāzī: *al-Waḥda al-islāmiyya*, 20, and idem: *Eslām. Ā'īn-e hambastegī*, 246; cf. also Ende: "Azhar", 313 note 14.

[29] The wrong date (1958), which may have been based upon this work, is also found in Zebiri: "Shaykh Maḥmūd Shaltūt: Between Tradition and Modernity", 213 as well as in Akhavi: "The Impact of the Iranian Revolution", 139; a further example of a mistake caused by the strange background of the *fatwā*'s origin is Enayat: *Modern Islamic Political Thought*, 48f., who assessed Shaltūt's comments made in February as an official opinion disseminated by the *MA* and termed the actual *fatwā* its continuation ("a more explicit *fatwā*"). Akhtar reproduced Enayat's error in *Al-Tawḥīd* 2/1405/174f.

[30] *RI* 11/1959/227f. and 445; mention of a "historic *fatwā*" only appears in the table of contents of the third fascicle (p. 336), the placement being so out-of-the-way it can be presumed that this was rather a sounding out of whether it would be possible to turn the conversation into a *fatwā*.

legal school equal in rank to the Sunni schools. It was only later, presumably in the autumn of 1959 and under the impression of the overwhelming response to his comments, that he relented to the JT's urging and, under the letterhead of the Azhar Rectorate, sanctioned the paragraphs that had caused the greatest sensation as an official legal verdict. This consideration as well as the happenings after 1960 might have provoked Shaltūt's decision not to include this *fatwā* among the collection of his legal declarations that later appeared in book form and thus play down its significance substantially.[31]

Neither the background of the *fatwā*'s origin nor the fact that it was more or less a "second hand" legal opinion, though, detracted from the positive reaction it caused in the following months outside the *taqrīb* grouping among Shiites. Articles containing the text of the interview with *al-Masā'* or its essence were reprinted in Shiite religious journals in Lebanon and Iran and bestowed with an almost hymnal praise for Shaltūt in which the historical uniqueness of this event was given utmost emphasis.[32]

The opinion of Muḥammad ʿAlī al-Zuʿbī, who ascribed putting an end to a 1300-year-old conflict with so to speak a surprise attack through the mouthpiece (*bi-lisān*) of the Azhar to Jamāl ʿAbd al-Nāṣir's leadership,[33] reveals two important components. On the one hand it betrayed insight into *whom* the current situation of the ecumenical movement ultimately owed gratitude. On the other, it gave expression to what later proved to be a fatal misjudgement, i.e. that in fact with the decree of the *fatwā*, all problems had been solved. The magnitude of the Shiites' hope concerning the further course of events was made clear by their supreme representative, Āyatollāh

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[31] Cf. for example the twelfth edition, entitled *Fatāwā l-imām al-akbar Maḥmūd Shaltūt*, which appeared in 1983. In his main work *al-Islām ʿaqīda wa-sharīʿa*, published in 1959, Shaltūt likewise did not specifically go into relations with Shiism in a concrete way but restricted himself to a general chapter on the subject *ikhtilāf al-madhāhib* (primarily pp. 519ff.); in regard to this book, see the review in *MA* 31/6 (Dec. 1959), 628–34; also *MA* 35/6 (Jan. 1964), 709–11, as well as Y. Linant de Bellefonds: "A propos d'un livre récent du recteur d'al-Azhar", *Orient* (Paris) 19/1961/27–42.

[32] Cf. *Maktab-e Eslām* 2/3 (Feb. 1960), 2–6, esp. 2f.; the *ʿIrfān* actually printed the *fatwā* twice: first (*al-ʿIrfān* 47/3 [Nov. 1959], 298–301) in a verbatim reproduction of the article from the Azhar journal in which the interview and the reaction to it were reported (see above, note 27), and again (*al-ʿIrfān* 47/7 [Mar. 1960], 692) as a reprint of the actual *fatwā* from the *RI*.

[33] al-Zuʿbī: "al-Azhar wa-l-Najaf (. . .)", *al-ʿIrfān* 47/4 (Dec. 1959), 367–73, on 372f.; the Lebanese scholar Mūsā ʿIzz al-Dīn expressed similar enthusiasm, see *MA* 31/9 (Mar. 1960), 108.

Borūjerdī, who sent a delegation to Cairo headed by Khalīl Kamare'ī in order to extend his thanks to Shaltūt.[34]

Striking in all of this is the restraint, bordering on aloofness, with which the *RI* treated the topic considering that in an article only four years earlier, ʿAbd al-Mutaʿāl al-Ṣaʿīdī had expressly demanded the possibility to change one's *madhhab*.[35] Indeed Moḥammad Taqī Qommī took it upon himself to distribute the *fatwā* personally among the Shiite scholars of Iran,[36] but nothing of its far-reaching implications was to be sensed in the columns of the journal of "his" organization.

Only Muḥammad al-Ghazzālī emerged as ready to take up the cudgels for the decree, and in a short item on the occasion of the ecumenical agreement's rapid advance, he repudiated Goldziher's remarks about Nādir Shāh.[37] Otherwise, however, the *RI* devoted only a single page to the reactions to the *fatwā*, and even here the reference remained rather vague that countless letters from around the world had reached the editorial staff. Since no edition of the journal could offer space that would suffice to acknowledge these comments adequately, it was announced that they were to be gathered and published in a separate volume, something that has never come about to the best of my knowledge.[38]

When looking for an explanation why the JT remained so strangely taciturn in the moment of its greatest triumph, two related phenomena that shaped the ecumenical discourse in the years 1958 through 1960 come to the fore. At first glance, they seem to have been responsible for the *taqrīb* movement's success, but regarded from a distance and against the background of their repercussions, they must be seen as signalling the beginning of its downfall.

One factor can be termed external, for it eluded the JT's direct influence; the other one was internal and insofar immediately related to the *taqrīb* movement's self-perception. The former refers to the international political situation as it unfolded after 1958 among Egypt, Iran and Iraq, but since this shaped the transition to the extensive organizational breakdown of the JT that occurred in 1960–61, it

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[34] *Nedā'ī az sar-zamīn-e Bayt ol-Moqaddas*, 142f.; see also above, p. 192.

[35] al-Ṣaʿīdī: "Saʿy qadīm fī tawḥīd (!) al-madhāhib", *RI* 7/1955/35–39.

[36] According to the caption, a photo printed in al-Shīrāzī: *al-Waḥda al-islāmiyya*, 21, shows the delivery of the text of the *fatwā* to Shiite *'ulamā'* in Khorāsān.

[37] al-Ghazzālī: "'Alā awā'il al-ṭarīq", *RI* 11/1959/412–16; cf. idem: *Difāʿ ʿan al-ʿaqīda*, 327f.; cf. also above, p. 32 note 27.

[38] *RI* 11/1959/445.

shall not be discussed for the moment. Instead, priority will be given to the second point that centred on the question about the specific position the instruction of Shiite law was to have at the Azhar. In concrete terms: whether or not a chair for Jaʿfarī and/or Zaydī fiqh was to be created in the Department of *Sharīʿa*.

The topic as such was certainly far from new: Already in 1923, when Muḥsin al-Amīn came to Cairo for the second time, he complained about the fact that the Shiites had neither their own school nor their own *riwāq* at the Azhar.[39] Also, an article about the Azhar published in the *ʿIrfān* in the autumn of 1928 began with the succinct criticism that it was extremely strange how there was not a single Shiite student and that Shiite law and theology were not taught in a university which after all had been established by Shiites.[40]

During ʿAbd al-Karīm al-Zanjānī's conversations with Muḥammad Muṣṭafā al-Marāghī, this problem also appears to have been on the agenda. Al-Zanjānī's biographer, Muḥammad Hādī al-Daftar, reports (albeit very scantily) about a dialogue between the two scholars that addressed the topic.[41] But these early efforts never came to anything more than what was at least a demand expressed publicly in the *MA* for the instruction of "the ʿAlid legal school" (*al-madhāhib al-ʿalawiyya*) at the Azhar.[42]

The JT soon placed this demand at the centre of its activity, invoking article three of its statutes which said, among other things, that effort was to be made to insure that all schools of Islamic law were represented at Islamic universities everywhere.[43] Comparative jurisprudence as taught at the Azhar was certainly praised, but Qommī let it be understood that this was no substitute for the actual goal: that Shiite law be an independent field of study.[44] Particularly under the impression

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[39] al-Amīn: *Riḥalāt*, 61f.; the expression *riwāq* (pl. *arwiqa*; literally: tent) designated the Azhar students' traditional living accommodations, which were segregated according to region of origin and legal school; see "Riwāḳ", *EI*[2] VIII/544f. (N. Rabbat); also "Azhar", *EI*[1] I/553–61, esp. 554f. (K. Vollers).

[40] "al-Jāmiʿ al-Azhar", *al-ʿIrfān* 16/3 (Oct. 1928), 241–47, on 241.

[41] al-Daftar: *Ṣafḥa*, 187.

[42] Badr al-Dīn ʿAlāʾ al-Dīn: "al-Madhāhib al-islāmiyya", *MA* 9/1938–39/180f.; ʿAlāʾ al-Dīn counted the Zaydiyya, the Imāmiyya and the Ismāʿīliyya "if they still exist" (*in kān lahu* [*i.e. madhhab al-Ismāʿīliyya*] *baqiyya*) among them, with the last-mentioned having the most justifiable claim to this (*fa-huwa al-aḥaqq min siwāhu*). This wording referred to al-Marāghī's contacts with their leader, the Āghā Khān; see above, p. 114 note 122.

[43] Cf. above, p. 137.

[44] *RI* 1/1949/90f.; Qommī in *RI* 2/1950/168f.

of the Tehran University's decision to establish two chairs for Shāfiʿī and Ḥanafī law,[45] Muḥammad Ṣāliḥ al-Ḥāʾirī al-Māzandarānī even went a step further and explicitly demanded comparable treatment for Shiism in Sunni countries and in particular at the Azhar.[46]

Qommī though preferred to remain less unequivocal. He indeed stressed that the concern with Shiite law should be placed at the very top of the Azhar's priority list, but in the published text, the crucial word (يعلموا) was printed unvocalized, which left it to the reader to decide whether he was saying "the people of the Azhar have to know (*yaʿlamū*) the Shiite sciences" or "the people of the Azhar have to teach (*yuʿallimū*) the Shiite sciences". His first call of this kind had fallen on deaf ears at the Azhar in the spring of 1953. Now, four years later and under circumstances that were gradually becoming more favourable, Qommī decided to repeat the same paragraph in the journal in almost identical form, including the deliberate ambiguity—assuming it was intended as such.[47]

In the meantime, prominent Sunni scholars such as Muḥammad Abū Zahra and Muḥammad al-Ghazzālī had also lent their voices in support of the demand for Shiite law to be taught at the Azhar in one form or another,[48] and at the end of 1957, for the first time, everything seemed to be in place. On the occasion of the appearance of al-Muḥaqqiq al-Ḥillī's *al-Mukhtaṣar al-nāfiʿ*, the Minister of *Awqāf*, Aḥmad Ḥasan al-Bāqūrī, made the casual remark in an interview that one of the goals of publishing the volume was to add Shiism alongside the four legal schools taught in Egypt.[49] Shortly thereafter, the *ʿIrfān* reported in an inconspicuous four-line announcement that the *Shaykh al-Azhar* (still ʿAbd al-Raḥmān Tāj at the time) had decided to introduce the study of Shiite law in a form that was analogous to that of the four Sunni *madhāhib* at the Azhar and to declare Shiism an official legal school.[50]

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[45] *RI* 3/1951/106; cf. Rondot: "Les Chiites et l'unité de l'Islam", 69.

[46] al-Māzandarānī in *RI* 3/1951/403–33, on 409, 426f. and 428.

[47] Qommī in *RI* 5/1953/146–51, on 150f. (reprinted in al-Shīrāzī: *al-Waḥda al-islāmiyya*, 63–69), and 9/1957/20–24 (with the meaningful title "Time is on our side": *al-Zamān fī jānibinā*).

[48] Abū Zahra: *Muḥāḍarāt ʿan al-mīrāth ʿind al-jaʿfariyya*, 1–3; al-Ghazzālī: *Ẓalām min al-gharb*, 249f.; cf. on the other hand the decisive rejection in *MA* 25/9 (May 1954), 1082f.

[49] *RI* 9/1957/218; ʿAbd al-Ḥusayn Sharaf al-Dīn and Āghā Bozorg al-Ṭehrānī likewise brought the book edition in connection with this topic, see *al-ʿIrfān* 45/4 (Jan. 1958), 391f., and *Dharīʿa* XIII/50 and XX/213; cf. also Qommī in *RI* 11/1959/358.

[50] *al-ʿIrfān* 45/3 (Dec. 1957), 302.

After the ubiquitous Muḥammad Jawād Mughniyya had greeted this information as "a significant, radical change",[51] the unthankful task of dampening the high-flown expectations was left to Aḥmad ʿĀrif al-Zayn. The Azhar envoy in Beirut, Muʿawwaḍ ʿAwaḍ Ibrāhīm, had informed him at a funeral service to honour ʿAbd al-Ḥusayn Sharaf al-Dīn, who had passed away shortly before, that the whole thing had simply been a premature announcement. Despite appropriate efforts in this direction, no concrete steps had yet been taken.[52]

In view of this prelude that lasted years, it was only logical that Shaltūt's interviews at the beginning of 1959, and especially those comments in July that later led to the aforementioned *fatwā*, kindled the debate anew. Shaltūt's imprecisely formulated statement, which he possibly left vague on purpose, formed the starting point: He wanted to help in putting through "the course of study of those schools of Islamic law whose foundations were known and outlines clear", to which the Imāmī and Zaydī *madhāhib* "unquestionably" belonged, in the Department of *Sharīʿa*.[53]

This was already enough for the Shiite commentators, first and foremost Mughniyya, to see therein a pledge for Shiite *fiqh* to have a chair of its own. Since Shaltūt made no effort whatsoever to deny these reports, his renewed comments on the topic at the beginning of July were seen as a confirmation of the previous assumptions, although this time he had explicitly spoken of reforming the curriculum of the Department of Comparative Jurisprudence in the *Sharīʿa* faculty. Not a word of a Shiite chair (*kursī*) was mentioned in this statement.[54] Nevertheless, concurrent with the interview, on July 7, Egyptian and Lebanese newspapers distributed the message that the establishment of a chair for Shiite law at the Azhar had been decided. Based on this announcement, the rumour quickly caught the attention of European observers, whence it found its way into some of the secondary literature and is asserted there until today.[55]

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[51] Mughniyya in *al-ʿIrfān* 45/4 (Jan. 1958), 309–12, primarily 311f.; he referred here to the Cairene journal *Ākhir sāʿa* of November 13, 1957.

[52] al-Zayn in *al-ʿIrfān* 45/6 (Mar. 1958), 571–76.

[53] *MA*, preceding 30/8 (Feb. 1959), [24] (from the January interview with *al-Masāʾ*).

[54] *MA* 31/2 (Aug. 1959), 239ff.; already in February he had talked about *fiqh muqāran* in *al-Shaʿb*, but this seems to have been submerged by the general tumult caused by the interviews; see *MA*, preceding 30/8 (Feb. 1959), [18].

[55] *OM* 39/1959/551 (with reference to *L'Orient*, Beirut); *Cahiers de l'Orient Contemporain* 16/1959/40/239 (with reference to *al-Ahrām* and *al-Jumhūriyya*, Cairo, as well as *L'Orient*); Rondot: "Les chiites et l'unité de l'Islam", 66f. (*AFP* and *L'Orient*); idem:

When the speculation, in which Moḥammad Taqī Qommī also finally participated,[56] made its way into the Azhar journal,[57] however, the Dean of the Department of *Sharīʿa*, Muḥammad Muḥammad al-Madanī, already well known as editor in chief of the *RI*, saw himself obliged to set things straight. He did this in a way that left nothing to interpretation and can almost be viewed as a snub of the Shia. In a lengthy article in the *MA* issue of December 1959, he let it be known that the goal of Shaltūt's initiative had not been to teach Imāmī and Zaydī *fiqh* independently and thus increase the number of the schools of law represented at the Azhar to six. Rather from the very beginning, it had merely been planned to teach the Shiite *madhāhib* at the Azhar within the framework of comparative jurisprudence, as, by the way, had already been the case at the University since 1936.[58]

The essence of what was said meant therefore that the entire discussion of the last few months and all the hopes among the Shiites that their denomination could be put de facto and de jure on equal footing with Sunnism, had definitely been premature. In contrast to the picture of a comprehensive ecumene that had been portrayed, the Azhar did not intend (and had in fact never intended) to change the status quo in any way. In order to preclude misunderstandings of the kind that had arisen after Shaltūt's interviews and which had set the debate in motion, al-Madanī made sure that his article appeared, in a slightly expanded form, simultaneously in the JT's journal.[59] After

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Der Islam und die Mohammedaner von heute, Stuttgart 1963, 219f.; J. Gutkowski: "Nowe prady w islamie: stworzenie na universitecie Al-Azhar katedry szyickiej", *Przeglad Orientalistyczny* (Warsaw) 34/1960/2/231–33; cf. Falaturi: "Die Zwölfer-Schia", 62 note 1; Lazarus-Yafeh: "Contemporary Religious Thought", 231f.; "Ikhtilāf", *EI*[2] III/1062 (J. Schacht); Sivan: *Sunni Radicalism*, 3; Zebiri: *Shaltut*, 25; Akhavi: "The Impact of the Iranian Revolution", 159; cf. also the article "al-Azhar" in *Dāʾerat al-maʿāref-e bozorg-e eslāmī*, VIII/69.

[56] Qommī in *RI* 11/1959/358.

[57] *MA* 31/2 (Aug. 1959), 241.

[58] al-Madanī: "Rajjat al-baʿth al-jadīd fī kulliyyat al-sharīʿa", *MA* 31/6 (Dec. 1959), 526–36, esp. 529f., 532; in fact Muḥammad Abū Zahra had already pointed out several years before that Aḥmad Ibrāhīm, who died in 1945 (see al-Ziriklī I/90), had been the first Sunni legal scholar to espouse the study of Shiite law at the Azhar (though without stepping directly into the ecumenical debate): *Liwāʾ al-islām* 9/6 (Sep.–Oct. 1955), 392 and Abū Zahra: *al-Mīrāth ʿind al-jaʿfariyya*, 2f.; cf. also Ibrāhīm: *al-Sunna wa-l-shīʿa*, 27.

[59] *RI* 11/1959/373–88, esp. 378f., 381; a Persian translation of this article was published in *Maktab-e Eslām* 2/5 (May 1960), 68ff., and 2/6 (June 1960), 43ff., though under the misleading title "al-Azhar shīʿe-rā moʿarrefī mīkonad". The pas-

this turn, there could be no more doubt about the Azhar leadership's determination to rebuff the idea of granting Shiite law an independent place at the University once and for all. Shaltūt, too, himself later rendered his statements more precisely in this respect.[60]

Muḥammad Jawād Mughniyya's prompt reaction demonstrated that the Shiite *ʿulamāʾ* in the *taqrīb* movement had clearly understood the signal sent by al-Madanī. In a contribution to the *RI*, he criticized the Azhar's limiting the issue to comparative jurisprudence as inadequate and gave free rein to his disappointment about the meagre results of the discussion.[61] At this point in time at the very latest, it must have become clear to the JT that the putative triumph of the ecumenical idea, i.e. having moved Shaltūt to issue a *fatwā* based upon his newspaper interview of July 1959, was increasingly assuming the traits of a Pyrrhic victory.

With that the public debate around the creation of a chair for Shiite law at the Azhar was laid to rest. Despite the disillusioning course of the discussion, in the ecumenical literature of the last four decades, Shaltūt has almost unanimously been accorded merit for having supported the introduction of Shiism at the Cairene University.[62] Sometimes this has been touched up with subtle stylistic cosmetics in order to gloss over the distinct disappointment at the paltry results.[63]

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sages that were either added for the *RI* or omitted from the *MA*, contain, interestingly, a short treatise on the Imamate/caliphate issue; closely following the article by Muḥammad Ṣāliḥ al-Ḥāʾirī al-Māzandarānī that had appeared the previous year in *RI* 3/1951/403–33 (see above, pp. 224f.), al-Madanī stressed that there was no contradiction between the two institutions since, in the eyes of the Shiites, too (i.e. according to al-Māzandarānī), Imam and caliph did not necessarily have to be one and the same person. He apparently considered it unnecessary in the *MA* to repeat this manifest attempt at bringing the abrupt rejection of the application for the chair to a relatively conciliatory end.

[60] In his preface (April 14, 1960) to Muṣṭafā al-Shakʿa's *Islām bi-lā madhāhib*, 23; in September 1959, he had still evaded a direct reply to this question, see *MA* 31/3 (Sep. 1959), 362f. and 383.

[61] Mughniyya: "al-Azhar wa-fiqh al-shīʿa", *RI* 12/1960/33–36; reprinted in idem: *Min hunā wa-hunāk*, 271–74 and al-Shīrāzī: *al-Waḥda al-islāmiyya*, 498–501.

[62] al-Bahādilī: *al-Ḥawza al-ʿilmiyya*, 155f.; Fashshāhī in the preface to Kamareʾī: *Payām-e Īrān*, 9; Kamareʾī: *Rābiṭat al-ʿālam al-islāmī*, 26ff.; Mughniyya: *Tajārib*, 300f.; Najāt: *ʿAwl wa taʿṣīb*, 172ff.; Jaʿfar Sobḥānī: *Shakhṣiyyathā-ye eslāmī-ye shīʿe*, Qom 1354sh/1975, 7; Thābit: *al-Waḥda al-islāmiyya*, 7ff.; Hādī Faḍlallāh: "al-Jānib al-iṣlāḥī ʿind ʿAbd al-Ḥusayn Sharaf al-Dīn", in: *al-Imām al-sayyid ʿAbd al-Ḥusayn Sharaf al-Dīn*, 253–80, on 265; Moḥammad Sharīf Rāzī: *Cherā shīʿe shodam? (. . .)*, Tehran, s.d. (approx. 1965), 106f.; *Dharīʿa* XX/213; "al-Azhar", *Dāʾerat ol-maʿāref-e bozorg-e eslāmī*, VIII/63–74, on 69.

[63] Ṣāliḥ al-Shahrastānī: "Qum wa-jāmiʿatuhā (. . .)", *al-ʿIrfān* 56/7 (Dec. 1968), 729–60, on 742: it was decided to teach *jaʿfarī fiqh* among (*ḍimna*) the four other

This, however, can hardly obscure the fact that Shiism never attained an independent status in the University's curriculum, remaining permanently relegated to the position of a fifth wheel under the rubric "comparative law". Even this subject eked out a rather neglected existence at the University, the great reform of 1961 not altering this situation in the least.[64] For example, in an article about the mutual permeation of the schools of law, the Azharī ʿAlā' al-Dīn Shalabī in 1964 quite naturally spoke of the "four *madhāhib* currently being taught at the Azhar."[65]

An evaluation published in the same year by the *Awqāf* Ministry proved that the ecumenical excitement at the end of the 1950s had virtually no effect on the practical teaching activity of the Cairene University: In each of the years from 1957 to 1961, only one Iranian student came to study at the Azhar, and not a single lecture unambiguously devoted to a Shiism-related topic was held between 1958 and 1964.[66]

Reconsideration and, if necessary, rectification of this state of affairs at the Azhar for the benefit of Shiism was apparently given just as low a priority in later years as in 1959–60. When, in late summer 1971, Muḥammad Muḥammad al-Faḥḥām became the very first Rector of the Azhar to visit Qom, the topic was inevitably brought up, and again it was Muḥammad Jawād Mughniyya who formulated the Shiites' central demand. He asked the *Shaykh al-Azhar* frankly whether Jaʿfarī law was taught at the University like Sunni *fiqh*. The question was clearly an intentional provocation because Mughniyya undoubtedly knew that this was not the case. The Qom-based periodical *al-Hādī*, which gave a detailed account of the visit, indeed reported the question but avoided the reply in what was not a particularly adroit

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legal schools; Jawād Moṣṭafawī: "Etteḥād wa hambastegī (. . .)", *Mishkāt* 2/1362sh/25–60, on 50: a chair for Shiite law "was proposed" (*pīshnehād shod*); finally, Mortażā Moṭahharī speaks about a "chair for comparative jurisprudence"; cited in al-Bahādilī: *al-Ḥawza al-ʿilmiyya*, 156.

[64] Lemke: *Šaltūt*, 214–17, 236f.; in the Department of Theology (ibid., 206–14), Shiism was not represented at all; cf. *MA* 33/1 (June 1961), 121f.; also Muḥammad Fatḥī ʿUthmān: Introduction to al-Ṣaffār: *at-Taʿaddudiyya wa-l-ḥurriyya fī l-islām*, p. *n*; Muṣṭafā Mujāhid ʿAbd al-Raḥmān became Head of the Department of Comparative Jurisprudence.

[65] ʿAlā' al-Dīn Shalabī: "Tadākhul al-madhāhib al-fiqhiyya", *MA* 35/7–8 (Feb.–Mar. 1964), 791–94, on 791.

[66] Wizārat al-awqāf: *al-Azhar—tārīkhuhu wa-taṭawwuruhu*, Cairo 1964, 574, 587ff.; the number of Iranian students also did not increase later: 1961/62: 0; 1962/63: 1 and 1963/64: 2.

manner by beginning the following paragraph with the words: "After (al-Faḥḥām) had completed his answer, . . .".[67] The reader does not require an especially vivid imagination to guess the content of the reaction and why it had been suppressed.

The discussion of the significance of Shiite law at the Azhar has been given here so much attention with due consideration. In fact, the specifics reveal one of the most important reasons why at the moment of its seemingly greatest triumph, the ecumenical movement, embodied in the JT, was already veering toward collapse. Regardless of how tentatively the demand for it was articulated, the establishment of an independent Shiite chair at the most renowned Sunni university was one of the *taqrīb* organization's few concrete goals that went beyond platitudes and mere statements of intent. In line with its credo, according to which any rapprochement between the denominations could only prove successful when accompanied by efforts toward mutual understanding through the study of each other's writings, a signal, a signpost that was as permanent as visible was to be created, from which it would hardly have been possible to back down.

After Shaltūt's appointment as Rector, and in view of the political climate that prevailed in 1958–59 (to be discussed in the following section), the opportunity for this appeared more promising than ever. Less than fifteen months later, however, it turned out that not even the *taqrīb* protagonists among the Azhar *'ulamā'* were prepared to follow up on the first steps that had been taken with the publication of Shiite books in Cairo and the decree of the *fatwā* in the summer of 1959. Moreover, the brusque formulation with which al-Madanī brushed aside this request, and the fact that he did so in the *RI*, gives credence to the conclusion that from the very beginning and categorically, the Sunni position had never included long term and virtually irreversible actions for the consolidation of an inner-Islamic ecumene.

The JT was split over the issue and, grotesquely, this was along "strict party lines". On the one side were the Sunni Azharīs, such as al-Madanī and Shaltūt, for whom loyalty to their institution took priority over supporting ecumenical demands that might have compromised the interests of the University and reasons of state. In opposition to them were Qommī and Mughniyya as Shiite representatives

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[67] *al-Hādī* 1/1 (Sep. 1971), 137–54, on 141; cf. also al-Raḍawī: *Fī sabīl al-waḥda al-islāmiyya*, 60f.; regarding the visit of al-Faḥḥām in Qom, see below, pp. 359ff.

whose endeavours toward a permanent and independent presence of their denomination at the Azhar were sufficiently well-known.

One single legal opinion, and especially one that had been the product of such unusual circumstances and at the urging of the JT, or a few editions of what was anyway a small number of Shiite works, could not in any way, in terms of permanence, be measured against the reputation and renown that would have been attained by an Azhar professor. In fact the reverberation that the Shiite books caused in Egypt was extremely brief. As is well known, Muḥammad Jawād Mughniyya reported about his Cairo visit in 1963 that he had encountered frightful ignorance of Shiism among Sunni *ʿulamāʾ*, even at the Azhar.[68] Another example is the fact that at the beginning of 1967, the publicist ʿAbd al-Karīm al-Khaṭīb asked Murtaḍā al-Raḍawī, who was in Cairo at the time, to send him a copy of al-Ṭabrisī's Koran commentary *Majmaʿ al-bayān* upon his return to Iraq, since there were apparently none to be had at this time, although the JT still existed in Cairo.[69] It may be assumed that a chair for Shiite law would not only have counteracted this circumstance but would have generally helped propel *taqrīb* activities far more powerfully into the public's perception.

The orderly retreat that Shaltūt and al-Madanī, the foremost representatives of the Azhar in the JT, led in this question should not, however, be equated with a betrayal of the positions they previously espoused. No shadow of doubt can be cast upon their sincere ecumenical interest, as well as that of other Azhar scholars. Especially in the years 1959 and 1960, a clear, tangible effort to establish a more conciliatory tone was made in the Azhar journal as well, and this was reflected in the great number of articles devoted to the issue of Muslim unity.[70] The somewhat belated obituary to ʿAbd al-Majīd Salīm,

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[68] Mughniyya: "Fī l-Qāhira", in: idem: *Min hunā wa-hunāk*, 121–31; see above, pp. 203f.

[69] al-Raḍawī: *Maʿa rijāl al-fikr*, 202f.; concerning al-Khaṭīb (born 1920), see ibid., 200; the short-lived nature of the works published in the 1950s is also illustrated by Muḥammad Ḥusayn al-Dhahabī, who stated in the second edition of his book *al-Sharīʿa al-islāmiyya* in 1968 that one reason for its reissue was the fact that there were hardly any books in Egypt dealing with Shiite law—except in order to refute it (ibid., 6); al-Dhahabī, who temporarily served as Minister of *Awqāf*, was kidnapped and murdered in 1977 by the Islamist group *al-Takfīr wa-l-hijra*; cf. G. Kepel: *The Prophet and Pharao. Muslim Extremism in Egypt*, London 1985, 70–102, on 96ff., and Jansen: *The Dual Nature*, 75–94.

[70] Cf. for example ʿAbbās Ṭāhā: "Aṣl al-islām wa-l-taqrīb bayn al-umam washarāʾiʿihā al-mukhtalifa", *MA* 30/11–12 (May 1959), 1046–50; Maḥmūd Abū Rayya:

whose activity for the JT and significance for the Islamic ecumene were stressed emphatically, deserves special mention in this regard.[71]

It was not a disagreement in principle over whether there should be understanding between the denominations that heralded the beginning of the end of the *taqrīb* organization, but—yet again—the issue of how this rapprochement should actually be implemented at the Azhar. The fact that this basic contradiction emerged at the very moment when the problem was arising for the first time likewise proves that it was always much easier for the ecumenical endeavour to formulate general statements from a minority position than to put them into practice as soon as it had seemingly gained power and influence. This was true, and particularly so, when the main Sunni actors remained the same in both stages.

In this light it is occasionally hard to comprehend the enthusiasm with which the *ʿulamāʾ* who sought an ecumenical approach in the relationship between Sunnis and Shiites declared Shaltūt's *fatwā* to be *the* central document in the history of the *taqrīb* movement. In view of the circumstances surrounding its origin, the eventual failure of the suggestion to establish the professorship, and the developments after 1960, the typical and (despite a few exceptions) completely uncritical citation of the *fatwā*[72] can hardly be termed anything other

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"Asbāb ikhtilāf al-raʾy bayn al-muslimīn", *MA* 31/1 (Jul. 1959), 55–61; Muḥammad al-Bahayy: "Maʿa al-madhāhib al-islāmiyya", *MA* 31/2 (Aug. 1959), 137–41; ʿAbd al-Laṭīf al-Subkī: "Mawqif al-islām min al-waḥda wa-l-tafarruq", *MA* 31/6 (Dec. 1959), 537–43; Muḥammad Fatḥī ʿUthmān: "Uṣūl al-fiqh al-shīʿī wa-maṣādiruhā", ibid., 641f.; Aḥmad ʿAbd al-Jawād al-Dūmī: "al-Sayyid ʿAbd al-Raḥmān al-Kawākibī", *MA* 31/7 (Jan. 1960), 691–97; Aḥmad Ḥasan al-Zayyāt: "Ummat al-tawḥīd lā budd an tattaḥid", *MA* 31/10 (Apr. 1960), 1038–40; Maḥmūd Shaltūt: "al-Islām waḥda wa-jamāʿa", ibid., 1041–43; Maḥmūd al-Sharqāwī: "al-Madhhabiyya wa-l-taqlīd", ibid., 1124–30. It is striking that even authors who in past years had represented the anti-Shiite trend within the neo-Salafiyya (like al-Subkī and ʿUthmān) seemed unable to evade these developments completely, at least at this time.

[71] Muḥammad Rajab al-Bayyūmī: "al-Imām ʿAbd al-Majīd Salīm (. . .)", *MA* 32/2 (Jul. 1960), 159–65; immediately following Salīm's death, scarcely any obituaries had been dedicated to him; see *MA* 26/4 (Oct. 1954), 349.

[72] The original Arabic text of the *fatwā* or a translation can be found in the following works (although, of course, this list cannot claim to be exhaustive): *al-ʿIrfān* 51/7 (Jan. 1964), 735f. (obituary of Shaltūt); ʿAbdallāh al-Qommī: "Daʿwat al-taqrīb", 223–25; Thābit: *al-Waḥda al-islāmiyya*, 87–89; al-Zuʿbī: *Lā sunna wa-lā shīʿa*, 203; al-Rāfiʿī: *Islāmunā*, 59f.; idem: "al-Buʿd al-waḥdawī li-l-mujtahid al-akbar al-sayyid ʿAbd al-Ḥusayn Sharaf al-Dīn", in: *al-Imām al-sayyid ʿAbd al-Ḥusayn Sharaf al-Dīn*, 290 (excerpts); al-Ṣaffār: *al-Taʿaddudiyya wa-l-ḥurriyya fi-l-islām*, 172 (excerpts); Muḥammad Fikrī Abū l-Naṣr: "al-Murājaʿāt", in: al-Raḍawī: *Ārāʾ al-muʿāṣirīn*, 182f. (excerpts; identical to Sharaf al-Dīn: *al-Murājaʿāt*, introduction, 21f.); al-Jundī: *al-Imām Jaʿfar al-Ṣādiq*, 258f.; ʿAbd al-ʿAẓīm: *Mashyakhat al-Azhar*, II/188; Ṭabāṭabāʾī:

than legend building and a transfiguration of a situation that neither existed nor (at least not at the Azhar) was ever intended in this way.

The positive comments of those whose intention to exploit the *fatwā* for other purposes is sometimes difficult to overlook[73] predominated from the outset; only at the very beginning were individual comments expressing a bit more scepticism to be heard in the chorus of the apologists. These were the voices of the participants in the ecumenical debate who articulated their approval for the *fatwā* on this side of the fine line between partial criticism and fundamental polemic, yet at the same time let it be understood that this was not the end of the matter. Muḥammad al-Ghazzālī had previously described the *fatwā* as merely a first step on what he implied was to be a long journey.[74]

Clear disenchantment was already to be felt behind the words of ʿAbdallāh al-Niʿma, who in the autumn of 1961, i.e. under conditions that had by now changed noticeably, wrote a critical review of Muḥammad ʿAlī al-Zuʿbī's optimistic *taqrīb* book *Lā sunna wa-lā shīʿa*. He maintained that people behaved as if Shiism had not even existed previously and originated only as the result of Shaltūt's opinion, "which was issued under very specific circumstances". This exaggerated praise, however, distorted the awareness of the necessity of far-reaching steps toward rapprochement, one single declaration of

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Khāṭerāt-e zendegānī-ye (. . .) Borūjerdī, 120; Kamareʾī: *Payām-e Īrān*, 191; idem: *Manāzil al-waḥy*, 63 (excerpts); idem: *Rābiṭat al-ʿālam al-islāmī*, following p. 16; Mughniyya: *al-Ǧawāmiʿ wa-l-fawāriq*, 21, 23; al-Kuthayrī: *al-Salafiyya*, 684f.; Salām: *al-Waḥda al-ʿaqāʾidiyya*, 36f.; al-Raḍawī: *Fī sabīl al-waḥda al-islāmiyya*, [8] and 40f.; idem: *al-Burhān*, 267f.; al-Bahādilī: *al-Ḥawza al-ʿilmiyya*, 426; ʿAṭawī: *al-Taqiyya*, 162–64; al-Wardānī: *al-Shīʿa fī Miṣr*, 190f., [222]; Huwaydī: *Īrān min al-dākhil*, 327; Fūda: *Ẓawāǧ al-muʿa*, after the preface (unpaginated); al-Shīrāzī: *al-Waḥda al-islāmiyya*, 20; idem: *Eslām. Āʾīn-e hambastegī*, 244f. (Persian), 235 and 246 (Arabic), 255f. (French) and [15]–[16] (English); Shirrī: *Shīʿe wa tohmathā-ye nā-rawā*, 118ff. (Persian); idem (i.e. Chirri): *The Brother of the Prophet Mohammad*, 380f.; idem: *Inquiries about Islam*, 181 (both in English); Iqbāl Nūrānī: *Itteḥād bayn ol-muslimeñ. Ek nuqṭa-yi nazar awr maʿrūżа*, Karachi 1991 (Urdu); Ibrāhīm: *Le sunnisme et le chiisme*, 27f. (French); Dar al-Taqreeb: *Two historical documents*, 14–16 (the quasi-official English version); *The Islamic Review* 50/7–9 (Jul.–Sep. 1962), 3 (English); *La Pensée Chiite* 2/Mar. 1960/34–36 (French).

[73] Muḥammad Marʿī al-Amīn al-Anṭākī, already mentioned in connection with ʿAbd al-Ḥusayn Sharaf al-Dīn's *Murāǧaʿāt*, stated that the *fatwā* was one of the factors that led him to convert (*Li-mādhā ikhtart*, 16), although immediately thereafter he reports in detail about his Iraq-Iran trip in 1950–51, at which time he already seems to have been a Shiite, and mentions with the accuracy of a bookkeeper the dates of every conversation subsequent to 1952 in which he allegedly succeeded in converting Sunnis to Shiism (ibid., 33ff. and 319ff.).

