MU'TAZILAH, THE FIRST RATIONALIST SCHOOL OF THOUGHT IN ISLAMIC HISTORY: A CRITICAL STUDY OF ITS IDEOLOGY AND APPROACH

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Mu'tazilah was the first rationalist movement in the early history of Islam. While the holy Qur'an was the primary source of knowledge for Muslims to think of oneness of God, His attributes, Heaven, Hell and other metaphorical issues, Mu'tazilites tried to interpret such dogma in the light of human reason and contradicted the mainstream Muslim dogmas. The Mu'tazilites enjoyed a golden period under the patronage of al-Ma'mun, the Abbasid caliph. However, after withdrawal of the patronage, their doctrine lost ground in the society and gradually disappeared. Nevertheless, their approach of critical thinking still has an impact on modern Muslim thinkers. Rejection of God's attributes, creation of holy Qur'an, status of grave sinner and creation of human action were significant ideological issues of Mu'tazilah. Their ideology of freedom and free thought were based on rejection of fate and destiny. This paper attempts to critically analyse the major ideological issues of Mu'tazilah, in terms of their origin, development and dispute with scholars of Aḥl al-Sunnah wa'l-Jama'ah. It also discusses contributions of Mu'tazilites and impact of their ideology on intellectuals of later period.

Key words: Mu'tazilah, Wāṣil ibn 'Aṭā, al-Jabrīyah, al-Qadarīyah, Khawārij, Grave Sinner.

Introduction

Since the political turmoil started in the Islamic history after the assassination of the third caliph 'Uthmān ibn 'Affān (R.A.), followed by the dispute between 'Alī ibn Abī Ṭalib (R.A.) and Mu'āwiyah (R.A.), some critical issues emerged as a disagreement. A group from the party

of ʻAlī (R.A.) later called Khawārij[1] parted on the issue of arbitration (taḥkīm). Since then controversy on various issues emerged and became a subject of debate and heated discussion among people. One of such issues was the status of a grave sinner whether to be considered believer or non-believer. When this question was raised in academic circle of al-Ḥasan al-Baṣrī[2] (r), one of his disciples, Wāṣil ibn ʻAṭā (699-749) differed with his teacher and opined that the grave sinner was neither believer nor unbeliever but having an intermediate position as sinner (fasiq). Consequently Wāṣil left his teacher's study circle. So al-Ḥasan al-Baṣrī declared: "Wāṣil *Iʻtazala* ʻAnna" i.e. Wāṣil withdrew from us. *Iʻtazala* is the root word of Muʻtazilah which means: those who withdraw and stand apart.[3]

The historians recorded that such disagreeing attitude in thought also appeared earlier. A group among followers of ʻAli ibn Abi Talib (R.A.) withdrew from him when disputed over a political issue. Similarly, when al-Ḥasan ibn ʻAli (R.A.) gave covenant to Muʻawiyah (R.A.), a group of his followers withdrew from the politics and restricted to a devoted life naming themselves as Muʻtazilah. However, most of the historians consider the incident of Wāṣil ibn ʻAṭā as the starting point of the Muʻtazilah school of thought.

Goldziher, an orientalist tried to establish a link between the name of the Muʻtazilah and the life style of the group that since the founder and the early scholars of Muʻtazilah lived a pious life, renouncing the world and abstaining from the pleasure of the material life, they, therefore, were called Muʻtazilah[4]. However, this argument is not acceptable as all those belonged to Muʻtazilah could not be ascertained as pious.

Aḥmad Amin tries to connect the name of Muʻtazilah with a Jewish theological school called in Hebrew 'Pharisees' which means Muʻtazilah in Arabic.[5] The similarity between Jewish Muʻtazilah and Muslim Muʻtazilah was much closer in the sense that the Jewish Muʻtazilah interpreted 'Torah' in accordance with logic and philosophy whereas Muslim Muʻtazilah interpreted the attributes of God in view of human reason. Therefore, it was the group of Jewish people who after embracing Islam might have named the group as Muʻtazilah seeing the close similarity in their doctrine.

Al-Jabriyah[6] and al-Qadariyah[7]

Although the doctrine of Muʻtazilah movement had been established over the decades, it had initially absorbed the theological views that had already been discussed by some groups in Baṣrah and Damascus. In this

context, the Jabriyah and the Qadariyah had played a significant role.

During the period of Umaiyyads, when cosmopolitan atmosphere had emerged as a result of intermingling of different nations like Persians, Romans and Arabs, the Muslim society had an exposure to a few theological issues that were debated by Christians, Jews and Greek philosophers. Acquiring knowledge of such issues, a few scholars tried to interpret the theological terms given in the holy Qur'ān in the light of human reason.

Al-Ja'd ibn Dirham (d. 736) had spoken about predestination in Islam. One of his followers Jahm ibn Ṣafwān (d. 746) formulated a doctrine of complete divine determining. He rejected the free will and believed that human actions are fully determined by the God. Rejecting a divine attribute, he also declared that Qur'ān is not eternal but a God's creature. Followers of this doctrine were called Jabrīyah.

As starkly opposed to Jabriyah's doctrine, another group, with the initiative of Ma'bad al-Juhani (d. 699), advocated the free will rejecting any sort of predestination.[8] They believe that it is the man who creates his own action which is not determined by the God. They even deny any prior knowledge of God about human action before it happened. The follower of this doctrine was called Qadariyah advocated in Baṣrah by Ma'bad al-Juhani and in Damascus by his follower Ghaylān al-Dimashqī (d. 723). Both were sentenced to death by the Umayyad authorities.

Emergence of Mu'tazilah School

One of the most critical issues debated in the second half of the first century of Hijrah was the status of a believer who committed grave sin. Khawarij had taken an extreme view that such a person is not a believer and hence will receive perpetual punishment in the Hell. To the contrary, the Murji'ah[9] held opposing view that he would remain a believer and the God alone would judge his status. On the issue in question, Waṣil ibn 'Aṭā a disciple of Ḥasan al-Baṣrī declared his view against his teacher that the grave sinner was neither believer nor unbeliever but holding a middle position until he would repent and the unrepentant would be in the Hell for ever. Quitting his teacher's circle, Waṣil had established his own circle in Baṣrī. His friend 'Amr ibn 'Ubayd joined him. As a starting point of emergence of Mu'tazilah school of thought, this incident is dated, according to Abu Zahrah, in between 101 - 105 A.H/ 719 – 723 C.E.[10]

Waṣil was greatly influenced by the philosophical ideology prevailed

in those days to the extent that he absorbed many principles from other ideological movements. He had adopted negation of God's attributes, rejection of eternity of Qur'ān from the Jabriyah while he had borrowed the principle of predestination from the Qadariyah. According to the historian al-Ḍaḥabi, Mu'tazilah is an inheritor of Jabrīyah and Qadarīyah.