[74] al-Ghazzālī: *Difāʿ ʿan al-ʿaqīda*, 328: "*Wa-hādhihi l-fatwā fī nazarī bidāyat al-ṭarīq wa-awwal al-ʿamal*".

this kind definitely not being sufficient to wipe out the legacy of generations.[75]

The most pessimistic judgement in this respect came from the periodical *The Islamic Review* that appeared in Great Britain put out by an Aḥmadiyya organization called the "Working Muslim Mission and Literary Trust". Following the reproduction of the text of the *fatwā*, it came to the conclusion:

> If the Azhar Rectorial pronouncement is regarded sufficient and an end in itself, the hydra of schism will raise its head again in the not very distant future.[76]

What was published as a prophecy of a possible future that was to be feared could at the time of its appearance (1962) already be read as a stocktaking of the moment. That, however, did not hinder the ecumenical movement's supporters from wrenching the *fatwā* completely out of its historical context and celebrating it without regard to its actual ineffectuality as a precursor of the supposedly successful rapprochement between the Islamic denominations. Suffice it to quote ʿAbd al-Ḥalīm al-Zayn as a representative of the general tenor. In an obituary to Shaltūt that appeared in the *ʿIrfān*, he designated the legal opinion as "the most splendid step toward unity of the Islamic religion since the early days of Islam".[77]

Politics and theology: Egypt, Iraq and Iran 1958–1960

ʿAbdallāh al-Niʿma's reference to the very specific circumstances to which the *fatwā* owed its issuance focuses the viewer's attention on

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[75] ʿAbdallāh al-Niʿma: "Sunna lā shīʿa", *al-ʿIrfān* 49/1 (Aug.–Sep. 1961), 7–13, esp. 13; cf., in contrast, al-Zuʿbī: *Lā sunna wa-lā shīʿa*, 201–03, and idem in *al-ʿIrfān* 48/4 (Dec. 1960), 343–48, esp. 347f.; Subḥī Manṣūr, in the preface to Faraj Fūda's book *Ẓawāj al-mutʿa*, p. *dh*, which appeared posthumously, commented in a similar fashion, although thirty years later; on the other hand, in recent years Iranian thinkers such as ʿAbd ol-Karīm Sorūsh and Neʿmatollāh Ṣāleḥī Najaf-Ābādī (consciously disregarding the political background of the *fatwā*) requested the Shiite *ʿulamāʾ* to emulate Shaltūt and through issuance of a similar *fatwā* establish recognition of the Sunni legal schools; see Buchta: "Die inneriranische Diskussion", 574f., 577f.; idem: *Die iranische Schia*, 316f.

[76] *The Islamic Review* 50/1962/7–9/4; regarding the background of this journal and its publisher, see A. Tibawi: "History of the London Central Mosque and the Islamic Cultural Centre 1910–1980", *WI* 21/1981/193–208; cf. also *MW* 50/1960/344.

[77] ʿAbd al-Ḥalīm al-Zayn: "Maḥmūd Shaltūt—al-ʿālim al-fāḍil wa-l-muṣliḥ wa-l-mujāhid", *al-ʿIrfān* 51/7 (Jan. 1964), 736–38, on 738.

the political situation of the years 1958–59, which gave rise to the previously mentioned external factor that led to the breakdown of the organized form of an inner-Islamic ecumenical movement. That the Azhar's concessions to the Shia, even though merely lip service, may have been related to ʿAbd al-Nāṣir's foreign policy is an observation that is neither surprising nor particularly new. Events since 1954 had clearly shown that the Egyptian president had no hesitation about exploiting the JT, too, in his attempt to assume a leadership role in the Arab World.

Contemporary European pundits had little difficulty discerning the connection between Shaltūt's ostensibly theological pronouncements and ʿAbd al-Nāṣir's foreign policy objective.[78] But whereas the Azhar scholars themselves, not even their Rector, went through the motions of denying the subordination of their action to the will of the government, the uncritical and ongoing interpretation of the *fatwā* that prevailed after Shaltūt's death naturally did not admit any possible motives beyond purely theological-legal argumentation. A typical example of this kind of protestation is Khalīl Kamareʾī, who replied to a Sunni detractor that Shaltūt had not given his opinion in response to a piece of advice or any type of pressure from the authorities or an influential individual; politics, he emphasized categorically, had not played any role whatsoever.[79]

Correspondingly, the contentions of the Orientalist side, who were not satisfied to explain Shaltūt's *fatwā* (and other initiatives in this direction) as having been the result of nothing but the participants' good will, were impugned emphatically. In particular, commentators who viewed themselves in the legacy of previous ecumenical endeavours usually see only malicious insinuations in the Orientalists' remarks, the latter's only goal being to calumniate Sunnis and Shiites alike and incite them against each other in the historical continuation of colonialism.[80]

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[78] Bagley: "The Azhar and Shīʿism", 124f.; Rondot: "Les chiites et l'unité de l'Islam", 68; Dodge: *Al-Azhar*, 157f.

[79] Kamareʾī: *Rābiṭat al-ʿālam al-islāmī*, 27, 29; by stating that he, Kamareʾī, knew things in this regard of which no one else beside him had knowledge (*aʿlam ashyāʾ lā yaʿlamuhā ghayrī fī l-mawḍūʿ*) he may have attempted to make his position unassailable.

[80] Indicative of this is Waḥīd Akhtar's reply to Martin Kramer, who in a review of Enayat: *Islamic Political Thought*, came to the obvious conclusion that like other texts of Modernism, Shaltūt's *fatwā*, too, cannot be regarded in isolation. Rather the political thinking of an era always had to be seen in relation to the contemporaneous political action (*MES* 20/1984/238–40, esp. 239). Akhtar, a Professor of

Shaltūt himself actually had far fewer reservations in this matter in terms of letting the political implications of his action come to light. Already the form in which he repeatedly stepped into the public eye in the course of the year 1959 indicated that he was not as concerned about a scholarly discussion as with the speedy distribution of what he said. His forum in this issue was not the theological or legal treatise that rose above the events of the day and painstakingly parsed the pros and cons of rapprochement. Nor was it the religious periodicals such as the Azhar journal, where his comments were only *re*printed. Rather, he used the fast-paced medium of the daily press that, despite its occasionally ambiguous conciseness, nevertheless presented the advantage of reaching a large number of readers extremely rapidly. Unlike his independent works in which Shaltūt maintained utmost reserve in topics with unmistakable reference to Shiism,[81] the much more casual environment of a newspaper interview offered the occasion to address with relative openness even points such as the Azhar's relations with the Shia, which had proven themselves quite delicate and the assessment of which had altered repeatedly depending on the political situation. The connection of these announcements to political events and decisions did not have to be articulated; it became evident through the moment of its publication and was immediately comprehensible to every reader.

The political background[82] of Shaltūt's comments was circumscribed by the relations between Egypt and Iraq. In February 1958, the former had fused with Syria to form the United Arab Republic, in the latter, a military putsch swept away the Hashimite *Ancien Régime* in the early morning hours of July 14, 1958. In contrast to the one

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Philosophy at the Aligarh Muslim University, was clearly insulted by this type of observation, calling it "slandering in high sounding technical terms"; his own principal reproach to Enayat was the latter's "reliance on some books written by the Orientalists" (*Al-Tawḥīd* 2/1405hq/4/165–89, on 186 and 188); cf. the similar viewpoint in al-Raḍawī: *Fī sabīl al-waḥda al-islāmiyya*, 109–14; al-Aḥsā'ī: *al-Ṭā'ifiyya*, passim, esp. 97, 231ff.; al-Ṣāfī: *Maʿa al-Khaṭīb fī khuṭūṭihi al-ʿarīḍa*, 71–74.

[81] Thus, for example, in his collection of *fatwā*s, he even refrained from mentioning Shiism by name in his replies to questions about visiting graves and *mutʿa*, see *Fatāwā*, 219–23, 273–75.

[82] For the following remarks, cf. Dann: *Iraq under Qassem*, 69–76, 156–94; Farouk-Sluglett/Sluglett: *Der Irak seit 1958*, 57–80; P. Rondot: "Le duel Nasser—Kassem", *Etudes* 92/1959/208–16; H. Ram: "Iraq—UAR Relations 1958–63: the Genesis, Escalation and Culmination of a Propaganda War", *Orient* 34/1993/421–38; Tipp: *A History of Iraq*, 163–67; Jankowski: *Nasser's Egypt*, 151–59.

that had taken place in Cairo six years earlier, this was a bloody event, but similarly it brought "free officers" (under the leadership of ʿAbd al-Karīm Qāsim) to power. King Faiṣal II and the sovereign ʿAbd al-Ilāh, whose authority remained even after the monarch had reached his majority in 1953, fell victim to the overthrow on the same day, the Prime Minister, Nūrī al-Saʿīd, on the next.

In the first few months that followed, into the late autumn of 1958, the governments in Baghdad and Cairo cooperated closely, and ʿAbd al-Nāṣir's calculation that Iraq would join the UAR seemed to work out. However, relations between the two countries chilled noticeably within a brief period in early 1959. The reason lay in the Nasserist forces around ʿAbd al-Salām ʿĀrif, one of the July co-conspirators, gradually being deprived of their weight by Qāsim, who in a countermove granted the Communists more influence. It emerged that Qāsim's idea of Iraqi nationalism was at odds with ʿAbd al-Nāṣir's claim to pan-Arab leadership.

The nadir of Egyptian-Iraqi relations, which affected other governments in the area,[83] was reached at the beginning of 1959 when an anticommunist revolt, led by the commander of the brigade of Mosul, ʿAbd al-Wahhāb Shawwāf, that had nevertheless received nothing but verbal support from Egypt, was crushed. From this point on a propaganda battle between the two countries burst into the open. In the course of autumn 1959, this turned into a "dreary and inconclusive cold war (. . .), sporadically punctuated by the trading of insults".[84] Nothing was to change until Qāsim's fall in February 1963, after which he suffered the same fate as the rulers he had deposed four and a half years earlier.

Maḥmūd Shaltūt willingly approved the Azhar's becoming the legitimating mouthpiece of Egyptian foreign policy during all these events. Just as the violent overthrow in Baghdad of July 1958 had been celebrated as a lesson to the haughty that the genie of Arabism was out of the bottle,[85] the change of course in Egyptian politics vis-à-vis Iraq in 1959 was faithfully followed in the columns of the Azhar journal. The pivotal point of the Egyptian polemic against the Qāsim regime was the actual or imagined Communist threat that appeared

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[83] B. Shwadran: "Husain between Qasim and Nasir (July 1958–December 1960)", *MEA* 10/1960/ 330–45.

[84] Kerr: *The Arab Cold War*, 17.

[85] "Intifāḍat al-ʿIrāq", *MA* 30/1 (July 1958), 107–09, on 109: *anna al-ʿurūba kharajat min al-qumqum.*

to take concrete form after the suppression of the Mosul revolt. In this way, ʿAbd al-Nāṣir was able to divert attention away from his own disappointment about the failure of the two states to achieve union, which of course would have meant an enormous gain in prestige for the Egyptian president. The articles on Iraq that appeared in the *MA* in the spring of 1959 concentrated completely on denouncing the influence of the Communists and ʿAbd al-Karīm Qāsim's putative reign of terror in general. In a pun taken from the government-controlled political press, the Iraqi president was called *Qāsim al-ʿIrāq* ("the divider of Iraq").[86]

Shaltūt had plainly revealed himself as an outright partisan of ʿAbd al-Nāṣir when he used the occasion of his reply to the abovementioned letter of congratulation from Aḥmad ʿĀrif al-Zayn as an eager encomium of the president's policies.[87] Now he exerted the entire authority of his position as *Shaykh al-Azhar* to bestow the blessing of the University upon the Cairo regime's publicity campaign against Iraq. A striking example of this was provided by two face-to-face pages in the May edition of the *MA* on which ʿAbd al-Nāṣir and Shaltūt appeared hand in hand as it were. The president rejected Communism as a degeneration of the idea of its founders, and his Rector supplied a fitting legitimation clothed in religious words, openly calling on the Iraqi people to rise in resistance.[88]

This shoulder-to-shoulder stance reached its climax in September 1959 after the execution of over a dozen Iraqi officers who had opposed Qāsim. Shaltūt immediately published a declaration (*bayān li-l-nās*) claiming that with this massacre (*madhābiḥ*), Qāsim had violated God's law and thus deserved the penalty for this type of transgression imposed by the Koran in verse 5/33.[89] A religious authority's

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[86] Aḥmad Aḥmad Jilbāya: "Yā Qāsim al-ʿIrāq waylak āmin", *MA* 30/11–12 (May 1959), 959–65; ʿAbbās Maḥmūd al-ʿAqqād: "Iflās madhhab. Lā ṭāqa ʿli-l-māddiyya al-shuyūʿiyya' bi-l-baqā'", ibid., 941–43 and 946; incidentally, the customary reply to this insult in Iraq was *Nāṣir al-istiʿmār*: "he who helps colonialism achieve victory".

[87] *MA* 30/10 (Apr. 1959), 906; that Shaltūt's words were immediately printed in the *ʿIrfān* (46/8 [Apr. 1959], 706f.) can also be seen as support of the Egyptian policy.

[88] *MA* 30/11–12 (May 1959), 944 ("Ra'y al-sayyid ra'īs al-jumhūriyya fī l-shuyūʿiyya") and 945 ("Nidā' min Shaykh al-Azhar ilā ʿulamā' al-muslimīn"); cf. also "Une interview du Cheikh al-Azhar concernant les attaques de communistes irakiens contre l'Islam", *MIDEO* 5/1958/440–43: Shaltūt's interview with *Akhbār al-Yawm* of March 21, 1959; "La république arabe face à l'Irak et au communisme: Documents annexes", *Orient* (Paris) 3/1959/9/123–60.

[89] "Ḥukm Allāh fī ḥukm qāsim" (or: Qāsim), *MA* 31/3 (Sep. 1959), 359; reprinted

judgement could hardly have been more unequivocal in tone and intent.

Within the framework of this highly political altercation, the abatement of Communism constituted the provisory link necessary for cooperation between the Azhar and the (Iraqi) Shiites in 1959–60. In the meantime, the *ʿulamāʾ* in Najaf, too, had revised their initial enthusiasm for the new potentates. Only a few days after the revolution, their supreme leader, Āyatollāh Muḥsin al-Ḥakīm, had written a letter to ʿAbd al-Karīm Qāsim expressing his best wishes for the continued success of the endeavour.[90] A short while later, though, particularly due to the increasing influence of the Communists, the clergy summarily distanced themselves from the regime.[91]

Applying the logic "the enemy of my enemy is my friend", it was natural for the Azhar and the Shia to seek each other out for support in their opposition to the Iraqi government. The fact that Shaltūt's statements about mutual relations between the Islamic denominations were directed by daily political considerations was not only openly admitted by the Azhar, but pointedly deployed as a weapon in the fight against Qāsim and Communism. Recognition of Shiism as a school of law on par with the Sunni *madhāhib*, allegedly the result of an appeal for aid by the Iraqi *ʿulamāʾ*, initially served no other purpose than as assistance for the home-grown Iraqi opposition to the Baghdad government. Shaltūt's statements were discovered for *taqrīb* purposes only later and promptly led to the above-mentioned misunderstandings.

The task of outlining the political benefit of ecumenical announcements fell to one of his students, Maḥmūd al-Sharqāwī,[92] who, as

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in al-Sarrāj: *al-Imām Muḥsin al-Ḥakīm*, 326f.; Koran 5/33: "The punishment of those who wage war against God and his Apostle, and strive with might and main for mischief through the land is: execution, or crucifixion, or the cutting off of hands and feet from opposite sides, or exile from the land: that is their disgrace in this world, and a heavy punishment is theirs in the Hereafter." Regarding the background of the execution, see Farouk-Sluglett/Sluglett: *Der Irak seit 1958*, 80–84.

[90] Printed in al-Sarrāj: *al-Imām Muḥsin al-Ḥakīm*, 317f.; concerning Muḥsin al-Ḥakīm (1888/89–1970), see al-Ziriklī V/290; *MMI* III/92; *RF* I/423f.; *GD* VII/276–80; al-Sarrāj, passim; obituary in *al-ʿIrfān* 58/3–4 (Jul.–Aug. 1970), 435–43.

[91] Mallat: *The Renewal of Islamic Law*, 15f.; Wiley: *The Islamic Movement of Iraqi Shiʿas*, 33f.; Akhavi: *Religion and Politics*, 98; Nakash: *The Shiʿis of Iraq*, 135; cf. al-Sarrāj: *al-Imām Muḥsin al-Ḥakīm*, 170f.; this, however, did not prevent Sunni polemicists from continuing to use the pun *shīʿī/shuyūʿī*; see Ende: "Sunniten und Schiiten", 193; cf. also above, p. 258 note 36.

[92] Cf. his personal obituary to his teacher entitled "Shaykhī Maḥmūd Shaltūt", *MA* 35/6 (Jan. 1964), 678–82.

had Muḥammad Muḥammad al-Madanī in regard to the issue of the chair for Shiite law, did this in the *MA* and with unusual bluntness:

> We have seen how Communism's corrupting influence had almost been successful in destroying the firmly rooted belief in an Islamic country near to us and how it attempted to tear down the local sanctuaries of culture, tradition, and ideals. But when the people of this country became aware of the attack the tyrants had planned against their religion and the things sacred to them, the Shiite scholars turned to the Azhar with a request for assistance. The Azhar and its Rector stood by them with all the means at their disposal (*bi-kull mā yastaṭīʿ*). Differences of legal school and conviction of belief did not keep the Iraqi Shiite *ʿulamāʾ* from turning to the Sunni Azhar or the Sunni Azhar from complying with the request for aid from the Shiite *ʿulamāʾ*.[93]

This, however, also made it clear that the alliance between the Azhar and Shiism was of a tactical and not a theological nature. Even though al-Sharqāwī also indefatigably invoked the durability of the Islamic ecumene in his article, this consideration was neither decisive for the Azhar's and Shaltūt's action nor was it a necessary consequence of it.

This ostensible cooperation between Sunnis and Shiites proved to have serious negative repercussions whose significance for the *taqrīb* union in the long run were not yet visible in the heady mood of the moment. By immediately jumping onto the bandwagon and converting the newspaper interviews that Shaltūt had intended to be of short-term impact into a long-term *fatwā* in an attempt to seize the day, the JT abandoned the basic principle it had heretofore held of steering clear of politics. For better or worse, it delivered itself to that very force that it had identified earlier as one of the main causes for the schism within Islam. Every change in the conditions behind Egypt's foreign policy that was currently favourable to *taqrīb* from now on would inevitably affect the JT's fortunes.

In the months following Shaltūt's sensational comments, nothing of this was yet to be felt. The Azhar continued to fight against the Communists, at a time when their real influence in Iraq had already strongly diminished.[94] For this reason, as well as to confirm their marriage-of-convenience with the Shia, the *MA* published several

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[93] al-Sharqāwī: "al-Azhar wa-madhāhib al-fiqh al-islāmī", *MA* 31/2 (Aug. 1959), 142–46, on 145; cf. Bagley: "The Azhar and Shīʿism", 124f.

[94] Farouk-Sluglett/Sluglett: *Der Irak seit 1958*, 76.

*fatwā*s in which the Iraqi *'ulamā'* 'Abd al-Hādī al-Ḥusaynī al-Shīrāzī, Muḥsin al-Ḥakīm and 'Abd al-Karīm al-Jazā'irī unanimously rejected Communism and branded joining the Communist Party an act of heresy. In order to lend even more weight to the judgement of the three scholars, a similar decision issued by Muḥammad al-Ḥusayn Āl Kāshif al-Ghiṭā', who had died six years previously, was added.[95] As a countermove, Azhar scholars, too, used the forum of the Shiite *'Irfān* in order to mobilize outside Egypt against Communism.[96]

The animosity that characterized Egypt's relations with Iraq in the years 1959–60 stood in contrast to its bonds with Iran. The latter, for its part, was in conflict with the Baghdad government because of the ill-defined border between the two countries at the Shaṭṭ al-'Arab.[97] Also in the case of Iran, 'Abd al-Nāṣir's politics had repercussions for the Azhar.

In the summer of 1959, Shaltūt received the Iranian ambassador in Cairo for a conversation at whose centre lay the Azhar's aspirations toward Islamic unity. The rector made certain both to underline the significance of 'Abd al-Nāṣir's policies for the Azhar and also to emphasize the importance of the press (!) in implementing this common policy.[98] The Shah expressed his thanks for the amicable obligingness a few months later by having four important Shiite legal works delivered to the Azhar through the Iranian embassy in Cairo and inviting Maḥmūd Shaltūt to visit Iran. It was indicative that in his speech of thanks, Shaltūt came to mention the merits of the JT, which had not played any role in the Azhar's contacts with the Iraqi *'ulamā'* and was not cited in any place of prominence. This might have also been meant as a discreet acknowledgement of the support by the Iranian government that the organization was given via its Secretary-General.[99]

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[95] *MA* 32/1 (June 1960), 119–21; Muḥsin al-Ḥakīm's *fatwā* (p. 119) is reprinted in al-Sarrāj: *al-Imām Muḥsin al-Ḥakīm*, 320 (there dated February 15, 1960); regarding this, see also O. Spies: "Urteil des Groß-Muǧtahid über den Kommunismus", *WI* 6/1959–61/264f.; concerning al-Shīrāzī (1888–1962), cf. al-Ziriklī IV/172; *MMI* II/355, and *ṬASh* I.3/1250–55; regarding al-Jazā'irī (1872–1962/63), see *RF* I/346; al-Khāqānī: *Shu'arā'*, V/505–18; *MMI* II/305.

[96] Ḥāmid Maḥmūd Ismā'īl: "al-Islām wa-l-shuyū'iyya", *al-'Irfān* 47/7 (Mar. 1960), 639–45.

[97] G. Scarcia: "La controversia tra Persia e 'Irāq per lo Shaṭṭ el-'Arab (diciembre 1959–gennaio 1960)", *OM* 40/1960/77–93; P. Rossi: "Le litige frontalier entre l'Irak et l'Iran", *Orient* (Paris) 3/1959/12/19–26; R.K. Ramazani: *Iran's Foreign Policy, 1941–1973 (. . .)*, Charlottesville 1975, 400–04.

[98] *MA* 31/2 (Aug. 1959), 251f.

[99] *MA* 31/7 (Jan. 1960), 769; the books mentioned were Muḥammad Ḥusayn

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The publicly demonstrated elation lasted a little more than a year before pendulating one-hundred-and-eighty degrees from one day to the next at the end of July 1960. Predictably, events were again triggered off by a political event; in this case it was a rather casual remark made by Shah Moḥammad Reżā Pahlawī. After rumours for a few days in various Iranian newspapers had it that Iran was planning to establish a diplomatic representation in Israel, he replied to questions on the topic at a press conference on July 23 by saying that his country had already recognized the Jewish state for a long time. Therefore, the announcements did not contain anything new, the envoy in Tel Aviv having merely been recalled for budgetary reasons.[100] In fact contacts between the two states had already existed since the end of the 1940s. These were inconspicuously continued after Tehran's first recognition of Israel in March 1950. An Iranian consul occasionally resided in Tel Aviv, and Israel maintained a commercial mission in the Iranian capital.[101]

The Shah attempted to play down the affair still more by contending that the recognition was of course merely *de facto* and not *de jure* in nature. Nevertheless, the state-run Egyptian media instantly took the incident as the reason to initiate a press campaign against the Iranian government and the person of the Shah that in terms of the insults hurled was no less vitriolic[102] than that against ʿAbd al-Karīm Qāsim

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al-Ṣaghīr's *J̌awāhir al-kalām* (not *al-aḥkām* as indicated) *fī sharāʾiʿ al-islām* (see *Dharīʿa* V/275–77); *Sharāʾiʿ al-islām fī masāʾil al-ḥalāl wa-l-ḥarām* by al-Muḥaqqiq al-Ḥillī (see *Dharīʿa* XIII/47–50; regarding the summary *al-Mukhtaṣar al-nāfiʿ*, see above, pp. 150f. and note 129); *Qawāʿid al-aḥkām fī masāʾil al-ḥalāl wa-l-ḥarām* by al-ʿAllāma al-Ḥillī (*Dharīʿa* XVII/176f.); and finally *Madārik al-aḥkām fī sharḥ ʿibārāt "Sharāʾiʿ al-islām"* by Muḥammad b. ʿAlī al-Mūsawī al-ʿĀmilī (*Dharīʿa* XX/239).

[100] The Shah's comments and the resulting diplomatic affair are summarized in *MER* 1/1960/216–20; cf. also *Cahiers de l'Orient Contemporain* 17/1960/43/152f. and 205f.; *OM* 40/1060/434, 473f.; *Herder-Korrespondenz* 15/1960–61/70–72; *Archiv der Gegenwart* 30/1960/8548f.; Rondot: "L'opinion musulmane", passim; Ram: "UAR-Iranian Propaganda War", 226–32; R.K. Ramazani: *The Persian Gulf. Iran's Role*, Charlottesville ²1973, 36–38; S. Sobhani: *The Pragmatic Entente: Israeli-Iranian Relations, 1948–1988*, Westport, Conn. 1989, 40f., deals with this only peripherally, and Rizq: *al-ʿAlāqāt al-īrāniyya bi-Miṣr* not at all.

[101] M.G. Weinbaum: "Iran and Israel: the Discrete Entente", *Orbis* 18/1974–75/1070–87; cf. also U. Bialer: "The Iranian Connection in Israel's Foreign Policy, 1948–1951", *MEǰ* 39/1985/292–315, as well as E.E. Shaoul: *Cultural Values and Foreign Policy Decision Making in Iran: The Case of Iran's Recognition of Israel*, Ph.D. dissertation, Washington 1971, esp. 135–93 (limited to the period 1950–53).

[102] Some examples of mutual insults traded by politicians as they were quoted in the respective press are found in *MER* 1/1960/217a; for instance the Egyptian

the previous year. At the same time, diplomatic relations between the two countries were immediately broken off. On July 26 the Iranian Ambassador and the entire staff of the diplomatic mission were expelled from Cairo, whereupon one day later Tehran took revenge by ousting the Egyptian mission.

Apart from the bilateral broadside, the excitement in the field of international politics soon abated, not least because the government in Cairo had isolated itself with its excessive reaction. In particular, ʿAbd al-Karīm Qāsim took advantage of the situation and entered the scene as a moderate statesman. By willingly and openly accepting the Iranian explanation of a merely de-facto recognition, he both achieved an improvement in the relationship between Iraq and Iran, which was well known to have been tense before, and distinguished himself as a counterpole to ʿAbd al-Nāṣir. King Ḥusayn of Jordan was similarly conciliatory, and the Arab League did not fall in line with Egypt either, preferring instead to put off discussion of the problem until the next regular meeting of Foreign Ministers at the end of August. By then the tempest had died down—except for the relations between Egypt and Iran that remained severed until shortly before ʿAbd al-Nāṣir's death in the autumn of 1970[103]—and the equivocal statement that emerged from the League's Ministers' Conference saw to it that the entire affair disappeared from the columns of the newspapers in a matter of only five weeks.

The results of all this were far more grave for the *taqrīb* society and the entire ecumenical discussion. This may not least be attributed to the behaviour of the Azhar that unswervingly followed the decisions of the government as it had done during the prior months. Furthermore, the question of recognizing Israel was extremely sensitive at this time and one where the Azhar even before had not left any doubt about its strict opposition to any form of concession.

In September 1953, in its first mention of the Iranian-Israeli relationship, the Azhar journal reported with satisfaction that after the overthrow of Moḥammad Moṣaddeq, who had revoked the recognition of Israel, his successor, General Faẓlollāh Zāhedī, at the urg-

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Foreign Minister, Maḥmūd Fawzī, called the Shah an "inferior and babbling creature . . . whose face has been deformed through committing sin upon sin". His counterpart in Tehran, ʿAbbās Ārām, got back at him by calling ʿAbd al-Nāṣir "light-headed Pharaoh", an allusion to Koran verse 29/39.

[103] See below, p. 359.

ing of Iraqi *ʿulamāʾ* had assured that he would not alter this position.[104] In the following years the Azhar repeatedly came out with vehement anti-Israeli comments that were sometimes also noted outside the Islamic world. One occasion was in January 1956, still before the Suez crisis, when the University's *fatwā* committee categorically dismissed any possibility of concluding peace with Israel.[105] Insulting Israel as "a state of robbers" (*dawlat luṣūṣ*) fit well in this picture.[106]

But even measured against these hostile assertions, it was surprising how fast and uncompromising the Azhar *ʿulamāʾ* reacted to the Shah's press conference. On the very next day (the *MA* named July 24 as the date of Iran's legal recognition of Israel: *iʿtirāf Īrān al-qānūnī bi-Isrāʾīl*), about a dozen of the most important representatives of the Azhar convened in a first emergency session chaired by Shaltūt. Next to a formal disapprobation of the Iranian step, it was also decided to send telegrams to the Shah and Āyatollāh Borūjerdī, the latter's loyalty to the Iranian government being very well known. For the good of Muslim unity, both were requested not "[to] take the unbelievers as friends rather than the believers" (Koran 3/28).[107]

Just two weeks later, when the affair had almost come to an end on the diplomatic level, a conference was held at which not less than seventeen Islamic groups came together, again under Shaltūt's aegis, for a comprehensive condemnation of Iran. Expectedly, its clear focal point was the argument—similarly used by the government—that by recognizing Israel, a land that illegally held Muslim territory in Palestine, Iran had made itself an accomplice of the colonialists and enemies of Islam, which was even worse because the Koran unambiguously places Jews on par with unbelievers.[108] The Iranian government's explanation that it was merely a *de facto* recognition of Israel was rejected with the observation that in regard to the enemies of God, Islam does not permit distinction between *de facto* and

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[104] *MA* 25/1 (Sep. 1953), 122f.

[105] *MA* 27/6 (Jan. 1956), 682–86; *OM* 36/1956/21; all four Sunni legal schools were represented on the committee: Ḥasanayn Muḥammad Makhlūf, Maḥmūd Shaltūt (both Ḥanafīs), ʿĪsā Mannūn (Shāfiʿī), ʿAbd al-Laṭīf al-Subkī (Ḥanbalī) and Muḥammad al-Ṭanīkhī (Mālikī); see *MA* 25/6 (Feb. 1954), 759.

[106] *MA* 29/7 (Jan. 1958), 670f.

[107] The Azhar's reaction is fully documented in *MA* 32/2 (July 1960), 229–42, on 230f.

[108] Ibid., 236f.; Koran verse 5/82 quoted in this regard reads: "Strongest among men in enmity to the Believers wilt thou find the Jews and the Pagans; . . ."; cf. also J. Bouman: *Der Koran und die Juden. Die Geschichte einer Tragödie*, Darmstadt 1990, esp. 93–100.

de jure recognition. Consistent with this, the meeting called for a "Holy War against the grave decision" and added a more or less open appeal to the Iranian people to revolt against their ruler.[109]

The organizations that participated in this meeting comprised the entire spectrum of Islamic groupings whose existence was still permitted in Egypt after the resolute crackdown against the Muslim Brotherhood and the consolidation of ʿAbd al-Nāṣir's rule. They included pan-Islamic organizations such as the Islamic Conference, created by Egypt and Saudi Arabia in 1954 and represented by Muḥammad Abū l-Majd, who was also active in the JT, as well as the neo-Salafiyya in the form of the *Ǧamāʿat anṣār al-sunna al-muḥammadiyya*,[110] or the *Ǧamʿiyyat al-shubbān al-muslimīn*, for whom the former Vice-Rector of the Azhar and activist of the JT ʿAbd al-Laṭīf Darāz served as spokesman.

The *taqrīb* association was also present. Since its Secretary-General Moḥammad Taqī Qommī had been in Iran for quite a while,[111] his deputy Muḥammad Muḥammad al-Madanī served as its official delegate. In view of his other role as Dean of the Azhar's Department of *Sharīʿa*, and bearing in mind his reaction to the demand for a Shiite chair at the Azhar, it was obvious that he would offer no opposition to Shaltūt's line, which mirrored ʿAbd al-Nāṣir's policy exactly.

The JT had thus renounced its last remnant of independence, relegating itself as nothing but an Azhar appendage, and with that an appurtenance of the Egyptian government. In a telegram the *taqrīb* organization sent to the Iranian Ambassador in Cairo even before July 26, the JT concluded, perfectly accurately as it turned out, that the act of recognizing Israel meant the "deathblow" (*ḍarba qāḍiya*) for all previous endeavours towards rapprochement.[112]

After the resolutions of the Azhar conference and Shaltūt's declaration openly hinting that the fall of the Shah (from whom he had accepted presents only a half year earlier) was to be striven for, there was no longer any possibility of amicable agreement in the conflict. This was not altered by the Iranian ruler's telegram of reply to Shaltūt in which he did not devote a single syllable to Israel, but

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[109] *MA* loc. cit., 234, 237.

[110] See above, p. 136 note 61.

[111] Kamareʾī: *Rābiṭat al-ʿālam al-islāmī*, after p. 16, quotes a letter from Shaltūt to Qommī dated May 19, 1960, in which the Rector of the Azhar refers to Qommī's departure from Egypt.

[112] *MA* 32/2 (Jul. 1960), 238.

rather focused on the positive role he himself had played in the Suez crisis, which had been lauded in the *MA*.[113] As in the case of Iraq in 1958–59, within a very short time relations with Iran changed from cordial accommodation to a long, continuous period of silence only interrupted occasionally in order to exchange animosities.[114]

Shaltūt unsuccessfully had attempted to bring the *ʿulamāʾ* of Najaf over to his side when he cabled an appeal to their most important representative, Āyatollāh Muḥsin al-Ḥakīm, that he might use his contacts to the Iranian scholars around Borūjerdī to secure rescindment of the controversial recognition. Al-Ḥakīm, who himself in two missives to Borūjerdī and the Tehran-based Āyatollāh Moḥammad Mūsawī Behbehānī[115] had protested against the Shah's comments,[116] answered the *Shaykh al-Azhar* that he had been notified by Iranian *ʿulamāʾ* that there had been no recognition of Israel at all, and it was neither now nor in the future the intention of the government to grant it.[117] Remarkable in the incident is al-Ḥakīm's explicit reference to "some" scholars in Tehran, not identified more specifically, whose explanation, a mere repetition of the government's official line, apparently was adequate for him. It fits in this picture that al-Ḥakīm obviously did not have any reasons for opposing the Shāh on principle. Āyatollāh Montaẓerī recalls in his memoirs that al-Ḥakīm once answered the question why he defended the Iranian regime by stating that it was, after all, a Shiite country.[118]

Just like his opponent ʿAbd al-Nāṣir, the Shah sought and found his faction of court theologians who were ready to side openly with his government in this dispute. The pro-government attitude of their spokesman, the said Āyatollāh Behbehānī, had already been known for years.[119] Āyatollāh Borūjerdī, who resided in Qom, was also by

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[113] The telegram is printed in Bahiyya et al.: *Naqd wa-taʿlīq*, 35f.

[114] Cf. for example Najāt: *ʿAwl wa taʿṣīb*, 624, who sharply criticized the unmentioned ʿAbd al-Nāṣir because of his alleged expansionist inclinations; in contrast, *MA* 36/2 (Dec. 1964; according to the title page: Jan. 1965), 766, where protests against the Shah's Palestine policies and the hope that Islam would soon put a stop to this tyranny were expressed; for a polemic of a similar tone but more recent date, see Shalabī: *Ḥarakāt fārisiyya mudammira*, 192f.

[115] Regarding him (1874–1963), see *EIr* IV/96f. (H. Algar); *GD* IV/401–03.

[116] The two telegrams are printed in al-Sarrāj: *al-Imām Muḥsin al-Ḥakīm*, 286 (as a quotation from the journal *al-Aḍwāʾ* of August 19, 1960).

[117] al-Sarrāj: *al-Imām Muḥsin al-Ḥakīm*, 310–12 (there from *al-Aḍwāʾ* of August 24); both telegrams were also printed later in *al-ʿIrfān* 48/5–6 (Jan.–Feb. 1961), 610–12.

[118] Montaẓerī: *Matn-e kāmel-e khāṭerāt*, 81.

[119] Akhavi: *Religion and Politics*, 72–75; Mottahedeh: *The Mantle of the Prophet*, 239f.;

no means an opponent of the regime and, as was his wont, did not reveal his opinion in public. Nevertheless it can be assumed that he also endorsed the government's point of view.

This political affair actually aroused very little emotion within the Shiite public, and there was other evidence for this besides Muḥsin al-Ḥakīm's appeasing reply to Shaltūt. The number of related reports that appeared in the Lebanese *ʿIrfān* speaks for itself: The journal devoted a mere seventeen lines in an out-of-the-way location in the news section to the matter, and this came after a two-month time lapse because of the editorial staff's annual vacations. The piece noted tersely that no political exchange between Iran and Israel had taken place, which Borūjerdī had confirmed, meaning there was no justification for the severance of relations between Egypt and Iran.[120]

The pointed disregard of an incident that had incited such great indignation among authoritative Sunni theologians was certainly also influenced by the desire to avoid further endangering the fragile relationship between Sunnis and Shiites. These had not remained without subtle tensions even at the times of great euphoria. The result, though, proved to be exactly the contrary of what had been intended. The Azhar left it at the condemnation printed in the July edition of the *MA*, but there were no further official contacts with the Shiite *ʿulamāʾ* during the remainder of Shaltūt's term in office. Also, the sharp denunciation of the Iranian government's campaign against the growing opposition by members of the clergy under the leadership of Rūḥollāh Khomeynī that arose in 1963[121] can be read as an attack on the Shah rather than an explicit defence of the Shia. In his declaration, Shaltūt avoided the word "Shia", speaking only of the "Iranian *ʿulamāʾ*", and likewise did not mention any names.[122] Relations between the Azhar and the Iraqi scholars in Najaf faded appreciably in the following years but did not deteriorate into direct antagonism. For example, Muḥsin al-Ḥakīm himself participated in the obsequies for Maḥmūd Shaltūt, who died in December 1963.[123]

Rondot: "L'opinion musulmane", 99 (there cited as "Behbani"; when Rondot's mentioned the "principal moujtahid d'Irak, l'Ayatollah Karim", he might have meant Muḥsin al-Ḥakīm).

[120] *al-ʿIrfān* 48/1 (Sep. 1960), 102.

[121] Cf. in this regard Göbel: *Moderne schiitische Politik*, 176–84; Mottahedeh: *The Mantle of the Prophet*, 188–91.

[122] *MA* 35/2 (Jul. 1963), 136f.

[123] "Taʿāzī l-ʿālam al-islāmī bi-wafāt al-imām al-akbar", *MA* 35/6 (Jan. 1964), 754–63, esp. 760 and 763.

The increasing alienation that began to grow again between the scholarly centres reflects on the one hand the disappointment of the Sunni *ʿulamāʾ* at the behaviour of their Iraqi colleagues. The latter had made their loyalty to their heavily criticized Iranian co-confessionalists clear during the Iran-Israel affair, when they, rather than siding with the Azhar, adopted Borūjerdī's and Behbehānī's attitude of accepting the Tehran government's official announcements.

On the other hand the increasing reserve was also an expression of the hopeless situation into which the Azhar had manoeuvred itself through its rash, undiplomatic reaction to the Shah's press conference. A return to the situation in the autumn of 1959 appeared impossible under these conditions, even if the Cairene University had desired it and the government granted its approval, as it would have led to an incalculable loss of face for Shaltūt and other *ʿulamāʾ*.

For the scholars in Najaf in turn, it was precisely the Azhar's obvious acquiescence to ʿAbd al-Nāṣir's government that provided grounds for reverting to their cautious distance from the Sunni scholars in Cairo. At least this can be understood in Muḥammad Riḍā al-Muẓaffar's elegantly formulated remark, which bore hidden criticism of the Azhar. In an article about theological seminaries in Najaf that strangely enough appeared in the *MA*, he wrote that the supreme Shiite clergy (*al-marjaʿiyya*) had neither financial nor other relationships of any type whatsoever to the various governments, regardless of the circumstance. By contrast, he stressed the right to independent decision-making by means of *ijtihād* as well as the absolute freedom of opinion, both of which prevailed in Najaf.[124]

This criticism of the Azhar, hardly visible at first glance, gained a particularly explosive effect due to the political situation at the time it was made. The struggle against Communism alone did not suffice as a basis for mutual understanding between the Azhar as an institution and the Shiite *ʿulamāʾ*, especially when the threat from their common enemy no longer existed, or at least not in its initial gravity, and when other political priorities had taken its place. The Azhar's breaking with Najaf as a result of a change in Egyptian foreign policy was an open admission that even the brief accommodation of 1958–59 had merely been a matter of expediency dictated

[124] Muḥammad Riḍā al-Muẓaffar: "Jāmiʿat al-Najaf al-ashraf (. . .)", *MA* 32/6 (Nov. 1960), 604–07, esp. 605; cf. also al-Sarrāj: *al-Imām Muḥsin al-Ḥakīm*, 170f.

by immediate events. Impulses for a continuing legal-theological discussion were neither aimed at nor anticipated.