With the continued intellectual contributions made by Mu'tazilah scholars during the second and third centuries of Hijrah, its basic principles were established and well defined. Wāṣil ibn 'Atā (d. 749), Abul Hudhayl al-'Allāf (d. 840), Ibrahīm al-Naẓẓām (d. 845), Bishr ibn al-Mu'tamir (d. 825), Abū 'Uthmān al-Jāḥiz (d. 869) and Abu 'Alī Al-Jubba'ī (d. 915) were major contributors to the formation of Mu'tazilah movement.

Objectives of Mu'tazilah

The Mu'tazilah initially appeared to defend Islam through their powerful arguments and logical debates against Zandaqah[11], a group who were Muslims in appearance but atheists in reality tried to launch an intellectual war against Muslims. The group was consisting mainly of Persians, Jews and Christians who unconvincingly had embraced Islam.

Wāṣil ibn 'Aṭā was more enthusiastic to spread his school of thought to various parts of the Muslim world. He started spreading Mu'tazilah principles through teaching, holding debates and authoring books. He had sent a number of trained delegates extensively from China in the East to Morocco in the West. According to Abū Ḥilāl al-'Askarī, Waṣil sent his preachers to Africa, Khurāsān, Sindh and Ḥijāz. Those preachers, leaving behind their country, family and wealth, dedicatedly served to spread Mu'tazilah ideology of Islam.[12] Having empowered with eloquent speech, logical argument and philosophical approach, Mu'tazilites were able to convince their opponents. It was reported that having persuaded by powerful argument of Abul Hudhayl al-'Allāf, about three thousand Persians had embraced Islam.

Further, they felt imperative to establish Islamic beliefs before the people of other cultures in their own logical methods from ancient Greek philosophy and other sources.

Five Principles of Mu'tazilah

In the Islamic history, Mu'tazilah was the first rationalist movement. Its scholars also used partly the ancient Greek philosophical approach to derive dogmatic conclusions from the Qur'ān. They tried to interpret

Qur'ānic texts pertaining to dogma in the light of human reason. The principles formulated initially by Wāṣil ibn ‘Aṭā had been later developed by his disciples and structured by Abul Hudhayl al-‘Allāf. With the passage of time, dispute and differences of opinion among Mu‘tazilah scholars over details of the principles led to their division into a number of sub-sects. However, in spite of their dispute, Mu‘tazilah scholars remained agreed on five principles of their beliefs. Thus, Abul Ḥusayn al-Khayyāṭ, a Mu‘tazilite (d. ca. 900) asserts: "With acceptance of the five principles, one can be called or identified as Mu‘tazilah".[13]

Al-Tawḥīd (Monotheism)

This was the crux of Mu‘tazilah doctrines. They called for unity of God exempt from plurality of eternals. They admit that God is knowing, powerful and seeing etc. but they contend that these are integral parts of His essence. If these are not considered same with His essence, plurality of eternals will certainly arise which is clear unbelief and against unity of God. He cannot be divided into distinctive existences.

Following are some corollaries of this principle: (a) Negation of God's attributes (b) Denial of beatific seeing of God by people of paradise (c) Createdness of Qur'ān (d) God's pleasure and anger are not connected with His essence as these are state which is mutable and prone to disappear (*Ḥadith*).

Al-‘Adl (Divine Justice)

God is just and He cannot do injustice to His creation. God must reward the obedient for their good deeds and punish the sinners for their misdeeds. His justice demands human to be completely free in his act to choose good or evil. Then, man will be fully responsible for their deeds. God does not create human actions. They argue that if creation of human acts is associated with God and not with man, how can he be held responsible for his actions and be punished for committing sins? Would God not be unjust if He calls man to account for his sins and admit him to hell, if man is not free to create his acts? Thus, human freedom is necessary requirement of divine justice.

Al-Wa‘d wa-al Wa‘īd (Promise and threat)

Since God has determined reward for obedient and punishment for

disobedient. Hence all actions of human being be they good or bad must receive recompense.

Manzilah bayn al-Manzilatayn (Intermediate State)

There is an intermediate position for the grave sinner if he dies without repentance. He will be on the half way between faith and unbelief and can be considered neither a complete believer nor unbeliever.

Amr bil Ma'rūf wa Nahi 'anil Munkar (Enjoining Good and Forbidding Evil)

One must command good and strive to prevent the evil acts. Thus, there are two necessary obligations for a believer i.e. to enjoin the right and forbid the wrong through any way. Thus it is necessary means to stop social injustice and immorality and uphold virtues and morality in society. As 'Abdul Jabbār says, "It is necessary, if possible, to reach a point where evil (al-munkar) does not occur in the easiest of circumstances or lead to something worse, for the goal is for evil simply not to happen."[14]

Reason as the First Source of Knowledge

They asserted that the reason ('aql) is the final arbiter of what is considered right or wrong. Hence whatever has been revealed by God has certain theoretical reason to reach and understand the fact. Thus, Mu'tazilah school of thought was entirely based on human reasoning. The very first issue of 'Manzilah Bayna Manzilatayn' which was raised by its founder Wāṣil ibn 'Aṭā, was purely an intellectual issue and not based on evidence from Qur'ān or Sunnah. It was the first seed on the basis of which all later principles of Mu'tazilah had evolved.

According to Islamic principles agreed upon during the period of the Prophet (ﷺ) and his companions – Ṣaḥābah and the third generation - Tābi'īn, the sources of knowledge and evidence are four in the following prioritization: (1) Qur'ān (2) Sunnah (3) Ijmā'– Consensus (4) Qiyās – Analogy. But changing the sequence the Mu'tazilites had brought the reasoning as the first evidence preceding the Qu'rān, Sunnah and Ijmā'. Qāḍī Abdul Jabbar said, "The sources and evidences are four: (1) Proving from Reason (2) Qur'ān (3) Sunnah (4) Ijmā'".

He justified his statement arguing that through reason alone we can understand that the Qu'rān and Sunnah are the revealed sources. In the absence of reasoning, one cannot differentiate between good and bad.

Therefore, reason is the first and foremost resource and evidence. Of course, the Qu'rān is original source in terms that it urges people to use their intellect and also happens to be the source of Sharī'ah rulings.[15]

According to Mu'tazilah, the most important knowledge is to know about God. It is not a natural process rather a theoretical knowledge to be gained through reasoning. It is obligatory for every human being to know God using his reason and intellect. The existence of God and His oneness cannot be proved except by human reason. Although the revealed sources provide sufficient evidence for existence and oneness of God, it could only be understood through human reason. Thus, Mu'tazilites justify their stand to give the first priority to the reason keeping revealed sources next to it.