The cessation of the institutionalized ecumenical dialogue came almost straight away on the heels of the severance of diplomatic relations between the governments in Cairo and Tehran. One can get the impression that Shaltūt and the Azhar had reacted so vehemently in the matter in order to put an end to the current *taqrīb* debate, accompanied as it had been by effusive demands and expectations as a result of the comments of 1959, and to quash tacitly the *fatwā* which had in the meantime fallen into disfavour.

The polemic reloaded

It did not take long for the response of the Sunni opponents of rapprochement with Shiism, who came to a large extent from the traditionally anti-Shiite circles of the neo-Salafiyya and Wahhābiyya, to make itself heard. In spite of their freedom of movement being considerably restricted by the change in Egyptian politics, their voices were not completely silenced in the first year of Shaltūt's term of office and during the campaign that promoted his *fatwā*. Already in July 1959, i.e. directly after the publication of the interview, the leader of the *Jamāʿat anṣār al-sunna al-muḥammadiyya*, ʿAbd al-Raḥmān al-Wakīl, addressed an open letter to Shaltūt in his organization's journal. Laying special emphasis on the controversial topics of the veneration of graves, the corruption of the Koranic text, and the infallibility of the Imams, he protested against Shaltūt's conciliatory tone and thus provoked a detailed rebuttal by the Lebanese scholar Ḥusayn Yūsuf Makkī al-ʿĀmilī that was published in the *ʿIrfān* immediately.[125]

Even after al-Khaṭīb's dismissal as editor in chief, the ecumene's foes still managed to maintain a foothold in the Azhar journal, although the criticism they could express had to be of a more subtle nature. An example of this is a short article by Ḥasan ʿUmar ʿUmar devoted to the Shiite *ghulāt* in which he opposed al-Madanī's

[125] al-ʿĀmilī: "Maʿa raʾīs taḥrīr majallat 'al-Hady al-nabawī'", *al-ʿIrfān* 47/2 (Oct. 1959), 194–97; al-Wakīl (1913–1970), who was employed in the Department of *Sharīʿa* in Mecca in the 1960s (see Schulze: *Internationalismus*, 137 note 436), also represented his organization during the above-mentioned conference at the Azhar in August 1960 that led to the condemnation of Iran; see *MA* 32/2 (Jul. 1960), 232.

appeasing contention that these extremists were nowadays as good as extinct.[126] Whereas in other places consideration was being given to the inclusion of the Ismāʿīliyya, the ʿAlawiyya, and even the Druze in the *taqrīb* discussion,[127] ʿUmar not only complained about these groups' very existence but also and particularly about the Azhar's lack of missionary activity among them. Thus, ʿAbd al-Laṭīf Mushtaharī, the emissary of the Azhar who had been sent that year, i.e. 1379h (1959–60), and who was supposed to convert them to Islam (sic! *dāʿiyyan ilā l-islām*), returned to Cairo after only a month.[128] It is noteworthy that on this occasion, too, Shiite rejection of these reproaches appeared in the *ʿIrfān*. Muḥammad Ḥasan Shaʿbān came to the defence of the Nuṣayrīs (himself possibly being a member of this denomination) and criticized the *MA* for having published ʿUmar's piece, which in his eyes was a relapse into "destructive Nāṣibism".[129]

The protest formulated outside of Egypt at the time frequently reached the addressees directly by mail. Some were sceptical questions, such as that from a certain Abū l-Wafā al-Muʿtamadī al-Kurdistānī, whose letter as well as Shaltūt's reply to it were printed in the *RI*.[130] Others were plain polemic demanding the *fatwā*'s nullification, since it had only been issued for political reasons.[131]

A letter supposedly sent to the Azhar's *fatwā* committee by Muḥammad b. Ḥusayn Naṣīf, a member of a well-known Ḥijāzi family of notables,[132] is an especially conspicuous example of this. In

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[126] In al-Madanī's article, discussed above, in which he set the speculation about a Shiite chair at the Azhar straight, he casually remarked that the *ghulāt* no longer existed and had not left any traces; "Rajjat al-baʿth fī kulliyyat al-sharīʿa", *MA* 31/6 (Dec. 1959), 526–36, on 528b.

[127] Cf. above, p. 240 and note 111.

[128] ʿUmar: "Ghulāt al-shīʿa lam yanqariḍū baʿd", *MA* 31/8 (Feb. 1960), 907f.; cf. Kramer: "Syria's Alawis and Shiʿism", 245; al-Ghazzālī: *Difāʿ ʿan al-ʿaqīda*, 270.

[129] Shaʿbān: "Nāṣibiyya haddāma", *al-ʿIrfān* 47/9 (May 1960), 886f.; regarding the term *nawāṣib*, see above, p. 79.

[130] *RI* 12/1960/396–400; likewise in Kamare'ī: *Rābiṭat al-ʿālam al-islāmī*, 127–35; cf. ibid., 13f. as well as idem: *Payām-e Īrān*, 10f. (preface by Ḥoseyn Fashshāhī).

[131] Kamare'ī: *Rābiṭat al-ʿālam al-islāmī*, 19–21 quotes a similar letter from a certain ʿUmar Fārūq Aʿẓam, whose polemic he then (25–112) refutes in detail; in this regard, see below, pp. 366f.; al-Khāqānī: *Maʿa al-Khuṭūṭ al-ʿarīḍa*, 25 reports that he read a book entitled *Tanbīh al-ʿawāmm li-nḥirāf Shaltūt ʿan al-islām* but does not cite an author, a place, or a year of publication.

[132] Concerning him (1884/84–1971), see al-Ziriklī VI/107f.; Maghribī: *Aʿlām al-Ḥijāz*, I/209–15; see also *OM* 6/1926/103; his grandson ʿAbdallāh b. ʿUmar Naṣīf (born 1939) was head of the Muslim World League in Mecca from 1983 until July 1993 (see Schulze: *Internationalismus*, 242f.); since then he has been Vice-President of the newly created Consultative Council (*majlis al-shūrā*) of Saudi Arabia.

it, according to the version transmitted by Muḥammad ʿArafa,[133] he asked the committee for a statement on the book *Faṣl al-khiṭāb fī taḥrīf kitāb rabb al-arbāb*, with which the Iranian scholar Ḥusayn Nūrī al-Ṭabrisī (d. 1902) had ignited the modern discussion about the alleged corruption of the Koranic text. Most certainly Naṣīf was not actually interested in the Azhar's opinion of the book, which he sent along as a precaution. Rather, his intention was to make unmistakably clear to the University exactly who it was they were getting ready to come to terms with: namely, people who followed al-Ṭabrisī's legacy in questioning the authenticity of the Koran.

There is hardly any doubt that Naṣīf generalized this individual scholar's opinion to be that held by all contemporary Shiites despite comments to the contrary by other Shiite *ʿulamāʾ*. In the past he had repeatedly been active in the area of anti-Shiite polemic and revealed himself to be the driving force operating unobtrusively in the background behind many momentous diatribes. Al-Khaṭīb's editions of older polemics owed their existence primarily to Naṣīf's influence, which the former frequently stressed.[134] When his famous pamphlet *al-Khuṭūṭ al-ʿarīḍa* appeared at the beginning of 1961, Naṣīf acted as its editor; the contentious question of the alleged forgery of the Koran played an important role in it, which will be discussed shortly.

Until this point in time criticism of rapprochement could be dismissed as nothing more than annoying sneers that lacked official backing, but this picture changed fundamentally after the events of the summer of 1960. It reached a high point in the autumn, and as so often in the previous months, what set things off was seemingly insignificant. On September 23, 1960, a commentator by the name of Ibrāhīm al-Jabhān, hitherto largely unknown outside the Arabian Peninsula, published an open letter to Maḥmūd Shaltūt in the Riyadh-based periodical *Rāyat al-Islām* in which he furiously attacked his *taqrīb* politics of the last year and a half.[135]

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[133] In his preface to the new edition of Jārallāh: *al-Washīʿa*, 2–18, on 9.

[134] Cf. his preface to al-Ālūsī: *Mukhtaṣar al-tuḥfa al-ithnā ʿashariyya*, p. *yd*; about it, *MA* 25/3 (Nov. 1953), 371; preface to al-Dhahabī: *Muntaqā min minhāj al-iʿtidāl*, 13f.; concerning it *MA* 26/17–18 (May 1955), 1045f.; in 1938, Naṣīf had also incited ʿAbdallāh al-Qaṣīmī (d. 1996) to his polemic *al-Ṣirāʿ bayn al-islām wa-l-wathaniyya* (see ibid., I/39), which appeared as a retort to Muḥsin al-Amīn; cf. also Wasella: *Vom Fundamentalisten zum Atheisten*, 65ff.

[135] "Khiṭāb muwajjah li-Shaykh al-Azhar", reprinted in *al-ʿIrfān* 48/3 (Nov. 1960), 291–94, and in Thābit: *al-Waḥda al-islāmiyya*, 111–17; see also Ende: "Die Azhar", 315ff.

Expanding upon the entire list of sins attributed to the Shiites, he lectured the *Shaykh al-Azhar* in condescending tones. Addressing him throughout simply as *yā sayyidī*, he opined that Shaltūt had failed to apprehend anything about his interlocutors' true intentions and that he had fallen into the JT's snares (*aḥābīl*).[136] In contrast to what the organization contended, the confessions not only differed in their interpretations of individual legal norms, but rather Sunnis and Shiites were at variance down to the very foundations of the religion, the roots of which were the unity of God and the Koran, and this was not to mention the Shiites' attitudes toward the Prophet's companions. Neither was it admissible to distinguish within Shiism between the Imāmiyya and other groups such as the Ismāʿīliyya, Bahā'iyya, Qarāmiṭa, Shaykhiyya, Qādiyāniyya and Aḥmadiyya (!), since their common denominator was the unbelief attributable to their common origin.[137]

With regard to current events, al-Jabhān described the "Islam, in which they (i.e. the Shiites) garb themselves" (*talabbasū bihi*) as a capitulation to Zionism and drew a direct line from ʿAbdallāh b. Saba' through the Shuʿūbiyya down to the Iranian recognition of Israel.[138] Of course a polemic pun was not to be missed: here the butt was the sixth Imam, Jaʿfar al-Ṣādiq, whom al-Jabhān referred to as "their lying *Ṣādiq*" (*ṣādiquhum al-kādhib*, *ṣādiq* meaning literally "truth-loving").[139]

The date and place of the article's publication had been carefully chosen and were immediately understood by the Shiites as the *casus belli* they were meant to be. It was not just *any* writer who had expressed an opinion that under other circumstances might have been scorned with silent disdain. In this case, the Shiites' traditionally most stubborn opponents from the ranks of the Wahhābiyya had exploited the moment to add fuel to the fire of a situation that had been extremely tense for several weeks.

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[136] Thābit: *al-Waḥda al-islāmiyya*, 114; the argument as such was not new, al-Mallāḥ had already used it to discredit ʿAbd al-Majīd Salīm (see above, p. 268), and it has also occasionally been found more recently, for instance in ʿAbd al-Munʿim al-Nimr: *al-Muʾāmara ʿalā l-kaʿba*, 45 note 1; the background contention that the ecumenical aims of Shiism are only part of the traditional *taqiyya* is accepted a bit too hastily by Fischer: *Iran*, 178f.

[137] Thābit: *al-Waḥda al-islāmiyya*, 114.

[138] Ibid., 113; regarding Shuʿūbiyya cf. R. Mottahedeh: "The Shuʿûbîya Controversy and the Social History of Early Islamic Iran", *IJMES* 7/1976/161–82.

[139] Thābit, 112, 116.

Already Muḥammad Naṣīf's "inquiry" to the Azhar had provided a hint that the politics of understanding with Shiism initiated by ʿAbd al-Nāṣir and carried out by Shaltūt had certainly not found a receptive audience everywhere in the Islamic world. In Saudi Arabia especially they had been met with open antagonism and now this impression was confirmed. The periodical *Rāyat al-Islām*, which had first appeared in May 1959, was the first purely Wahhabi journal,[140] and on top of that also had a semi-official status. Its owner was the Najdi scholar Najd ʿAbd al-Laṭīf b. Ibrāhīm Āl al-Shaykh, a brother of the Saudi Grand Muftī Muḥammad b. Ibrāhīm Āl al-Shaykh and himself occasionally leader of a scientific institute in Riyadh.[141] Both belonged to the most outstanding family of scholars and notabilities in Saudi Arabia, whose famous ancestor was no less a person than Muḥammad b. ʿAbd al-Wahhāb himself.[142] It may therefore safely be presumed that Jabhān's article unmistakably reflected Saudi politics on this issue.

A major part of the Shiite reaction to al-Jabhān's article took place on the pages of the *ʿIrfān*. Obviously its editors had recognized that the effort to play down the diplomatic affair between Egypt and Iran had been counter-productive, and the first statement on al-Jabhān therefore comprised a demonstrative show of support for Shaltūt, ʿAbd al-Nāṣir and al-Sādāt. Muḥammad Jawād Mughniyya, too, defended Shaltūt against the accusations.[143]

The following months were characterized by lively correspondence between individual Shiite scholars, but also by letters from the Shiite divines to Sunni *ʿulamāʾ* and politicians, a correspondence that made the *ʿIrfān* the centre of what was literally a worldwide protest.[144] A

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[140] Schulze: *Internationalismus*, 254.

[141] Ibid., 144; regarding ʿAbd al-Laṭīf b. Ibrāhīm Āl al-Shaykh (1897/98–1967), see al-Bassām: *ʿUlamāʾ Najd*, II/494f., concerning Muḥammad b. Ibrāhīm (1893–1969) ibid., I/88–97.

[142] Steinberg: *Religion und Staat*, 245–48, 305f.; the family continues to exert its influence until today: after the death of the Grand Muftī ʿAbd al-ʿAzīz b. Bāz in 1999, ʿAbd al-ʿAzīz b. ʿAbdallāh Āl al-Shaykh was appointed as his successor; in the same year, Ṣāliḥ b. ʿAbd al-ʿAzīz Āl al-Shaykh became Minister of Islamic Affairs; cf. *MECS* 23/1999/513.

[143] *al-ʿIrfān* 48/3 (Nov. 1960), 291–96; Mughniyya's contribution (ibid., 294–96) is reprinted in idem: *al-Shīʿa wa-l-ḥākimūn*, 205–11.

[144] Letters of protest reached the *ʿIrfān* from Baḥrayn, Dakkār, Masqaṭ, Detroit, and elsewhere (*al-ʿIrfān* 48/5–6 [Jan.–Feb. 1961], 621f.), Indonesia (48/9 [Apr. 1961], 911–14) as well as Cambridge (48/10 [Apr. 1961], 1032); an entire article by ʿAbdallāh al-Birrī, a member of the previously mentioned Detroit Shiite community, was also published: 48/8 (Mar. 1961), 801–03.

first attempt by the journal to put an end to the debate and to convince readers to stop sending further items in regard to the matter failed.[145] Only in April 1961, a good half year after the appearance of al-Jabhān's polemic, did the situation calm down again. In the ecumenical literature until the present, al-Jabhān nevertheless firmly holds his place among the targets of Shiite criticism alongside Aḥmad Amīn, al-Khaṭīb, al-Mallāḥ, and others.[146]

In addition to the coverage of the affair in the *ʿIrfān*, two independent pamphlets aroused some interest. In the first, Salmān al-Khāqānī, a scholar of Iraqi origin who resided in the southwest Iranian city of Khorramshahr and Āyatollāh Muḥammad Ṣādiq al-Rūḥānī, who taught in Qom,[147] compiled their own comments on al-Jabhān, as well as those they received in the mail from other countries.[148] The first edition, published merely a month after the controversial item appeared, seems to have sold out very quickly, necessitating an expanded reissue in January 1961. The second reply came from the Iranian scholar Muḥammad Ṣāliḥ al-Māzandarānī, whose commitment to the cause of *taqrīb* has already been discussed and who now composed a long essay in which he refuted Jabhān's slanders point by point. Central to this treatise was the call to King Saʿūd to convene a conference of reform-minded scholars in order to remove this thorn from his Kingdom to which all Muslims looked as the birthplace of the Prophet and the *ahl al-bayt* and the site of the holiest places in Islam.[149]

The dispute over the content of al-Jabhān's accusations followed well-trodden paths, which is hardly surprising given the generality of his attack and the stridency of his tone. The Iraqī Shiite author Aḥmad b. ʿAzīz al-Mūsawī al-Ghālī, for instance, addressed him

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[145] *al-ʿIrfān* 48/5–6 (Jan.–Feb. 1961), 622.

[146] al-Zuʿbī: *Lā sunna wa-lā shīʿa*, 208–10; Thābit: *al-Waḥda al-islāmiyya*, 7ff.; Faḍlallāh: *Āfāq islāmiyya*, 26–45, esp. 38ff. (the article reprinted there, "al-Ījābiyya wawāqiʿunā al-ṭāʾifī" was from 1964); al-Khāqānī: *al-Shīʿa wa-l-sunna fī l-mīzān*, 183f.; al-Raḍawī: *al-Burhān*, 12; Kamareʾī: *Payām-e Īrān*, 8.

[147] Regarding al-Khāqānī (1914–1987/88), see *MMI* II/49f.; *RF* I/472; *GD* V/31f.; al-Khāqānī: *Shuʿarāʾ*, IV/ 168–89; concerning al-Rūḥānī (1919 or 1921/22–1997), cf. *GD* II/160–62; *RF* II/617f.; obituary in *Dialogue*, August 1997, p. 2; Akhavi: *Religion and Politics*, 100, counted him among the "radical" *ʿulamāʾ*.

[148] Bahiyya et al.: *Naqd wa-taʿlīq*, passim; I have not been able to obtain any biographic information regarding Mūsā Bahiyya (بهية), the first of the three authors mentioned on the title page, whose name may be a pseudonym; his contribution to the brochure seems to have been limited to the introduction (pp. 8–13, there with the location al-Ḥilla).

[149] Māzandarānī: *Risālat kalimāt al-ḥujaj al-ʿāmira*, 14 and passim.

throughout his own sharp counter-polemic merely as "the khārijite".[150] Most Shiite commentators quoted his reproaches extensively but only to refute them in the same detailed manner and, whenever possible, as a retort to the sender.[151] With particular fervour they condemned the contention that Shiism had capitulated to Zionism, which had itself been descended from ʿAbdallāh b. Saba'. To demonstrate the contrary, Shiite *ʿulamā'* virtually vied with one another in the vehemence of their attacks on Israel, Zionism, and Judaism in general and tried to prove the extent to which Shiism, mostly left alone by the other Muslims, had always been devoted to the struggle against the Jews. ʿAbd al-Karīm al-Zanjānī, who at this time re-emerged in the ecumenical discussion for the first time in more than twenty years, used the occasion not only to stress his own merits in regard to *taqrīb* and thus aggrandize himself as standing among Shaltūt's intellectual progenitors,[152] but also to recall his trip to Palestine in 1936 and his agitation against the Zionist colonizers there.[153]

Occasionally these attempts at defence assumed almost bizarre characteristics, for instance when an Indonesian author "exposed" al-Jabhān as an Israeli spy and traced the source of the latter's pamphlet back to the Foreign Ministry in Tel Aviv.[154] Common to all refutations was the intense denunciation of Saudi Arabia and its *ʿulamā'*, who—in yet another reversal of one of al-Jabhān's arguments—had always been at the beck and call of colonialism.[155]

At the beginning, the Shiites' protest was also directed with equal passion at the Kuwaiti government because at the end of his article, al-Jabhān had revealed himself to be a Kuwaiti or at least to reside there. Al-Zanjānī, Muḥsin al-Ḥakīm, and al-Rūḥānī wrote

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[150] al-Ghālī: *Qāṭiʿ al-burhān*, passim.

[151] Mughniyya in *al-ʿIrfān* 48/3 (Nov. 1960), 294–96; Thābit: *al-Waḥda al-islāmiyya*, 117–41; Bahiyya et al.: *Naqd wa-taʿlīq*, 14–55; in contrast, ʿAbdallāh al-Birrī concentrated on an apologia of Jaʿfar al-Ṣādiq, see *al-ʿIrfān* 48/8 (Mar. 1961), 803.

[152] al-Mīlād: *Khiṭāb al-waḥda al-islāmiyya*, 145–47; Thābit: *al-Waḥda al-islāmiyya*, 118, 140.

[153] Thābit, 119–31; Salmān al-Khāqānī commented similarly curtly and likewise made reference to the principal witness, Muḥammad Amīn al-Ḥusaynī, in Bahiyya et al.: *Naqd wa-taʿlīq*, 32–38.

[154] Ṣāliḥ al-Muthannā al-ʿAṭṭās: "al-Ajīr al-fāshil ʿāmil al-istiʿmār wa-l-ṣiḥyūniyya Ibrāhīm al-Jabhān", *al-ʿIrfān* 48/9 (Apr. 1961), 912–14.

[155] Muṣṭafā Jamāl al-Dīn: "Iḥqāq al-ḥaqq wa-ibṭāl al-bāṭil", *al-ʿIrfān* 48/8 (Mar. 1961), 804–07; cf. also *al-ʿIrfān* 48/3 (Nov. 1960), 299f. and 302; al-Sarrāj: *al-Imām Muḥsin al-Ḥakīm*, 322 (quotation of a letter of al-Ḥakīm's to Lebanese scholars); Bahiyya et al.: *Naqd wa-taʿlīq*, 15, 37, 42.

several letters to the Kuwaiti emir, Shaykh ʿAbdallāh al-Sālim al-Ṣabāḥ,[156] demanding that he take appropriate measures and deport al-Jabhān. In fact, the Kuwaiti ruler answered immediately and let the Shiite *ʿulamāʾ* know that his country disapproved of this type of sectarian activities and that the author had been expelled when his undertaking became known.[157]

Even the Saudi King Saʿūd b. ʿAbd al-ʿAzīz, who had likewise received mail from the Shiite clerics, notified al-Zanjānī in a manner that appeared absolutely accommodating at first glance that the article reflected neither the opinion of the government nor that of the periodical, and that the individual culpable for its publication had been dismissed.[158] Occasionally it was even reported that publication of the journal itself had been terminated.[159]

Whether Saʿūd's brief reply was any more than a tactic to play down the issue may be doubted, considering that al-Jabhān's career as an anti-Shiite polemicist continued and that he enjoyed the discreet protection of the Saudis even after this incident. His polemic *Tabdīd al-zalām wa-tanbīh al-niyām ilā khaṭar al-tashayyuʿ ʿalā l-muslimīn wa-l-islām*, which originally appeared in 1965, was reissued in expanded form in Riyadh in 1979,[160] and an open letter of refutation from the Kuwaiti(?) Shiite scholar Badr al-Dīn al-Kāẓimī was addressed to a P.O. box in the Saudi capital.[161] Finally, a third diatribe by al-Jabhān

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[156] Regarding him (1888–1965; in power from 1950), see al-Ziriklī IV/88; cf. the article "Āl Ṣabāḥ", *EI*² VIII/668f. (E.M. Sirriyeh) as well as A.M. Abu Hakima: *The Modern History of Kuwait 1750–1965*, London 1983.

[157] al-Zanjānī's correspondence with ʿAbdallāh al-Ṣabāḥ is printed in Thābit: *al-Waḥda al-islāmiyya*, 14–19, and in *al-ʿIrfān* 48/5–6 (Jan.–Feb. 1961), 612f.; regarding Rūḥānī, see Bahiyya et al.: *Naqd wa-taʿlīq*, 61f. and 66–68; concerning al-Ḥakīm see *al-ʿIrfān*, loc. cit., 614f., and al-Sarrāj: *al-Imām Muḥsin al-Ḥakīm*, 171f. (where it is erroneously stated in note 158 that the journal *Rāyat al-Islām* appeared in Kuwait).

[158] Thābit, 21–25; Bahiyya, 58–60; *al-ʿIrfān* 48/9 (Apr. 1961), 880; see also *al-ʿIrfān* 48/3 (Nov. 1960), 299; Thābit, 27f. even quotes an article that appeared briefly thereafter in *Rāyat al-Islām* in which the author, a certain Ṣāliḥ b. Muḥammad, considerably corrected the image of the Imam Jaʿfar al-Ṣādiq presented by al-Jabhān.

[159] Bahiyya, 69f. (with reference to the Saudi ambassador in Beirut); also "Majalle-ye Rāyat al-Islām tawqīf shod", *Maktab-e Eslām* 2/11 (Nov. 1960), 57f.; according to Schulze: *Internationalismus*, 254, *Rāyat al-Islām* ceased to appear only in 1963 due to the press reform.

[160] Cf. Ṭuʿayma: *Dirāsāt fī l-firaq*, 74 note 1; a third edition appeared in 1408/1987–88, also in the Saudi capital; regarding the first edition, see Thābit: *al-Waḥda al-islāmiyya*, 145–47; cf. also al-Kuthayrī: *al-Salafiyya*, 666f.

[161] al-Kāẓimī: *al-Sayyid Badr al-Dīn al-Kāẓimī ilā Ibrāhīm al-Jabhān*, 3; apparently also Muḥammad Jawād Mughniyya's younger brother Aḥmad wrote something against al-Jabhān: his work *al-Jabhān salīl al-shayṭān* is mentioned on the inside back cover page of *al-ʿIrfān* 53/6 (Dec. 1965).

appeared in Kuwait more than two decades after his notorious debut as a publicist in the sheikhdom, indicating that the disgrace he had fallen into there had not been permanent either.[162]

The Azhar, and in particular its Rector Shaltūt, who had been the object of this considerable hostility and to whom the letter had been addressed personally, were conspicuous by their long silence. A comment as had been taken for granted and occasionally openly been demanded[163] by the Shiite *ʿulamāʾ*—which in this case would of course have required an unambiguous condemnation of al-Jabhān and the Saudis—failed to materialize. It was not until the December edition of the Azhar journal, after ʿAbd al-Karīm al-Zanjānī and Muḥammad Ṣādiq al-Rūḥānī had unmistakably expressed their "amazement" at Shaltūt's silence in mild but unequivocal terms,[164] that a first, brief reference to the article in *Rāyat al-Islām* was published. In the piece, the Azhar (Shaltūt himself did not appear) imitated with remarkable similarity the terseness with which Shiite commentators had reacted to the vociferous Egyptian condemnation of the Iran-Israel affair. It was merely reported that al-Jabhān's words had caused a storm of indignation "among the Shiite scholars" (but not necessarily among their Sunni colleagues at the Azhar), whereupon "an important Saudi source" had assured Shaltūt that neither the open letter nor the journal reflected the government's opinion.[165]

Just as the Iraqi and Iranian Shiites had been pointedly satisfied a few months earlier with the Shah's official explanation, the Azhar now let itself be placated by the brief denial of the government in Riyadh. In a second and final explanation of the incident, the Azhar repeated its laconic assessment of the article, this time, too, without explicitly condemning it. Instead, a letter from Iraqi *ʿulamāʾ* was printed in which

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[162] *al-Bāṭiniyyūn wa-l-ḥarakāt al-haddāma fī l-tārīkh al-islāmī*, Kuwait 1983.

[163] For example, from the president of the supreme Shiite court of justice in Beirut, Ḥusayn al-Khaṭīb, on behalf of all Shiite *ʿulamāʾ* in Beirut, see *al-ʿIrfān* 48/3 (Nov. 1960), 299f., 302.

[164] al-Zanjānī's letter to Shaltūt of November 25, 1960 (who apparently did not reply) is printed in *al-ʿIrfān* 48/5–6 (Jan.–Feb. 1961), 613f. and Thābit: *al-Waḥda al-islāmiyya*, 29f.; Rūḥānī's reproach is found in Bahiyya et al.: *Naqd wa-taʿlīq*, 57f.; for a similar condemnation of the silence of an Azhar Rector (al-Marāghī) in face of the reproaches of Sunni polemicists (al-Nashāshībī, Jārallāh) by a Shiite scholar (Mughniyya) in the year 1938, see above, p. 116.

[165] *MA* 32/7 (Dec. 1960), 786; an article by Ḥāmid Maḥmūd Ismāʿīl, an Azhar envoy in Sidon who condemned al-Jabhān's abuses and professed to the *ahl al-bayt*, in the *ʿIrfān* can be taken as a kind unofficial reaction: *Taʿqīb ʿalā khiṭāb al-Jabhān, al-ʿIrfān* 48/4 (Dec. 1960), 389–92.

they rejected al-Jabhān's comments and demonstratively supported Shaltūt.[166]

Despite all the appeasement, the increasing cooling of relations between the Azhar and Shiism could no longer be ignored, and within the Azhar itself occasional opposition to rapprochement with the Shiites found new articulation. Although most of the known *taqrīb* opponents of earlier times themselves did not—or could not—step forward themselves publicly, they saw to it, presumably by means of deliberate indiscretions, that their opinions became known through alternative routes via long-standing allies outside of Egypt. For example, in his epilogue to Muḥibb al-Dīn al-Khaṭīb's new broadside pamphlet *al-Khuṭūṭ al-ʿarīḍa* (on which see below) dated January 2, 1961, the previously mentioned Saudi scholar Muḥammad Naṣīf reported that three Azhar scholars, Muḥammad ʿArafa, Ṭāhā Muḥammad Sākit and ʿAbd al-Laṭīf al-Subkī had sent Shaltūt a letter advising him not to get involved any further in rapprochement with the Shiites. Any activity in this direction would be absolutely pointless after Azhar-dispatched emissaries to Syria and Lebanon had reported that local Shiites there were still completely caught up in their old ideas and a long way from professing Arab nationalism and Islam.[167]

Whereas the latter two *ʿulamāʾ* mentioned by Naṣīf had been among the vehement adversaries of the ecumenical movement back in the 1950s (and have already been introduced here as such),[168] the appearance of Muḥammad ʿArafa's name in this context comes as somewhat of a surprise. Having made not less than eighteen contributions to the *RI* between 1955 and 1960, he had ranked as one of its most prolific authors. Furthermore, during the same period, through his activity in the Islamic Conference founded by ʿAbd al-Nāṣir and King Saʿūd, he had played a prominent role in formulating the JT's concerns within the framework of Egyptian government politics. ʿArafa, though, confirmed his change of opinion in the preface he later wrote for a reprint of Mūsā Jārallāh's well-know anti-Shiite polemic *al-Washīʿa fī naqḍ ʿaqāʾid al-shīʿa* by referring to the purported Shiite practice of excommunicating anyone who did not believe in the Imamate doctrine.[169]

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[166] *MA* 32/8 (Jan. 1961), 911f.

[167] al-Khaṭīb: *al-Khuṭūṭ al-ʿarīḍa*, 65.

[168] Cf. above, pp. 266f. and 276.

[169] Jārallāh: *al-Washīʿa*, 2–18, on 5; regarding ʿArafa, see above, p. 277 note 117; his falling in line with the anti-ecumenical phalanx, though, did not prevent the standard-bearers of *taqrīb* thought in post-Revolutionary Iran from translating a (possibly

Since his last piece in the JT journal had appeared just half a year before the letter quoted by Naṣīf, it may be assumed that his step was also motivated by his deep hostility against Israel and the Jews. Apparently ʿArafa saw neither a possibility nor a reason to maintain ecumenical contacts with theologians who silently endorsed the Shah's recognition of Israel. He, in contrast, had stressed the need for joint action against Israel as an essential aspect of any inner-Islamic rapprochement. In keeping with this, he had never spared polemic criticism of the alleged Jewish conspiracy against Islam that had been manifest since the early Islamic period.[170]

Even after the events of 1960–61 there was no open animosity directed at Shiism, with emphasis here on the word *open*. Instructive, however, is a case of what may be called substitute rejection of the Shiite interpretation of history through the publication of an article by the Indian scholar Shiblī al-Nuʿmānī (d. 1914). Dealing with ʿUmar's behaviour on day of the *saqīfa*, the author contended that ʿAlī had voluntarily stayed away from the assembly, thus explicitly renouncing his candidacy to become Muḥammad's successor.[171] In this connection it should be recalled that in 1912, al-Nuʿmānī (actively supported by Muḥammad Rashīd Riḍā) had made a name for himself with a polemic against the Egyptian publicist of Lebanese descent, Jurjī Zaydān, who had presented the reign of the Umayyads in a very negative light. Al-Nuʿmānī was so infuriated at Zaydān's main accusation that the early Islamic dynasty had behaved chauvinistically vis-à-vis their non-Arab subjects that their long-standing personal friendship was shattered.[172]

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expanded) series of Arafa's article that had appeared between 1955 and 1957 in the *RI* (entitled "Kayfa yastaʿidd al-muslimūn waḥdatahum wa-tanāṣurahum?", partially reprinted in al-Shīrāzī: *al-Waḥda al-islāmiyya*, 156–95) and celebrating it as an exceptional contribution to the aspiration of Muslim unity; the Persian edition carries the title *Waḥdat wa hamyārī: Mosalmānān chegūne khod-rā bāz miyāband?* (Tehran 1362sh/1983) and was reviewed by W. Akhtar in the English edition of *al-Tawḥīd* 2/1405hq/2/108–16.

[170] ʿArafa: "Kayfa yastaʿidd (. . .)", *RI* 9/1957/249f.; see also his interpretation of Koran verse 3/103 in *MA* 30/9 (Mar. 1959), 697–700; 30/10 (Apr. 1959), 862–67, and 31/1 (Jul. 1959), 26–29, on 698ff. and 864f.

[171] "Mawqif ʿUmar b. al-Khaṭṭāb yawm al-saqīfa", *MA* 33/2 (Jul. 1961), 181–85, on 184; regarding al-Nuʿmānī (1858–1914), see al-Ziriklī III/155; Kaḥḥāla IV/294f.; *MDA* III/1503f.; *EI*[1] IV/388f. (A. Siddiqi); from 1903 he was chairman of the famous Indian scholarly association *Nadwat al-ʿulamāʾ*; concerning this institution cf. J. Malik: "The Making of a Council: The Nadwat al-ʿUlamâ", *ZDMG* 144/1994/60–91.

[172] Regarding this controversy, cf. Ende: *Arabische Nation*, 40–50; concerning Zaydān (1861–1914), the founder and long-standing editor of the journal *al-Hilāl*, see al-

The relations between Sunnis and Shiites had not played a distinct role in this controversy. Nonetheless it can be surmised that the reprint of this article critical of the Shiites by a well-known apologist of the Umayyad view of history would hardly have missed its effect on the Shiite readership of the *MA*, particularly at this point in time. The *ʿIrfān's* incessant efforts to move the stuck dialogue between Sunni and Shiite scholars back into motion, which culminated in an invitation to Shaltūt and Muḥsin al-Ḥakīm to a joint summer vacation in Lebanon,[173] were, under these circumstances, doomed to failure from the outset.

Meanwhile Muḥibb al-Dīn al-Khaṭīb, too, was back in action, putting out a polemic pamphlet with the long-winded title "The Broad Lines of the Foundations upon which the Religion of the Imami Twelver Shiites is Based".[174] Despite its brevity of only forty pages, it was something of a summa of his longstanding embroilment with Shiism and ecumenical thinking. Responsible for the first Arabic edition of this booklet (Jeddah, 1380/1961)[175] was the well-known Wahhabi *ʿālim* Muḥammad Naṣīf. He contributed the preface and epilogue, thus incidentally indicating yet again that the Kingdom's official proclamation of distancing itself from anti-Shiite machinations was merely cosmetic. Just a year later, a further edition appeared in Jeddah the costs of which were covered by ʿAlī b. ʿAbdallāh Āl Thānī, a member of the Qaṭarī ruling family and emir of the country from 1949 to 1960.[176] A still later reproduction of the booklet was even produced by the Office of the Muftī of Saudi Arabia (*Dār al-iftāʾ*).[177] Until 1982, the *Khuṭūṭ* had gone through ten editions; probably not all of them came about legally.

Lacking any systematic division into chapters, which resulted in the argumentation often being associative, al-Khaṭīb treated all the points of contention that appeared to him especially suitable to prove

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Ziriklī II/117, as well as primarily T. Philipp: *Jurjī Zaydān. His Life and Thought*, Beirut, Wiesbaden 1979.

[173] *al-ʿIrfān* 48/10 (Jun. 1961), 943.

[174] *al-Khuṭūṭ al-ʿarīḍa li-l-usus allatī qāma ʿalayhā dīn al-shīʿa al-imāmiyya al-ithnā ʿashariyya*; a Turkish translation entitled *Şiilik dini esaslarının görünen çizgileri* (s.l., s.d.) is quoted by Glünz: "Das Manifest der Islamischen Revolution", 247 note 40.

[175] Apparently an Urdu edition had previously come out in Lahore, see the list of the editions up to 1982 in the tenth edition, Cairo 1982, 2, which I used.

[176] Concerning him (1892–1974), see al-Ziriklī IV/309.

[177] Riyadh 1390/1970–71; in 1404/1983–84, a reprint of Maḥmūd Shukrī al-Ālūsī's previously mentioned (pp. 264f.) polemic *Mukhtaṣar al-tuḥfa al-ithnā ʿashariyya*, edited by al-Khaṭīb, appeared in Riyadh also under the aegis of the Office of the Muftī.

what he had already stated categorically on the first page: that rapprochement between the Shiite and Sunni legal schools was impossible.[178] Not without reason had he already anticipated the result of his treatise in the title, where he had spoken of the Shiite "religion", being by consequence fundamentally different from Sunni "Islam". The following subject areas can be distinguished in detail:

1. The accusation of the forgery of the Koran (*taḥrīf al-qur'ān*) which took up the longest contiguous space (pp. 10–15): Using Ḥusayn al-Nūrī al-Ṭabrisī's book *Faṣl al-khiṭāb*, but also Nöldeke's *Geschichte des Qorāns*, who in turn referred to an anonymous work of Indian origin by the name of *Dabestān-e madhāheb*,[179] al-Khaṭīb sought to provide proof that Sunnis and Shiites ultimately believe in two different Korans. The protests of Shiite scholars who distanced themselves from al-Ṭabrisī's book were classified by him as mere expressions of *taqiyya* and hence rejected (p. 14).

2. The defence of the caliphs Abū Bakr and ʿUmar against the attacks of the Shiites, who according to al-Khaṭīb not only refused to recognize the caliphs' rule but even made the day of ʿUmar's assassination a day of rejoicing and paid respect to his murderer (pp. 19–21, 39).[180]

3. The Shiite belief in the infallibility of the Imams and their knowledge of the concealed. For al-Khaṭīb, this essential aspect of the doctrine of the Imamate was completely unacceptable because in this way the Imams were put above the prophets (pp. 29–32). He compared the reverence that the Shiites evinced for the twelve Imams with the position of the Greek gods and thus termed it pagan and hostile to Islam (pp. 42, 43). Also for the idea of the Mahdī he spared only disdain and disgust. This dangerous superstition was worse in his eyes than (again) the legends of the Greek gods, and if it were to find broader approval, the entire Islamic world turn into what he here called a "lunatic asylum" (pp. 37f.).