Mu'tazila's Stand on Revealed Sources

The philosophical approach of Mu'tazilites towards the revealed sources led them to arrive at extreme views that could hardly be supported. Their presumed ideology prevented them studying verses of the Qur'ān objectively with open mind. They considered their five principles as a yardstick to determine the meaning of the Qur'ānic verses. If a verse happens to be in agreement with their principles, it is considered to be having the most correct connotation with its denotation. Otherwise, the verse falls under category of ambiguous verses (Mutashābihat) and thus needs interpretation. Applying this logic, scholars of Mu'tazilah went beyond the textual and contextual meaning of the verse in order to arrive at a meaning suitable to their ideology. This kind of approach can be obviously seen in their interpretations of the verses related to God's attributes, fate and destiny etc.

Same approach had been followed by them towards Sunnah too. The Ḥadith which falls into agreement with their principles is regarded as acceptable and otherwise, the others are either interpreted if possible or rejected. In this manner, Mu'tazilites criticized a number of Ḥadiths in terms of their text (*matan*) and reporters' chain (*isnad*). "Aḥmad Amin says: "They judge Ḥadith by reason, rather judging the reason by Ḥadith."[16] Al-Naẓẓam, a Mu'tazilah scholar said, "Human reasoning may abrogate Ḥadith."[17]

According to Sunni principles, the primary legislative sources are Qur'ān and Ḥadith. But, by giving the first priority to the reason, Mu'tazilites thus accepted that Halal, Haram can be ruled by human reason. Al-Shahrastani (d. 1153) said, "The Jubba'i scholars like Abu 'Ali

and Abu Hashim called to accept the legislation by reason alone as the reason is the source of knowledge and judgment."[18]

Closeness of Mu'tazilah to Statesmen

In order to strengthen and propagate their ideologies, such sects always tried to gain confidence and closeness to upper echelons of the government. From its inception, Mu'tazilah were close to the heads of states and caliphs. Prior to them, some other sects like Jabriyah and Qadariyah also followed the same strategy. al-Qadariyah: Its scholars approached Yazid ibn Walid ibn 'Abdul Malik, a Umayyad caliph. They persuaded him to embrace their ideology and provide state patronage and he acceded. They further influenced him to appoint their own people to key posts in government.[19]

Similarly al-Jahmiyah did. Ja'd ibn Dirham had become mentor of the last caliph of Umayyad, Marwan ibn Muḥammad who was nicknamed as Marwan Ja'di.[20] Taking the advantage, Ja'd made the effort to spread Qadariyah beliefs. However, when political crisis erupted in latter period of Marwan, Qadariyah activities were stopped.

As for Mu'tazilah, its scholars strategized to get the state support from the start of Abbasid rule. 'Amr ibn 'Ubayd, one of the early scholars of Mu'tazilah was a close friend of Abu Ja'far al-Mansur, even before he became caliph. He was not only his friend but also an advisor.[21] Hence 'Amr ibn 'Ubayd had got high courage and boldness during Abu Ja'far's regime and started to propagate his ideology confidently. This was one of the strong factors for spread of Mu'tazilah movement.

Caliph Harun al-Rashid also had a soft corner for Mu'tazilah. He had made some Mu'tazilites like Ibn al-Sabbak, Thumamah ibn Ashras closer to him to seek advice and fatwa (opinion). The closeness of these Mu'tazilites to the court of caliph earned them fame and respect among the people. However, as Harun al-Rashid was more pious, Mu'tazilites were not able to persuade him to spread their ideology. But it served as a source to develop their future activities.

Golden Period of Mu'tazilah

The golden period of Mu'tazilah started when the Abbasid caliph al-Ma'mun came to power in 198 AH/ 813 C.E. He was also one of the learned scholars and intellectuals of his time. He accelerated the translation movement with a strong desire to transfer knowledge from

the ancient Greek philosophies to Arab Muslim society. Being a student of Abul Hudhayl al-'Allaf, al-Ma'mun was primarily admirer of Mu'tazilah's principles. According to Ibn Kathir, a great effort was made by Bishr al-Marisi, a Mu'tazili scholar to bring al-Ma'mun into the fold of Mu'tazilah even before he came to power.[22] Aḥmad ibn Abi Du'ad, a learned scholar and a leading proponent of Mu'tazilah occupied the key position in policy making council in the government of al-Ma'mun and was appointed as chief judge. Because of his continuous persuasion, al-Ma'mun agreed to provide patronage to Mu'tazilah and made it a state sponsored school of thought. A number of key government posts were filled with Mu'tazili scholars who enjoyed the confidence of the khalifah.

During this period, the issue of Qur'ān status had reached its crucial stage. From the very beginning, the Mu'tazilah negated attributes of God and therefore, according to their logic, Qur'ān is not eternal but created by God. While Sunni Muslims all together believed that the Qur'ān is the word of God, not His creature and hence eternal.

'Omar Farrukh stated that since 212 AH/ 827 C.E. khalifah al-Ma'mun had taken up this issue and tried to impose the Mu'tazilah's view forcefully on every scholar. In 218 AH/ 833 C.E, while returning from battle field of Minor Asia, even on his way, in Damascus, many scholars were interrogated and forced to declare that Qur'an is a created being.[23]

By the written order of al-Ma'mun issued to Isḥaq ibn Ibrahim, the chief security officer of Bagdad, the judges and government officials were also inquired. Those who accepted the views of Mu'tazilah were freed and allowed to remain in their job and others were terminated.[24] Furthermore, many renowned scholars including Imam Aḥmad ibn Ḥanbal (R.A.) and even the ordinary people were subjected to torture and imprisonment.

Even though Imam Ahmed was freed from the prison after 18 months by al-Mu'tasim, he was again exiled by the next khalifah, al-Wathiq. Al-Buwayti, a famous Egyptian jurist and disciple of Imam Shafi'i (R.A.) died in the prison during the regime of al-Wathiq. Imam Nu'aym ibn Ḥammad also died in prison. Aḥmad ibn Naṣr al-Khuza'i was executed by al-Wathiq and so forth. There were victims of state persecution galore.

Thus Mu'tazilites, with a strong state support, remained powerful to suppress the voice of their opponents during the regimes of three caliphs viz. al-Ma'mun, al-Mu'taṣim and al-Wathiq (198-228 A.H) for a period of about 14 years.[25]

Historians agreed that the whole episodes of torturing on account of Mu'tazilah had come to an end as soon as Al-Mutawakkil came to power in 232 AH/ 847 C.E. According to al-Damiri, an Egyptian writer of 14th century, this turning point took place even earlier than 232 A.H. In the later period of his rule, al-Wathiq withdrew the state support accorded to Mu'tazilah. However it was al-Mutawakkil who finally terminated the debate on the issue of Qur'ān in 232 AH and allowed the scholars to freely discuss issues according to Sunni principles in the year 237 AH/ 851 C.E. He also eliminated the Mu'tazilah elements from key posts of the government.