4. The *taqiyya*. Any attempt on the part of the Shiites to deny or even only to relativize some of these points was (and is) pointless in al-Khaṭīb's estimation, since it resulted from nothing but dissimulation and was thus untenable, actually a travesty (pp. 9f., 31, 36). In his attempt to "prove" the ubiquity of Shiite hypocrisy, he traced the

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[178] al-Khaṭīb: *al-Khuṭūṭ al-ʿarīḍa*, 5.

[179] T. Nöldeke/F. Schwally: *Geschichte des Qorāns*, Leipzig 1909, II/102ff., ascribed the book, which appeared in the seventeenth century, to Muḥsin al-Fānī al-Kashmīrī; F. Mojtabā'ī names Mīr Dhū l-Fiqār Ardastānī (1617–1670) as the author, see "Dabastān-e madhāhib", *EIr* VI/532–34; also *Dharīʿa* VIII/48f.; Falaturi: "Die Zwölfer-Schia", 94f.; J. Eliash: "The 'Shīʿite Qur'ān': A Reconsideration of Goldziher's Interpretation", *Arabica* 16/1969/15–24, esp. 17ff.; Brunner: *Die Schia und die Koranfälschung*, 14–16.

[180] On the feast of *ʿOmar-koshan* in Iran, cf. Buchta: *Die iranische Schia*, 73.

derivation of the name "Taqī" that supposedly enjoyed particular popularity among Shiites (and here he probably meant Moḥammad Taqī Qommī) to the word *taqiyya*—wisely concealing the fact that the progenitor of the Salafiyya, Ibn Taymiyya, also carried the *laqab* Taqī al-Dīn (p. 14 note 1).[181]

5. The struggle against rapprochement in general and the JT in particular. Next to the traditional points of contention that always constituted the heart of the anti-Shiite heresiography, al-Khaṭīb cited a series of reproaches that represented a direct replication of the standard arguments heard in the ecumenical discussion: al-Khaṭīb replied to the practice maintained in *taqrīb* circles of restricting the debate to the Imāmiyya and Zaydiyya while explicitly excluding the remaining Shiite groups of the *ghulāt* by expressly including the Nuṣayriyya (pp. 36f.), Ismāʿīliyya (pp. 41f.) and the Bābiyya (pp. 44f.); to the contention that the two sides agreed in the principles of the religion and that differences existed only in the interpretation of individual legal norms (*furūʿ al-dīn*), he offered his categorical verdict that Shiism and Sunnism were separated by irreconcilable differences in the *uṣūl al-dīn* (pp. 34–36);[182] and the omnipresent reference to the alleged activity of the "enemies of Islam" was given a reverse spin here as well—Shiism itself constituted a "a fifth column in the citadel of the Muslims" through their constant betrayal of history (pp. 27f.)[183] and thus prepared the ground for Communism (pp. 22f., 43f.). Like nearly all polemics, he indiscriminately combined modern concepts and a traditional approach when, for instance, immediately after the use of the expression "fifth column" (which he explained in a footnote just to make sure his readers understood the term) he quoted extensively from the book *al-Kāfī fī ʿilm al-dīn* by the Shiite "Church Father" al-Kulaynī (died 940/41)[184] in order to refute the doctrine of the Imamate (pp. 28f.). Even though al-Khaṭīb staunchly proclaimed his commitment to rapprochement in

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[181] Maḥmūd al-Mallāḥ, too, knew this pun, see his *Tārīkhunā l-qawmī*, 98.

[182] In order to make it perfectly clear to the reader just how much the creed of Sunnis and Shiites differed, the book contained a synoptic listing (presumably written by Muḥammad Naṣīf) in which all the essential points were treated; *al-Khuṭūṭ al-ʿarīḍa*, 55–64. In another appendix (50–54), the editor quoted an extremely critical review of the classic Shiite work *Awāʾil al-maqālāt fī l-madhāhib wa-l-mukhtārāt* by al-Shaykh al-Mufīd (died in 1022; see *EI*[2] VII/312f. [W. Madelung]; *GAS* I/549ff.; P. Sander: *Zwischen Charisma und Ratio. Entwicklungen in der frühen imāmitischen Theologie*, Berlin 1994, 82–122; also *Dharīʿa* II/472f.); regarding the author of the review in *RAAD* 29/1954/129–32, Muḥammad Bahjat al-Bīṭār (1894 or 1896–1976), cf. Kaḥḥāla M/614f. and *MMS* 75f.

[183] al-Khaṭīb had already employed the term "fifth column" in his preface to al-Ālūsī's *Mukhtaṣar al-tuḥfa al-ithnā ʿashariyya* (there p. *w*).

[184] Regarding him, see *EI*[2] V/362f. (W. Madelung); *GAS* I/540–42; about the book, one of the four basic Shiite collections of *ḥadīth (al-kutub al-arbaʿa)*, see *Dharīʿa* XVII/245f.; also Sander: *Zwischen Charisma und Ratio*, (as in note 182), primarily 123–64.

> the first paragraph of his pamphlet, calling it among the most splendid goals of Islam (p. 5), he nevertheless left no doubt whatsoever that he considered this venture with *these* Shiites almost absurd. The *taqrīb* union, at whom he actually directed his attacks, was nothing more than a propaganda instrument in his view, which was already demonstrated by the official support it received from the Iranian government as well as by the fact that it had its headquarters in Cairo rather than in Tehran, Qom, Najaf or the Jabal ʿĀmil (pp. 6f.). The argument put forward by its activists that the Shiites' condemnation of the caliphs Abū Bakr and ʿUmar was a thing of the past he immediately termed "lies and deception" (*kadhb wa-ghashsh*, p. 26); in reality, he had learned by reading al-Khāliṣī's *Iḥyāʾ al-sharīʿa*, current Shiism was even worse than that of former times (pp. 26f.),[185] for the Shiites' intention was not rapprochement but rather indoctrination (p. 43).

As was to be expected, al-Khaṭīb's hate-filled pamphlet immediately became the subject of embittered replies by Shiite authors. They not only meticulously listed the attacks against the Shiite doctrines that were contained in the *Khuṭūṭ* in order to refute them sentence by sentence, but also made certain to profess their faith in the ecumenical dialogue and to include a statement of appreciation for the JT. Once again Muḥammad Jawād Mughniyya was the initiator,[186] followed by several independent treatises, some of which were considerably longer than al-Khaṭīb's pamphlet.[187]

As in the case of al-Jabhān, almost all authors who entered the fray against the *Khuṭūṭ* unhesitatingly turned the tables and declared the author an extended arm of the colonialists and imperialists. The universal applicability of this accusation never came into question for either side, and so al-Khaṭīb had to swallow the foreseeable

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[185] ʿAbdallāh al-Gharīb struck a similar tone twenty years later: *Wa-jāʾa dawr al-majūs*, 131.

[186] *Faḍāʾil al-imām ʿAlī*, 181–204 (I should like to thank Dr. W.-D. Lemke, Istanbul/Beirut for helping me obtain a copy of these pages), on 183f. about the JT; in his autobiographical records he later reported that he received threatening letters after the publication of his reply to al-Khaṭīb, *Tajārib*, 11; see also *al-ʿIrfān* 49/5 (Jan. 1962), 512.

[187] al-Khāqānī: *Maʿa al-Khuṭūṭ al-ʿarīḍa*, passim, regarding the JT and *taqrīb*: 5–7, 11f., 15f., 23–25; al-Ṣāfī: *Maʿa al-Khaṭīb*, passim, esp. 13f., 22–24, 176–81; concerning al-Ṣāfī (born 1919), see *GD* II/189, *Moshār*, col. 137 as well as Sobḥānī's preface to al-Ṣāfī's book *Lamaḥāt fī l-kitāb wa-l-ḥadīth wa-l-madhhab*, 3–15; Iḥsān Ilāhī Ẓahīr: *al-Shīʿa wa-l-sunna*, Lahore 1973, is a polemic against the book *Maʿa al-Khaṭīb*; al-Ṣāfī, in turn, replied to it with a second book on the subject: *Ṣawt al-ḥaqq wa-daʿwat al-ṣidq*; cf. also al-Khāqānī: *al-Shīʿa wa-l-sunna fī l-mīzān*, 9–18. The book *Aḍwāʾ ʿalā khuṭūṭ Muḥibb al-Dīn al-ʿarīḍa* by ʿAbd al-Waḥīd al-Anṣārī (Beirut 1963) was not accessible to me.

reproach that he had approvingly quoted from Orientalist literature that *eo ipso* was likewise colonialist propaganda.[188] Similarly, it comes as no surprise that al-Khaṭīb's term "fifth column" was also immediately turned on him by his critics.[189]

Finally, what aroused particular indignation was the fact that even in subsequent years this diatribe enjoyed the unbroken and open display of benevolence of official and semi-official Saudi Arabian authorities. For awhile, the Muslim World League in Mecca looked after the distribution of the work,[190] and occasionally the Shiites complained that the *Khuṭūṭ* had been disseminated during the pilgrimage of 1389h free of charge.[191] This may have been done in homage to al-Khaṭīb, who had died a short while before.[192] A letter of protest in this regard that Abū Muḥammad al-Khāqānī sent to King Fayṣal at the beginning of March 1970 (Dhū l-ḥijja 1389)[193] was never answered; the reply may be seen as having come in the form of the previously mentioned reprint of the work that followed shortly thereafter (1390/1970–71) under the auspices of the Office of the Muftī in Riyadh.[194]

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[188] al-Ṣāfī: *Maʿa al-Khaṭīb*, 71–74.

[189] al-Khāqānī: *Maʿa al-Khuṭūṭ al-ʿarīḍa*, 10; Mughniyya: *Faḍāʾil al-imām ʿAlī*, 182f., 197; cf. al-Ṣāfī: *Maʿa al-Khaṭīb*, 7–21; Mughniyya: *Hādhihi hiya al-wahhābiyya*, 17f., as well as Kamareʾī: *Payām-e Īrān*, 43; on the Sunni side, Fahmī al-Huwaydī (cf. above, p. 74 note 93) was critical of al-Khaṭīb: *Īrān min al-dākhil*, 324f. Incidentally, Mughniyya opened his riposte with the "disclosure" that behind the "hysterical" attempts to divide the *umma* that had often occurred recently, such as those by al-Jabhān, al-Khaṭīb, and Muḥammad al-Sibāʿī al-Ḥifnāwī (the last mentioned was an epigone of al-Khaṭīb's, see Ende: *Arabische Nation*, 104), were actually the American President Kennedy and the Jewish lobby who supported him, their goal being to distract the attention of the Muslims from the Palestine conflict; *Faḍāʾil*, 181f.; cf. idem: *Tajārib*, 229; al-Bahnasāwī maintained a similar "argumentation", saying the Iraq-Iran war after 1980 had caused the Koranic statement that the Jews were behind all wars to be forgotten: *al-Ḥaqāʾiq al-ghāʾiba*, 8.

[190] Schulze: *Internationalismus*, 358.

[191] Abū Muḥammad al-Khāqānī: *Maʿa al-Khuṭūṭ al-ʿarīḍa*, 7, 9; Salmān al-Khāqānī: *al-Shīʿa wa-l-sunna fī l-mīzān*, 11; al-Aḥsāʾī: *al-Ṭāʾifīya*, 65.

[192] Fahmī al-Huwaydī even stated that Khaṭīb's polemic was handed out to the pilgrims regularly every year, at least until 1993; cf. his preface to Mughniyya: *al-Jawāmiʿ wa-l-fawāriq*, 16.

[193] al-Khāqānī: *Maʿa al-Khuṭūṭ al-ʿarīḍa*, 8–13; ibid., 14–18: further letters of protest to the Qaṭari crown prince (from 1972 until June 1995 emir) Khalīfa Āl Thānī against the shaykhdom's publicist support of the *Khuṭūṭ*.

[194] Meanwhile, accessibility to the book has been greatly facilitated by the internet; an English translation is available under the URLs: <http://village.flashnet.it/users/fn034463/khutoot.html> and <http://members.telering.at/islam/texte/0100/141refu_shia_2.htm>.

In terms of content, the Shiite refutations brought just as little new as the Sunni polemic tirades that they in turn caused, whose number increased exponentially after the Islamic revolution of 1979. Whereas the authors of the latter, frequently referring to al-Khaṭīb,[195] make every effort to outdo even his spiteful tone, from the former come apologetics that are no less persistent, in which standardized rejoinders are leveled at trite Sunni accusations.

The main components that are almost never missing in virtually any written Shiite justification are the defence of the Mahdī concept, the relativization of *taqiyya*, as well as the fundamental rejection of any accusations of *taḥrīf*. The last-mentioned issue in particular has moved more and more into the centre of the dispute.[196] The Sunni reproach that the Shiites believe in another, i.e. falsified, Koran was already encountered in the heresiographic literature of the twentieth century and was emphatically denied by the Shia,[197] whereas the Shiite defenders of a *taḥrīf* theory such as al-Ṭabrisī or his student Āghā Bozorg al-Ṭehrānī always remained in the minority.[198]

It was al-Khaṭīb, however, who was the first (and until today surely the most effective) exponent to exploit this topic explicitly in connection with the inner-Islamic ecumenical discussion. In his first polemic against the JT, which appeared in his journal *al-Fatḥ* of October 1948 (and had been discussed in the previous chapter), the *taḥrīf* reproach was not yet mentioned at all. There he still even saw the vague possibility of rapprochement between the denominations as soon as the Shiites mitigated their judgement of the Prophet's companions and desisted in their belief in the infallibility of the Imams.[199]

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[195] Cf. al-Gharīb: *Wa-jā'a dawr al-majūs*, 143–45; Ẓahīr: *al-Shīʿa wa-l-sunna*, 66; idem: *al-Radd ʿalā l-duktūr ʿAlī ʿAbd al-Wāḥid Wāfī*, 22.

[196] Cf. in detail Brunner: *Die Schia und die Koranfälschung*, 94–114.

[197] Ibid., 72–81; for previous Sunni comments, cf. Jārallāh: *al-Washīʿa fī naqd ʿaqā'id al-shīʿa*, 112f., 151–55; al-Qaṣīmī: *al-Ṣirāʿ bayn al-islām wa-l-wathaniyya*, II/861–81; Muṣṭafā Ṣādiq al-Rāfiʿī: *Taḥt rāyat al-qur'ān*, Cairo 1926; Rashīd Riḍā: *al-Sunna wa-l-shīʿa*, 43f., 54; Shiite comments: al-Khunayzī: *al-Daʿwa al-islāmiyya*, II/107–71; Sharaf al-Dīn: *Ajwibat masā'il Jārallāh*, 28–37; Mahdī b. Maḥmūd Borūjerdī: *Borhān-e roushan. al-Burhān ʿalā ʿadam taḥrīf al-qur'ān*, Tehran 1954; Amīnī: *al-Ghadīr fī l-kitāb wa-l-sunna wa-l-adab*, III/301–04 (on al-Qaṣīmī); regarding Abū l-Qāsim al-Khū'ī's comment, see above, p. 224.

[198] al-Ṭehrānī wrote a defence of al-Ṭabrisī (entitled *al-Naqd al-laṭīf fī nafy al-taḥrīf ʿan al-qur'ān al-sharīf*) that he never published, apparently at the advice of Muḥammad al-Ḥusayn Āl Kāshif al-Ghiṭā; see *Dharīʿa* XXIV/278; "Dāneshmandān-e moʿāṣer wa āthār-e ānhā. Shaykh Āghā Bozorg Tehrānī", *Rāhnamā-ye ketāb* 4/5–6 (Jun.–Jul. 1961), 525–29, on 529; Brunner: *Die Schia und die Koranfälschung*, 80f.

[199] Cf. above, pp. 258ff.; similarly in his preface to al-Suwaydī: *Mu'tamar al-Najaf*, 50f., 54.

Under the impression of the JT's first successes and the fact that, thanks to the intervention of ʿAbd al-Majīd Salīm, their efforts gained a hearing at the Azhar, al-Khaṭīb obviously felt the need to bring up heavier artillery. Since his editions of anti-Shiite texts in the early 1950s, he turned more intensely to the *taḥrīf* issue in order to demonstrate the intractability of the split between Sunnism and Shiism.[200] The detail that he devoted to the accusation of Koran forgery in his *Khuṭūṭ*[201] was a recognizable attempt to deliver another blow at the *taqrīb* organisation, which was already under attack.

The Shiite commentators were presumably conscious of this danger and therefore pointedly struck back at just this accusation with equal intensity.[202] When one considers the acrimony of the debate concerning the authenticity of the Koran for the last three decades,[203] it must be stated that al-Khaṭīb's appeal did in fact meet with considerable success, all the more so as the remaining points of contention have also not been relegated to oblivion.

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[200] Prefaces to *Mukhtaṣar al-tuḥfa al-ithnā ʿashariyya*, p. *ṭ*, and *Muntaqā min minhāj al-iʿtidāl*, 7f.

[201] On p. 12 of his book, he printed a photo of what was alleged to be the Shiite *Sūrat al-Wilāya*, taken, according to the caption, "from an Iranian Koran".

[202] Mughniyya: *Faḍāʾil al-imām ʿAlī*, 188–94; al-Ṣāfī: *Maʿa al-Khaṭīb*, 43–70; al-Khāqānī: *Maʿa al-Khuṭūṭ al-ʿarīḍa*, 36–51.

[203] Regarding the Sunni position, cf. Furayj: *al-Shīʿa fī l-taṣawwur al-islāmī*, 13–27, 170, 175; al-Jabrī: *Ḥiwār maʿa al-shīʿa*, 118–22; al-Gharīb: *Wa-jāʾa dawr al-majūs*, 114–20; Muḥammad Kāmil al-Hāshimī: *ʿAqāʾid al-shīʿa fī l-mīzān*, 43–67, 287–90; Mālallāh: *al-Shīʿa wa-taḥrīf al-qurʾān*, passim; al-Mūsawī: *al-Shīʿa wa-l-taṣḥīḥ*, 130–36; al-Qafārī: *Uṣūl madhhab al-shīʿa*, I/200–303, II/586–613, III/990–1064; al-Sālūs: *Bayn al-shīʿa wa-l-sunna*, 292ff.; al-Turkumānī: *Taʿrīf bi-madhhab al-shīʿa al-imāmiyya*, 67–93; Ẓahīr: *al-Radd ʿalā l-duktūr ʿAlī ʿAbd al-Wāḥid Wāfī*, 67–102; idem: *al-Shīʿa wa-l-sunna*, 65–126 (English translation 106–206); idem: *al-Shīʿa wa-l-qurʾān*, passim; for the Shia: Rasūl Jaʿfariyyān: *Ukdhūbat taḥrīf al-qurʾān bayn al-shīʿa wa-l-sunna*, Tehran 1985; Nasīm al-Hāshimī: *al-Shīʿa wa-l-taḥqīq*, 135–41; al-Raḍawī: *Ārāʾ ʿulamāʾ al-muslimīn*, 147–243 (to a large extent identical with idem: *al-Burhān ʿalā ʿadam taḥrīf al-qurʾān*, 175–261); Bahāʾ al-Dīn Khorramshāhī: "Taḥrīf-e nā-pādhīrī-ye qorʾān-e karīm", *Waqf—mīrāth-e jāwīdān* 1/1372sh (1994)/2/18–27; Muḥammad Bāqir Anṣārī: "Taḥrīf al-Qurʾān: A Study of Misconceptions Regarding Corruption of the Qurʾānic Text", *al-Tawḥīd* 4/1407 (1987)/4/11–23.

CHAPTER TEN

FROM RAPPROCHEMENT TO RESTRAINT (1962–1979)

Relations between Sunni and Shiite scholars as they existed in the nearly two decades that were to last until the Iranian Revolution can be characterized as politely distant at best. The disenchantment and disappointment that entered the scene on both sides in the wake of the turbulent events of the preceding three years were simply too great for rapprochement to re-emerge from the ashes. Moreover, the internal problems that confronted the representatives of the two denominations, especially in the 1960s, also proved insurmountable. The changing self-conception of both Sunni and the Shiite *ʿulamāʾ* during the period left little room for ecumenical activities.

In March 1961 Āyatollāh Borūjerdī, advanced in years, passed away. His death set off an extended and intensive discussion among Shiite *ʿulamāʾ* concerning both the person and the authority of any possible successor as *marjaʿ al-taqlīd* as well as the modalities for recognizing a new "head" of the Shia.[1] In addition, in 1962–63 the Shah initiated his attempt to acquire control over the vast *awqāf* property holdings for the state through a land reform known as the "White Revolution", thus aiming to reduce the clergy's material independence. Not least due to the leadership crisis after Borūjerdī's demise, there was a split within the Iranian scholarly community. One faction of theologians, who were loyal to regime (and to which Moḥammad Taqī Qommī belonged),[2] favoured the acceptance of the law submitted to Parliament. Against them stood an irreconcilable opposition under the leadership of Āyatollāh Khomeynī.[3] This, though, was essentially an inner-Shiite or rather inner-Iranian issue to which the Sunni schol-

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[1] Cf. Lambton: "Reconsideration", passim; Akhavi: *Religion and Politics*, 99ff.; for the background of the debate, see also A. Amanat: "In Between the Madrasa and the Marketplace: The Designation of Clerical Leadership in Modern Shiʿism", in: S.A. Arjomand: *Authority and Political Culture in Shiʿism*, Albany 1988, 98–132.

[2] Akhavi: *Religion and Politics*, 103.

[3] Göbel: *Moderne schiitische Politik*, 172ff.; Mottahedeh: *The Mantle of the Prophet*, 244ff.; Moin: *Khomeini*, 74ff.

ars, at least from the Azhar, added little more than a condemnation—sharp in tone—of the procedure of the Iranian government.[4]

It has been contended that common interests between the Shiite opposition to the Shah led by Khomeynī on the one hand and ʿAbd al-Nāṣir's Arab-nationalist opposition to the Tehran regime on the other somehow forged overnight a "'united front' between Iranian Shīʿīsm and Arab Sunnīsm" that allegedly brought the militant parts of the Iranian clergy a respectability previously unknown within Sunni circles.[5] But in regard to the *taqrīb* debate, this appears to be quite doubtful.

Ecumenical activities having a relatively limited scope on the Shiite side in subsequent years, the beginning of the 1960s saw significant changes within the Sunni scholarship as well. The development pivoted on the tense relationship between the Egyptian and Saudi Arabian governments, which rubbed off on the *ʿulamāʾ* of both countries. For the inner-Islamic ecumene, this meant the victory of a tendency that was increasingly to be felt since the middle of the 1950s: The government-led pan-Islamism that had at first regarded the "classical" *taqrīb* movement with suspicion and later contained it, now superseded it almost completely. Nothing remained of the pattern of ecumenical argumentation that in previous years the policies of the powers-that-be had used without a qualm. It was replaced by a foreign policy characterized by efforts at hegemony that conjured up the idea of Islamic unity only in a very general form. The slogans coming from Cairo, Riyadh, and Mecca in the 1960s spoke of internationalism instead of *taqrīb* and the two spheres had precious little to do with each other.

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[4] Cf. above, p. 318.

[5] Enayat: *Modern Islamic Political Thought*, 50; with regard to the subsequent evolution still to be discussed, this interpretation seems to be rather questionable. Possibly it is influenced by Mortażā Moṭahharī, whom Enayat credits elsewhere (p. xi) with having inspired him to write his book; Moṭahharī, who commented positively on Shaltūt's *fatwā* (see *Maktab-e tashayyoʿ* 3/1380hq: "Shāmel-e sharḥ-e zendegānī-ye . . . Borūjerdī", 313; cf. also al-Mīlād: *Khiṭāb al-waḥda al-islāmiyya*, 37ff.), was regarded at the beginning of the 1960s as the leader of the "social reformers" among the Iranian *ʿulamāʾ*; after his assassination in May 1979 he became one of the first great martyr figures of the Islamic Revolution in Iran; regarding him, see *GD* VIII/98–105; *EI*[2] VII/762f. (H. Algar); Dabashi: *Theology of Discontent*, 147–215; Hajatpour: *Iranische Geistlichkeit*, 179–201, as well as J.G.T. ter Haar: "Murtazā Mutahharī (1919–1979): An Introduction to his Life and Thought", *Persica* 14/1990–92/1–20.

The starting point of the inner-Sunni rivalry was the well-known Azhar reform law of June 1961, which represented the climax of the Egyptian government's efforts to assimilate the Muslim scholars into the state.[6] ʿAbd al-Nāṣir's aspirations to political pre-eminence in the Near East that in 1958 had materialized in the union with Syria and the emergence of the UAR was meant to extend into the sphere of theology. This simultaneously offered the theologians the opportunity to cooperate with the government and completely suppress the influence of the neo-Salafi groups, particularly the Muslim Brotherhood, which had been decreasing over the preceding years anyway.

Both tendencies almost inevitably aroused the mistrust on the part of Saudi Arabia that later gave way to open opposition, since the Saudis now feared for their influence among the Arab-Islamic states and their scholarly communities. The political alliance between the two countries had already broken up in 1957–58, and when, at the same time, the pressure on the neo-Salafi circles also increased in Syria (where they had found refuge since their persecution in Egypt after 1954), Saudi Arabia had become a focal point for the scholars and intellectuals driven into exile. The tensions grew further during the year after ʿAbd al-Nāṣir undertook the Azhar reform, when he embarked to codify the state ideology within the framework of a National Charter (*al-mīthāq al-waṭanī*). The Azhar *ʿulamāʾ* followed him unconditionally in this move, too, and were even ready to take up the "Islamic Socialism" propagated by the regime and to justify it by referring to Islamic history.[7] In the vanguard of the propaganda war were high-level Azhar functionaries like Muḥammad al-Bahayy, Aḥmad Ḥasan al-Zayyāt as well as Maḥmūd Shaltūt himself, who praised Egypt's Socialist revolution as a continuation of the mission of Islam.[8]

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[6] The law 103/1961 and its various stipulations are treated in detail by Lemke: *Šaltūt*, 166–232; cf. also Zeghal: *Gardiens de l'Islam*, 98–103.

[7] Ibid., 169; an Italian translation of the National Charter is found in *OM* 42/1962/464–68; the most influential work on this subject happens to have come from the pen of the neo-Salafi Syrian scholar Muṣṭafā al-Sibāʿī: *Ishtirākiyyat al-islām*, Damascus 1959, Cairo 1960; regarding al-Sibāʿī, see above, p. 246 note 131; cf. in general D. Crecelius: "Die Religion im Dienste des islamischen Staatssozialismus in Ägypten", *Bustan* 8/1967/3/13–20; H. Enayat: "Islam and Socialism in Egypt", *MES* 4/1968/141–72; Haddad: *Contemporary Islam and the Challenge of History*, 24–32; Rejwan: *Nasserist Ideology*, 29–49; Zeghal: *Gardiens de l'Islam*, 103–14.

[8] Vatikiotis: "Islam and the Foreign Policy of Egypt", 141; the Prophet's companion Abū Dharr al-Ghifārī played an important role in the Islamic justification of Socialism; in this regard, see Ende: *Arabische Nation*, 210–21; U. Haarmann: "Abū Dharr—Muḥammad's Revolutionary Companion", *MW* 68/1978/285–89.

This constellation—presented here only in very abridged form—ultimately led to the establishment of an actual counter-centre to the Azhar on the Arabian Peninsula at the beginning of the 1960s.[9] The first step was achieved by the foundation of the Islamic University in Medina in the summer of 1961, in which the neo-Salafi activists who had recently immigrated to the Kingdom played a decisive part. A year later, on the occasion of the pilgrimage season of 1381 (May 1962), the situation escalated when the Saudi authorities refused to accept the black cover of the Kaʿba (the *kiswa*), which had been traditionally manufactured in Egypt and solemnly transported to Mecca. The official reason stated was the supposedly inadequate quality of the *kiswa* of the previous year. Unofficially, though, the senders were given to understand that they were apostates and their producing a cloth of such great significance was henceforth out of the question.[10]

In addition, an Islamic Conference was convened in Mecca between May 18 and 20, 1962, on the first day of which the creation of the Muslim World League (*Rābiṭat al-ʿālam al-islāmī*) was announced. In view of the dangers the Islamic world was asserted to be exposed to, and as whose source, naturally, Egypt was identified, cooperation among the Islamic states in the various political, economic, and cultural fields should be put on a new foundation, this time under the leadership of Saudi Arabia.[11]

For the Shiite scholars, these events were only of secondary importance at best. Indeed a Zaydi *qāḍī*, ʿAbd al-Raḥmān b. Yaḥyā al-Iryānī from Yemen, was present on the occasion of the proclamation of the Muslim World League, but no representative of the Twelver Shiite clergy from Iran, Iraq, or Lebanon attended.[12] There was not even a broad exchange of ideas with the Shiites despite the fact that

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[9] Cf. in detail, Schulze: *Internationalismus*, 141–52.

[10] Ibid. 175f.; regarding the *kiswa* in general, see *EI*² VI/166 (s.v. "Makka"; R.B. Winder); R. Stratkötter: *Von Kairo nach Mekka. Sozial- und Wirtschaftsgeschichte der Pilgerfahrt nach den Berichten des Ibrāhīm Rifʿat Bāšā: Miʾāt al-Ḥaramain*, Berlin 1991, 52–56; F.E. Peters: *The Hajj. The Muslim Pilgrimage to Mecca and the Holy Places*, Princeton 1994, 126–29 and index, s.v.; M. Gaudefroy-Demombynes: "Le voile de la Kaʿba", *SI* 2/1954/5–21.

[11] Cf. in detail, Schulze, 181–212; also, the article "Muslim World League", *OE* III/208–10 (R. Schulze), and Landau: *Politics*, 283–87; regarding the history of the term *rābiṭa*, see "al-Rābiṭa al-islāmiyya", *EI*² VIII/359–61 (R. Schulze).

[12] Schulze: *Internationalismus*, 184ff.; idem: *Geschichte*, 219; al-Iryānī was later temporarily head of the government of North Yemen, see Kerr: *The Arab Cold War*, 107–14.

at least one Iranian government envoy was present at the founding conference of the organization in Mecca.[13]

From its very inception the Muslim World League was a decidedly Sunni group borne to a high degree by Wahhabi, Salafi, and neo-Salafi scholars and intellectuals. Little was felt of any *taqrīb*-oriented endeavours to advance the ecumenical discussion between Sunnism and Shiism. The definition of rapprochement and unity as supported in Mecca was limited to Sunni Muslims exclusively. Although the Shiites were not to be openly attacked, they were passed over by a pointed policy of silence and thus became by and large a taboo entity.[14]

Characteristic of this attitude was a lecture given in Tunis in February 1966 by Muḥammad al-Fāḍil b. ʿĀshūr, Muftī of Tunisia and member of the Constituent Board of the Muslim World League since 1964. He entitled his presentation "Islamic Unity: the Question of Rapprochement among Muslims", but his speech dealt just as little with Shiism in particular as with the *taqrīb* movement in general. Instead, he characterized the World League as the only appropriate venue to consider the issue of Islamic unity.[15]

King Fayṣal's call for unity and "Islamic solidarity" (*al-taḍāmun al-islāmī*), which he made a pillar of his foreign policy from the middle of the 1960s, did not change this policy of disdain at all. Although he travelled to Tehran twice and even used the word of a "call to rapprochement" (*daʿwat al-taqārub*) to underline his argumentation,[16] his efforts, too, remained limited to politically motivated bloc building against the omnipresent enemies of colonialism, Zionism, and Communism without ever resulting in a dialogue with the Shiite clergy.[17]

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[13] Schulze: *Internationalismus*, 188; Iran's share in conceiving the World League is presented in highly embellished form by Badeeb: *Saudi-Iranian Relations*, 89.

[14] Regarding the relationship of the World League to Shiism, cf. Schulze: *Internationalismus*, 356–62 (mainly about the period after 1979); see also *OM* 42/1962/401b.

[15] Ibn ʿĀshūr: *al-Waḥda al-islāmiyya*, passim, esp. 28–30; regarding Ibn ʿĀshūr (1909–1970), see al-Ziriklī VI/325f.; Kaḥḥāla M/720; al-Mukhtār b. Aḥmad ʿAmmār: *al-Shaykh Muḥammad al-Fāḍil b. ʿĀshūr—ḥayātuhu wa-atharuhu al-fikrī*, Tunis 1985; obituaries in *MA* 42/5 (Sep. 1970), 401–06, *RAAD* 46/1971/450f., and *Islamic Studies* 9/1970/2/191.

[16] Zuhdī al-Fātiḥ: *al-Faysaliyya. Manhaj ḥaḍāra wa-madrasat binā'. Ḥiwār maʿa Fayṣal b. ʿAbd al-*ʿAzīz, Beirut 1972, 69; regarding his trips, cf. Ṣalāḥ al-Dīn al-Munajjid: *Aḥādīth ʿan Fayṣal wa-l-taḍāmun al-islāmī*, Beirut 1974, 51–61.

[17] Regarding Fayṣal's (reigned 1964–75) policy of *taḍāmun* cf. Nagel: "Faiṣal von Saudi-Arabien", passim; Schöne: *Islamische Solidarität*, 19–34; Landau: *Politics*, 260–67; Muḥammad Ḥasan ʿAwwād: *al-Taḍāmun al-islāmī al-kabīr fī zilāl daʿwat al-qā'id al-*

The Shiite resonance to the Saudi Arabian attitude was correspondingly poor. At least the *ʿIrfān* temporarily adopted the custom of maintaining a separate column about cultural and political activities in Saudi Arabia; for example, it was stated in one of these announcements that Muḥammad Naṣīf, the man behind al-Khaṭīb's polemics against Shiism (which on this occasion was suppressed), had bequeathed his extensive library to the City of Jeddah.[18]

All in all, however, the Shiite theologians did not give the impression that they saw in the Kingdom's foreign policy or the activity of the Muslim World League any basis for a continuation of the ecumenical efforts of former years. The single exception to this rule was Khalīl Kamareʾī, who in the past had appeared as an official emissary of Borūjerdī in *taqrīb* affairs. He wrote a book in honour of the Saudi monarch in 1965–66, shortly after he had participated in the second Islamic conference organized by the Muslim World League.[19] The impulse for the book, which he provided with a picture of Fayṣal and dedicated to the *khādim al-ḥaramayn al-sharīfayn (. . .) al-muʿazzam*,[20] was presumably initiated by the latter's state visit to Iran in December 1965, Kamareʾī's favourable attitude towards the Shah probably having played a considerable role in his enthusiasm.[21] In addition to references to his own efforts to promote agreement between Sunnis and Shiites, which were intended to include the Saudi government as well, he recalled Maḥmūd Shaltūt's *fatwā* and praised Muḥammad Amīn al-Ḥusaynī for his pro-Shiite comments.[22] He laid particular significance on silencing the use of epithets like *rawāfiḍ* and *nawāṣib* that were especially widespread in the polemics between Wahhabis

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zaʿīm Fayṣal b. ʿAbd al-ʿAzīz, Cairo 1976; N.O. Madani: *The Islamic Content of the Foreign Policy of Saudi Arabia. King Faisal's Call for Solidarity, 1965–1975*, Ph.D. Diss. Washington 1979; al-Rasheed: *A History of Saudi Arabia*, 128–34.

[18] *al-ʿIrfān* 58/5 (Sep. 1970), 629–31, on 630; further installments are found in 58/6 (Oct. 1970), 759–61; 58/7 (Nov. 1970), 871–74; 59/1 (May 1971), 152–54; 59/4 (Aug. 1971), 526–28, as well as 58/7–10 (Dec. 1971), 1028f.; after Fayṣal's assassination on March 25, 1975, Nizār al-Zayn dedicated a long, complimentary obituary to him; see *al-ʿIrfān* 63/4 (April 1975), 507–28.

[19] Schulze: *Internationalismus*, 219 (where he is erroneously designated as "the leader of the Sunni community in Tehran").

[20] Kamareʾī: *Manāzil al-waḥy*, after the title page; regarding the honorary title *khādim al-ḥaramayn*, see *EI*[2] IV/899f. (B. Lewis); since 1986 this has also been the official formula for addressing the Saudi monarch.

[21] Kamareʾī, 5f., 63 (referring to a meeting with a Saudi Arabian ministerial delegation led by Ḥasan b. ʿAbdallāh Āl al-Shaykh).

[22] Ibid. 55, 61ff.

and Shiites, but on the other hand he just as ardently defended the Shiite veneration of the graves of the Imams and their descendants against the long-standing reproach of the Wahhabi scholars, who saw in it merely a stubborn manifestation of unbelief.[23]

Kamare'ī concluded his booklet with the reproduction of a letter he had sent to Fayṣal on December 21, 1964, in which he congratulated him on his ascension to the throne. Ignoring the totally different outlook of the Muslim World League, he fell back on traditionally ecumenical arguments and reminded the Saudi Monarch of the new organization's task: namely, to improve the Muslims' knowledge of each other through the convening of conferences, the foundation of Islamic academies, as well as the provision of media in general. In view of the failure of the discussion over the professorship at the Azhar and the political background of Shaltūt's legal opinion, his inclusion of an explicit demand that Shiite law be added to the curriculum of the Islamic University of Medina and his suggestion to the *ʿulamāʾ* there that they emulate Shaltūt and recognize Shiism by issuing a similar *fatwā* was an almost foolhardy undertaking.[24] Neither Fayṣal nor the scholars of the World League reacted to it.

Kamare'ī remained almost completely isolated within the Shiite clergy in his approval of the Saudi *taḍāmun* policy.[25] That Fayṣal's call produced no further accommodation on the part of the World League made the majority of the Shia feel justified in their reservation. Actually the contrary of Islamic solidarity took place: given the Saudis' continuous reference to the significance of the *ḥajj* for the unity of all Muslims, their free distribution of an anti-Shiite polemic such as al-Khaṭīb's *al-Khuṭūṭ al-ʿarīḍa* during the pilgrimage in 1970 must have been perceived by Shiite authors as an even greater affront. Abū Muḥammad al-Khāqānī in his previously mentioned letter of protest to King Fayṣal therefore promptly confronted the recipient with the question whether in the meantime he had changed his mind about Islamic unity or if those responsible for carrying out this action had formed a fifth column that was obstructing the execution of the King's orders.[26]

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[23] Ibid. 58f.

[24] Ibid. 101–13, esp. 110.

[25] Nagel: "König Faiṣal von Saudi-Arabien", 67f., likewise quotes the Iraqi *ʿālim* ʿAlī Kāshif al-Ghiṭāʾ's words of praise for Fayṣal's foreign policy; regarding him, see below, note 35.

[26] al-Khāqānī: *Maʿa al-Khuṭūṭ al-ʿarīḍa*, 10.