Mu'tazilah Solution to Issues of Islamic Creeds

Mu'tazilah had attempted to find a middle way and solution to some main issues of Islamic creeds arose during the 1st and 2nd centuries of Hijrah. But a critical analysis of their stand on those issues shows that they failed to do so. Rather, their approach had further complicated the issues and aggravated debate among the Muslim society of that time to the greater extent.

The Issue of Grave Sinner (Committer of Major Sins)

For example, Mu'tazilite's stand on the issue of grave sinner (*Murtakib al-Kabirah*) was an innovation and not based on the principles of Islam and therefore it had opened heated debates among scholars. Before Mu'tazilah's stance, there were already three different opinions on the issue.

Khawarij
The issue of grave sinner was initially brought to discussion by the Khawarij. They believed that one who committed major sin was no longer a believer and hence had to be treated as unbeliever.[26]

Murji'ah
They believe that the grave sinner is still believer in all sense, because committing a major sin is nothing to do with his faith.[27]

Ahl al-Sunnah
He is a believer and he has to be treated as one among the Muslims. However, by committing such sin his faith would weaken until he repents.

While these three opinions were under debate, Wāṣil ibn ‘Aṭā had come up with a new opinion that the grave sinner was neither believer nor unbeliever, but he was in an intermediate position as *fasiq* (malefactor) and would go to Hellfire if he had not repented. He is no more Muslim owing to committing grave sin but at the same time cannot be regarded as kafir as he has not rescinded his faith.[28]

This opinion seems to be a moderate stand, but it has no textual evidence from Qur’ān and Ḥadith. Therefore, this innovated opinion of Mu‘tazilah did not solve the problem, but further worsened the debates onc the issue.

Dispute over Fighters of Battles of al-Jamal and Siffin

In the battles of al-Jamal and Ṣiffin, Muslims got divided into two groups and fought against each other. The former was ‘Ali ibn Abi Ṭalib (R.A.) and his followers on one side, and ‘Āyshah (R.A.) and her followers on the other side. The latter was between ‘Ali (R.A.) and Mu‘awiyah (R.A.). Both internal wars among Muslims had resulted into ideological differences which led to fierce disputes and arguments. Before analyzing Mu‘tazilah’s view point, it would be appropriate to first explore the opinions of other groups like Khawarij, Shi‘ah and Aḥl-us Sunnah wa'l Jama‘ah.

Khawarij

They took a very strange stand on this issue. According to them, by fighting against a group of believers, ‘Ali ibn Abi Ṭalib (R.A.) and his followers became unbelievers. It obviously conflicts with their earlier opinion on the previous occasion. When al-Jamal battle broke out they opined that those who fought against ‘Ali (R.A.) and his followers became unbelievers.

Shi‘ah

According to them, only those who fought against ‘Ali (R.A.) in both battles were considered unbelievers.

Aḥl-us Sunnah

Those who fought against ‘Ali (R.A.) were also believers. Supporting or opposing ‘Ali ibn Abi Ṭalib (R.A.) in the battles has nothing to affect one’s faith (*īmān*).

Mu'tazilah

One of the two fighting groups was certainly sinner (fasiq), but it cannot be determined as which one was. This was the Wāṣil's opinion.[29] According to 'Amr ibn 'Ubayd, both the parties involved in fighting in both the wars of al-Jamal and Ṣiffin were fasiq and hence they became disqualified to bear any legal witness.[30]

Human Action and Its Creator

The rational and philosophical approach of Mu'tazilites in metaphorical issues had led them to adopt many extreme ideologies which hardly reflect true sense of scriptural texts. One of those issues was creation of human actions; who is the creator? Man himself or Almighty Allah? According to Aḥl-us Sunnah, everything is created only by the Creator, Almighty Allah. Even though human actions are done by him and with his own intention, the original creator is the Almighty Allah.

Secondly, Mu'tazilah argue that if it is believed that God is Creator of human action be it good or bad, it will automatically necessitate that God is also Creator of evil. But since God is absolutely good, evil cannot be attached to Him. Because if God creates evil, He should be evil. In Kitab al-Usul al-Khamsa, 'Abd al-Jabbar states that: "It is the knowledge that God is removed from all that is morally wrong (*qabīḥ*) and that all His acts are morally good (*ḥasanah*). This is explained by the fact that you know all human acts of injustice (*ẓulm*), transgression (*jawr*) and the like cannot be of His creation (*min khalqihi*). Whoever attributes that to Him has ascribed to Him injustice and insolence (*safah*) and thus strays from the doctrine of justice."[31]

Such argument was well countered by Sunni scholars. Mu'tazilites did not touch the question as who is the creator of harmful creatures as it also goes against their so-called belief of justice.

However, Mu'tazilah believed that every human action is created by him alone, with his intention and therefore, he is liable for reward or punishment.[32] On the contrary, if it is said that the creator is Allah, man cannot be held responsible for his action. To prove this statement, Mu'tazilah attempted to put forth several arguments which were criticized and refuted by Sunni scholars.

In order to establish this ideology, Mu'tazilites used peculiar way in interpreting Qur'anic texts and inferred a remote meaning. Some examples are as follows:

Example 1:

"You do not see in the creation of the Most Merciful any inconsistency" (Qur'ān 67:3)

Based on this Qur'ānic verse, they argue that God's creation is perfect whereas, human action is imperfect. Therefore, human action cannot be a creation of Almighty.

Example 2:

"Whoever wills – let him believe; and whoever wills – let him disbelieve" (Qur'ān 18:29)

From this verse they argue that man creates his action. However, this verse relates human deeds to his own intention and affirms man's free will, but it does not mean that man is the creator of his deed. The following verse clearly explains that the will of man is subject to will of Almighty in terms of creation and bringing into existence. Unless Almighty wills, nothing would be created. "You do not will except that Allah will" (Qur'ān 76:30)

Example 3:

The Holy Qur'ān narrates in many places that some of the prophets had confessed their mistakes. For example Ādam (A.S.) and Ḥawwā (R.A.) said: "Oh Lord, we have wronged ourselves" (Qur'ān 7:23). Quoting similar verses Muʿtazilah argue that man's action is created by him alone. This argument also does not hold good, because the prophets confessed the mistakes committed by them and sought forgiveness from Almighty Allah. It does not mean that they are the creators of their sinful acts.

Human Freedom and Freedom of Thought

In the Islamic history, Muʿtazilah were believed to have been pioneers to advocate idea of human freedom and freedom of thoughts in the second and third century of Hijrah. This ideology had been derived from their belief in indetermination and denial of predestination. According to them, man creates his own actions and therefore he bears the responsibility

for consequences of his own actions. It is clearly asserted by Mu'tazilites that the man is the creator of his own action, will and wish.[33] However, according to the common beliefs of Muslims, God alone is the Creator of everything including human action. On this issue also, Mu'tazilites deviated from mainstream beliefs of Sunni Muslims.