On the few occasions when individual participants of the World League broke through the general disregard of Shiism, the result was frequently a renewed flaring up of mutual polemic such as in the case of one of its founding members, Abū l-Ḥasan ʿAlī al-Nadwī, an Indian Salafiyya scholar. In 1973 he led a delegation sponsored by the organization to Iran and later authored a book with the meaningful title "Listen, O Iran" (*Ismaʿī yā Īrān*). In it he attacked in particular the Shiite assessment of the *ṣaḥāba* and condemned the pictorial representations of the Shiite Imams omnipresent in the country. The defenders' retorts came immediately. Luṭfallāh al-Ṣāfī, who had been among the critics of Muḥibb al-Dīn al-Khaṭīb, dismissed the accusations comprehensively in a pamphlet entitled "Iran Listens and Replies" and turned the tables with the reproach to the Muslim World League that in supporting the Saudi government, it was also buttressing colonialism. The delegation, he claimed, had maintained much too close contacts to the Iranian government but had not visited the important universities in Qom, which had resulted in a completely distorted depiction of Shiism.[27] Indicatively, he mentioned al-Nadwī's work in the same breath with al-Khaṭīb's notorious *al-Khuṭūṭ al-ʿarīḍa*, yet nevertheless did not forget to point out his personal readiness for rapprochement with Sunnis.[28]

It does not lack a certain irony that the arguments with which the Shiite supporters of *taqrīb* often had to contend in regard to the JT, i.e. being a propaganda instrument for Shiism and seeking to exploit the other side's willingness for understanding, including the *ceterum censeo* of being personally in principle in favour of *taqrīb*, were applied here in exactly the opposite direction.[29]

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[27] al-Ṣāfī: "Īrān tasmaʿ fa-tujīb", in: idem: *Lamaḥāt*, 155–206, esp. 167–70 and 180–82; cf. also Ende: "Literatur und Politik in Saudi-Arabien (IV)", 525f.; regarding al-Nadwī (1913/14–1999), see ibid., 524–29; Schulze: *Internationalismus*, index, s.v., esp. 199f.; Yūsuf al-Qaraḍāwī: *al-Shaykh Abū l-Ḥasan al-Nadwī kamā ʿaraftuhu*, Damascus 1422/2001; ʿAbd al-Majīd al-Ghūrī: *Abū l-Ḥasan ʿAlī al-Ḥasanī al-Nadwī. al-Imām al-mufakkir al-dāʿiyya al-adīb*, Damascus 1420/1999; the book *Ismaʿī yā Īrān* was not accessible to me. In the 1980s al-Nadwī again published an anti-Shiite pamphlet: *Ṣūratān mutaḍāddatān*; concerning it, see his autobiography *Fī masīrat al-ḥayāt*, Damascus 1407/1987, I/279–88, 350; II/187–96.

[28] al-Ṣāfī: *Lamaḥāt*, 190, 205f.

[29] Moṣṭafā Nūrānī Ardabīlī is another example in this respect: *Yek taḥqīq-e ʿamīq. Pīrāmūn-e mas'ale-ye sherk wa bedʿat*, Qom 1353sh/1974, 7f.

Much more complex though not necessarily more productive was the relationship between the Shia and the Azhar in the 1960s. The latter had not remained inactive in the years after the 1961 reform in disseminating its concept of the "correct" path of Islam outside Egypt. Clearly the goal was to make up ground for the advance Saudi Arabia had achieved in the field of politically motivated pan-Islamism through the foundation of the Muslim World League. The instrument that the Azhar used primarily in this case was the Academy of Islamic Research (*Majmaʿ al-buḥūth al-islāmiyya*), which was described in article fifteen of the reform law as "the supreme authority for Islamic research" at the Azhar.[30]

From 1964 the Academy organized international conferences that basically were also open to Shiite participants.[31] Thus the editor in chief of the Azhar journal, Aḥmad Ḥasan al-Zayyāt, expressed his optimism on the occasion of the first conference that the Academy would contribute to the rapprochement of the legal schools and in this way help remove the causes of the inner-Islamic dispute.[32] However, the circumstances under which Shiite scholars participated in the Academy's congresses soon made it clear that the issue of *taqrīb* did not by any means stand at the centre of the organizers' attentiveness. None of the remaining *ʿulamāʾ* who just a few years before had been among the supporters of the JT and also issued words of praise for the Azhar now made the way to Cairo, nor did other high-ranking representatives of the Shiite clergy such as Āyatollāh Muḥsin al-Ḥakīm, whom the majority of Shiites acknowledged as *marjaʿ al-taqlīd* following Borūjerdī's death. It is even said that he rejected the invitation to a conference at the Azhar, since he found the Egyptian scholars' attitude toward Communism and Socialism too openly pro-government for his tastes. It remains unclear, though, whether the invitation in question was in fact to a conference convened by the Academy.[33]

Among the few Shiite *ʿulamāʾ* who responded to an invitation to one of the Academy's congresses between 1964 and 1971, only two

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[30] Lemke: *Šaltūt*, 178–85; Schulze: *Internationalismus*, 153f. 235–38.

[31] Regarding the eight congresses organized until 1977, see J. Jomier: "Les congrès de l'Académie des Recherches Islamiques dépendant de l'Azhar", *MIDEO* 14/1980/95–148.

[32] al-Zayyāt: "Muʾtamar ʿulamāʾ al-muslimīn", *MA* 35/9 (Apr. 1964), 897–900, on 898f.

[33] Wiley: *The Islamic Movement of Iraqi Shiʿas*, 40; cf. also al-Sarrāj: *al-Imām Muḥsin al-Ḥakīm*, 170f., and Nizār al-Zayn in *al-ʿIrfān* 50/4 (Nov. 1962), 338f.

did so publicly: ʿAlī Kāshif al-Ghiṭāʾ and Mūsā al-Ṣadr.[34] The former was a member of the famous Iraqi scholarly family to which Muḥammad al-Ḥusayn Āl Kāshif al-Ghiṭāʾ had also belonged.[35] Similar to his predecessor ʿAbd al-Karīm al-Zanjānī, who just thirty years previously had stopped at the Azhar, he authored a book describing his 1965 trip to Egypt. He was aided in this by Shaykh Muḥammad Kāẓim al-Kafāʾī, who likewise came from Najaf.[36] In both cases, however, the two scholars' actual role in the Sunni-Shiite dialogue was far from corresponding to the impression given in the books written to honour them.

ʿAlī Kāshif al-Ghiṭāʾs first contact with the Azhar already dated back twenty-five years. In 1940 he had corresponded briefly with the *Shaykh al-Azhar* Muḥammad Muṣṭafā al-Marāghī about linguistic details of al-Marāghī's Koran commentary, though without touching on the question of rapprochement between the denominations.[37] Also in the period that followed, he did not distinguish himself in the field in any way and appears to have regarded ecumenical activities rather indifferently.[38] What had particularly qualified him for

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[34] Besides these two scholars, the following personalities were mentioned in the *MA*: 1964: Muḥammad al-Khāliṣī (the son of Muḥammad b. Muḥammad Mahdī al-Khāliṣī, who died in 1963) as envoy from al-Kāẓimiyya, as well as an unnamed representative from Najaf (*MA* 35/9 [Apr. 1964], 1006); 1965: al-Khāliṣī, Kāẓim al-Kafāʾī (*MA* 37/1 [May 1965], 108f.); 1966: al-Kafāʾī (*MA* 38/4 [Apr. 1966], 387); 1971: Jaʿfar Shāhīdī, Muḥammad Taqī al-Ḥakīm (*MA* 43/3 [Mar. 1971], 228f.).

[35] Regarding some of the most important scholars from this family, see *RF* III/1036–55; Momen: *Introduction*, 310; "Āl Kāshif al-Ghiṭāʾ", *Dāʾerat ol-maʿāref-e bozorg-e eslāmī*, II/100–07; concerning ʿAlī Kāshif al-Ghiṭāʾ (1913–90), see *MMI* II/432; *RF* III/1047; cf. also Bāqir Sharīf al-Qurashī: "Maktabat Kāshif al-Ghiṭāʾ", *al-ʿIrfān* 42/10 (Aug. 1955), 1252–54.

[36] al-Kafāʾī: *Bayn al-Najaf wa-l-Azhar*, passim, esp. 51–222; al-Wardānī: *al-Shīʿa fī Miṣr*, 122–25, 187–89, [219]–[221]; about al-Kafāʾī (born 1924), see *MMI* III/229; *RF* III/1085f.; he was also in contact with the JT for a brief period, see *RI* 3/1951/103–05; a *qaṣīda* with the title *Yā waḥdat al-islām* that he presented on the occasion of the inauguration of a Baghdadi organization called the *Jamʿiyyat al-waḥda al-islāmiyya* is printed in *al-ʿIrfān* 36/2 (Feb. 1949), 145f.

[37] al-Kafāʾī: *Bayn al-Najaf wa-l-Azhar*, 20–39.

[38] In April 1954, however, he participated in a conference of Muslim and Christian scholars in Biḥamdūn in Lebanon that was organized by a group called the "American Friends of the Middle East"; in his lecture he lamented the sectarian fanaticism that was complicating the peaceful coexistence of mankind and was against the spirit of any religion; see *Proceedings of the Muslim-Christian Convocation, Bhamdoun, Lebanon April 22–27, 1954*, 94f. Muḥammad al-Ḥusayn Āl Kāshif al-Ghiṭāʾ, who had also been invited, refused to take part and gave his reasons in the work *al-Muthul al-ʿulyā fī l-islām lā fī Biḥamdūn*, Najaf 1954 (I owe the reference to this conference and the role of the two Iraqi scholars to Prof. Silvia Naef).

participation in the Academy's 1965 conference was presumably his attitude during the Suez conflict of 1956 when he organized a protest rally in Najaf to support Egypt as well as the benevolent telegram he sent to Jamāl ʿAbd al-Nāṣir and ʿAbd al-Salām ʿĀrif on the occasion of the conference of Arab heads of state that took place in Cairo in 1964.[39] In later years he remained close to politics and loyal to politicians, openly supporting the Baʿth regime that came to power in Iraq in 1968 in its fight against post-revolutionary Iran.[40] At the Cairene congress of the Azhar in 1965, he gave a lecture on his ideas of Islamic insurance and banking, the general topics of the meeting, without dealing with the difficulties of balance between the Muslim denominations.[41]

The same was true a few years later for Mūsā al-Ṣadr, the other, more distinguished Shiite representative in the Azhar Academy, who had been designated heir to ʿAbd al-Ḥusayn Sharaf al-Dīn as the leader of the Lebanese Shia[42] at the end of the 1950s and in May 1969 was elected as the first president of the newly created Supreme Shiite Council in Lebanon.[43] By virtue of this office he was of course intensely concerned with the problem of the coexistence of the various religious communities that was especially urgent in Lebanon. Nevertheless the demand he frequently expressed in those years for an abolition of the Lebanese confessional system can hardly be interpreted in the sense of a theological-legal rapprochement between Sunnis and Shiites. The political implications that led him to such comments were all too clear, as were his simultaneous efforts to assist

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[39] al-Kafāʾī, 39–47.

[40] *MECS* 7/1982–83/243f.; T.M. Aziz: "The Role of Muhammad Baqir al-Sadr in Shiʿi Political Activism in Iraq from 1958 to 1980", *IJMES* 25/1993/207–22, on 220 note 34; H. Batatu: "Shiʾi Organizations in Iraq: Al-Daʾwah al-Islamiyah and al-Mujahidin", in: J.R.I. Cole/N.R. Keddie (eds.): *Shiʾism and Social Protest*, New Haven 1986, 179–200, on 196; Mallat: *Renewal*, 17f.; Wiley: *The Islamic Movement of Iraqi Shiʿas*, 61, 69 note 66; Muḥammad Hādī al-Amīnī characterized this attitude as interference into things that exceeded his personal horizon, *RF* III/1047; see also above, note 25.

[41] Kafāʾī: *Bayn al-Najaf wa-l-Azhar*, 85–131; al-Wardānī: *al-Shīʿa fī Miṣr*, 122–25, 187–89, 192–97, [219]–[221]; see also *MA* 37/1 (May 1965), 105f. 109.

[42] Muḥammad Faḍl Saʿd in *al-ʿIrfān* 71/7 (Sep. 1983), 87–94.

[43] About him (born in 1928, he disappeared during a visit to Libya in 1978), see F. Ajami: *The Vanished Imam. Musa al-Sadr and the Shia of Lebanon*, London 1986; H.E. Chehabi: "The Imam as a Dandy: The Case of Musa Sadr", *Harvard Middle Eastern and Islamic Review* 3/1996/1–2/20–41; also Sharaf al-Dīn: *Bughyat al-rāghibīn*, I/259–61 and II/619–35; *Orient* 14/1973/103; Kramer: "Syria's Alawis and Shiʾism", 246–49; Göbel: *Moderne schiitische Politik*, 83–89; cf. also above, p. 76 note 102.

in the implementation of explicitly Shiite demands.[44] None of this was to be seen, though, during his appearances at the Academy of Islamic Research in 1970 and 1971, his 1971 lecture being devoted to the general topic of "Islam's Care for the Values and Thoughts of Humanity".[45]

The invitations of al-Ṣadr and Kāshif al-Ghiṭā' are instructive in that they expressed the Azhar's clear preference for scholars who were presumably conscious of the political consequences of their activities (and who made this obvious), but also who represented positions that were acceptable to the Azhar as protector of the Sunni legal schools. Particularly in the conflict with Israel, a point that became the focus of attention in the 1960s more than ever before, an increase in international support was hoped for. The unanimity with which the establishment of diplomatic relations between the Federal Republic of Germany and Israel was condemned may also be interpreted in this sense.[46]

It is interesting that during their stay in Egypt both ʿAlī Kāshif al-Ghiṭā' and Mūsā al-Ṣadr did refer to the example set by the *taqrīb* movement and claimed to act on its behalf. They did this, however, in the form of interviews with the Egyptian press and therefore outside the events organized by the Azhar. Kāshif al-Ghiṭā' in particular, in a conversation with a representative of the magazine *Rūz al-Yūsuf*, used the occasion to call for inner-Islamic rapprochement in order to fend off the endeavours of the colonialists, who were the only beneficiary of the schism between Muslims. He stressed several times his desire to convene a conference immediately after his return to Iraq at which the question of *taqrīb* was to be discussed in depth.[47] When asked which activities existed at the time toward this end, in

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[44] Cf. Rieck: *Die Schiiten und der Kampf um den Libanon*, 124–29; also S. Nasr: "Mobilisation communautaire et symbolique religieuse: l'imam Sadr et les chiʿites du Liban (1970–1975)", in: O. Carré/P. Dumont (eds.): *Radicalismes islamiques*, Paris 1985, I/119–58.

[45] *Riʿāyat al-Islām li-l-qiyam wa-l-maʿānī l-insāniyya*, printed in *MA* 43/3 (May 1971), 244–52.

[46] al-Kafā'ī: *Bayn al-Najaf wa-l-Azhar*, 89f.

[47] I have not been able to find any information about such a conference (which is not to be confounded with the second conference of the Muslim World League in the same year in Mecca; Schulze: *Internationalismus*, 218ff.); nevertheless in his entry about Muḥammad Kāẓim al-Kafā'ī, ʿAwwād mentions a work written by him entitled *al-Muʾtamar al-islāmī al-ʿirāqī: 30 ḥazīrān—3 tammūz 1965*, Baghdad 1965, which may be related to Kāshif al-Ghiṭā''s announcement; *MMI* III/229.

a concession to his hosts he indeed named the Academy of Islamic Research, but not the JT or the Azharis who had formerly been active in it. This interview ultimately did include a controversial point when Kāshif al-Ghiṭā' defended in great detail the Shiite temporary marriage and thus triggered off a generally critical reverberation among the magazine's readers.[48] Mūsā al-Ṣadr's reference to the *taqrīb* movement was much shorter, but he included instead a statement of appreciation for the JT for having smoothed the way for meetings of Sunni and Shiite scholars such as those of the Academy of Islamic Research.[49]

The conferences of the Academy did not offer any suitable forum for such statements. Even if the conversation tangentially touched on the topic of confessional reconciliation, it was apparently regarded preferable to discuss it with Sunni interlocutors.[50] In the official comments and decisions of the Academy, remarks regarding *taqrīb* that went beyond general demands for Islamic unity were not to be found. The farthest step taken in this direction was in 1971 when the aspiration toward unity became the subject of an independent resolution. But it foresaw only the noncommittal goal of cultural unity and better mutual knowledge without explicitly mentioning Shiism.[51]

Muḥammad Abū Zahra, in the past a declared supporter of the ecumenical movement, carried on his work toward communication with Shiism, but he, too, did not express his thoughts in this regard at the congresses, which he attended regularly. Instead, he published

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[48] The interview of June 7, 1965, is reprinted in al-Kafā'ī: *Bayn al-Najaf wa-l-Azhar*, 188–95, and in al-Wardānī: *al-Shīʿa fī Miṣr*, 192–97; regarding *mutʿa*, see also al-Kafā'ī, 195–210; Aḥmad al-Sharabāṣī, ʿĀ'isha ʿAbd al-Raḥmān, and Nawāl al-Saʿdāwī, among others, participated in the debate; all rejected Kāshif al-Ghiṭā''s view; cf. also Ende: "Ehe auf Zeit", 21–23.

[49] An interview al-Ṣadr gave to the journal *al-Muṣawwar* is reproduced in *al-ʿIrfān* 58/1 (May 1970), 129–34 (130f. about *taqrīb*); a photograph printed there shows him together with Jamāl ʿAbd al-Nāṣir at a reception for conference participants.

[50] This occurred, for example, during the 1966 conference when the *MA*'s correspondent, Saʿd ʿAbd al-Maqṣūd Ẓalām, asked the Iraqi Sunni *shaykh* ʿAbdallāh al-Shukhaylī about his views regarding *taqārub bayn al-madhāhib al-islāmiyya* at a rather informal meeting; see *MA* 38/4 (Oct. 1966), 490f. Furthermore, Kāshif al-Ghiṭā''s controversial comments on *mutʿa* the previous year had possibly contributed to this; at least a criticism of the Shiite opinion of the doctrine of temporary marriage that was printed in December 1966 in the Azhar journal may be interpreted in this sense: ʿAbd al-Qādir Maḥmūd: "Zawāj al-mutʿa bayn al-shīʿa wa-l-sunna", *MA* 38/7 (Dec. 1966), 704–10; from among the modern Shiites, only Muḥammad Jawād Mughniyya and Muḥammad al-Ḥusayn Āl Kāshif al-Ghiṭā' were mentioned by name.

[51] *MA* 43/4 (Jun. 1971), English section, 14–16; cf. Jomier: "Les Congrès", 125f.

a book in 1971 entitled *al-Waḥda al-islāmiyya* that was a significantly expanded version of a series of articles that had appeared at the end of the 1950s in the *RI*. In it he expressed his regret that no Ja'fari member had yet been admitted into the Academy of Islamic Research although this institution was considered a preliminary stage to a "comprehensive Islamic academy" (*majma' islāmī shāmil*). Reluctantly he had to acknowledge that the purview of the existing union was concentrated on Egypt since there were no members from Pakistan, India, Afghanistan, Iran, or Saudi Arabia and that the decisions made were not unconditionally followed.[52]

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In the face of the predominance of political considerations in the propagation of pan-Islamic goals, the "classical" *taqrīb* movement that had been embodied by the JT sank into absolute insignificance. The results of the events in the years 1960–61 were a sheer catastrophe for the JT: not only did the re-emergence of confessional polemic drastically demonstrate the fragility of the ecumenical debate's achievements and the extent of the unabated opposition against it to the Muslim public, but the very existence of the union as a formally independent organization seemed to be finished at the beginning of the 1960s. As is already well-known, in the absence of Moḥammad Taqī Qommī, who stayed in Iran, his deputy Muḥammad Muḥammad al-Madanī had readily joined the Azhar's condemnation of the Shah's diplomatic faux pas. During the "Jabhān affair" he went a step further by explicitly signing a letter of reply in the *'Irfān* to an inquiry by a Lebanese *shaykh* regarding the JT's sentiments toward the article in *Rāyat al-Islām* as the union's Secretary-General. This may indicate that Qommī was temporarily deprived of his power.[53]

The death of Āyatollāh Borūjerdī meant another setback for the JT. According to his biographers, he had championed the ecumenical dialogue up to the last days of his life and appealed to Qommī to renew his rapprochement activities as quickly as possible, although the latter's return to Cairo was not yet possible due to the political situation.[54] No edition of the *RI* appeared in 1961, making the scope

[52] Abū Zahra: *al-Waḥda al-islāmiyya*, 293–98, esp. 294.

[53] The letter in which al-Madanī declared that Shaltūt had dealt with this topic "officially" (*min al-jānib al-rasmī*) is printed in *al-'Irfān* 48/5–6 (Jan.–Feb. 1961), 619f.

[54] Cf. above, p. 191.

of the damage done to the JT clear; even in the insecure years after the July revolution the journal had never failed to make its regular appearance. Only a year after Shaltūt's *fatwā* had seemingly brought its breakthrough, a complete discontinuance of the *RI* and the dissolution of the JT did not appear impossible.

In the following year the greatest organizational difficulties had been at least superficially surmounted: Qommī could return to Egypt and also the *RI*'s publication was resumed. Its editor in chief al-Madanī, however, did not supply a syllable in his editorial about the reasons for the forced year-and-a-half hiatus.[55] Although the JT had decided once more to ignore its critics and their comments silently and instead to keep on acting as though ecumenical theology and political reality had nothing to do with each other, the fundamental change in the conditions of the *taqrīb* organization's work could not be overlooked. The fruitless discussions about a Shiite chair at the Azhar, the JT's openly contrived opportunism during the condemnation of Iran and the Azhar's unwillingness to oppose al-Jabhān and those of his ilk were still fresh in the memory of the Shiite commentators, and they acted accordingly. Of all Shiite authors only Moḥammad Taqī Qommī and Muḥammad Jawād Mughniyya remained after 1961. Those who had previously contributed to the journal turned away and no new forces could be recruited.

The list of Sunni authors also changed, and some of the most highly respected and most prolific writers left the journal. These included Muḥammad al-Bahayy, who had contributed twenty-four articles between 1951 and 1960, as well as Muḥammad ʿArafa and Muḥammad Abū Zahra, who had penned eighteen articles each between 1955 and 1960. The last-mentioned was also unquestionably the Sunni scholar most familiar with Shiism in general. All three were probably moved to take this step because of their disappointment at the *taqrīb* efforts' failure and their subjective "disenchantment" with the attitude of their Shiite counterparts, which they perceived as inflexible. While ʿArafa switched directly to the side of the opponents and admitted it frankly, neither Abū Zahra nor al-Bahayy openly criticized the Shia or the *taqrīb* movement after 1960; but they also no longer defended them.[56] Muḥammad al-Bahayy finally did not mention the

[55] *RI* 13/1962/3f.; now Qommī was presented again as Secretary-General, see ibid., 19.

[56] The same holds true for Muḥammad al-Ghazzālī, who preferred to ignore Shiism completely in later writings, even when dealing with pan-Islamic or inter-

JT in his autobiography at all. Both soon found a new venue for their commentary in the Academy of Islamic Research and were later even involved in the activity of the Muslim World League.[57]

In the case of al-Bahayy, who in May 1962 became Director General (*mudīr ʿāmm*) and shortly afterwards Minister of *Awqāf* and Azhar Affairs,[58] the fact may also have played a role that he and Shaltūt became embroiled in a far-reaching, irreconcilable disagreement during this period. In the course of this quarrel, which centred on issues of authority in the implementation of the 1961 Azhar reform, Shaltūt wrote several letters of protest to ʿAbd al-Nāṣir and Prime Minister ʿAlī Ṣabrī, both of whom, however, refused the offer of retirement that the *Shaykh al-Azhar* had made in them.[59]

The JT attempted repeatedly to revive the memory of the past. For instance the *RI* printed two lengthy excerpts from the book *Tadhkirat al-fuqahāʾ* by the important Shiite legal scholar al-ʿAllāma al-Ḥillī.[60] Immediately thereafter a special supplement was added to the journal that contained the official English translation of Shaltūt's *fatwā* of 1959 as well as an English version of an article by the *Shaykh al-Azhar* in which he gave a short summary of the JT's history.[61] In a series of articles, Muḥammad ʿAbdallāh Muḥammad made a long-winded effort to draw attention back to the characteristics of ecumenical rapprochement, leaving as the only remaining goal of the *taqrīb* a modest call to oppose enmity between the Muslim denominations. Since an investigation of the past would distract from this endeavour, it should be avoided it at all costs, he ended in the familiar manner and thereby indicated between the lines that this was also true for the JT and its involvement in politics.[62]

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national topics; cf. for example his book *Miʾat suʾāl ʿan al-islām*, Cairo 1404/1983, I/277–82 and II/28–34; in 1988 he was honoured with the King Fayṣal Prize, see *MA* 61/7 (Feb. 1989), 848.

[57] Schulze: *Internationalismus*, 357f.

[58] al-Bahayy: *Ḥayātī fī riḥāb al-Azhar*, 66–87.

[59] Cf. in detail ʿAbd al-ʿAẓīm: *Mashyakhat al-Azhar*, II/202–16; also Zebiri: *Shaltūt*, 29f., al-Bahayy himself only mentions the conflict vaguely in his autobiography, *Ḥayātī*, 64f.

[60] "Min dhakhāʾir al-fikr al-islāmī", *RI* 13/1962/364–98, 14/1963/155–69; cf. ibid. 153f. regarding the author, see above, pp. 25f. note 3; concerning the book, see *Dharīʿa*, IV/43f.

[61] Dar al-Taqreeb: *Two Historical Documents*, 3–13 (Shaltūt's article) and 14–16 (the *fatwā*); the Arabic original of Shaltūt's item appeared in *RI* 14/1964/194–202 ("Muqaddimat qiṣṣat al-taqrīb"; cf. above, p. 131 note 42).

[62] Muḥammad: "Maʿālim al-taqrīb", *RI* 14/1964/203–11, on 211; further installments: 15/1964/11–19; 15/1384h/58/131–40 (concerning the unclear dating of this volume, see above, pp. 144f. note 99); 16/1969/82–141 and 17/1972/78–86.

These advances did as little to change the Shiite *ʿulamā'*'s persistent indifference as did Moḥammad Taqī Qommī's almost imploring comment that the JT had never maintained anything but indirect relations with the Azhar. Indeed Azharis had been active in the union from the beginning, but the official Azhar had never exerted any influence on the JT. On the contrary, he claimed, the message of ecumenism had frequently (*fī kathīr min al-aḥyān*) even been a thorn in the flesh to some of its representatives: "The official attitude of the Azhar is one thing, the attitude of its *ʿulamā'* another."[63]

At no point did the failure of the attempt to restore the JT's former significance come to light as distinctly as in the case of the plan to collect the *ḥadīth*s recognized by both Sunnis and Shiites alike that Qommī proclaimed in 1962. The project's intention was not a critical examination of Islamic historiography, because this would have contradicted the JT's known credo of avoiding historical issues. Rather, Qommī gave to understand, the great number of topics in which they actually agreed was to be "proved" to Muslims—indeed, apart from some minor aspects, in all the essential rules of the religion.[64] Although the endeavour was proclaimed loudly in both the *RI* (where besides Qommī, Mughniyya, too, campaigned for it)[65] and the *ʿIrfān*,[66] the initiators' hopes for the collaboration of numerous Sunni and Shiite legal scholars did not materialize, and the work was apparently abandoned after Shaltūt's death.

The passing of Shaltūt, who had long shown signs of a serious illness[67] and whose authority as *Shaykh al-Azhar* had been undermined following his quarrel with al-Bahayy, left a gap in the entire *taqrīb* movement that was never again to be filled.[68] His successor as Rector of the Azhar, Ḥasan Ma'mūn, showed neither interest nor desire to become involved in efforts similar to Shaltūt's in furthering the

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[63] Qommī in *RI* 14/1964/187–93, on 192; reprinted in al-Shīrāzī: *al-Waḥda al-islāmiyya*, 32–39.

[64] Qommī in *RI* 13/1962/243–50, esp. 249; ibid., 247 Qommī dealt in passing with al-Khaṭīb's *taḥrīf* accusation by stating that all Muslims shared a single opinion when it came to the *sūra*s, verses and the wording of the Koran.

[65] Mughniyya in *RI* 14/1964/224–30; reprinted in al-Shīrāzī: *al-Waḥda al-islāmiyya*, 325–32.

[66] *RI* 13/1962/218–21 and 14/1963/153; *al-ʿIrfān* 50/1 (Aug. 1962), 126–28.

[67] Zebiri: *Shaltūt*, 15.

[68] Cf. the obituary in *RI* 14/1964/337–39; Qommī termed the attendance of two Shiite scholars (Muḥammad al-Shīrāzī and Muḥsin al-Ḥakīm) at Shaltūt's funeral as a historic event; see *RI* loc. cit., 192; cf. also *MA* 35/6 (Jan. 1964), 759f., 763.

ecumenical discussion.[69] As outlined above, the Azhar's pan-Islamic, or perhaps better "international", engagement in the following years concentrated on the Academy's conferences at which Shiism played only a minor role.

After Shaltūt's demise, the JT only rarely came back into the public view. Four issues of the *RI* appeared at irregular intervals in 1964, the most outstanding contribution being an article by Qommī parts of which already read like an obituary of the *taqrīb* organization.[70] Slightly more excitement was generated in 1966 when Muḥammad Muḥammad al-Madanī put out an anthology of *RI* articles at the behest of the Supreme Council for Islamic Affairs.[71] Alas, it produced no more new impulse for the ecumenical discussion than did a further issue of the *RI* published in the autumn of 1969. For this volume, the publicist ʿAlī al-Jundī took over the editorship following the death of the long-time editor in chief al-Madanī.[72] The actual background of this work should not be seen as an attempt to resuscitate the *taqrīb* discussion but rather as a response to the general commotion on the stage of Islamic internationalism in those weeks. In the wake of the fire in Jerusalem's *al-Aqṣā* Mosque on August 21, an Islamic conference was summoned for the end of September in Rabat. This event saw both Egypt's recognition of the Saudi Arabian claim to leadership and the making of preparations for the foundation of an organization of Islamic states that came to be known as the "Organization of the Islamic Conference".[73] A casual remark in

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[69] Cf. his interview with a journalist from the *Deutschlandfunk* (German National Radio) printed in *MA* 36/4 (Nov. 1964), 388–91, in which he indeed voiced optimism, but at the same time remained very reserved about the relationship between Sunnis and Shiites and did not mention the JT at all; regarding Maʾmūn (1894–1982), see ʿAbd al-ʿAẓīm: *Mashyakhat al-Azhar*, II/247–67.

[70] Qommī: "Rijāl ṣadaqū", *RI* 14/1964/187–93.

[71] al-Madanī (ed.): *Daʿwat al-taqrīb*; review in *al-ʿIrfān* 56/3 (Aug. 1968), 283; cf. also Jumʿa: "al-ʿAlāqāt al-thaqāfiyya", 338f.; Fleischhammer: "*Daʿwat al-taqrīb*", passim; the council mentioned (*al-Majlis al-aʿlā li-l-shuʾūn al-islāmiyya*) was a committee formed within the framework of the Islamic Conference that had been established in 1954; it was later put under the control of the Egyptian Ministry of *Awqāf*, cf. Schulze: *Internationalismus*, 154, 169, 271f.

[72] Cf. above, p. 145; in his obituary of al-Madanī (*MA* 40/3 [Jun. 1968], 236–38), Muṣṭafā Mujāhid ʿAbd al-Raḥmān described him as a long-term ally of Shaltūt but characteristically did not mention his activity in the JT.

[73] Schöne: *Islamische Solidarität*, 35–48; Landau: *Politics*, 287–95; "Organization of the Islamic Conference", *OE* III/260–66 (G.W. Choudhury/J.P. Bannerman); Schulze: *Internationalismus*, 272; in his editorial, al-Jundī, too, referred to the attack in Jerusalem: *RI* 16/1969/3f.

a book by a Shiite author that appeared two years later illustrates just how weak the voice of the JT had become under these circumstances: allegedly the union had been dissolved in the intervening period.[74]

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Indicative of the change in the intellectual climate that had occurred at the Azhar in the 1960s with regard to Shiite or "Shiiticizing" views is the reaction to Maḥmūd Abū Rayya's controversial book *Aḍwāʾ ʿalā l-sunna al-muḥammadiyya aw difāʿ ʿan al-ḥadīth*.[75] While this work, "which, taken at its face value, tore the tradition literature to pieces",[76] found approval with Shiite readers,[77] it caused vehement protests among numerous Sunni authors.[78] One of the refutations came from the Azhar scholar ʿAbd al-Ḥalīm Maḥmūd, who subsequently became Secretary-General of the Academy of Islamic Research (1969–70) and *Shaykh al-Azhar* (1973–78).[79] Although, as Abū Rayya himself admitted, only about a third of this slim, ninety-page booklet dealt with "some things discussed in the *Aḍwā*'", he found it reason enough for a furious and spiteful counter-attack. The preface he wrote in 1969 to the third edition of another controversial book, his biography of Abū Hurayra in which he represented the Prophet's companion in an extremely critical light, turned into a reckoning with almost the entire Azhar establishment.[80] To Maḥmūd in particular he addressed the question why it had taken the Azhari no less than

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[74] al-Khāqānī: *Maʿa al-Khaṭīb*, 6, 11.

[75] Cairo 1958, Tyros [2]1964, and Cairo [3]1967; see details in Juynboll: *The Authenticity of the Tradition Literature*, 38–43 (with a list of Sunni refutations); *REI* 29/1961/A. 1856f. (no. 219–23); regarding Abū Rayya (1889–1970), see al-Raḍawī: *Ārāʾ al-muʿāṣirīn*, 10–16; idem: *Maʿa rijāl al-fikr*, 313–30.

[76] Juynboll: *The Authenticity of the Tradition Literature*, 39.

[77] Cf. for example al-ʿĀmilī: *ʿAqīdat al-shīʿa*, 9.

[78] al-Ḥasanī: *Manhaj ahl al-bayt*, 4, even went so far as to put him on a par with Shiites like al-Kulaynī, Sharaf al-Dīn, al-Tījānī, and al-ʿAllāma al-Ḥillī.

[79] ʿAbd al-Ḥalīm Maḥmūd: *al-Sunna fī tārīkhihā wa-fī makānatihā*, Cairo 1967; regarding the author (1910–1978), see ʿAbd al-ʿAẓīm: *Mashyakhat al-Azhar*, II/289–460; *MA* 51/1 (Dec. 1978), 221–47, and 53/7 (May 1981), 1250–60; Raʾūf Shalabī: *Shaykh al-Islām ʿAbd al-Ḥalīm Maḥmūd. Sīratuhu wa-aʿmāluhu*, Kuwait 1402/1982; also, his autobiography *al-Ḥamdu li-llāh hādhihi ḥayātī*, Cairo [3]1985.

[80] Abū Rayya: *Shaykh al-maḍīra Abū Hurayra*, 13–33 (the above quotation is on p. 14); concerning this book cf. Juynboll: *The Authenticity of the Tradition Literature*, 63–99, as well as Ende: *Arabische Nation*, 94–97; see also Abū Rayya's article with the same title in *al-ʿIrfān* 50/5 (Dec. 1962), 457–60; regarding the unusual epithet *maḍīra* ("sour milk soup"), see the corresponding article in *EI*[2] V/1010.

nine years to reply to Abū Rayya's book, which had been published in 1958. Furthermore, Maḥmūd and the other Azhar scholars had to put up with the repeated reproach of complete incompetence and actually sheer ignorance concerning *ḥadīth* and early Islamic history.[81]

In addition to ʿAbd al-Ḥalīm Maḥmūd's book, there were two critics in particular who conjured up Abū Rayya's wrath. On the one hand, the Azhar *ʿulamāʾ*, incapable of any profound criticism of their own, had actually hawked around throughout the world of Sunni scholarship until, in the person of the Syrian Muṣṭafā al-Sibāʿī, they finally found someone willing to write a polemic against the *Aḍwāʾ*. With "Umayyad malice" (*ḍighn umawī*), this author had focused insistently on the "insignificant errors" (*hanāt*) in the first edition of Abū Rayya's book and had based upon them his judgement of sinfulness (*fisq*). All later critics from the ranks of the Azhar had copied from him without having noted that all these mistakes had been corrected in the following editions.[82] Abū Rayya saw this as yet another expression of the unquestioning faith in authority and blind imitation (*taqlīd*) prevailing at the Azhar with which the Azharis followed the four (Sunni) legal schools, ruling out any independent thinking whatsoever. As a result, he contended, among "these *shaykh*s not a single *mujtahid*" existed.[83]

The second target of Abū Rayya's anger was a direct reply to the *Aḍwāʾ* by Muḥammad b. Muḥammad Abū Shuhba, a professor in the Azhar's Department of *Uṣūl al-dīn*, that had originally been published in the *MA*.[84] Almost inevitable here were reproaches against Muḥibb al-Dīn al-Khaṭīb for having run down the formerly respectable journal, Abū Rayya on the other hand taking the credit for himself and his decisive part in the dismissal of al-Khaṭīb as editor in chief.[85] What infuriated Abū Rayya particularly was the fact that the series

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[81] Abū Rayya: *Shaykh al-maḍīra Abū Hurayra*, e.g. 14, 24f. 27.

[82] Ibid., 21f.; Abū Rayya's criticism was directed against al-Sibāʿī's book *al-Sunna wa-makānatuhā fī-l-tashrīʿ al-islāmī*, which first appeared in Cairo in 1961; al-Sibāʿī was a joint author, along with Muḥibb al-Dīn al-Khaṭīb and Sulaymān al-Nadwī, of another book of similar tendency: *Difāʿ ʿan al-ḥadīth al-nabawī wa-tafnīd shubuhāt khuṣūmihi*, Cairo (*Miṣr*), ca. 1960.

[83] Abū Rayya: *Shaykh al-maḍīra Abū Hurayra*, 26 note 2.

[84] Abū Shuhba: "Naqd kitāb ʿAḍwāʾ ʿalā l-sunna al-muḥammadiyya' ", *MA* 30/1–8 (Jul. 1958–Feb. 1959), 55–59, 146–51, 264–71, 321–29, 426–31, 522–27, 660–65.

[85] Abū Rayya: *Shaykh al-maḍīra Abū Hurayra*, 30; Abū Shuhba's discussion reached only to page 131 of the *Aḍwāʾ* before it was broken off in Febuary 1959, possibly in connection with al-Khaṭīb's dismissal as editor in chief of the *MA*.

of articles he took as the Azhar's official position on his comments appeared again as an independent publication in 1966, instigated by the second conference of the Academy of Islamic Research, funded by the Azhar and distributed in the entire Islamic world.[86]

Although strictly speaking the question of ecumenical rapprochement did not play a particular role in Abū Rayya's writings (and the JT wisely ignored him despite his Shiite-oriented opinions regarding early Islamic history), his case is significant in describing the Azhar's relationship with the *taqrīb* movement in the 1960s, and his dealing with Shiite scholars is crucial in this. Without reservations, he allowed them to confirm the correctness of his theories, and quoted them with pleasure as chief witnesses against his Sunni colleagues. For instance he included a preface by the Lebanese Shiite scholar Ṣadr al-Dīn Sharaf al-Dīn in the aforementioned third edition of his book about Abū Hurayra, in which Sharaf al-Dīn defended Abū Rayya against the attacks (*miḥna*) of Sunnis, primarily Muṣṭafā al-Sibāʿī.[87] No less noteworthy is his casual and respectful reference to ʿAbdallāh al-Subaytī, the Lebanese Shiite who had treated the Azhar and its leadership with biting ridicule in 1956. Abū Rayya called him "a great scholar from outside of Egypt" and bestowed him with the Shiite honorary title *al-ʿAllāma* ("the exalted scholar").[88] Conversely, in contributions he made to books by Shiite authors, e.g. Murtaḍā al-ʿAskarī, he repeatedly made remarks critical of his Sunni carpers.[89]

At least part of the rejection Abū Rayya experienced from the Azhar may have stemmed from this relationship to Shiite scholars who looked upon the Sunni *ʿulamāʾ* with contempt. This was even more so because the tone and choice of words in his attacks on the

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[86] Ibid., 31; I did not have access to this publication; also, cf. in general Abū Rayya's prefaces to the second and third editions of the *Aḍwāʾ*, Cairo 1967, 29ff.