As far as freedom of thought is concerned, they considered that the human reasoning is the primary source of knowledge. Aḥmad Ṣubḥi says, "The credit goes to Mu'tazilites; they were the pioneers to declare the human reasoning as a source of religious knowledge".[34] The principle of critical thinking in established religious matters had led Mu'tazilites to take a divergent stand on several points:

1.   Critical thinking led them to the doubt as a tool to find the fact.

2.   Interpretation of Qur'anic texts in a way which could cope with the results of human reasoning.

3.   Rejection of Ijma'– consensus of Muslim jurists as one of the sources of Shari'ah (Islamic Law).

4.   The unseen matters mentioned in the texts of Qur'an and Ḥadith like punishment in graveyard, bridge of *Ṣīrat, Shafā'at* – intercession, *Ru'yah* – seeing God in the Hereafter etc. were interpreted by human reasoning.

Some Other Beliefs of Mu'tazilites

Following are some other beliefs of Mu'tazilites as corollaries of their intellect.[35]

1.   Rejection of punishment and reward meted out to the dead in the grave and the questioning by the angels *Munkar* and *Nakīr*.
2.   Rejection of signs of the Day of Judgment, Gog and Magog (*Yajūj* and *Majūj*), and emergence of al-Dajjal.
3.   Rejection of recording of human acts by Angels (*Kiraman Katibīn*). Since God is well aware of all the deeds of His servants and hence there is no such need of the Recording Angels.
4.   Rejection of physical existence of the "Tank" (*al-Ḥauḍ*), the "Bridge" (*al-Ṣīrat*) and Heaven and Hell existed now which will come into being on the Day of Judgment according to their belief.

5. Rejection of the covenant (*al-Mīthāq*). They believe that God neither spoke to any prophet or angel, nor will He cast a glance towards them.

6. Rejection of the miracles (*al-Karām*at) of saints (*Wali*), since, if accepted, they would be misconstrued with evidential miracles of the prophets and cause confusion.

7. Rejection of the Ascension (*al-Mi'rāj*) of the Prophet of Islam, but accepting the Holy Prophet's journey to the Jerusalem.

8. Deeds, in addition to declaration (*al-taṣdīq*) are included in faith. Therefore, they believe that great sinner will perpetually live in Hellfire.

Inappropriate Interpretation of Texts

All principles of Mu'tazilah were generally formulated on the basis of philosophy, reason and logic. For example, one of the crucial issues of their principles was "Createdness of Qur'ān". If one says that Qur'ān is not created but eternal, there will be two eternal beings: God and Qur'ān. Eternity is owned by God only and anything else cannot be eternal or uncreated. Therefore, it is quite logical to say that Qur'ān is created. It was purely an intellectual assumption of Mu'tazilah. However, they tried to prove that this concept was also derived from the meanings of the holy Qur'ān.

In this matter, Mu'tazilites attempted to dishonestly interpret the verse and twist its meaning to be in agreement with their ideology. The verse referred by them is: "Allah is the Creator of all things" (Qur'ān 13:16). They argued that Qur'ān comes under 'all things' cited in the above verse and therefore Qur'ān is also created.

Their argument was countered that since the Qur'ān is the words of Allah and the speech of God is one of His attributes and God's attribute cannot be a thing other than God.

Further, they had deduced that the 'human action' did not come under 'all things' referred in the above verse and therefore human action is not created by God. From this point, one can certainly realize their conflicting arguments and understand how Mu'tazilites twisted the meaning of verse to support their assumptions.

In this context, the meaning of another verse, for example, was also misinterpreted by them. According to them, the verse "Allah has power over all things" (Qur'ān 2:284) is not applicable to human action and thus Allah has no power of creating human action. In Mu'tazilah's principle, man is the creator of his action.

Sunni scholars agreed that Allah cannot be seen. However, people of paradise in the hereafter can see Him. This principle was formulated on the basis of Qur'ānic verses and several Ḥadith. But how the sight will take place is not known and not explained anywhere. Mu'tazilah totally rejected the vision of God by adducing the logic that God cannot be related to a place and direction which is essential for vision. Therefore they tried to interpret otherwise the verses and Ḥadith related to the vision.

"That day faces will be resplendent, looking towards their Lord" (75:22). This Qur'anic verse is self-explanatory. The word '*Naẓr*' (looking), when used with various prepositions, gives different meanings accordingly. '*Naẓr fi*' means to analyse and examine and '*Naẓr ila*' means seeing through eyes. In this verse, '*Naẓr ila*' has been used which obviously means to see God through eyes in paradise. But Mu'tazilites blindly rejected to accept the obvious meaning of the word.

Role of Mu'tazilah in Defending Islam

Mu'tazilite Scholars like al-Qāḍi 'Abdul Jabbar[36] (d. 1024) and Muḥammad 'Ammarah claimed that the Mu'tazilah had played a vital role in defending Islam and its beliefs. They argued that several volumes had been authored in this regard by Mu'tazilah scholars like Waṣil ibn 'Aṭa, 'Amr ibn 'Ubayd, Abul Hudhayl al-'Allaf etc.

Some modern writers such as Abu Zahrah and Aḥmad Amin claimed that Mu'tazilah had played a considerable role in defending Islam against its enemies. Since such claim is mainly based on the books authored by Mu'tazilites and hardly referred by other general sources, it raises a doubt on veracity of the statement. However, the tremendous effort made by Mu'tazilah to spread the school is undoubted.

Impact of Mu'tazilah on Some Muslim Scholars of 19th & 20th Century

With the downfall of Mu'tazilah in late half of the 9th century, their

ideology of freedom of thought started losing ground among Muslim society and eventually vanished but the method of their logical thinking were inherited by others. Aḥmad Amin compares Muʻtazilah with the freedom party of modern Egypt. He said, "If Muʻtazilah's ideology lived and continued in the history, Muslim society might have been more advanced and colourful today".[37]

He also stated, "The modern reform movements of Muslim world in 19th century followed the methodology of Muʻtazilah. The only difference is that the teachings of Muʻtazilah were based on religion, whereas the modern Muslim renaissance focuses on intellectual affairs alone".[38] Therefore, it is believed that the Muslim reformers of 19th and 20th centuries had been strongly influenced by the ideology of Muʻtazilah, especially by their methodology of critical thinking.

Ashʻariyah[39] and Maturidiyah[40] whose thoughts widely prevailed later and existing till date, also used their method to argue their stand and counter Muʻtazilah principles. Both schools were the by-product of Muʻtazilah movement.