[87] *Shaykh al-maḍīra Abū Hurayra*, 5f.; it is worth noting here that al-Sibāʿī's book which attracted this criticism had already played a role once before in the *taqrīb* discussion during the author's dispute with Ṣadr al-Dīn's father, ʿAbd al-Ḥusayn Sharaf al-Dīn (see above, p. 246). It may be assumed that the son's preface was intended as an attempt at the moral rehabilitation of his father's honour.

[88] Abū Rayya: *Shaykh al-maḍīra Abū Hurayra*, 278 and 301; concerning al-Subaytī's criticism of the Azhar, see above, pp. 270f.

[89] Cf. the preface he wrote in 1962 to Murtaḍā al-ʿAskarī's *Naqsh-e ʿĀʾisha*, esp. 4f; also al-Raḍawī: *Maʿa rijāl al-fikr*, 329f. (a criticism of Abū Zahra whom he also vehemently attacked in *Shaykh al-maḍīra*, 293–98); he seems to have shared an intellectual kinship with the Iraqi scholar Murtaḍā al-ʿAskarī (born 1914; see *MMI* III/293f.; Moshār VI/cols. 142f.), see his aforementioned preface, passim, as well as al-Raḍawī: *Maʿa rijāl al-fikr*, 319–23; regarding al-ʿAskarī's (decidedly Shiite) view of history with respect to the controversial figure of ʿAbdallāh b. Sabaʾ, cf. Ende: *Arabische Nation*, 203–07, also *RI* 8/1956/441ff.

Azhar might just as well have come from a Shiite polemicist. Finally, his vehement criticism of Muṣṭafā al-Sibāʿī, who played a major role in the legitimation of "Islamic Socialism", could have scarcely found the Azhar's approval.[90] By openly opposing Abū Rayya's books on *ḥadīth* and historiography in the 1960s, the Azhar more or less consciously consented to give the Shiite *ʿulamāʾ* a snub who were open to just these topics. That this ran absolutely counter to any type of rapprochement of the denominations was obviously of secondary significance for the scholars of the Cairene University.

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After the Six Day War in June 1967 there was gradual reconciliation between Egypt and Iran, and diplomatic relations, severed since 1960, were discreetly resumed during ʿAbd al-Nāṣir's lifetime. This course was continued by his successor, Anwar al-Sādāt, who made a state visit to Tehran in autumn 1971.[91] Under these changing circumstances, it again became possible and desirable for the Azhar to establish contacts with Shiite scholars. One may see in this an attempt by both the government and the Azhar to re-connect the two strands of pan-Islamism that had come unravelled so clearly in the previous ten years and to reintegrate the discussion among theologians of different denominations into the politically motivated Islamic internationalism.

The result was one of the most remarkable and strangest events ever in the history of the relations between the Azhar and the Shia in the twentieth century: Muḥammad Muḥammad al-Faḥḥām,[92] *Shaykh al-Azhar* since 1969, visited Iran in the summer of 1971. From the beginning of his term of office, the new Rector had stressed that the achievement of Islamic unity was one of the principal concerns for him, too. Unlike Shaltūt, though, he did not devote his attention to Shiism specifically. Instead he limited himself to general appeals for

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[90] Abū Rayya went so far as to use the vehemently anti-Sunnite term from traditional Shiite heresiography *nāṣibī; Shaykh al-maḍīra Abū Hurayra*, 13.

[91] "Arab-Iranian Relations in Modern Time", *EIr* II/220–24, esp. 221 (R.K. Ramazani); Ram: "UAR-Iranian Propaganda War", 247; Āl ʿAlī: *Jawānib min al-ṣilāt al-thaqāfiyya*, pp. *q*ff.; al-Wardānī: *Miṣr . . . Īrān*, 24–31, 181–83; ʿAbd al-ʿAlīm al-Mahdī: "Mādhā ʿan al-mubāḥathāt al-Shāfiʿī fī Īrān?", *Minbar al-Islām* 29/10 (Nov. 1971), 18–20; also Ḥasan Ḥanafī: *al-Dīn wa-l-thawra fī Miṣr 1952–1981*, Cairo 1988, III/173–82; a strongly anti-Iranian depiction is found in al-Mūsawī: *Īrān fī rubʿ qarn*, 52–56.

[92] About him (1894–1980), see ʿAbd al-ʿAẓīm: *Mashyakhat al-Azhar*, II/271–86; Kaḥḥāla M/721; *MA* 41/6 (Oct. 1969), 404; *MIDEO* 11/1972/436–43.

a closing of ranks in the fight against the common external enemies: the Crusaders in the past, after them the Mongols, nowadays the colonialists, and in particular Israel.[93] This reservation notwithstanding, in July 1971 he and his delegation set out on the first official voyage by a head of the Azhar to Iran,[94] a trip whose stops included Tehran, Isfahan, Mashhad, and above all Qom.

The visit was noteworthy in that it was virtually ignored within the world of Islamic scholarship by Sunnis and Shiites alike and accordingly produced no results whatsoever. Ten years earlier, at the zenith of the ecumenical activities under Maḥmūd Shaltūt, an Iranian journey by the incumbent *Shaykh al-Azhar* would certainly have produced a sensational and almost revolutionary effect.[95] Now, however, with the *'ulamā'* of the two denominations again exercising restraint in their mutual contacts and a general disenchantment having set in, the trip failed to generate any interest. The Azhar journal did not even briefly mention it, and the very fact that al-Faḥḥām had been in Iran was only brought to the attention of the *MA*'s readers in a completely different context: In a casual communication, the journal informed that the *Shaykh al-Azhar* had discussed "the foundation of an Islamic university in Nigeria (!) with the Shah of Iran during his visit there".[96] Even ʿAlī ʿAbd al-ʿAẓīm, who generally documented both the lives and official undertakings of the Azhar Rectors of the twentieth century in great detail, made do with a terse, four-and-a-half-line paragraph. His summary stated that al-Faḥḥām had been received by his Iranian hosts—who remained unnamed—in a friendly manner and with due respect, and that there had been agreement in the desire to continue working in the service of achieving Islamic unity.[97]

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[93] *MA* 41/9 (Jan. 1970), 644f.; also 41/10 (Feb. 1970), 724–27; cf. also *Minbar al-Islām* 27/8 (Oct. 1969), 9–14; al-Raḍawī: *Fī sabīl al-waḥda al-islāmiyya*, 60–64, and idem: *al-Burhān*, 335–37.

[94] The other members of the delegation were ʿAṭiya Ṣaqr, ʿAbd al-Khalīl al-Ḥuṣrī, Aḥmad al-Sharabāṣī, and Muḥammad Muḥammad Muḥammad (sic!) al-Faḥḥām, the son of the *Shaykh al-Azhar*.

[95] Cf. for example the *MA*'s relatively detailed coverage of Shaltūt's trip to Southeast Asia at the beginning of 1961 that led him to Malaysia, Indonesia, and the Philippines: *MA* 32/9 (Feb. 1961), 1031–40, and 32/10 (Mar. 1961), 1165–68; see also ʿAbd al-ʿAẓīm: *Mashyakhat al-Azhar*, II/191–93; this was Shaltūt's only trip abroad as *Shaykh al-Azhar*.

[96] *MA* 43/5 (Aug. 1971), 505.

[97] ʿAbd al-ʿAẓīm: *Mashyakhat al-Azhar*, II/277.

The fact that Shiite scholars, too, reacted to al-Faḥḥām's visit very reservedly is extremely unusual. There was no reference to it in the *ʿIrfān*, and a search through the writings of ecumenically oriented authors published later likewise ends in vain. This may mainly be due to the general character of the visit, which was overwhelmingly political because of the thaw between Cairo and Tehran and during which there was no lack of comments of praise for the Shah on the part of the visitor.[98] At a time when Shiite opposition to the Iranian ruler had either been muzzled or forced into exile, the acclamatory solidarity between the Azhar and the Tehran government must have had a devastating impact on the Shiites outside of Iran. Whereas the Azhar had sharply criticized the Shah's actions against the *ʿulamāʾ* at the beginning of the inner-Iranian revolt, making support for Khomeynī's position at least theoretically possible, the impression now was that the Azhar had again changed sides in the wake of the volte-face in Egyptian foreign policy. As it had in 1960 by declaring its brief alliance with the Iraqi Shiites terminated, the Azhar was willing to compromise an important part of the Shiite scholars.

All in all, it appears that the trip was not more than a kind of incidental music for the resumption of diplomatic relationships between the two countries, aiming at the carefully considered reestablishment of contacts with the *Iranian* clergy, i.e. those who had remained in Iran, and not at the initiation of a discussion with Shiite theologians in general. This attitude became apparent in the selection of the Shiite representatives with whom the *Shaykh al-Azhar* met. The most important of them came from the ranks of the acquiescent and apolitical Shiite clerics who preferred tolerating the Shah's regime rather than agitating against him openly as did Āyatollāh Khomeynī, living in exile in Najaf. None of them had expressed anything of substance in regard to the issue of Sunni-Shiite rapprochement and had thus made it clear that it was not among their personal priorities. This holds true, for example, for Āyatollāh Moḥammad Hādī Mīlānī, who maintained at least sporadic contacts to Moḥammad Taqī Qommī,[99] but

[98] Cf. for example the short article by Mojtabā Kaywān about the visit of the Azhar delegation to Isfahan: *Yaghmā* (Tehran) 24/6 (Aug. 1971), 349f.

[99] Cf. the photograph in al-Shīrāzī: *Eslām. Āʾīn-e hambastegī*, 240, which shows Qommī together with Mīlānī and other *ʿulamāʾ* in Mashhad; regarding Mīlānī (1895–1975), who taught in Mashhad, see *GD* VII/98–105; *al-Mawsim* 20/1415 (1994)/143–63 and Momen: *Introduction*, 317; his meeting with al-Faḥḥām is mentioned briefly in the article "Iṣlāḥ, ii: Iran" in *EI*² IV/165 (H. Algar).

who does not seem to have exhibited any interest in debates that went beyond the immediate concerns of the Iranian Shia.[100]

Only in Qom did al-Faḥḥām's visit encounter a reasonable response, which was certainly due to Āyatollāh Moḥammad Kāẓem Sharīʿatmadārī.[101] Although the latter had been imprisoned for a short time during the disturbances of 1963[102] and allegedly had even saved Khomeynī's life,[103] in the following period he hardly appeared among the opponents of the regime. It was this basic loyalty that led the Shah to attempt to bring Sharīʿatmadārī into the conversation as a successor after the death of the *marjaʿ al-taqlīd* Muḥsin al-Ḥakīm in 1970 and thus curtail Khomeynī's chances. When Sharīʿatmadārī did not flatly refuse the ruler's request, he not only had to bear the brunt of protest demonstrations from Khomeynī's supporters but also became the target of vehement remonstrance by other Shiite scholars.[104]

When al-Faḥḥām, one of the most important and highest-ranking representatives of Sunni Islam, came to Qom a year later, this offered a welcome opportunity for Sharīʿatmadārī to garner an international reputation and to step out from behind Khomeynī's overpowering shadow. The founding of his instructional institute *Dār al-tablīgh* in Qom in the middle of the 1960s as competition to Najaf can also be interpreted in this sense.[105] During his meeting with al-Faḥḥām, Sharīʿatmadārī presented the Institute as effectively being a Shiite counterpart to the Azhar, and himself as an interlocutor of equal standing with the *Shaykh al-Azhar*, which makes it understandable that

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[100] Cf. Akhavi: *Religion and* Politics, 102, 131.

[101] Concerning him (1904/05–1986), see *EI*[2] IX/329 (J.G.J. ter Haar); *GD* II/12–30; *RF* II/744f.; *Moshār* V/cols. 22f.; Khiyābānī: *ʿOlamā-ye moʿāṣerīn*, 284–86; Momen: *Introduction*, 20; Keddie: *Roots of Revolution*, 208–10; brief biography in *Orient* 20/1979/4/5–8.

[102] Akhavi: *Religion and Politics*, 103.

[103] Keddie: *Roots of Revolution*, 208; Momen: *Introduction*, 254; for the background see Moin: *Khomeini*, 74–128.

[104] Algar: "The Oppositional Role of the Ulama", 252; Menashri: "Shiʿite Leadership", 122; regarding the death of Muḥsin al-Ḥakīm and the immediate recognition of al-Khūʾī as the new *marjaʿ al-taqlīd*, see *al-ʿIrfān* 58/3–4 (Jul.–Aug. 1970), 435–43.

[105] Cf. *al-ʿIrfān* 52/5 (Nov. 1964), 568; 53/7–8 (Jan.–Feb. 1966), 741–43 and 54/9–10 (Mar.–Apr. 1967), 1167–69; cf. Montaẓerī: *Matn-e kāmel-e khāṭerāt*, 119f.; this Institute is not to be confused with the study circle of the same name that the Iranian reform theologian Sharīʿat Sangalajī had gathered around himself after 1931, cf. Y. Richard: "Sharīʿat Sangalajī: A Reformist Theologian of the Riḍā Shāh Period", in: S.A. Arjomand (ed.): *Authority and Political Culture in Shīʿism*, Albany 1988, 159–77, on 164.

in the *Dār al-tablīgh*'s Arabic-language journal *al-Hādī* the visit was reported in fine detail, whereas the remainder of Muslim journalism practiced demonstrative reserve.[106]

Al-Faḥḥām's visit in Qom on July 13, 1971, had apparently been organized on short notice and lasted only one day. It was probably arranged by the untiring Muḥammad Jawād Mughniyya, who also delivered the welcome address.[107] Of course it was not to be expected that a meeting of such short duration would produce more than the exchange of noncommittal declarations of intent and similar formalities. Accordingly, the speeches were limited to the adjuration of the unity of all Muslims against the common enemies, colonialism and Israel, a well-worn argument that had already made an important contribution to the identity building in the heady days of the *taqrīb* debate and now, after the June War defeat, assumed an almost obsessive character. Even the emphasis on the commonality of basic principles of belief that had been so important in the past was relegated to the background.

The Iranian side repeatedly expressed its desire for more intense contacts with Sunni *ʿulamāʾ* in general and with representatives of the Azhar in particular. Instructive of the Azhar scholars' reaction to this request, though, was Mughniyya's previously cited question addressed to al-Faḥḥām whether Jaʿfari law was taught at the Azhar and whether cooperation between the Azhar and the *Dār al-tablīgh* was possible.[108]

In these circumstances the suggestions of ʿĪsā ʿAbd al-Majīd al-Khāqānī, a professor of Arabic literature at the *Dār al-tablīgh*, were

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[106] "Shaykh al-Azhar al-sharīf yazūr al-jāmiʿa al-islāmiyya fī Qum Īrān", *al-Hādī* 1/1 (Sep. 1971), 137–54; a pamphlet likewise edited by the *Dār al-tablīgh* entitled *Gāmī-ye dīgar dar rāh-e waḥdat-e eslāmī. Gozāresh-e mashrūḥ-e dīdār-e Shaykh ol-Azhar az ḥowze-ye ʿelmiyye-ye Qom*, Qom 1391/1971 was not available to me. The journal *al-Hādī*, too, traced its legitimation in the area of Islamic unity back to the father of pan-Islamism, Jamāl al-Dīn al-Afghānī, see the reprint of the latter's article "al-Waḥda al-islāmiyya" in volume 1/3 (Mar. 1972), 64–69.

[107] *al-Hādī* 1/1 (Sep. 1971), 138–41; a photograph that shows him together with al-Faḥḥām and Sharīʿatmadārī is printed in *GD* II/19, another in which he is seen arm in arm with al-Faḥḥām and Aḥmad al-Sharabāṣī is in his autobiography *Tajārib Muḥammad Jawād Mughniyya*, 283 (and in al-Wardānī: *al-Shīʿa fī Miṣr*, [223]); however, Mughniyya did not deal with al-Faḥḥām's visit to Qom. Later, Mughniyya taught for two years at the *Dār al-tablīgh*, and it was also this close connection to Sharīʿatmadārī that increased his antagonism to Khomeynī's theory of the *welāyat-e faqīh* which he set out in his book *Falsafat al-tawḥīd wa-l-wilāya*, Beirut 1976–77; regarding it, see Göbel: *Moderne schiitische Politik*, 128–37.

[108] *al-Hādī* 1/1 (Sep. 1971), 141; see also above, pp. 300f.

destined for futility before they were even formulated. Under the heading *al-Daʿwa ilā l-taḍāmun*—a remarkable choice of words by which he adopted the concept of solidarity introduced into the discussion by King Fayṣal while simultaneously avoiding the somehow contaminated term *taqrīb*—he outlined three pre-requisites for a meaningful dialogue between the denominations. Besides the continuation of contacts and conversations among religious scholars as well as the establishment of a "religious centre for monitoring printed documents and publications", he demanded the creation of a committee (*lajna*), the membership of which was to be composed of individuals who had achieved "high standing in the field of science". Its task was to be "the monitoring of Islamic activities" (*al-ishrāf ʿalā l-aʿmāl al-islāmiyya*) and to prevent efforts from being carried out in isolation because, al-Khāqānī warned, individual (that is, uncoordinated) activities were virtually detrimental to the cause of Islam.[109] He did not mention a single syllable about the JT, whose endeavours would be covered by these very demands.

The Rector's visit to Iran left no visible traces at the Azhar and even seems to have become rather blurred in al-Faḥḥām's own memory. In a letter written at the beginning of November 1977 to the Tehran-based scholar Ḥasan Saʿīd[110] who had visited him in Cairo, he recalled the "beautiful days that I spent in Tehran in 1970 (sic!)".[111] There do not seem to have been any further contacts with Shiite scholars either during the remainder of al-Faḥḥām's Rectorate or that of his successor, ʿAbd al-Ḥalīm Maḥmūd, apart from intermittent letters or telegrams, for instance on the occasion of religious holidays.[112]

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[109] ʿĪsā ʿAbd al-Majīd al-Khāqānī: "al-Daʿwa ilā l-taḍāmun", *al-Hādī* 1/1 (Sep. 1971), 45–55, on 49f.; cf. also ibid., 145–48.

[110] Regarding him, see *GD* IV/483; a letter from ʿAbd al-Ḥalīm Maḥmūd to him from the same year is printed in al-Raḍawī: *Fī sabīl al-waḥda al-islāmiyya*, [6] as well as in al-Ṣadr: *al-Shīʿa al-imāmiyya*, 4.

[111] Al-Raḍawī: *Fī sabīl al-waḥda al-islāmiyya*, 63; in absolute contrast to it is the almost effusive assessment that was spread even years later in Qom. An unnamed leader of a teaching institute in Qom confided to the writer V.S. Naipaul, who was residing in Iran in summer 1979, the year of the revolution, that "the rector of Al Azhar University in Cairo (. . .) had been so impressed by what he had seen in Qom that he had declared that Qom students would be accepted without any downgrading by Al Azhar", V.S. Naipaul: *Among the Believers. An Islamic Journey*, London 1982, 50; al-Khāqānī in turn expressed his regret to the Egyptian visitors that their visit had taken place during the summer vacation; *al-Hādī* 1/1 (Sep. 1971), 147.

[112] Cf. for example al-Faḥḥām's and Sharīʿatmadārī's telegrams on the occasion of the the *ʿīd al-fiṭr* at the end of Ramaḍān 1392/ 1972 in *al-Hādī* 2/2 (Dec. 1972), 186.

Maḥmūd, whom we have already encountered as a critic of Abū Rayya, made no secret about his scepticism of Shiism. In his collection of *fatwā*s, after an observation about the Shiite view of history that while not polemic was nevertheless clearly distanced, he came to the conclusion that the Shia were in fact a (political) party (*ḥizb*). For this reason they declared everything to be a lie that stood in the way of the strengthening of their position of power and became infatuated with anything they imagined to be of use to them. Their interpretation of Islamic history followed the pattern of these penchants. Over time, however, he contended optimistically, the Shia would be led back to the legal norm (*al-sanan al-qawīm*).[113] Given these facts, his considering the Shiite addition to the call for prayer invalid or his passing over Shiism during a discussion of the Muslim legal schools fits well into this picture.[114]

In the following years, Āyatollāh Sharīʿatmadārī attempted to stay in touch with Sunni scholars and from time to time welcomed Sunni *ʿulamāʾ* at his *Dār al-tablīgh*, the most prominent among them probably being the Grand Muftī of Syria, Aḥmad Kaftārū, in 1973.[115] He occasionally also made proclamations to the Sunni public, for example after the 1973 October War when he called for Muslim unity in the fight against Israel.[116] That was sufficient for Sunni polemicists to castigate his instructional institute with the same reproach as the JT at the time,[117] i.e. that it was a Shiite propaganda organization. But it did not lead to a renewed institutionalization of the Sunni-Shiite dialogue. In any case, Sharīʿatmadārī's public work came to an end shortly after the Iranian Revolution when the issue of the

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[113] ʿAbd al-Ḥalīm Maḥmūd: *Fatāwā*, I-II, Cairo 1981–82, I/100–15, esp. 114f.

[114] Ibid., I/426; Shalabī: *Shaykh al-Islām ʿAbd al-Ḥalīm Maḥmūd* (as above, note 79), 166–72; it should be noted, however, that the practice of extending the *adhān* by adding the phrase "I testify that ʿAlī is the friend (*walī*) of God" is also viewed with rather mixed feelings by some Shiite theologians, see Falaturi: "Die Zwölfer-Schia", 77f., as well as Ende: "Erfolg und Scheitern", passim.

[115] Cf. *GD* II/20, 24, and *al-Hādī* 2/4 (Aug. 1973), 182f.; Kaftārū had visited Iran already the year before and given some lectures in Qom, Mashhad, and Tehran; regarding Kaftārū (sometimes Kuftārū; born 1912 or 1915), see *MMS* 442, and Annabelle Böttcher: *Syrische Religionspolitik unter Asad*, Freiburg 1998, 52ff., 149ff., 206–08 (on his relations with Shiite *ʿulamāʾ*) and index, s.v.

[116] *al-Hādī* 3/1 (n.d., approx. 1974), 196–98; his contacts in this case, too, were the *Shaykh al-Azhar* and the Grand Muftī of Syria; concerning the telegrams and replies exchanged by Maḥmūd and Kaftārū, see ibid., 199f.

[117] al-Gharīb: *Wa-jāʾa dawr al-majūs*, 136, names the Lebanese Muftī Ḥasan Khālid and a certain *Ustādh* Ṣāliḥ Abū Raqīq as further Sunni visitors.

"correct" form of Islamic government led to a disagreement between Khomeynī and him. After riots by his supporters, Sharīʿatmadārī was placed under house arrest, later declared an absolute non-person and even formally stripped of all theological dignity.[118]

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Despite ʿĪsā al-Khāqānī's warning about the doubtful benefits of individual actions, the ecumenical discussion in the 1970s never got beyond this stage. A good example of the effeteness of the debate is the contribution of Āyatollāh Kamareʾī, whose personal reconciliation with Saudi Arabian politics and its scholarly community has already been discussed. In 1972 he returned to public attention with a book about the relations between Sunnis and Shiites. Under the title *Rābiṭat al-ʿālam al-islāmī*, a hardly coincidental allusion to the Muslim World League, he undertook a lengthy defence of a situation that had already ceased to exist more than a decade before the volume's publication. More than half of his work was devoted to an (undated) letter he claimed to have received from a certain ʿUmar Fārūq Aʿẓam from Mahābād in West Azerbaijan. This author demanded the convening of a conference consisting of Azhar and Saudi *ʿulamāʾ* whose goal would be the annulling of Shaltūt's *fatwā*, that "cancerous ulcer in the body of the religion" which had been dictated merely by political considerations.[119]

In the course of his reply that went far beyond a mere rejection,[120] Kamareʾī not only defended Shaltūt repeatedly but also came up with his own proposals regarding the best way to deal with the ongoing problems between the Muslim denominations. An international conference of Sunni and Shiite scholars from all major Islamic countries would be assigned the task of creating a Supreme Council (*hayʾa ʿulyā*) that would be concerned with handling subordinate questions.[121]

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[118] Cf. in detail Menashri: "Shiʿite Leadership", passim; idem: *Iran. A Decade of War and Revolution*, New York, London 1990, 239f.; Akhavi: *Religion and Politics*, 172–80; Göbel: *Moderne schiitische Politik*, 128. By his opponents, he and his institute *Dār al-tablīgh* were accused of collaboration with the Shah's notorious intelligence service *Sāvāk*: Ḥamīd Rūḥānī: *Sharīʿatmadārī dar tārīkh*, Tehran [3]1361/1982, esp. 75ff.

[119] Kamareʾī: *Rābiṭat al-ʿālam al-islāmī*, 20f.; in view of the fact that *al-fārūq* is the epithet of the second caliph, ʿUmar, it is not to be excluded that the author of the letter used a distinctly anti-Shiite pseudonym; cf. S. Bashear: "The Title '*Fārūq*' and its Association with ʿUmar I", *SI* 72/1990/47–70.

[120] Kamareʾī: *Rābiṭat al-ʿālam al-islāmī*, 25–112.

[121] Ibid., 39, 41f.

This committee, which he called *Majmaʿ* (or also *majlis*) *al-shūrā bayn al-madhāhib*, should exclusively consist of scholars who met four closely allied criteria: every member should hold the rank of *faqīh mujtahid*, be well-versed in Islamic history, have travelled extensively in the Islamic countries, and also be knowledgeable beyond the boundaries of theology.[122]

Unlike other calls for Islamic unity that remained noncommittal, Kamareʾī had a clear concept of the things upon which the scholars should first focus their attention. All nine "suggestions" that he submitted to the yet-to-be-created council were related to an extended occupation with early Islamic history, in particular the sensitive points of *ḥadīth* and the Prophet's companions, and thus represented what could be seen as a rather unusual request in the context of the ecumenical debate. When one considers the nine points in detail,[123] though, it becomes clear quite rapidly that he was basically concerned with a revision of Islamic historiography in the sense of the traditional Shiite interpretation. With his first request, the compilation of a list of the *ḥadīth* about which Sunnis and Shiites agreed, he was still on secure *taqrīb* ground; Shaltūt and the JT had once begun such an endeavour, to which Kamareʾī explicitly referred.

However, his second point already put him in a position that was completely contrary to that of the Sunni view of history: The committee of scholars, he demanded, should submit a collection of biographies of outstanding companions of the Prophet, but individuals such as Abū Hurayra, Muʿāwiya b. Abī Sufyān, and ʿAmr b. al-ʿĀṣ could surely be excluded because their integrity and the propriety of their attitude was a matter of controversy among Muslims. Equally problematic was the demand to categorize the deeds of the first four caliphs into those that advanced Islam and others that resulted in its "regress" (*taqahqur*). The latter should definitely be forgotten, and the common people (*ʿāmma*) were under no circumstances to be burdened with these accounts. Finally, his desire to have the Imams' birthdays declared general holidays and to see the *Āl al-bayt* glorified would have made it easy for Sunni readers, supposing they existed in any appreciable number, to dismiss his work as Shiite propaganda. The same was true of the taunt in which he designated Khadīja

[122] Ibid., 68f.
[123] Cf. for the following ibid., 72–77.

and Umm Salama (the Prophet's fifth wife) as "Mothers of the Believers" but "forgot" to mention ʿĀ'isha.

Kamare'ī's suggestions for revival of the *taqrīb* discussion were neither taken up by other scholars nor by the JT, which was in the advanced throes of death, although Kamare'ī repeatedly referred to it.[124] Faced with the author's traditional Shiite view of history, it was not at all surprising that Saudi Arabian *ʿulamā'*, too, primarily the Grand Muftī Muḥammad b. Ibrāhīm Āl al-Shaykh and the Secretary-General of the Muslim World League, Muḥammad Surūr al-Ṣabbān, whom Kamare'ī had explicitly mentioned with praise,[125] were not impressed by the title of the book and were unwilling to warm up to the Iranian scholar's ecumenical plans.

Another book, which appeared two years after Kamare'ī's work, generated more resonance. Under the title *Maʿa rijāl al-fikr fī l-Qāhira*, Murtaḍā al-Raḍawī al-Kashmīrī produced a collection of not less than thirty-two records of conversations with Egyptian scholars and intellectuals he had encountered in Egypt over the years. The author, an Iraqi Shiite publicist of South Asian origin,[126] was not entirely unknown in the field of ecumenical activities. At the end of the 1950s he had resided in Cairo for the first time and actively supported the JT's publication efforts. The most important result of his cooperation with Moḥammad Taqī Qommī was the 1957 edition of the famous Shiite legal compendium *Wasā'il al-shīʿa* by al-Ḥurr al-ʿĀmilī and the supplementary work Ḥusayn Taqī al-Nūrī al-Ṭabrisī wrote to it entitled *Mustadrak al-wasā'il*.[127] He simultaneously began to publish the writings of contemporary Shiite authors in the Cairene subsidiary of his Baghdad printing facility *Maṭbaʿat al-Najāḥ*, and in doing so also complied with the *taqrīb* movement's request for better information for the Sunnis about Shiism.[128]

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[124] For example ibid., 25, 34, 37f., 72.

[125] Ibid., 35; Kamare'ī had praised the two individuals mentioned as positive exceptions to the other Saudi *ʿulamā'*, who were not as concerned as the Azhar scholars about the welfare of the Muslims and were "as flammable as gunpowder", even in regard to trivial matters; regarding Muḥammad b. Ibrāhīm Āl al-Shaykh, see above, p. 324 note 141, concerning al-Ṣabbān (1899–1972), who headed the Muslim World League from 1962 until his death, see Maghribī: *Aʿlām al-Ḥijāz*, I/222–34; Schulze: *Internationalismus*, 29 and index s.v.

[126] Regarding him (born 1930), see *RF* II/612; *MMI* III/293; Naqwī: *Tadhkere-ye ʿolamā-ye emāmiyye-ye Pākestān*, 257; cf. also al-Wardānī: *al-Shīʿa fī Miṣr*, 126f.

[127] Cf. above, p. 151.

[128] This publishing house does not seem to have been established by al-Raḍawī

Among the most significant titles brought to the Sunni public in this way were the tenth edition of Muḥammad al-Ḥusayn Āl Kāshif al-Ghiṭāʾ's *Aṣl al-shīʿa wa-uṣūluhā* that appeared at the beginning of 1958, Muḥammad Riḍā al-Muẓaffar's apologetic *ʿAqāʾid al-imāmiyya* of 1961,[129] and Murtaḍā al-ʿAskarī's critical study about ʿAbdallāh b. Sabaʾ of 1962.[130] The prefaces to these editions frequently came from Sunni writers, though not necessarily individuals active as theologians or specialists in the science of religion. In the case of al-Muẓaffar's book (and numerous others that appeared in al-Raḍawī's publishing house), the preface was penned by the literature expert Ḥāmid Ḥifnī Dāwūd, who emphasized the importance of reading the publications of the Shiite scholars themselves and not only writings about them, in order not to repeat Aḥmad Amīn's mistakes.[131] On the other hand, al-Raḍawī used his connections to Sunni *ʿulamāʾ* in isolated instances to publish Sunni works in Najaf, such as the Koran commentary by the Azhar scholar Muḥammad ʿAbd al-Munʿim al-Khafājī.[132]

During this first stage of his *taqrīb* involvement, al-Raḍawī limited himself to activity as a publisher without appearing as an author. This only changed in the 1970s with the aforementioned book in which he described the conversations he had had with representatives of Sunni Islam in Cairo during his stays between the end of 1957 and 1967. It was not until 1974, after a delay of seven years, that prospects seemed promising enough to him to step into the public eye with

himself: On the title page of the first edition of the biographical collection *Aḥsan al-wadīʿa fī tarājim ashhar mashāhīr mujtahidī l-shīʿa* by Muḥammad Mahdī al-Qazwīnī al-Kāẓimī, which appeared in Baghdad in 1929 (regarding the author, see above, p. 91 note 33), ʿAbd al-ʿAzīz al-Dabbās is named as director of the *Najāḥ* printing house; al-Raḍawī moved the company to Najaf (in 1956?), see *RI* 10/1958/217. The *Najāḥ* printery was not yet named as the publisher responsible for *Wasāʾil al-shīʿa* in 1957: al-Raḍawī appeared, though, as the printing overseer, the work itself, however, was put out by *Dār al-ʿahd al-jadīd li-l-ṭibāʿa*.

[129] The first edition appeared in 1953–54 in Najaf (*MMN* 245).

[130] Also in the second edition (Najaf [1]1956; cf. *MMN* 242); cf. Ende: *Arabische Nation*, 204; a comprehensive list of twenty-seven Shiite books that were printed at al-Raḍawī's initiative in Cairo is found in al-Raḍawī: *al-Burhān*, 24f. note 2; cf. further idem: *Maʿa rijāl al-fikr*, 31.

[131] al-Muẓaffar: *ʿAqāʾid al-imāmiyya*, p. *d*; regarding Dāwūd (born 1918), see al-Raḍawī: *Maʿa rijāl al-fikr*, 67–135 and idem: *Ārāʾ al-muʿāṣirīn*, 92–98. His book *Naẓarāt fī l-kutub al-khālida* is a collection of thirteen such introductions that he authored to Shiite books.

[132] al-Khafājī: *Tafsīr al-qurʾān al-ḥakīm*, Najaf, s.d. (approx. 1963); al-Khafājī had also been involved in the edition of the *Wasāʾil*.

the declared intention of providing new thrust to rapprochement between Sunnism and Shiism by means of his recordings, again through the Cairene branch of the *Najāḥ* printery.[133] Toward this goal he willingly included a preface by Murtaḍā al-Ḥakamī, who honoured the book and its author with the remark that here was the continuation of the dialogue with the *Shaykh al-Azhar* that had been initiated in the past by ʿAbd al-Ḥusayn Sharaf al-Dīn.[134]

Neither representatives of the JT, with whom after all he had previously cooperated, nor the exceptional Azhar scholars who had decisively determined the pace of the *taqrīb* events before 1961 appeared in his book. At the very end al-Raḍawī made only a passing reference that he had been in contact with Maḥmūd Shaltūt, Muḥammad Muḥammad al-Madanī, and ʿAbd al-ʿAzīz ʿĪsā, but did not divulge anything about the content of his talks with them.[135] Only Aḥmad Ḥasan al-Bāqūrī and Muḥammad ʿAbd al-Munʿim al-Khafājī can be regarded as representatives of the "classical" *taqrīb* movement of the 1950s.[136] Fewer than half of the thirty-two individuals treated in the book were Azhar scholars, whereas the powerfully eloquent critic of the Azhar Maḥmūd Abū Rayya was accorded nearly twenty pages.[137]

The conversations that al-Raḍawī presented revolved mainly around the "correct" judgement of the Prophet's companions and, closely combined with this, the Sunni attitude toward the *ahl al-bayt*. With few exceptions,[138] al-Raḍawī's interlocutors afforded a more or less clear approval of the traditionalist attitude he demonstrated in defending the Shiite view of history, although he did not always achieve his goal, which was public comments made in the form of prefaces.[139]

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[133] Cf. for example the somewhat long-winded remark on the title page according to which the book was "a frank dialogue about various Islamic topics, the idea of which has been taken up by the central figures of this book in the spirit of objectivity and aims at depth, sincerity and rapprochement".

[134] al-Raḍawī: *Maʿa rijāl al-fikr*, 21.

[135] Ibid., 353.

[136] Ibid., 51–56 (al-Bāqūrī), 285–99 (al-Khafājī).

[137] Ibid., 311–30.

[138] Cf. for example the almost hostile conversation with a representative of the Tijāniyya order, Ḥāfiẓ al-Tijānī (141–45), or his criticism of Ṭāhā Ḥusayn, after the latter had refused the request to write a preface (169–80).

[139] For instance in the case of the well-known publicist and Koran commentator ʿĀ'isha ʿAbd al-Raḥmān "Bint al-Shāṭi'", who on the one hand let herself be carried away by the remark that in fact she was a Shiite and wanted to write a book about ʿAlī's son Ḥusayn, but who refused on the other hand al-Raḍawī's request to write a preface to the book *al-Zahrā'* by Muḥammad Jamāl al-Hāshimī offering the excuse that it contained mistakes and questionable facts; ibid., 182–84;

In his effort to have Sunni yes-men attest to the "correctness" of the Shiite historiography, he was in fact similar to his role model Sharaf al-Dīn.

Al-Raḍawī's book received favourable reviews in both Sunni and Shiite journals,[140] and it may have been this positive echo that encouraged him to resume the publication of Shiite texts in Cairo, an area of activity in which he had remained dormant for years. Among the books he put out in the second half of the 1970s, particular mention must be given to the twentieth (according to the title page) edition of ʿAbd al-Ḥusayn Sharaf al-Dīn's *Murājaʿāt*. This version, which appeared in 1979, the year of the Islamic Revolution in Iran, was a reprint of the first edition, expanded with a forty-page introduction including numerous comments by Sunni and Shiite scholars.

Besides producing his own works on Islamic unity in which he devoted ample space to the early years of the *taqrīb* movement and particularly Shaltūt's and the Azhar's roles,[141] he now focused greater attention on literature dealing with polemic refutation of "erroneous doctrines" held by Sunnis in regard to Shiism. Older volumes of this genre, e.g. Muḥammad Ṣādiq al-Ṣadr's reply to Aḥmad Amīn[142] or Muḥammad Ḥasan al-Qazwīnī al-Ḥāʾirī's attack on the Wahhābiyya,[143] were re-issued.

In spite of this anti-Sunni proclivity, al-Raḍawī seems to have been active in Cairo for awhile even after the Iranian Revolution; for instance al-Ṣadr's book appeared in 1982. Somewhat later in the

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concerning ʿĀʾisha ʿAbd al-Raḥmān, who was awarded the 1994 King Fayṣal Prize for Literature, cf. C. Kooij: "Bint al-Shāṭiʾ: a Suitable Case for Biography?" in: Ibrahim A. El-Sheikh et al. (eds.): *The Challenge of the Middle East*, Amsterdam 1982, 67–72, as well as Jansen: *Interpretation*, 68–76.

[140] Cf. *al-ʿIrfān* 62/9 (Nov. 1974), 1145; *MA* 48/1 (Jan. 1976), 113f. (where Tehran is given as the place of publication).

[141] Cf. primarily *Fī sabīl al-waḥda al-islāmiyya* (Cairo[3] 1980); the book *Ārā al-muʿāṣirīn ḥawl āthār al-imāmiyya*, Cairo 1979 is a continuation of *Maʿa rijāl al-fikr fī l-Qāhira*, both formally and in terms of its content.

[142] al-Ṣadr: *al-Shīʿa al-imāmiyya*, Cairo 1982 (originally Baghdad 1933).

[143] al-Ḥāʾirī: *al-Barāhīn al-jaliyya fī rafī tashkīkāt al-wahhābiyya*, Cairo 1977 (originally Najaf 1346/1927–28, [2]1382/1962–63; see *MMN* 106); al-Raḍawī himself contributed an appendix to a reprint (ca. 1990) consisting of an enumeration of not less than seventy-seven anti-Wahhabi polemics; further publications of this kind are the famous diatribes *Dalāʾil al-ṣidq* by Muḥammad Ḥasan al-Muẓaffar (against the Sunni theologian Faḍlallāh b. Rūzbihān al-Khunjī, who lived in the fifteenth century; see Ende: *Arabische Nation*, 114f., for more references) and ʿAbdallāh al-Subaytī's condemnation of Aḥmad Amīn *Taḥt rāyat al-ḥaqq*, both of which are mentioned at the end of al-Raḍawī's appendix to al-Ḥāʾirī's just-cited book.

1980s he resettled in Tehran, where he continued his publication activity.[144] In the ensuing years he seems to have enlarged his purview with his books being published in Beirut and London, in part with the same layout as the *Najāḥ* volumes from Cairo and Tehran.[145]

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All these things passed the JT by without slowing its downfall let alone halting it. Moḥammad Taqī Qommī's last two appearances in Cairo in the 1970s on the occurrence of the twenty-fifth and thirtieth anniversaries of the organization's foundation were attempts to rescue the society and its concept, but there was nothing left to save. Nonetheless, in 1972 the JT, already pronounced dead on various occasions, did manage to attract some publicity. Presumably as a reaction to the reconciliation between Egypt and Iran, and as at least an indirect result of al-Faḥḥām's Iran voyage, in May 1972 Moḥammad Taqī Qommī set out for Cairo, where he was received by a delegation of Azhar *ʿulamāʾ* at the airport.[146] The only tangible result of his visit was the appearance of what proved to be the last issue of the *RI* in which, in the tried-and-true practice, neither the situation of the JT nor the *taqrīb* movement in general was dealt with.[147]

Five years later, in the spring of 1977, Qommī went once again to Cairo. This time some publicity-oriented preparation of the trip had been made in advance: In the meantime, although outside of Egypt, two more extensive anthologies with articles from the *RI* had appeared. Their editor, the Iranian commentator ʿAbd al-Karīm Bī

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[144] *RF* II/612; among the *Najāḥ* books that appeared in Tehran are Muḥammad Ḥusayn al-Zayn *al-Shīʿa fī l-tārīkh* (s.d.), ʿAbdallāh al-Subaytī's *al-Mubāhala* (1982; the title of this book refers to the Koran verse 3/61 that is of some significance to the Shiites' self-conception; cf. Momen: *Introduction*, 13f., and M.M. Ayoub: *The Qurʾan and its Interpreters. II: The House of Imran*, Albany 1993, 188–202; Qawām al-Dīn Muḥammad al-Washnawī: *Ahl al-bayt wa-āyat al-mubāhala*, Qom 1392/1972), as well as a booklet with four essays by Muḥammad Taqī al-Ḥakīm entitled *Fikrat al-taqrīb bayn al-madhāhib wa-buḥūth ukhrā* (also 1982). Moreover, in 1987 he appeared as editor of the sixth edition of Luṭfallāh al-Ṣāfī's refutation *Maʿa al-Khaṭīb fī khuṭūṭihi al-ʿarīḍa*.

[145] Specifically, *Ārāʾ ʿulamāʾ al-muslimīn* and *al-Burhān* both published by *al-Irshād li-l-ṭibāʿa wa-l-nasr*. An anti-Wahhabi polemic written in 1987 after the clashes during the Pilgrimage (*Ṣafḥa ʿan Āl Saʿūd al-wahhābiyyīn*) was so hostile in tone that he preferred to publish it in Bombay; on the back cover of his *Ārāʾ ʿulamāʾ al-muslimīn*, al-Raḍawī refers to a "Knowledge Centre" in Bombay.

[146] *al-Hādī* 1/4 (Jun. 1972), 144f. (with reference to the Egyptian daily paper *al-Akhbār* of May 15, 1972).

[147] Cf. ʿAlī al-Jundī's editorial to *RI* 17/1972/3f.

Āzār Shīrāzī, appealed to Sunni as well as Shiite scholars, especially Iranians, to reactivate their efforts in the Islamic ecumene. Qommī himself stayed in the background, but in the Persian version he took advantage of the opportunity presented by an interview with Shīrāzī to recall the JT and its alleged steadfastness in political matters.[148]

On the occasion of his stay in Cairo, the then-Minister of *Awqāf* and Azhar Affairs, Muḥammad Mutawallī al-Shaʿrāwī, gave a reception to honour the "leader of the Shiite Muslims in Iran (!)" at which numerous Azhar scholars are supposed to have been present. In his speech of thanks, Qommī expressed his hope that the walls with which the Muslim denominations had surrounded themselves might be pulled down and the JT revitalized.[149] Al-Shaʿrāwī aroused special attention through his decision to join the JT and to declare his doing so publicly.[150] The visit actually generated far greater interest than most previous *taqrīb* initiatives and put the JT back into the columns of the Egyptian press for the first time in ages, although not absolutely in the way Qommī might have wanted. For immediately after al-Shaʿrāwī's joining the JT, the Islamist journal *al-Iʿtiṣām* published a sharp criticism of the *Awqāf* Minister, posing the question to him on the title page whether he had left the Sunni legal school (!, *madhhab al-sunna wa-l-jamāʿa*). The centrepiece of the article was a letter by the former Egyptian State Muftī Ḥasanayn Muḥammad Makhlūf, who was already more than eighty years old and now publicly enlightened his disciple about the "true" character of Shiism. Yet again the disputes over the Imamate, the belief in the *Mahdī*, and the Shiites' denial of the legitimacy of the first caliphs stood at the centre of the reprehension. Makhlūf called to mind that the "propagandists of the JT"

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[148] al-Shīrāzī: *al-Waḥda al-islāmiyya*, Beirut 1975 (²1991), as well as idem: *Eslām. Āʾīn-e hambastegī*, Tehran 1976 (esp. 24–32).

[149] Here, he made the mistake—casual in itself, yet in a way characteristic—to date back the foundation of the JT to 1937; *MA* 49/5 (Jul. 1977), 979f.; regarding al-Shaʿrāwī (1911–98) see Qalīma: *Muʿjam*, 225; J.J.G. Jansen: "The Preaching of Shaykh al-Shaʿrāwī: Its Political Significance", in: A. Fodor (ed.): *Proceedings of the 14th Congress of the Union Européenne des Arabisants et Islamisants, Part One* (. . .), Budapest 1995, 51–59; H. Lazarus-Yafeh: "Muḥammad Mutawallī al-Shaʿrāwī: A Portrait of a Contemporary ʿĀlim in Egypt", in: G. Warburg/U. Kupferschidt (eds.): *Islam, Nationalism, and Radicalism in Egypt und the Sudan*, New York 1983, 281–97; also: J.J.G. Jansen: *The Neglected Duty. The Creed of Sadat's Assassins and Resurgence in the Middle East*, New York 1986, 121–50; on the occasion of the inauguration of an Iranian cultural centre in Cairo 1977 to which Qommī's visit may have been related, cf. Jumʿa: *al-ʿAlāqāt al-thaqāfiyya*, 359.

[150] al-Wardānī: *al-Shīʿa fī Miṣr*, [228].

had almost been successful once previously, with the collusion of Shaltūt and "a flock of deviationists", in implementing their demand for the instruction of Shiite law at the Azhar. Indeed the Shiites were to be considered Muslims because it was necessary to form a common front with them against the enemies of Islam from other religions. This, however, Makhlūf stressed, did not change in any way the fact that their opinions were invalid (*mubṭal*). Al-Shaʿrāwī owed it to the public to explain his attitude toward Shiism unequivocally, since otherwise the Shiites would capitalize on his declaration of membership in the JT and use him for the purposes of their propaganda.[151]

Makhlūf's attack was ultimately also significant because during his incumbency as Muftī in the 1950s, he had contributed a message of greeting to the JT journal, albeit only once and in a rather half-hearted manner.[152] His pro-Wahhabi attitude that since the middle of the 1950s had led to close cooperation with the Saudi Arabian religious scholars and earned him the Saudi-sponsored King Fayṣal Prize in 1983 rules out any possibility here of a "disenchantment effect" similar to that manifested by some other *taqrīb* activists of the early years. In any case, his disagreement with al-Shaʿrāwī cannot have lasted very long in view of the fact that in 1980 both were among the participants in the constituent assembly of the *Jāmiʿat al-shuʿūb al-islāmiyya al-ʿarabiyya* planned by Anwar al-Sādāt.[153] Nevertheless the gravity of the accusations with which al-Shaʿrāwī saw himself confronted proved that the aim of reviving an ecumenical forum including the Azhar again could not by any means count on unanimous approval from Egypt's Sunni dignitaries.

A decade and a half after its effective disappearance from the Muslim public view, Qommī's union still had to contend with the

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[151] Makhlūf's letter in the June edition of *al-Iʿtiṣām* is reprinted in al-Wardānī: *al-Shīʿa fī Miṣr*, 198–200; cf. ibid., 156 and [227f.]; his two-volume *fatwā* collection *Fatāwā sharʿiyya wa-buḥūth islāmiyya* was also published (in 1985) by *Dār al-iʿtiṣām*.

[152] Cf. above, p. 167; his short article was reprinted in both anthologies of *RI* articles edited by Shīrāzī.

[153] Cf. in this regard Schulze: *Internationalismus*, 403f.; despite Makhlūf's reproaches against Shiism, his linguistic Koran commentary was translated into Persian and published in Mashhad in 1988 (i.e. still in his lifetime) under the title *Tafsīr wa towžīḥ-e kalemāt-e qorʾān*, Mashhad 1367sh/1988; the preface to this edition was written by Moḥammad Wāʿeẓ-Zādeh, who later became Secretary-General of the Iranian *taqrīb* organization *Majmaʿ-e taqrīb*, established in 1990; cf. also Aḥmad Ṣādeqī Ardestānī's preface to his Persian translation of Sharaf al-Dīn's *al-Fuṣūl al-muhimma*, 16, where he mentions Aḥmad Amīn, Abū Zahra, and even Makhlūf, as well as others, among the Sunni supporters of rapprochement.

same difficulties and the same opposition as during its foundation. Although almost thirty years lay between Muḥibb al-Dīn al-Khaṭīb's 1948 diatribe against the "*Dār al-takhrīb*" with the demand for its expulsion to Iran[154] and Makhlūf's reproach, the span between them was actually quite short. In the long run the JT had not been able to mitigate the scepticism or downright rejection of Shiism and inner-Islamic ecumenism espoused by important sectors of the Sunni public. This is true and even more so in the case of initiatives by individual scholars and intellectuals or the activities of other associations that emerged as epigones of the JT, which rated little more than some biting remarks from some anti-Shiite polemicists.[155]

The 1978–79 Islamic Revolution in Iran and the subsequent breaking off of diplomatic relations between Iran and Egypt put an end to Qommī's plans once and for all. The JT was dissolved, and Qommī went into exile in Paris where he died in a traffic accident on August 28, 1990.[156] The only Islamic union of the twentieth century that at least in the first decade and a half of its existence demonstrated the perspective of rapprochement between the two major Islamic denominations silently ceased to exist, generally unnoticed by the public.

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[154] Cf. above, p. 259.

[155] Cf. Asʿad Sayyid Aḥmad in his preface to Muḥammad Mālallāh's *Maṭāriq al-nūr*, 4f. (the book is a fictitious argument between Ibn Taymiyya and al-ʿAllāma al-Ḥillī which was dedicated by the author to Muḥibb al-Dīn al-Khaṭīb) about an organization called *Jamʿiyyat Āl al-bayt*; al-Wardānī: *al-Shīʿa fī Miṣr*, 161–68, [224], also deals with this group, which was allegedly established in 1973 in Cairo as a quasi continuation of the JT. As *spiritus rector* he names an Iraqi Shiite by the name of Ṭālib al-Rifāʿī, who delivered the death prayer at the Shah's funeral; the society, which was banned in December 1979, is supposed to have had associations with the Muslim Brotherhood and even published Shiite books (including the *Murājaʿāt*). In view of their having distanced themselves from *all* Islamic legal schools, even al-Wardānī is forced to comment that the *Jamʿiyyat Āl al-bayt* did not represent "the" Shia in Egypt, but was only one of their activities; cf. also Ende: "Sunni Polemical Writings", 225; *Rūz al-Yūsuf* no. 3339 (June 8, 1992), 22ff.

[156] al-Fayyūmī: *Fī manāhij tajdīd al-fikr al-islāmī*, 125; ʿAbdallāh al-Qommī: "Daʿwat al-taqrīb", 9; *Al-Ahram Weekly*, Sep. 3–9, 1992, p. 2; al-Wardānī: *al-Shīʿa fī Miṣr*, 155; Qommī's funeral in Tehran allegedly caused anti-government demonstrations (communication from Prof. S.A. Arjomand); al-Sharqī: *Naqsh-e eslām*, 539f., quotes from what is called the last proclamation made by JT, which was on the occasion of the Iranian "Unity Week" (*hafte-ye wahdat*) 1362sh/1982, however without indicating either an individual responsible for it or a place; Māridīnī's contention made in 1986 (*al-Thawra al-īrāniyya bayn al-wāqiʿ wa-l-usṭūra*, 95), that "until today" the JT still exists in Cairo, in contrast, seems to be based on some misunderstanding.

EPILOGUE

CONTINUING RAPPROCHEMENT INTO THE TWENTY-FIRST CENTURY?

The history of what might be termed the classical ecumenical movement in modern Islam, which has been the object of our investigation, came to an end in 1979. Later developments, of which only a short overview shall be given here, no longer bore the features of a theological-legal discussion among scholars and intellectuals—no matter how much these in turn may have been influenced by politics. The pointed aspiration toward *taqrīb* rather became an immediate and central component of the foreign policy of the states concerned.

There can be no question of the confessional quarrel having moved into the background, or a resolution for it having been found after 1979; actually the opposite was the case. However, the foundations on which the representatives of the two religious communities confront each other have changed radically in the meantime. The year 1979 not only left an indelible impression on the political history of the Middle East but also on the intellectual history of Islam. For Twelver Shiite theology in particular, the Iranian Revolution marked the climax and, at least temporarily, the end of a fundamental internal upheaval. Āyatollāh Khomeynī's theory of the "guardianship of the jurist" (*welāyat-e faqīh*) turned the *'ulamā'* into politicians and centuries-old religious convictions into pillars of a constitutionally anchored state doctrine.[1] Thus it does not come as a surprise that the events in Iran were as significant for the relations of Muslim theologians (including the ideologues) with one another as they were in the area of international politics. A clear-cut division of the two fields is even less possible than it used to be, and from time to time they are even completely congruent.

This is especially true for the relations between Iran and Saudi Arabia, who entered into a bitter competition over the issue of who embodies the "true" Islam after the Revolution.[2] Saudi Arabia pur-

[1] Cf. for this purpose Arjomand: "Ideological Revolution", passim.
[2] Fürtig: *Iran's Rivalry*, passim, esp. 23–60 and 215–30.

sued a double strategy during the 1980s and much of the 1990s. On the one hand, it consciously sought confrontation with Iran, for instance in the way it handled Iranian pilgrims in Mecca or by means of the Muslim World League, which openly opposed Shiism during the period.[3] On the other hand, through the Organization of the Islamic Conference,[4] it has pushed forward the creation of an Academy of Islamic Law (*Majmaʿ al-fiqh al-islāmī*). A sub-committee of this organization, established in 1983, was delegated the explicit task of attending to the question of rapprochement among the legal schools.[5] The Iranians' vehement protests were a foreseeable result, and the question was certainly valid as to whether the Academy's establishment was anything more than a public effort by the Saudi government to stress its good intentions toward inner-Islamic equilibrium in order to be able to blame Iran all the more easily for the dispute during the pilgrimage.

The annual *ḥajj* to Mecca has afforded a reliable gauge of the current degree of tension. Ranging from conciliatory gestures, to verbal attacks, to bloody clashes, it manifested every facet of the confessional conflict within Islam in the twentieth century. The disputes reached their culmination in the confrontations of July 31, 1987 when 402 pilgrims (most of them Iranians) were killed and 649 people were wounded by Saudi Arabian police and military units during violent demonstrations.[6] Diplomatic relations were severed in April 1988, and the following years witnessed a cold war between the two countries. When two bomb attacks killed one pilgrim and injured another 16 during the pilgrimage in 1989, the Saudi authorities seized the opportunity to arrest—and later on execute—a handful of Kuwaiti Shiites under the pretext "that they had obtained the explosives from Iranian agents."[7]

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[3] Schulze: *Internationalismus*, 359–62.

[4] Regarding this organization see above, p. 355 note 73.

[5] *MECS* 7/1982–83/237f.; see also Schulze: *Internationalismus*, 301f.

[6] Kramer: "Tragedy in Mecca", passim; idem: "La Mecque", passim; regarding the pilgrimage in the years after the Iranian Revolution in general, see the articles in *MECS* also written by Martin Kramer, esp. 6/1981–82/284–88, 301–03; 7/1982–83/249–51; 8/1983–84/175–77; 9/1984–85/161–64; 10/1986/149–51; 11/1987/172–76; 12/1988/183–85; 14/1990/189–91; 15/1991/191–93; 16/1992/216–18; 17/1993/116f.; also J. Goldberg: "Saudi Arabia and the Iranian Revolution. The Religious Dimension", in: D. Menashri (ed.): *The Iranian Revolution and the Muslim World*, Boulder 1990, 155–70; Fürtig: *Iran's Rivalry*, 38ff.

[7] Fürtig, 51; the bombings were most probably carried out by a Beirut-based

Propagandistic clashes remained the order of the day for many years, e.g. in 1995, when Khomeynī's successor as leader of the Revolution, ʿAlī Khāmeneʾī, claimed that Iranian pilgrims be conceded the right to the ritual disavowal of infidels (*al-barāʾa min al-mushrikīn*), which he described as being one of the pillars of the *ḥajj*.[8] Finally, after disturbances occurred among Baḥraynī Shiites who rose against the Sunni rulers of their country in the mid-1990s, the suspicion was immediately voiced that the Iranian government had been behind the riots.[9]

Shortly thereafter, however, things began to change fundamentally, again mostly for political reasons, as Saudi Arabia intended to improve its regional position by creating a counterbalance to Iraq and to avert possible negative consequences of US policy towards Iran, especially after the bombing of US military facilities in Dhahran in July 1996. Despite the never-ceasing suspicion that Iranian elements may have been involved in this attack,[9a] the diplomatic détente before long assumed a virtually breathtaking speed. An intense diplomatic exchange set in and reached its climax with the visit of the Iranian President Moḥammad Khātamī (elected in 1997) to the Saudi Kingdom in May 1999 and the defence alliance between the two countries concluded in April 2001.

Although the motivation behind these steps was overtly political, occasionally side effects on the religious level were also to be observed. As early as 1996, the Iranian Ambassador to Riyadh, Moḥammad Reżā Nūrī Shāhrūdī, met with the Saudi Grand Muftī ʿAbd al-ʿAzīz b. Bāz, the Wahhabi representative *par excellence*. And when two years later a Medinese Imam by the name of ʿAbd al-Raḥmān al-Ḥudhayfī dared to disturb the newly blossoming friendship by delivering a fiercely anti-Shiite sermon in the presence of the former Iranian President ʿAlī Akbar Hāshemī Rafsanjānī, the Saudi authorities fired him without further ado.[10]

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splinter group called "Generation of Arab Rage". Iran in turn tried to instrumentalize the tragic incident caused by a mass panic during which 1426 pilgrims were trampled to death in a tunnel in Mina the following year; these tensions notwithstanding, diplomatic relations were resumed on March 26, 1991, against the background of the Iraqi attack on Kuwait.

[8] *MECS* 19/1995/550f. and 20/1996/593.

[9] *Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung*, February 24, 1996, p. 3; cf. M.F. Mühlböck: "Sunniten und Schiiten in Bahrain", in: H. Preissler/H. Stein (eds.): *Annäherung an das Fremde. XXVI. Deutscher Orientalistentag vom 25. bis 29.9.1995 in Leipzig. Vorträge*, Stuttgart 1998, 321–25.

[9a] Cf. J. Teitelbaum: *Holier Than Thou. Saudi Arabia's Islamic Opposition*, Washington 2000, 83–98.

[10] Saudi-Iranian relations in the second half of the 1990s are treated in detail

Indeed the number of mutual polemical writings directly instigated or tacitly approved of by the authorities in Tehran and Riyadh seems to have decreased noticeably in recent years.[11] Nevertheless, the potential of these moves for a rapprochement on a theological or juridical level should not be overestimated. Rather, shared concerns caused by the growing danger of Islamist terrorism helped forge a tactical alliance that even outlived the Taliban regime in Afghanistan after 1996, who were more or less openly supported by the Saudis and steered a bluntly hostile course towards Shiite Iran.[12] For the time being, diplomatically motivated bloc-building as first conceived by Fayṣal's *taḍāmun* policy in the 1960s seems to have won the day once again, the only difference now being the inclusion of Shiite Iran.

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As far as the reaction to the Iranian Revolution among Sunni Muslims outside Saudi Arabia is concerned, including those in opposition to their own governments, it has been mixed from the beginning. The Egyptian Muslim Brotherhood in particular found it difficult to maintain their initial enthusiasm for Khomeynī the more the new rulers in Tehran stressed their decidedly Shiite identity and stipulated it in the Constitution.[13] The leader of the Muslim Brotherhood at the time, ʿUmar al-Tilimsānī, expressed the process of distancing from the Shia that was observable after a relatively short period saying:

> The difference between the Shi'is and the Sunnis, the origin of which lies with the Shi'is and not the Sunnis, is very deep-rooted and serious.

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in *MECS* 19/1995/550f., 20/1996/593f., 21/1997/618–20, 22/1998/529–31, 23/1999/515–18, and 24/2000/502f.; cf. also J.A. Kechichian: "Trends in Saudi National Security", *MEJ* 53/1999/232–53, on 233ff.

[11] One of the last relevant titles in this regard is al-Ḥaddād: *al-Mawsūʿa al-wahhābiyya wa-l-shīʿa al-imāmiyya* (1998).

[12] A. Rashid: *Taliban. Islam, Oil and the New Great Game in Central Asia*, London 2000, 196–206; *MECS* 22/1998/146–48; Saudi Arabia severed its diplomatic ties with the Taliban only on September 25, 2001, after the terror attacks in New York and Washington.

[13] Matthee: "The Egyptian Opposition", passim, primarily 251–65; idem: "Arab Commentaries on the Iranian Revolution", *Iranian Studies* 17/1984/303–12; J.J.G. Jansen: "Echoes of the Iranian Revolution in the Writings of Egyptian Muslims", in: D. Menashri (ed.): *The Iranian Revolution and the Muslim World*, Boulder 1990, 207–18; Sivan: *Sunni Radicalism*, esp. 22–26; Buchta: *Die iranische Schia*, 227–34; regarding the Iranian constitution, see S. Tellenbach: *Untersuchungen zur Verfassung der Islamischen Republik Iran vom 15. November 1979*, Berlin 1985, and Arjomand: "Authority in Shiism", passim.

> When Khomeini began his revolution we supported him and stood at his side despite the radical doctrinal differences that exist between the Shi'is and the Sunnis. (. . .) (F)rom a doctrinal point of view, Sunnism is one thing and Shi'ism is another.[14]

Apart from occasional exceptions such as the Palestinian Fatḥī ʿAbd al-ʿAzīz Shiqāqī[15] the vast majority of Sunni Islamists kept their distance from the Shia, though without in principle refusing occasional dialogue.[16]

At the same time, primarily under the influence of the Iraq-Iran War (1980–88), a noticeable renaissance of Sunni polemic could be observed that in its essence was not only directed against the current Iranian government but aimed at Shiism as a whole.[17] Leaning on role models like Muḥammad Rashīd Riḍā, Muḥibb al-Dīn al-Khaṭīb, and Ibrāhīm al-Jabhān, the authors considered it as their most distinguished duty to open their readers' eyes and warn them about contemporary Shiism that was even more dangerous than that of the past.[18] Reprints of well-known diatribes of both sides became the order of the day in the 1980s,[19] and the fate of the Pakistani Sunni commentator Iḥsān Ilāhī Ẓahīr illustrates that this type of dispute is not merely an academic debate with critical undertones. The vehe-

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[14] Citation from Matthee: "The Egyptian Opposition", 262f.; concerning al-Tilimsānī (1903/06–1986), cf. G. Kepel: *The Prophet and Pharaoh. Muslim Extremism in Egypt*, London 1985, 105f., as well as his autobiography *Dhikrayāt lā mudhakkirāt*, Cairo 1985.

[15] Already in 1979, he (born 1943) wrote a frequently cited book entitled *al-Khumaynī: al-ḥall al-islāmī wa-l-badīl* and maintained his pro-Iranian attitude later as well; cf. M. Hatina: *Islam and Salvation in Palestine. The Islamic Jihad Movement*, Tel Aviv 2001, 23ff., 53ff. and index, s.v.; in October 1995 he was assassinated on Malta, in an act presumed by many to have been carried out by Israeli intelligence; cf. also Buchta: *Die iranische Schia*, 111; al-ʿAlāwina: *Dhayl al-aʿlām*, 149f.; *MECS* 19/1995/125.

[16] *MECS* 14/1990/185; 15/1991/195–98.

[17] Shalabī: *Kullunā ikhwa*, 30ff., termed the first Gulf War "the return to ignorance": *al-ʿawda ilā l-jāhiliyya*.

[18] For instance Gharīb: *Wa-jāʾa dawr al-majūs*, 7, 131, 142ff.; al-Turkumānī: *Taʿrīf bi-madhhab al-shīʿa al-imāmīya*, 5ff.; Ẓahīr: *al-Radd ʿalā l-duktūr ʿAlī ʿAbd al-Wāḥid Wāfī*, 11ff., and al-Najrāmī: *al-Shīʿa fī l-mīzān*, 5ff. (who even manages to interpret the Crusades as a part of the Shiite conspiracy against Islam); in the case of Aḥmad b. ʿAbd al-ʿAzīz al-Ḥamdān's *Mā yajib an yaʿrifahu al-muslim ʿan ʿaqāʾid al-rawāfiḍ al-imāmiyya* (Cairo 1994), the anti-Shiite polemic stayed in the family, since the author introduced himself as a nephew of Ibrāhīm al-Jabhān at the very beginning (p. 5).

[19] Only to be mentioned here as representative: Jārallāh: *al-Washīʿa* (1982), al-Khaṭīb: *al-Khuṭūṭ al-ʿarīḍa* (1982), al-Qaṣīmī: *al-Ṣirāʿ bayn al-islām wa-l-wathaniyya* (1982), as well as on the part of the Shia: Muḥsin al-Amīn: *al-Ḥuṣūn al-manīʿa* (1985), Mughniyya: *Hādhihi hiya al-wahhābiyya* (1987).

mence and perseverance with which he attacked the Shiites over a period of one and a half decades (presumably supported by Saudi Arabia) and declared them heretics, using mere variations of the same topic, ultimately was enough reason for his opponents to assassinate him at a public appearance in 1987.[20]

The Iranian Revolution and the controversial echo it caused has not in any way altered the basic argument that Islamic unity is the loftiest goal and that defending against the conspiracies of the external enemies of the religion is the duty of every Muslim. In view of the general climate of distrust and animosity, however, all attempts at revival of an Islamic ecumene have until now proven fruitless as far as these efforts were not undertaken by governmental organizations.[21] But even if far greater public response is indeed certain in the case of government-led organizations, this does not necessarily also increase the chances of success with the Muslims of the opposing confession.

A considerable portion of this distrust was aroused by the fear that Iran might try to export the Revolution into the Sunni Middle Eastern states. This trepidation was certainly not unfounded, as the Revolutionary government in Tehran consciously attempted to establish a more prominent name for itself among pan-Islamic organizations and made Islamic unity a cornerstone of its politics.[22] Typically enough a confessional dispute was the starting point of these activities. In November 1981 the Saudi Muftī ʿAbd al-ʿAzīz b. Bāz, the most famous and most rabid opponent of Shiism in the Kingdom,[23] issued

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[20] Yūsuf: *Tatimmat al-aʿlām*, I/23; cf. the obituary in *Islamic Studies* 26/1987/2/230; in general, see also Jawīd Jamāl Ḍaskawī: *ʿAllāme-ye Eḥsān Elāhī Ẓahīr*, Lahore 1990; regarding this type of literature and its authors, see Ende: "Sunni Polemical Writings", passim.

[21] In most cases, this was attempted by more or less conspiratorial and to a degree quite obscure groupings: Next to the *Jamʿiyyat Āl al-bayt* already cited above, p. 375 note 155, there is the *Jamʿiyyat kull muslim*, whose foundation was reported in the Azhar journal in December 1980; a certain Kāmil al-Būhī was identified as Secretary-General of the organization, which intended to establish branches "in all countries of the world"(!), *MA* 53/1 (Dec. 1980), 194; al-Gharīb: *Wa-jāʾa dawr al-majūs*, 131f., mentions an organization, supposedly based in Kuwait, by the name of *Dār al-tawḥīd*, but without giving any further information.

[22] The subject of Islamic unity as a component of post-Revolutionary Iranian government politics is treated in detail by Buchta: *Die iranische Schia* passim; cf. also idem: "Die inneriranische Diskussion", and Landau: *Politics*, 259f.

[23] On Ibn Bāz (1911/12–99) cf. Qalīma: *Muʿjam*, 156f.; ʿAbd al-Raḥmān b. Yūsuf al-Raḥma: *al-Injāz fī tarjamat al-Imām ʿAbd al-ʿAzīz b. Bāz* (. . .), Beirut 1419/1999; Ende: "Religion, Politik und Literatur in Saudi-Arabien", part III.; a decidedly anti-Wahhabi viewpoint is represented by Ṣāliḥ al-Wardānī: *Ibn Bāz, faqīh Āl Saʿūd*, Cairo 1998.

a *fatwā* pronouncing the widespread custom of celebrating the Prophet's birthday a heretical innovation. Iran immediately exploited the situation and at the urging of Āyatollāh Ḥoseyn ʿAlī Montaẓerī celebrated the "Week of Unity" (*hafte-ye waḥdat*) in January 1982 for the first time, which had demonstratively been made to coincide with the time around the *mawlid al-nabī*.[24]

In the following years Tehran convened a great number of congresses in which the concept of Islamic unity stood at the centre.[25] Following Khomeynī's death on June 3, 1989, the efforts were intensified even more, and in October 1990, after one of these conferences that had been devoted exclusively to the topic of *taqrīb*, the establishment of an independent organization for the purpose of inner-Islamic rapprochement was decided upon at the instigation of his successor, ʿAlī Khāmene'ī. The new society was given the allusive name *Majmaʿ al-taqrīb bayn al-madhāhib al-islāmiyya* and its journal received the no less meaningful title *Risālat al-taqrīb*.[26] Ḥojjat ol-Eslām Moḥammad Wāʿeẓ Zādeh Khorāsānī was made its Secretary-General, and like the Cairene JT, the Iranian organization, too, has its own institute.[27] In this way the JT's memory has consciously been retained,[28] although the name

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[24] *MECS* 6/1981–82/290; Buchta: *Die iranische Schia*, 102–04; Montaẓerī: *Matn-e kāmel-e khāṭerāt*, 300–02, 483f.; Masih Muhājirī: *Background of the Islamic Unity*, Tehran ²1408/1988, 6; regarding the background, cf. A. Schimmel: *Und Muhammad ist sein Prophet. Die Verehrung des Propheten in der islamischen Frömmigkeit*, Düsseldorf, Cologne 1981, 124–38, and G.E. von Grunebaum: *Muhammadan Festivals*, London 1976, 67–84.

[25] The most important of these meetings, about which extensive anthologies have also been published, are the "World Congress of Friday Imams and Prayer Leaders", the "Conference on Islamic Thought" (see *MECS* 7/1982–83/239f.; 8/1983–84/168; Buchta: *Die iranische Schia*, 105–10), and the "International Conference of Islamic Unity" (regarding its sixth meeting, see *Spektrum Iran* 7/1994/1/65f.).

[26] Most issues of this journal may be consulted online under the URL <http://www.taghrib.org/arabic/nashat/elmia/markaz/nashatat/elmia/matboat/resalat altaghrib/index.htm>.

[27] The *Majmaʿ al-taqrīb* is treated in detail by Buchta: *Die iranische Schia*, 251–74, and idem: "Tehran's Ecumenical Society", passim; regarding the "Fourth Conference of Islamic Unity", which resulted in the creation of the organization, cf. the extensive report in *Keyhān*, October 9, 1990, p. 3; October 10, 1990, pp. 6, 19, 23; October 13, 1990, p. 3; also, the articles by Wāʿeẓ Zādeh in the journal *Mishkāt* published in Mashhad 27/1990/1–23; 28/1990/1–15; 29/1990–91/1–10; 30/1991/1–12; 31/1991/4–26; further ibid. 32/1991/4; 35/1992/212f.; 38/1993/191f.; the Institute (located in Qom) is mentioned in *Rāhnemā-ye marākez-e farhangī-ye (. . .) shahrestān-e Qom*, Qom 1991/92, 62; cf. finally the interview with Wāʿeẓ Zādeh in *Taqrīb bayn madhāheb-e eslāmī. Wīzhe-nāme-ye panjomīn konferāns-e waḥdat-e eslāmī, shahrīwar māh 1371—rabīʿ ol-awwal 1413*, Tehran 1993, 7–17 (I wish to thank Dr. Wilfried Buchta for providing the two last-mentioned sources); see also *MECS* 16/1992/202f., and al-Mīlād: *Khiṭāb al-waḥda al-islāmiyya*, 283–99.

[28] This resulted in the reprinting of all volumes of the *RI* in 1991 initiated by the Tehran *taqrīb*-organization; cf. *Mishkāt* 33/1991/221.

Moḥammad Taqī Qommī is avoided unless absolutely inescapable.

This, though, was not the only indication of Iran's *taqrīb* efforts. Reference was made to initiatives of Shiite scholars further back in the twentieth century, the most important being without doubt the "discovery" of the utility for this purpose of the alleged correspondence between ʿAbd al-Ḥusayn Sharaf al-Dīn and Salīm al-Bishrī that has been discussed in Chapter 3. In the effort to emphasize the integrity of its own objectives, inquiries into even earlier Islamic history have occasionally been made in search of cases that manifest characteristics of ecumenical endeavours initiated by Shiites.[29]

As in the relations with Saudi Arabia, Iran's ecumenical aspirations, too, have undergone some noticeable changes in recent years. The *taqrīb* organization is still active, and the "Seventeenth Conference on Islamic Unity" had been announced for May 2004.[30] Recently it seems to have been renamed *al-Majmaʿ al-ʿālamī li-l-taqrīb bayn al-madhāhib al-islāmiyya*, the Secretary-General of which is now Muḥammad ʿAlī al-Taskhīrī, the former head of the *Ahl al-bayt* society that was a prominent part of the Iranian ecumenical endeavours of the early 1990s.[31] Also, it continues to put out publications on Islamic culture in general and rapprochement between the denominations in particular.[32]

As for the self-presentation of the Iranian government in the wider Muslim World, however, the *taqrīb* card is at present far less conspicuously played than between 1982 and 1995. From the mid-1990s on, the focus was unambiguously on the diplomatic rehabilitation of the once-outlawed regime, and in this field success was being achieved in a considerably quicker and more tangible form: With the hosting of the eighth summit meeting of the Organization of the Islamic Conference, which took place in Tehran from December 9 to 11, 1997, Iran was definitely back on the diplomatic scene. While Egypt

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[29] Cf. for example Jawād Moṣṭafawī: "Etteḥād wa hambastegī yā tafāhom-e shīʿe wa sonnī dar Nahj ol-balāgha", *Mishkāt* 2/1983/25–60; Rasūl Jaʿfariyān: *Andīshe-ye tafāhom-e madhhabī dar qarn-e haftom wa hashtom-e hejrī*, Qom 1371/1992 (cf. also *Spektrum Iran* 6/1993/3/94).

[30] Cf. the society's website <http://www.taghrib.org>.

[31] Regarding Taskhīrī (b. 1944) and the *Rābiṭat ahl al-bayt* (or *al-Majmaʿ al-ʿālamī li-ahl al-bayt*) established in May 1990, see *MECS* 14/1990/181, 16/1992/202f., and Buchta: *Die iranische Schia*, 275–92; some years ago, Taskhīrī acted also as president of a (new?) organization called *Rābiṭat al-thaqāfa wa-l-ʿalāqāt al-islāmiyya*; cf. *al-Ḥayāt* June 18, 2000, 8; cf. also the short biographical outline on the society's website <http://www.taghrib.org/arabic/aminalaam/taskhiri.htm>; after the fall of Ṣaddām Ḥusayn, he figures at present (February 2004) as Khāmene'ī's representative in Najaf.

[32] The first three issues of the internet edition of its journal *Majallat al-taqrīb* may be consulted under the URL <http://www.altaghrib.net/>.

was reluctant and sent only its Foreign Minister, the Saudi Arabian delegation was headed by Crown Prince ʿAbdallāh, the factual ruler of the country.[33] Even the journal of the Muslim World League found words of praise on this occasion.[34]

One reason for this shift in the concept of the country's foreign policy may be seen in the apparent failure to spread the revolutionary spirit anywhere abroad. Another factor, though, was certainly the legitimacy crisis that overtook the regime at the end of 1994 following the death of the aged Grand Āyatollāh Moḥammad ʿAlī Arākī. His demise brought up the acute question of whether the joint authority of spiritual guide of at least a major part of the Shiite believers and the constitutional office of the Leader of the Revolution (*rahbar-e enqelāb*) that had been divided since Khomeynī's death could be reunited.[35] After some weeks of intense discussions, ʿAlī Khāmene'ī renounced his initial bid for spiritual power, finding not even enough support among the Iranian clergy. It does not seem too farfetched to conclude that this apparent dismantling of the leadership position of the Iranian Revolutionary regime also disposed of the issue of exporting this model to other countries in the region, let alone to Sunni Muslims, since it made the main representative of the revolutionary fervour look unattractive as a source of spiritual emulation, even among his own co-religionists.[36]

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Iran's earlier pan-Islamic advances had met with little approval from Sunnis, the less so as they were also controversial among the Shiite

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[33] *MECS* 21/1997/159ff.; Buchta: "The Failed Pan-Islamic Program", 281f.; Iran kept presidency of the OIC until the next summit in Qaṭar in 2000: *MECS* 24/2000/118ff.; during this period, the "Islamic Inter-Parliamentary Union" was inaugurated and took its headquarters in Tehran: *MECS* 23/1999/118.

[34] *The Muslim World League Journal* 25/10 (Feb. 1998), 19–23.

[35] After 1989, Khomeynī's spiritual authority had been transferred to the Āyatollāhs Moḥammad Reżā Golpāyegānī (d. 1993; cf. *GD* II/31–36) and Arākī, whereas ʿAlī Khāmene'ī succeeded him merely as Revolutionary leader; on Arākī's death, cf. also *Mishkāt* 45 (winter 1373sh), 199–215.