The later Muslim intellectuals were somewhat under the influence of western thoughts and hence adopted defensive and compromising approach whereas Muʻtazilah, though, they partially used the Greek philosophy but their approach was highly assertive to prove their ideology powerfully before the nations of other culture. They have never compromised with any principle of Islamic prohibitions. For example, the case of *riba* (interest), some Muslim scholars of 19th and 20th century under influence of Western thought attempted to lessen case of bank interest as riba like Sir Syed (1817-1898), Muḥammad ʻAbduh (1849-1905), Muḥammad Rashid Rida (1865-1935), Fazlur Rahman (1919-1988) and Muḥammad Sayyid Tantawy (1928-2010) etc.

Sir Syed Aḥmad Khan

Sir Syed was a great educationist and reformer who in 1875 founded Muḥammadan Anglo Oriental College which became Aligarh Muslim University in 1920, the first Muslim university in South Asia. In his exegesis and writings, the influence of Muʻtazilah ultra rationalism is visible. He, on many instances, quoted Muʻtazilah philosophers. He denied the miracles associated with holy prophet and other prophets arguing that such things are against the laws of nature and there is no such matter in the Qurʼān opposing laws of nature.[41] Hence he took verses related to miracles in metaphorical sense than in their literal meaning. Everything

in the world is the outcome of independent chains of causes and effects which ultimately reaches the First Cause intitiated by God and indestructibility of matter proves existence of God[42]. Good and evil in things or reward and punishment for human deeds, all are based on natural laws and are independent of divine injunctions. He also considered *wahi* and *ilhām* a natural process. In all the matters, he tried to advocate the case of naturalism, natural laws or natural causation as the main basis. Thus in the matter of unseen, he did not admit many established mainstream beliefs as they cannot be proved. He was branded as 'naturist'. On the matters like jinn, devils, angels, facing Qiblah, birth of the prophet 'Isā (A.S.), signs of Day of Judgment such as emergence of al-Dajjāl, bridge al-Ṣirāṭ, al-'Arsh, al-Kursi, al-Lawḥ al-Maḥfuẓ, al-Shifā'ah, vision of God etc. he had given either radically weird interpretation or denied their physical existence by terming them "metaphor'. He also disagreed over Ḥadith as a primary source of Shari'ah and regarded the Qur'ān as the only one.

Those verses which could not fit to his principles, he explained them either through farfetched arguments or strange interpretation. For example, he interpreted miracle of bringing life to dead meaning death as *kufr* and life as *īmān* and the case of *mi'rāj* or seeing the dead birds alive by Ibrahiim (n) as a dream or spiritual experience etc. He superseded Mu'tazilah on such issues. He had formulated fifteen principles of exegesis.

However, it's interesting to note that Sir Syed's early writings were quite traditionalistic but after final downfall of Mughal Empire especially after great revolt of 1857 and establishment of full British rule, his thought greatly changed with Western influence and so appeared in his later works. One can argue that bizarre thoughts in his works might be the outcome of a subjugated mindset with an attempt to reconcile the relationship between Muslims and Christians. This was the very reason that he segregated the worldly affairs esp. power of rule from religious aspects. It was inadequately argued that new religious ideas of Sir Syed were an effort of social reform among Indian Muslim society but it is self-evident that strange beliefs on matter of unseen are having no connection with social reform objectives. However, there is no denying of his sincere efforts towards social reforms.

Other Intellectuals

Similarly, many other scholars followed the step and expressed far-out and odd opinions on the matters of belief and unseen by rejecting the

authority of Ḥadith. The prominent among them in Indian sub-continent were Ghulam Ahmad Perwez, Maulvi Chiragh Ali, Aslam Jairajpuri, Mohammad Ali Lahori, Khaja Ahmad Din Amritsari, Abdullah Chakralwi, Fazlur Raḥman etc. In order to reject, they first created doubt over texts of Ḥadith and questioned its contents and then took the verses for their strange and invented interpretation. However, positive aspects of their discussion should also be given consideration as an evolution of thoughts.

Some emerged in other parts of the world and advocated for rationalism and were alleged to have influence of Mu'tazilah in their ideology like Muḥammad 'Abduh, Muḥammad Rashid Riḍa and Naṣr Ḥamid Abu Zayd (1943–2010) in Arab world, Harun Nasution (1919–1998) in Indonesia, to name a few. In his work 'Theology of Unity', Abduh appeared to have sided with Mu'tazilah ideology of human freedom. He further clarified it in terms of natural causality that Allah has initially determined the laws for universe which function accordingly without involving God's intervention and thus humans forge its own destinies. This notion was an echo of what Sir Syed expressed. A contemporary unorganized group also claim to be 'neo-Mu'tazilites' based in Arab and other parts of world.

There was fundamental difference between Mu'tazilah in early history of Islam and the scholars of the last two centuries claimed to have been influenced by Mu'tazilites ideology. The former has not ever touched any Islamic injunctions and teachings except few issues related to matters of creed rather they showed strict adherence to prescriptions and prohibitions of Islam under the principle of 'al-'amr wa-al-nahi'. Whereas the latter compromised on many issues and argued their case through defensive approach under influence of Western ideology behind a shield of rationalism.

A Critique of Mu'tazilah

They did not focus on other fields of knowledge and issues which were more needed at that time for ijtihad[43]. Their all efforts and energies were centered on some points of religious beliefs and to make them official doctrine of the state and generally accepted by people.

Against their own principle of free will and freedom of thought, they tried to impose their ideology with force on public and those who refused to accept were subjected to severe persecution. Thus it led to conflict and hostility among Muslim society.

In some cases they adopted a very weird and unacceptable stand.

For example, 'Amr ibn 'Ubayd considered all those who indulged in battles of al-Jamal and ṣiffin as wrongdoers, though

Waṣil held that either of the both sides was wrong but which one was not confirmed and thus associated with both. Hence, they did not only accuse the companions of the holy prophet (ﷺ) participated in these battles but also put them under intermediate status group as according to them the wrongdoers are neither believers nor unbelievers.

In the matter of creeds, the difference between Mu'tazilah and the others was on the details of beliefs and their exposition or interpretation and not on rejection or acceptance of essential beliefs. Both Mu'tazilah and Sunni scholars agreed on oneness of Allah, Qur'ān as a revealed book, Life Hereafter, Heaven and Hell, reward and punishment etc. but Mu'tazilah made disagreement in interpretation on such matters an issue of faith and unbelief and hence imposed forcefully.

There was no denying of using reason to understand divine and prophetic commandments but Mu'tazilah made human reason as the first and final arbiter in the matter of unseen and destiny. Whatever was not accepted by their reason, they either interpreted the texts of Qur'ān and Ḥadith or denied the obvious meaning of the texts. Further, they used a verse by generalizing its meaning to argue for their beliefs but they ignored the same verse and did not argue with it if generalization went against their argument. Their ultra-rationalism did not allow them to appreciate the fact that reason, like any other faculty, has its limitations and hence may err or fail to understand the truth in all its details.

Because of their disputative way of thinking, they themselves got divided into various sub-sects like Wāṣiliyah, Hudhayliyah, Naẓẓamiyah, Bishriyah, Mu'ammariyah, Thumamiyah, Jahiziyah, and Jubba'iyah etc. They paved the way for opposition and conflict with mainstream religious doctrines.

Huge energies and efforts were consumed in putting forward the arguments and counter arguments by both sides and created an atmosphere of rift and conflict among Muslim society. Such energies would have been utilized for productive purposes if Mu'tazilah had not entangled the people in needless disputes over divinities and matters of unseen. Ash'ariyah and Maturidiyah had to emerge as a new school of thought in Islamic creeds just to counter Mu'tazilah beliefs. Intellectual discourse and debate turned into a futile excessive argumentation nay a nitpicking and hair-splitting exercise.

Their highly intolerant attitude, forceful imposition of their beliefs

and use of threat and persecution to make people accept their beliefs created an atmosphere of hatred and intense resentment against them in the mind of public and thus they lost the public support. Once political patronage was over, their ideology met with inevitable decline and gradually disappeared from the scene. The reprisal took place and the works of Mu'tazilah with an official ban were wiped out as their contentious ideologies with further differences after differences caused by its various sub-sects had become a source of serious internecine strife in the matter of beliefs among Muslims.

As Mu'tazilah attempted to reconcile reason and revelation and contended that these two things were not fully separate. But they failed to succeed in finding an acceptable formulation of solution than al-Ash'ari who made revelation primary but also accorded an important place to the reason.

Reasons for Downfall of Mu'tazilah

Mu'tazilah thrived and flourished because of government direct patronage though their doctrines were diametrically opposed to the beliefs held by mainstream masses of Muslims. With the withdrawal of political support, the acceptance of their ideology did no longer survive and finally got abandoned.

Secondly, the persecution and atrocities against those who did not accept their beliefs created anger in public. Not only eminent and great scholars like Imam Aḥmad ibn Ḥanbal (R.A.) were subjected to torture but also common people were persecuted. Many were brutally executed for dissent.

Thirdly, majority of their intellectual debate was related to unseen matters (*ghayb*) which were supposed to be understood through revealed sources.

Fourthly, Ash'arites and Maturidites emerged as a powerful popular force to counter Mu'tazilah beliefs. They used their argumentative methods of logic and critical thinking and applied the same against Mu'tazilah.

Finally, the Muslim masses were greatly connected with classical scholars i.e. fuqahā and muḥaddithin of their time and hence Mu'tazilah beliefs were not readily accepted even by groups of ordinary people.

Conclusion

Among all ideological groups in the history of Islam, Mu'tazilah was

the most influential. Even though some of the basic ideologies borrowed from Khawarij, Qadariyah and Murji'ah in the initial stage, the Mu'tazilah's principles were well defined in the later period.[44] The ideological contribution made by Wāṣil ibn 'Aṭā, Abul Hudhayl, al-Naẓẓam, Bishr ibn al-Mu'tamir, Mu'ammar ibn 'Abbad and other scholars were significant. As claimed that Mu'tazilites were typically equipped with logical knowledge, philosophical and rational approach which had helped them to attract younger generation and suppress the voice of their opponents.

In the beginning of 3rd century of Hijrah, under sponsorship of Abbasid caliphs, the Mu'tazilah became more powerful and their ideology as a state doctrine was forcefully imposed on public. The opponents were imprisoned, tortured and even killed till the state sponsorship was completely terminated by al-Mutawakkil in 232 A.H.

On the other hand, Ash'ariyah had emerged as a powerful counter force which gradually defeated Mu'tazilah on ideological ground. On the issues like grave sinner, createdness of holy Qur'ān etc, Ash'arites effectively defied their arguments. Thus the Mu'tazilah movement with all its ideology had gradually ceased. However, their logical and critical approach is still a living source in the minds of modern Muslim thinkers.

Further, the emergence of such sectarian group was not a political phenomena as generally alleged by the orientalists and many studies and researches especially conducted in the West. For example, the principles of Mu'tazilah sect such as createdness of Qur'ān, denial of God's attributes and vision of God, the issue of grave sinner etc. have nothing to do with connection of politics. Rather these were purely questions of beliefs as a development of innovated ideologies in theological thought. This was the very reason that Abbasid caliph al-Mutawakkil seized the official support from Mu'tazilah and completely banned the debate on such issues since such movement was in no way helping the government rather creating an environment of mistrust between state and public and also among the people.

Intellectual discourse had never been stopped in the Islamic history rather it had always been there from the very beginning in the form of intellectual exertion taken place as ijtihad on various issues. In latter centuries too, many scholars presented intellectual explanation with reason to understand the Islamic injuctions (aḥkām) and the wisdom behind prescription and proscription. What is needed and important for the future that debate on such thought should not be confined to a narrow perspective of reasoning only rather could be seen in broder perspective as an evolution of thoughts and intellectual approach.

Notes and References

1. The Kharijites - Seceders (Khariji pl. Khawarij). The earliest sectarian group in Islamic history, although they originally supported 'Ali ibn Abi Ṭalib (R.A.) but turned against him after the Battle of Ṣiffin (657) when he agreed to submit his dispute with Mu'awiyah (R.A.) to arbitration. They accused him of rejecting the Qur'ānic instruction. Later 'Ali (R.A.) was forced to fight them in the Battle of Nahrawan (658) and defeated. (Oxford Islamic Studies Online: http://www.oxfordislamicstudies.com/article/opr/t125/e1274 accessed 21 Sep 2019).

2. Ḥasan al-Baṣri, in full Abu Sa'id ibn Abi al-Ḥasan Yasar al-Baṣri, (642-728) was a famous Tabi'i – a successor to Ṣaḥābah, He was renowned for his piety, ascetic life, deep knowledge, preaching and eloquence. He was born nine years after the death of the holy prophet (ﷺ). He met many Ṣaḥābah including a number of senior ones like 'Uthman, Talha (R.A.) etc. He had a very large study circle in the mosque of Basra.

3. Abul Fatḥ Muḥammad ibn 'Abdul Karim al-Shahrastani, al-Milal wan-Niḥal, vol. I (Beirut: Dar al-Ma'rifah), p. 62.

4. Hasan Jarullah Zuhdi, al-Mu'tazilah, (Cairo: Matba'at Miṣr, 1947), p. 3.

5. Aḥmad Amin, Fajr al-Islam, 16th edition (Cairo: Maktabah al-Nahḍah al-Miṣriyah, 1975), p. 289.

6. A theological sect who held that human actions take place entirely by will of Allah and the man has no role to play.

7. Another sect who held diametrically opposed view that human actions take place purely by human will and power.

8. al-Shahrastani, al-Milal wan-Niḥal, vol. I, p. 61.