[36] Cf. regarding the course of the debate Buchta: "Die Islamische Republik Iran und die religiös-politische Kontroverse um die *marjaʿīyat*", passim; Arjomand: "Authority in Shiism", 321f.; *MECS* 21/1997/358–61; O. Roy: "The Crisis of Religious Legitimacy in Iran", *MEJ* 53/1999/201–16; the positions of the Arab Shiite clergy are reflected in the collective volume *Ārāʾ fī marjaʿiyyat al-shīʿa*, edited by a "*majmūʿa min al-bāḥithīn*", Beirut 1415/ (December) 1994; the spiritus rector behind this undertaking was the Lebanese scholar Muḥammad Ḥusayn Faḍlallāh.

scholars themselves.[37] With the exception of a few elusive figures such as the Lebanese *shaykh* Saʿīd Shaʿbān, a Shiite who converted to Sunni Islam and drew attention to himself by making repeated attempts in the 1980s to negotiate between Iran and Saudi Arabia,[38] the Sunni *ʿulamāʾ*, including those outside the Arabian Peninsula, have reacted with reserve. In particular, the Azhar kept a very low profile and already in the September 1979 edition of the *MA* published an article expressing scepticism about the concept of an Islamic Republic. This was followed in the November 1980 issue by a sharp criticism of Khomeynī and the Shiite *Mahdī* doctrine.[39]

Four and a half years later the incumbent Rector, Jādd al-Ḥaqq ʿAlī Jādd al-Ḥaqq, answered the question as to what had become of the JT and whether the Azhar planned to arrange a comparable institution, as follows:

> This group (. . .) was already dissolved a long time ago exclusively for political reasons. (. . .) The organization had arisen from the people. If the people were inclined to re-establish it, we as the institution of al-Azhar would not join it.[40]

The then Secretary-General of the Supreme Council for Islamic Affairs, Jamāl al-Dīn Maḥmūd, was even less equivocal. Asked how he assessed the developments in Iran, he stated frankly:

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[37] Cf. Buchta: "Die inneriranische Diskussion", passim; idem: *Die iranische Schia*, 293–320; Tehran's ecumenical comments were clearly oriented toward foreign policy, whereas the Sunni minority in Iran itself was (and still is) a long way from being treated as equal on a practical basis; at least until 1997 (which means all along the "ecumenical" phase of the regime) there was apparently not even one Sunni mosque in the capital: Buchta: *Die iranische Schia*, 189f. (ibid., 171–204 on the situation of the Iranian Sunnites after the Revolution); cf. also Huwaydī: *Īrān min al-dākhil*, 355, who reports that after the Revolution, a Sunni *ḥowze-ye ʿelmiyye* by the name of *Madāris al-Shaykh Maḥmūd Shaltūt* (!) was established in Sanandāj (in the Kurdish part of the country), but with a Shiite as director.

[38] *MECS* 9/1984–85/157; 11/1987/187; 12/1988/178; 15/1991/195; on Shaʿbān (d. 1998) cf. Qalīma: *Muʿjam*, 128.

[39] *MA* 51/8 (Sep. 1979), 1887–95; Matthee: "The Egyptian Opposition", 261.

[40] Ende/Jacobsen: *Über den Islam und seinen Weg*, 7f.; regarding Jādd al-Ḥaqq (1917–1996), who was the head of the Azhar from March 1982 until his death, cf. Schulze: *Internationalismus*, 382 note 252; *MA* 54/6 (Mar.–Apr. 1982), 933f.; obituary in *Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung*, March 16, 1996; also *Arabies* no. 113 (May 1996), 5; al-ʿAlāwina: *Dhayl al-aʿlām*, 55f.; on his serving as Egyptian State Muftī between 1978 and 1982 cf. Skovgaard-Petersen: *Defining Islam*, 227–50; Jādd al-Ḥaqq's views on abortion is discussed by R. Lohlker: *Scharia und Moderne. Diskussion über Schwangerschaftsabbruch, Versicherung und Zinsen*, Stuttgart 1996, 13–45.

> I believe that Iran is not an Islamic country in the true sense of the word, it is a Shiite country. (. . .) The internal reforms in Iran are superficialities that do not conform to Islam, and they absolutely do not confirm that it is an Islamic state. The word of Islam is not a garment with which one can enrobe or disrobe at whim.[41]

Both judged the prospects of settling the confessional dispute in Islam with corresponding misgiving. Maḥmūd considered the differences completely insurmountable since it was a question of "spiritual differences" and warned at the same time of efforts by "some Islamic sects" (meaning Shiism of course) to force their ideas upon others.[42] Jādd al-Ḥaqq for his part let diplomatic caution prevail and concealed his suspicion between the lines. Despite its seemingly conciliatory tone, his statement that it might also be possible to overcome differences of opinion between the legal schools after a resolution of the political differences suggests that for the Azhar, agreement at least with *these* Shiites in power in Iran was out of the question. This was because the political differences to which he alluded were based substantially on Khomeynī's doctrine of *welāyat-e faqīh* that survived the death of its inventor and represented the legitimizing basis of the Shiites' current political clergy just as it had within his lifetime.[43]

During the years that followed these interviews, hardly anything changed in the Azhar's attitude toward the Tehran regime.[44] A characteristic example of the official point of view of the University is a two-volume encyclopaedia of the basics of Islamic history and belief that came out in 1984–88. Only a few paragraphs were devoted to (Twelver) Shiism at all, and these were anything but flattering. Reference was made to Mūsā Jārallāh's timeworn diatribe *al-Washīʿa fī naqd ʿaqāʾid al-shīʿa* of 1935 and to a rather remote *risāla* by a Pakistani scholar. As if there had never been any attempts to overcome the differences, the main articles of faith of Shiism were summarized as follows: cursing the *ṣaḥāba* and declaring them infidels, claiming that the text of the Koran had been falsified, rejecting every

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[41] Ende/Jacobsen, 22; cf. R. Wielandt: "Zeitgenössische ägyptische Stimmen zur Säkularisierungsproblematik", *WI* 22/1982/117–33, esp. 125; concerning the Supreme Council for Islamic Affairs, cf. above, p. 355.

[42] Ende/Jacobsen, 26.

[43] Ibid., 8; cf. also the Azhar's comments concerning the incidents during the pilgrimage in Mecca in 1987 quoted in Qindīl: *Abraha al-jadīd*, 48–51 (regarding the title of this polemic cf. Koran, *sūra* 105, and Paret: *Konkordanz*, 522).

[44] *MECS* 10/1986/135f.; 11/1987/159; al-Wardānī: *Miṣr . . . Īrān*, 71f. and 79f. criticized the *Shaykh al-Azhar*'s anti-Shiite remarks.

tradition that does not go back to their Imams (whose sinlessness ranked even above that of the prophets), applying *taqiyya* and refraining from *jihād* in the Imam's absence. These were declared to be only the main differences, overshadowing a vast number of minor points of dissent. All in all, the Imāmiyya on these pages hardly fared better than the Ismāʿīlīs, Nuṣayrīs, and Druzes.[45]

The eleventh conference of the Azhar-appended Academy of Islamic Research at the beginning of March 1988 attracted attention beyond Egypt. In a demonstrative closing of ranks with the Muslim World League it was decided to establish an institution called the "Islamic World Council for Propagation and Aid" to coordinate the international activities of the Azhar, the World League, and two dozen other Sunni organizations.[46] After years of isolation in the Muslim World and in an effort to regain respectability lost in the wake of the Camp David Agreement, the Azhar willingly accepted participation in this Saudi-run institution that just a quarter century earlier had arisen as a counterpole to the Cairene University. The link was the common antagonism toward Iran and the fear that the Shiites would export their Revolution on the one hand, and the shared interest in containing the violent Islamist opposition on the other.[47] The extent of this sort of rapprochement became obvious when Jādd al-Ḥaqq was awarded the King Fayṣal Prize for Service to Islam in 1995[48] and the Azhar as an institution in 2000.[49]

Of course the opposition to Iran did not hinder either the Rector or other Azhar representatives from repeatedly vowing their principal support for Islamic unity. In this vein Jādd al-Ḥaqq commented on the topic in several conversations that were printed in the University's journal, but he did so in the most general of terms and without ever alluding to a revitalized attempt at ecumenical rapprochement with Shiism.[50] On the contrary, in an article about the question of the

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[45] al-Azhar al-sharīf (ed.): *Bayān li-l-nās*, II/12–15 (I owe the reference to this book to Mariella Ourghi).

[46] *MECS* 12/1988/179f.; 13/1989/185f.; cf. also *MA* 60/8 (Apr. 1988), 1101–04 and 61/3 (Oct.–Nov. 1988), 356–70; Kāmil al-Sharīf became Secretary-General of the *Majlis al-islāmī al-ʿālamī li-l-daʿwa wa-l-ighātha.*

[47] Cf. *MECS* 17/1993/113f.; see also below, note 62.

[48] al-ʿAlāwina: *Dhayl al-aʿlām*, 55.

[49] *The Muslim World League Journal* 28/3 (June 2000), 20–23.

[50] *MA* 59/3 (Nov. 1986), 296–304, esp. 299ff.; 66/8 (Oct. 1993), 493–99, esp. 498ff.; in the last-mentioned interview, he reconfirmed the close cooperation with the World League primarily in regard to the states that emerged in Central Asia

"correct" *ikhtilāf*, he completely ignored Shiism and instead focused on the events of the *saqīfa*, describing them in a way that put the validity of the election of Abū Bakr as caliph in the foreground.[51]

Accordingly, personal meetings between high-ranking members of the Azhar with Shiite interlocutors from Iran have remained the exception. In summer 1990 for instance the Iranian envoy Moḥammad ʿAlī Taskhīrī paid his respects to Jādd al-Ḥaqq. The former was President of the *Ahl al-bayt* League that was founded in the same year, and thus himself one of the leading representatives of Iranian pan-Islamism. Their conversation, which followed a Foreign Ministers' conference in Cairo, revolved mainly around the question of reconciliation between the Islamic legal schools. It produced, however, no tangible results as was also the case of a meeting between the *Shaykh al-Azhar* and the Iranian chargé d'affaires in Egypt the following year.[52]

All these adverse circumstances notwithstanding, it appeared for a short time at the beginning of the 1990s that an ecumenical forum might again be established in Egypt. In 1990 Moḥammad Taqī Qommī sent his son ʿAbdallāh, who had been born and raised in Egypt, to Cairo to test the waters regarding the possibilities for resumption of the JT's activity. ʿAbdallāh continued his father's work after the latter's death in August the same year and obviously within a short time was able to establish good contacts to the Supreme Council for Islamic Affairs. A few months later, in collaboration with the Secretary-General of the Council, ʿAbd al-Ṣabbūr Marzūq, he published an anthology containing numerous reprints of articles from *Risālat al-Islām*.[53] It also appears that at least a kind of rudimentary organizational structure of the JT existed again at this time because in a preface to the book, Muḥammad ʿAbdallāh Muhammad, one of the *RI*'s contributors in the 1960s, was explicitly cited as the group's president.[54] Encouraged by this initial success, ʿAbdallāh Qommī

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after the breakdown of the Soviet Union, and thus implied the ongoing rivalry with Iran, which is known to consider this area within its sphere of influence.

[51] *"Adab al-ikhtilāf fī l-islām"*, *MA* 66/5 (Nov. 1993), 628–37; cf. also Ashraf Shaʿbān: "Muqawwimāt al-waḥda al-islāmiyya", *MA* 65/8 (Feb. 1993), 1179–83.

[52] *MA* 63/2 (Sep. 1990), 240 (also al-Wardānī: *Miṣr . . . Īrān*, 38 note 49), and 63/12 (Jun. 1991), 1428f.; regarding Taskhīrī, see above, note 31.

[53] ʿAbdallāh al-Qommī: *Daʿwat al-taqrīb. Tārīkh wa-wathā'iq*, Cairo 1412/1991 (esp. both prefaces, 5–9).

[54] Ibid., 11–13.

spent summer 1992 in Cairo and officially announced the reopening of the *Dār al-taqrīb*.[55]

The arguments had remained the same since the JT's period of prominence, and ʿAbdallāh Qommī, too, felt it judicious to appease potential critics immediately by asseverating that for him at issue was rapprochement of the legal schools exclusively and not their merger or elimination. Moreover, he contended, Sunnis and Shiites agreed in the essential points of the religion, whereas divergences of opinion existed only in secondary questions, the confessional dispute being of a political and not a religious nature.[56] The last declaration in particular had not lost anything of the almost imploring character with which it had already been attempted forty years earlier to conceal the ecumenical activities' dependence on the political situation of the moment.

It is hardly an unwarranted assumption, though, to suspect renewed political calculation behind the time and circumstances of the JT's reactivation. The cooperation of the Supreme Council for Islamic Affairs, under the authority of the *Awqāf* Ministry, clearly demonstrated the government's benevolence and its endeavour to counter the simultaneous attention-getting Iranian activity in this area. The son of the symbolic figure Qommī, who had never completely been able to hide his affinity to the Shah and had died in exile after the Revolution, seemed to be the most suitable man for the job, trying to claim, as it were, the copyright for Islamic ecumenism for Egypt. Once again it was politics that determined the JT's fate, but with the difference that the response now was far more modest than in the past. There was no reaction whatsoever from Iran to the Cairene initiative, and the same is true for the Lebanese and Iraqi Shiites.[57] Furthermore, the activity of the new JT does not seem to have been carried any further than this single public appearance.

This, however, was not yet the last in the series of organizations founded in the name of rapprochement between the Islamic legal schools in the 1990s. In 1994 a publishing house called *Dār al-taqrīb bayn al-madhāhib al-islāmiyya* was founded in Beirut and in the meantime has put out a number of books, among them also some anthologies consisting of reprints of *RI* articles. Their respective prefaces were

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[55] *Al-Ahram Weekly*, September 3–9, 1992, p. 2.
[56] Ibid.; in addition ʿAbdallāh al-Qommī: *Daʿwat al-taqrīb*, 8f.
[57] Cf. also *MECS* 16/1992/203f.

written by the Lebanese Sunni scholar ʿAbdallāh al-ʿAlāyilī[58] and the former Dean of the Azhar's Department of Theology, Maḥmūd Ḥamdī Zaqzūq, who was appointed Egyptian *Awqāf* Minister at the beginning of 1996.[59] The director of the company, Taḥsīn Ṣalāḥ al-Khayyāṭ, stressed explicitly that there was no connection with either the re-established JT in Cairo or any other similar institution. The activity of his establishment was exclusively that of a publisher seeking to revive the memory of the "classical" JT.[60]

Jādd al-Ḥaqq died in March 1996 and was succeeded by Muḥammad Sayyid Ṭanṭāwī, who had been Muftī of Egypt since 1986.[61] Although he enjoyed the reputation of being far more "liberal" in legal matters than his predecessor, this did not necessarily imply greater readiness on his part for rapprochement with Shiism. During his term of office as Muftī, Ṭanṭāwī had dismissed as a baseless contention the pivotal point of the Shiite view of history: the conviction that ʿAlī was in fact the Prophet's legitimate successor. In addition he had rejected the Shiite practice according to which the believer had to practice *taqlīd* of a (living) *mujtahid*. Instead he called for any Muslim who did not possess adequate knowledge in theological affairs to adhere to the teachings of one of the *four* Imams, that is, one of the founders of the Sunni legal schools.[62] Therefore, it was probably only consistent that in a book on "Dialogue in Islam" that he pub-

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[58] 1913–97; cf. Qalīma: *Muʿjam*, 156.

[59] *Masʾalat al-taqrīb bayn al-madhāhib al-islāmiyya. Usus wa-munṭalaqāt* and *Naḥwa mujtamaʿ islāmī muwaḥḥad: al-Waḥda al-islāmiyya—mā lahā wa-mā ʿalayhā*, both Beirut 1994; another title of the *taqrīb* genre is Muḥammad Suwayd: *al-Madhāhib al-islāmiyya al-khamsa wa-l-madhhab al-muwaḥḥad (. . .)*, Beirut 1418/1997; a commentary on the first two surahs of the Koran by Jaʿfar Sharaf al-Dīn has also been published here: *Dāʾirat al-maʿārif al-qurʾāniyya*, Beirut 1416/1995.

[60] Private communication, July 1994; I am not familiar with any information regarding a possible resonance in the world of Islamic scholarship to activities of the publishing house.

[61] *Rūz al-Yūsuf*, March 25, 1996, 20–25; regarding Ṭanṭāwī (b. 1928) as Muftī, cf. Skovgaard-Petersen: *Defining Islam*, 250–94; T. Koszinowski: "Muhammad Saiyid Tantawi. Großscheich der Azhar-Universität in Kairo", *Orient* 37/1996/385–91.

[62] *Rūz al-Yūsuf*, June 8, 1992, 29. With this opinion, Ṭanṭāwī comes remarkably close to the Wahhābiyya: ʿAbd al-ʿAzīz Ibn Bāz and Muḥammad b. Ṣāliḥ al-ʿUthaymīn in a collection of *fatwā*s that appeared in Cairo (!) in 1990 pronounced an explicit and categorical prohibition against following the Imāmiyya, Zaydiyya, or similar *ahl al-bidaʿ* such as the Khārijites, the Muʿtazila, or the Jahmiyya; Ibn Bāz and al-ʿUthaymīn: *Fatāwā hayʾat kibār al-ʿulamāʾ*, Cairo 1990, I/136; regarding Ibn Bāz, cf. above, note 23; on al-ʿUthaymīn (1927–2001), who was awarded the King Fayṣal Prize for Service to Islam in 1994 (*Arab News*, Feb. 9, 1994), cf. the obituary in *al-Ḥayāt*, Jan. 11, 2001.

lished in 1997, he did not even mention the Shiite school of law.[63]

In autumn 1997, a rather bizarre affair occurred in Egypt that aroused only brief and limited interest outside the country. More than 50 people were arrested and accused of having plotted to spread extremist opinions and of disturbing public order through the propagation of Shiite books and thought.[64] A sheikh named Ḥasan Shiḥāta, the preacher in a Gizeh mosque, was publicly presented as the group's ringleader and repeatedly questioned by the public prosecutors, whose inquiries revolved around opinions Shiḥāta had expressed concerning the Prophet's companions, above all Muʿāwiya (whom he called an unbeliever), and his alleged approval of temporary marriage. Shiḥāta denied any affiliation with Shiism or Shiite organizations but readily let his very critical stance towards Ibn Taymiyya and the Wahhabis be known.

The Azhar, and especially its Academy of Islamic Research, also figured in this affair by appearing as an expert witness. At an early stage, Ṭanṭāwī himself vehemently refuted Shiḥata's criticism of Ibn Taymiyya and his attacks on Muʿāwiya and in turn condemned the *mutʿa* in strong terms. Still more outspoken was the official statement by ʿAbd al-Muʿizz al-Jazzār of the Azhar Academy. Concerning the books that had been confiscated by the authorities during the wave of arrests and submitted to the Academy for scrutiny, he listed eleven points that in his view proved a grave deviation from the Islamic (Sunni) convictions. Apart from traditional accusations against Shiism, such as the falsification of the Koran, the insulting of the *ṣaḥāba*, the questions of *mutʿa* and *taqiyya*, the most astonishing reproach was that these writings also constituted an attack on the Saudi government (*muhājamat al-niẓām al-suʿūdī*).[65] Moreover the Shiites, according to

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[63] Muḥammad Sayyid Ṭanṭāwī: *Adab al-ḥiwār fī l-Islām*, Cairo 1997; al-Fayyūmī: *Fī manāhij tajdīd al-fikr al-islāmī*, 119, writes that the Tehran-based *Majmaʿ-e taqrīb* invited the Azhar to a conference in order to take up the glorious days of Shaltūt and Borūjerdī, and that Sayyid Ṭanṭāwī accepted the invitation, whereupon a delegation of the Academy of Islamic Research attended the meeting; however, it is not stated when this actually took place.

[64] The affair is covered in detail in the articles of the Cairene news magazine *Rūz al-Yūsuf*, Sep. 16, 1996, 34ff.; Sep. 23, 1996, 74f.; Oct. 28, 1996, 52ff.; Dec. 16, 1996, 28ff.; Dec. 30, 1996, 64ff.; Jan. 13, 1997, 12ff. and Mar. 3, 1997, 58f.; cf. also *Dialogue* (London), Dec. 1996, 6; *al-Ahram Weekly*, Oct. 24–30, 1996, and Mar. 6–12, 1997 (I am indebted to Dr. Hanspeter Mattes from the *Deutsches Orient-Institut*, Hamburg, for having provided me with a copy of the two last-mentioned items); on a similar action in 1989, cf. Akhavi: "The Impact of the Iranian Revolution", 143.

[65] *Rūz al-Yūsuf*, Sep. 23, 1996, 74f.; Dec. 16, 1996, 28; cf. ibid., Mar. 3, 1997, 59.

al-Jazzār, did not recognize Egypt as legitimate, because in their view, an Islamic state was impossible during the absence of the Mahdī. The conclusion of the Academy was that this brought the Shiite group quite near to Islamist convictions such as those articulated by the *Jamāʿat al-takfīr wa-l-hijra*.[66] Nevertheless, most of the detainees were released by the end of the year, and the whole affair ended with Shiḥāta suddenly and without giving any reason recanting and apologizing to the public prosecutor, Muʿāwiya, and everybody who might have expected him to do so. Behind the scenes, a visit to Cairo by the head of the Lebanese Shiites, Muḥammad Mahdī Shams al-Dīn, may have helped to clear the situation.[67]

It has never become entirely clear whether the attempt of some Egyptian Shiites to have their creed officially recognized at approximately the same time was in any way related with the Shiḥāta affair. One of the most prominent converts from Sunni to Shiite Islam, the prolific author Ṣāliḥ al-Wardānī (whose name was never mentioned in connection with the Shiḥāta affair), seems to have made some efforts in this regard, without, however, obtaining any tangible results. On the contrary, the Minister of *Awqāf*, Maḥmūd Zaqzūq, was even reported to have ordered that Shiite preachers be banned nationwide.[68]

Until today, Shiite convictions and books are still only reluctantly tolerated in Egypt. Characteristically, when in 2001–02 the well-known Cairene publishing house *al-Madbūlī* put out a reference work on Shiism in history, they deemed it appropriate to include the note that all statements in the book reflected the opinions of the author exclusively and not those of the publisher.[69]

ʿAbd al-Muʿizz al-Jazzār's defence of the Saudi regime once again showed the ideological proximity that had come to exist between the Azhar and Wahhabi circles. The latter, in turn, as was to be

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[66] On this organization, cf. above, p. 302 note 69.

[67] According to *al-Ḥayāt*, Feb. 21, 1997; this was the first visit of its kind of a president of the Supreme Shiite Council in Lebanon (regarding which, cf. above, p. 76 note 102), ignoring Mūsā al-Ṣadr's attendance at the conferences of the Azhar's Academy in 1970 and 1971 (cf. above, pp. 348ff.); in Shams al-Dīn's meeting with the *Shaykh al-Azhar*, both sides stressed their intention to resume the activities of the *taqrīb* society that Maḥmūd Shaltūt had founded at the beginning of the 1960s (sic!), no word being mentioned about the attempt to establish a successor organization in 1993.

[68] *L'Orient—Le Jour* (Beirut), Oct. 11, 1996; *Kayhān-e hawā'ī*, Oct. 16, 1996, 24.

[69] al-Mūsawī: *al-Shīʿa fī l-tārīkh*, opposite title page; still in 1997, the book by Ṣāliḥ al-Wardānī: *Zawāj al-mutʿa ḥalāl*, was put on a blacklist by the Academy of Islamic Research: *Cairo Times*, Dec. 24, 1997.

seen above, have become much more cautious in their dealings with Shiite Islam. In a way it may also illustrate the degree to which the Azhar has become caught between the government's crackdown on Islamist groups and the increasing radicalization within its own ranks. This extremism became particularly visible during the trial of the assassinators of the secularist intellectual Faraj Fūda and the case of the prominent linguist and Koran expert Naṣr Ḥāmid Abū Zayd, whose marriage was dissolved because of his alleged apostasy.[70]

In contrast to Saudi Arabia, the Egyptian government did not show any inclination to mend its ties to Iran until very recently. Accordingly, contacts between Azhar dignitaries and Shiite envoys (such as a meeting between Ṭanṭāwī and Taskhīrī in June 1999[71] or between Ṭanṭāwī and the Iranian presidential advisor Kāẓem Mūsawī in August 2000) did not receive much public attention. Diplomatic relations between the two countries had been severed following the 1979 Revolution, and it was only in December 2003 that the two heads of state, Mubārak and Khātamī, met (on neutral ground) in Geneva.[72] Now that Tehran has agreed to give the original name back to a street in the city centre that had been renamed to honour Khālid Islāmbūlī, one of the assassins of Anwar al-Sādāt, the resumption of diplomatic relations is only a question of time.[73] Whether this might also lead to renewed contacts between the Azhar and Shiite institutions and scholars on a theological and juridical level remains to be seen. Progress in ecumenical matters is still dependent on the general political climate.

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[70] S. Barraclough: "Al-Azhar Between the Government and the Islamists", *MEJ* 52/1998/236–49; regarding the Fūda case (1992) cf. Jansen: *The Dual Nature*, 113ff.; *Faraj Fūda. Shahīd al-ʿaṣr*, I–II, Cairo 1996; see also above, p. 183, note 148; the background and implications of the Abū Zayd affair have been treated in detail by J. Thielmann: *Naṣr Ḥāmid Abū Zaid und die wiedererfundene ḥisba. Šarīʿa und Qānūn im heutigen Ägypten*, Würzburg 2003; cf. also Jansen: *The Dual Nature*, 110ff.; K. Bälz: "Submitting Faith to Judicial Scrutiny Through the Family Trial: The 'Abū Zayd Case' ", *WI* 37/1997/135–55; G.N. Sfeir: "Basic Freedoms in a Fractured Legal Culture: Egypt and the Case of Nasr Hamid Abu Zayd", *MEJ* 52/1998/402–14.

[71] Taskhīrī, who had already met with Jādd al-Ḥaqq (see above, note 52), had also attended the International Conference on Population and Development that took place in Cairo in September 1994 (cf. *Orient* 36/1995/35–42) and "met a few times with Egyptian officials and visited al-Azhar": Bayat/Baktiari: "Revolutionary Iran and Egypt", 317.

[72] *al-Ḥayāt*, Dec. 11, 2003; *al-Ahram Weekly*, Dec. 18–24 and 25–31, 2003.

[73] *Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung*, Jan. 7, 2004; *al-Ahram Weekly*, Feb. 19–24, 2004; on the gradual détente at lower political and economic levels in recent years, cf. Bayat/Baktiari: "Revolutionary Iran and Egypt", 316ff.; also *Nahost-Jahrbuch 2001*, Opladen 2002, 90.

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Upon delving into a century of ecumenical activities within Islam the results are rather pessimistic. Neither the JT nor any other forum has so far been able to bring Sunnis and Shiites closer to each other for an extended period. The organizational failure of inner-Islamic ecumenism became apparent after 1960, and later attempts at revival have not been very promising in view of the personal and political backgrounds of their initiators and their motives. But the JT's collapse as an institution following the affair of the Iranian government's diplomatic recognition of Israel in July 1960, accelerated by the death of its figureheads Borūjerdī and Shaltūt, was merely the external side. In addition, and of considerably greater significance for the relationship of the Muslim denominations to one another, a general failure as regards the contents of the *taqrīb* efforts has to be noticed.

The history of the Islamic ecumene in the twentieth century may be read for the most part as a sequence of mutual disappointments. Whether the topic is the conversations between ʿAbd al-Karīm al-Zanjānī and Muḥammad Muṣṭafā al-Marāghī that ran aground after a short time, the debate about a chair for Shiite law at the Azhar, the Shiite *ʿulamā'*'s taciturnity during the Sunnite condemnation of the Shah in 1960, or the Sunnis' silence in regard to the Shiite commotion caused by Ibrāhīm al-Jabhān's polemic the following year—there was always a latent tension accompanying the progress of the ecumenical contacts to be felt. That the *taqrīb* endeavour's greatest success, Shaltūt's *fatwā*, nearly seamlessly devolved into the breakdown of the ecumenical debate shows symbolically just how close accord and acrimony lay to each other in the Sunni-Shiite relationship in the twentieth century. The "disenchantment" of some former supporters of rapprochement, which broke through in extremely vehement attacks, can therefore also be seen as an expression of the great hopes that had initially been placed in this dialogue.

Ultimately, though, the JT did not fail because of the polemic of those who changed sides with all the zeal that converts are known to manifest,[74] but rather because of the inner contradictions of its

[74] The same, however, holds also true with regard to the tireless (and in the course of time increasing) activity of converts from Sunnism to Shiism, such as the Anṭākī brothers, Muḥammad al-Tījānī, or Ṣāliḥ al-Wardānī, and inner-Shiite critics, who aimed at a de facto Sunnitization of Shiism, such as Mūsā al-Mūsawī or Aḥmad al-Kātib; regarding the two last-mentioned individuals, cf. Badry: "*Marjaʿiyya* and *Shūrā*", 204–06, and Brunner: "A Shiite Cleric's Criticism", passim.

own argumentation. It was stressed again and again how important it was to become acquainted with the convictions of the other denomination and to study its writings. Alas, those very issues that formed the essence of the difference between Sunnis and Shiites and that frequently ignited dispute—the significance of the Imamate, the Shiite *Mahdī* doctrine or controversial concepts like *taqiyya* and *mutʿa*, let alone the question of the authenticity of the Koran—were consciously excluded from the discussion or at best shoved to the side with an apologetic undertone. It was feared, and justifiably so, that just mentioning them would lead to renewed antagonism.

Instead, those involved restricted themselves to contend that mutual agreement existed in regard to all fundamental principles of the religion, and that dissent was merely a matter of a few secondary legal rules. The truth was, however, that unity did not even prevail within the individual denominations over the questions of which secondary norms were meant, how to deal with these controversies, which kind of accord was to be striven for, and with which groups and religious communities a dialogue was desirable and permissible.[75] It almost appears as though the ecumenical debate was acknowledged for such a long time *because* dealing with the decisive topics was assiduously avoided.

Even the appeal to pare the existing prejudices and to deal with one another in the spirit of the tolerance was not without ambivalence. In its stead the constant recourse to the concept of external foes became an important, probably the most important, factor in identity building among the activists. Since the days of Jamāl al-Dīn al-Afghānī there has rarely been a call for Islamic unity without reference to the machinations and conspiracies of the "enemies of Islam" under which one is free to include Freemasons, imperialists, colonialists, Communists, Orientalists, Zionists, or unpopular grouping within Islam. Justification for Islamic ecumenism did not always derive from theological motives as much as from a political-ideological front against an

[75] Without delving into the relationship of the Christian churches and denominational communities to each other, it should be stressed explicitly here that this particular point does not represent a special feature of Islamic ecumenical thinking by any means. Christian theologians see themselves no less exposed to difficulty in doing justice to "diversity in unity" or in establishing "unity in diversity"; for an introduction to the virtually immense field of the Christian ecumene, refer to the articles "Ökumene" and "Ökumenismus" in: *Theologische Realenzyklopädie*, vol. XXV (Berlin, New York 1995), 46–86.

opponent, whatever the latter's particular definition happened to be.

The relationship of the pro-ecumenism scholars to politics was correspondingly inconsistent. They never tired of demonstratively expressing to the outside world the distance between *taqrīb* and politics and the importance of reflecting on religion itself. Simultaneously, however, the *'ulamā'* repeatedly deviated from even this meagre credo. Al-Marāghī's caliphate plans, Qommī's contacts to the Shah, and Shaltūt's support of the Egyptian revolutionary government during the nationalization of the Azhar prove that the causes as well as the effects of the ecumenical discussion in Islam depended less on relations between scholars than between rulers.

Only in this way can the willingness to sacrifice ecumenical contacts on the altar of utilitarian political considerations be adequately understood—in spite of the doubtlessly sincere striving for agreement that also existed. This is ultimately valid for the Azhar as well. At no time in the twentieth century did rapprochement with Shiism have real priority for the Cairene University, which constantly reacted only to advances from outside, nearly always initiated by Shiite *'ulamā'*. The interest in sustaining the contacts flagged rapidly whenever the goals of Egyptian foreign policy changed.

The contradictions in which the dialogue between the two major Islamic denominations is caught today facilitate matters for those who are against ecumenical rapprochement or any type of conversation with the opposing side. In order to demonstrate what at least in their eyes is the absolute futility of a such venture both in terms of its meaning and prospects of success, they need only refer to the topics in dispute that are avoided by the *taqrīb* partners. The completely irreconcilable interpretations of early Islamic history and the ensuing problem regarding the legitimate ruler in Islam still represent an issue with no resolution. And as long as the followers of both denominations continue to define not only their historical but also their current identity by defending or condemning the first three caliphs, it is likely that nothing will be able to alter this state of affairs.

The fact that at issue is more than a dispute among religious scholars becomes evident from the examples of Iranian foreign policy, the disputes in the Gulf area, or the conflict in Pakistan that has been smouldering for years.[76] Even if the small group that sup-

[76] Regarding Sunni-Shiite relations in Pakistan, cf. A. Rieck: "Sectarianism as a Political Problem in Pakistan: The Case of the Northern Area", *Orient* 36/1995/429–48,

ports a revision of the writing of Islamic history were to find a greater audience,[77] this would not automatically smooth the way for rapprochement between the denominations; Sunni polemicists always have the Shiite practice of *taqiyya* to fall back on.

* * *

The famous French writer Paul Valéry (1871–1945), a member of the Académie Française, did not have a particularly good opinion of history and its use for justification of alleged present needs:

> L'Histoire est le produit le plus dangereux que la chimie de l'intellect ait élaboré. Ses propriétés sont bien connues. Il fait rêver, il enivre les peuples, leur engendre de faux souvenirs, exagère leurs réflexes, entretient leurs vieilles plaies, les tourmente dans leur repos, les conduit au délire des grandeurs ou à celui de la persécution, et rend les nations amères, superbes, insupportables et vaines. L'Histoire justifie ce que l'on veut. Elle n'enseigne rigoureusement rien, car elle contient tout, et donne of the exemples de tout. (. . .) Dans l'état actuel du monde, le danger de se laisser séduire à l'Histoire est plus grand que jamais il ne fut.[78]

Throughout the twentieth century, confessional polemics escalated inexorably despite the extensive ecumenical efforts described on the preceding pages and apparently achieved at least some degree of success. Furthermore, the increasing instrumentalization of religion for political purposes over the past decades both in the Islamic world and elsewhere cannot simply be swept under the carpet. At the beginning of the twenty-first century, faced with these facts, one is apt to acknowledge the accuracy of Valéry's acrid and pessimistic assessment.

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idem: "A Stronghold of Shia Orthodoxy in Northern Pakistan", in: R. Brunner et al. (eds.): *Islamstudien ohne Ende. Festschrift für Werner Ende zum 65. Geburtstag*, Würzburg 2002, 383–408, and M.Q. Zaman: "Sectarianism in Pakistan. The Radicalization of Shi'i and Sunni Identities, *Modern Asian Studies* 32/1998/689–716.

[77] Buchta: "Die inneriranische Diskussion", 571–76, and idem: *Die iranische Schia*, 305–20, quotes the Iranian philosopher 'Abd ol-Karīm Sorūsh, who comments in this sense; regarding Sorūsh, cf. in detail Hajatpour: *Iranische Geistlichkeit*, 320–40; K. Amirpur: *Die Entpolitisierung des Islam. 'Abdolkarīm Sorūš Denken und Wirkung in der Islamischen Republik Iran*, Würzburg 2003, and A.P. Dahlén: *Islamic Law, Epistemology and Modernity. Legal Philosophy in Contemporary Iran*, New York, London 2003, 187–342.

[78] Paul Valéry: "De l'Histoire", in: *Œuvres*, Paris 1988, II/935.

ABBREVIATIONS

For full references see the bibliography

AAS	Asian and African Studies (Jerusalem)
ASh	al-Amīn: *Aʿyān al-shīʿa*
BO	Bibliotheca Orientalis (Leiden)
BSOAS	Bulletin of the School of Oriental and African Studies (London)
Dharīʿa	al-Ṭehrānī: *al-Dharīʿa ilā taṣānīf al-shīʿa*
EI[1]	Encyclopaedia of Islam (first ed.)
EI[2]	Encyclopaedia of Islam (second ed.)
EIr	Encyclopaedia Iranica
EQ	Encyclopaedia of the Qur'ān
GAL	Brockelmann: *Geschichte der Arabischen Litteratur*
GAS	Sezgin: *Geschichte des Arabischen Schrifttums*
GD	Sharīf Rāzī: *Ganjīne-ye dāneshmandān*
JT	Jamāʿat al-taqrīb bayn al-madhāhib al-islāmiyya
sh	in connection with dates: *shamsī*
IJMES	International Journal of Middle East Studies (Cambridge)
IS	Iranian Studies (Ann Arbor)
JAL	Journal of Arabic Literature (Leiden)
JAOS	Journal of the American Oriental Society (New Haven)
JNES	Journal of Near Eastern Studies (Chicago)
JSAI	Jerusalem Studies in Arabic and Islam
JSS	Journal of Semitic Studies (Manchester)
MA	Majallat al-Azhar (Cairo)
MDA	Dāghir: *Maṣādir al-dirāsa al-adabiyya*
MEA	Middle Eastern Affairs (New York)
MECS	Middle East Contemporary Survey (New York, London; later Boulder)
MEJ	Middle East Journal (Washington, D.C.)
MER	Middle East Record (Jerusalem)
MES	Middle Eastern Studies (London)
MIDEO	Mélanges de l'Institut Dominicain d'Etudes Orientales du Caire
MMI	ʿAwwād: *Muʿjam al-muʾllifīn al-ʿirāqiyyīn*
MMN	al-Amīnī: *Muʿjam al-maṭbūʿāt al-najafiyya*
MMS	ʿAyyāsh: *Muʿjam al-muʾallifīn al-sūriyyīn*
MW	The Muslim World (Hartford, Conn.)
OE	Esposito (ed.): *The Oxford Encyclopaedia of the Modern Islamic World*
OM	Oriente Moderno (Rom)
RAAD	Revue de l'Académie Arabe de Damas
REI	Revue des Etudes Islamiques (Paris)
RF	al-Amīnī: *Muʿjam rijāl al-fikr wa-l-adab fī l-Najaf*
RI	Risālat al-Islām (Cairo)
RMM	Revue du Monde Musulman (Paris)
RMMM	Revue du Monde Musulman et de la Méditerranée (Aix-en-Provence)
SI	Studia Islamica (Paris)
ṬASh	al-Ṭehrānī: *Ṭabaqāt aʿlām al-shīʿa*
WI	Die Welt des Islams (Berlin, Leipzig; after 1951 Leiden)
WZKM	Wiener Zeitschrift für die Kunde des Morgenlandes (Vienna)
ZDMG	Zeitschrift der Deutschen Morgenländischen Gesellschaft (Leipzig; since 1945/50 Wiesbaden)

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The hyphen at the beginning of an entry indicates the omission of the Arabic article „al".

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In this index, all persons (unless pure references to literature), organizations, confessional groups, newspapers, magazines, and the most important subject matters and concepts have been included. Names of places and extremely frequent terms, such as Shia / Shiism, *taqrīb*, Azhar, or pan-Islamism, have been ignored. The hyphen at the beginning of an entry indicates the omission of the Arabic article "al"; superior numbers refer to footnotes.

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