9. Murji'ah held God alone will decide whether or not a Muslim had lost his faith. Thus no one who once accepted Islam, could be declared unbeliever. Deed and faith are not related and hence deeds have no effect on faith. Moreover, faith does not increase or decrease with performance of good or bad deeds. On the issue of grave sinner, Khawarij and Murji'ah are at opposite poles.

10. 'Umar Farrukh, Tarikh al-Fikr al-'Arabi, ila Ayyam ibn Khaldun, 3rd edition (Beirut: Dar al-'ilm lil-Mala'in, 1951), p. 198.

11. The term Zindiq pl. Zanadiq or Zandaqah was originally used for Manichaeans/Zoroastrians - the dualist (thanawiyah) having belief in two Gods. So the people holding certain other beliefs mainly coming from the ancient Persian religion along with Islamic beliefs were regarded Zindiq. The term was later applied for heretics.

12. 'Abdul Laṭif ibn 'Abdul Qadir al-Ḥifẓi, Ta'thir al-Mu'tazilah fil-Khawarij wa-al-Shi'ah - Asbabuhu wa-Mazahiruhu, 1st edition (Jeddah: Dar al Andalus al-Kha?ra', 2000), p. 271.

13. *Ibid.*, p. 26.

14. 'Abd al-Jabbar, 'Kitab al-Usul al-Khamsah' in Defenders of Reason in Islam, Richard C Martin and others, Oneword, Oxford, 1997, p 92, qtd. in Muhammad Kamal, 'Mu'tazilah: The Rise of Islamic Rationalism', Australian Rationalist, no. 62, 2003, p. 34.

15. Al-Qāḍī Abdul Jabbar, Faẓl al-i'tizal wa-Ṭābaqat al-Mu'tazilah (Tunis: Dar al-Tunisia, 1974), p. 139.

16. Aḥmad Amin, Ḍuḥal Islam, vol. III (Cairo: Maktabah al-Nahḍah al-Miṣriyah), p. 85.

17. 'Abdullah ibn Muslim ibn Qutaybah, Ta'wil Mukhtalif al-Hadith (Cairo: Maktabah al-Mutanabbi), p. 32.

18. al-Shahrastani, al-Milal wan-Niḥal, vol. I, p. 81.

19. Maḥmud Isma'il, al-Ḥarakat al-Sirriyah fil-Islam, 1st edition (Beirut: Dar al-Qalam, 1973) p. 95.

20. Abu al-Ḥasan 'Ali ibn al-Ḥusayn ibn 'Ali al-Mas'udi, Muruj al-dhahab wa-ma'adin al-Jawhar, vol. III (Beirut: al-Maktabah al-'Aṣriyah, 1988), p. 247.

21. 'Abdullah ibn Muslim ibn Qutaybah, 'Uyunul Akhbar, 2nd edition, vol. I (Beirut: Dar al-Kitab al-'Arabi, 1996), p. 241.

22. Ismā'īl ibn 'Umar ibn Kathir, al-Bidayah Wan-Nihayah, 4th edition, vol. I (Beirut: Dar al-Kutub al-'ilmiyah, 1988), p. 275.

23. Farrukh, Tarikh al-Fikr al-'Arabi, p. 290.

24. Abu Ja'far Muḥammad ibn Jarir al-Ṭabari, Tarikh al-Umam wal- Muluk, 2nd edition (Beirut: Dar al-Kutub al-'ilmiyah,1405/1984), pp. 168-69.

25. Muḥammad Abu Zahrah, Tarikh al-Madhahib al-Islamiyyah (Cairo: Dar al-Fikr al-'Arabi), p. 500.

26. Al-Shahrastani, al-Milal wan-Niḥal, vol. I, p. 141.

27. *Ibid*., I: 169.

28. Farrukh, Tarikh Al-Fikr al-'Arabi, p. 223.

29. al-Shahrastani, al-Milal wan-Niḥal, vol. 1, p. 141.

30. Abu Manṣūr 'Abd al-Qadir ibn Ṭahir al-Baghdadi, al-Farq Bayn al-Firaq, (Beirut: Dar al-Ma'rifah), p. 121.

31. Al-Shahrastani, al-Milal wan-Niḥal, vol. I, p. 47.

32. Farrukh, Tarikh Al-Fikr al-'Arabi, p. 224.

33. Al-Shahrastani, al-Milal wan-Niḥal, vol. I, p. 57.

34. Al-Qāḍī Abdul Jabbar, al-Mughni fi Abwab al-Tawḥid wa'l-'Adl, vol. VIII (Cairo: Dar al-Miṣriyah lit-Ta'lif wat-Tarjumah), p. 283.

35. Mir Valiuddin, "Mu'talizm", in A History of Muslim Philosophy, ed. by M.M. Sharif, Pakistan, vol.1, book 3, Pakistan Philosophical Congress (Kempten: Allgäuer Heimatverlag GmbH., 1963) pp. 202-203.

36. Prominent Mu'tazili theologian. An adherent of the Shafii school of law, he was appointed chief justice (qāḍī) under the Buwayhids. His 'Faẓl al-i'tizal wa Ṭabaqat al-mu'tazilah' is a major source of Mu'tazili hagiography, and his 'Al-Mughni fi abwab al-tawhid wa'l-'adl' is a major source for Mu'tazili doctrine. (The Oxford Dictionary of Islam Online, http://www.oxfordislamicstudies.com/ article/opr/t125/e3, accessed 21 Sep 2019).

37. Aḥmad Ṣubḥi, al-Falsafah al-Akhlaqiyah fi al-Fikr al-Islami (Cairo: Dar al-Ma'arif), p. 41.

38. Amin, Ḍuḥal Islam, III: 202.

39. Followers of the school founded by Abul Ḥasan al-Ash'ari (873-935) who was formerly a Mu'tazili but later abandoned Mu'tazilah doctrines and heavily opposed them. He showed a reaction against the extreme rationalism of Mu'tazilah and attempted to reconcile revelation and reason.

40. Followers of the school founded by Abu Manṣur Muḥammad al-Maturidi (853–

944) who also opposed and countered Mu'tazilah doctrines and based the theology relying primarily on revelation with rational inferences when needed.

41. 'Aziz Aḥmad, Muslim Self-Statement in India and Pakistan 1857-1968 (Wiesbaden: Otto Harrasowitz, 1970), p. 31.
42. Muḥammad Ismail Panipati, (ed.), Maqalat-i-Sir Syed, vol. I (Lahore: Majlis Taraqqī-e Adab, 1962), pp. 9-10.
43. Use of abilities and effort to the fullest by a competent scholar to deduce logical solution to new cases.
44. *Ibid.*, III: 207

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        Beirut: Dar al-Ma'rifah, n.d.

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