Appendix

Inauthentic and Doubtful Texts

After al-Māturīdī found general recognition, there was a great attempt to adorn oneself with his name. This is certainly the reason why he is named as the author of a series of smaller texts that have been transmitted to us in manuscript form; what all of these works have in common is that they are not mentioned by any of our bio-bibliographical sources as having been written by al-Māturīdī. This alone is grounds for suspicious and suggests the hypothesis that we are dealing strictly with pseudepigrapha. Nevertheless, one must distinguish between different cases. Most of these texts can clearly be shown to come from a later time; however, in regard to one of them we can only assert that al-Māturīdī’s authorship is very improbable, but not completely ruled out.

1 Inauthentic Texts

1.1 Sharḥ al-Fiqh al-akbar

The work which has long found the greatest attention from among these texts is without a doubt the so-called Sharḥ al-Fiqh al-akbar. It is ascribed to al-Māturīdī in a Yemeni manuscript, and was thus printed under his name in the Rasāʾil al-sabʿa. Several voices immediately objected to this attribution, but for a long time, the text could not be more precisely examined because there was no edition in which its complex history of transmission could be assessed. This situation has changed in the meantime, since we now possess a edition by H. Daiber. He edited the Sharḥ on the basis of seven manuscripts and added a detailed commentary to it. Thus the text has become accessible for the first time in a way that allows us to reflect on its historical dating.

As Daiber confirms in the introduction to the edition, al-Māturīdī’s authorship of the Sharḥ is out of the question. There are a number of important indications that rule out such a thesis, among which is the observation that the Sharḥ contradicts a point

---

1 Cf., for example, Madelung, “The Spread,” 122n3; van Ess, Review of Kitāb al-Tawḥīd, 557n2; Sezgin also does not mention it among al-Māturīdī’s works (gas, vol. 1, 604–606).
2 Hans Daiber, The Islamic Concept of Belief in the 4th/10th Century: Abū l-Layth al-Samarqandi’s Commentary on Abū Ḥanīfah (died 150/767) al-Fiqh al-absaṭ (Tokyo, 1995). In the introduction (ibid., 1ff.) Daiber discusses the manuscripts, the question of authorship, and the foundational theological orientation of the work; this is followed by the Arabic text (ibid., 27ff.), then a theological commentary (ibid., 21ff.), and detailed indexes (ibid., 253). Unfortunately I was not able to refer to this edition, when I myself examined and cited the Sharḥ (e.g., 59f.).
3 Daiber, Islamic Concept, 5ff.
in al-Māturīdī’s doctrine. One could suffice with this reason alone to dismiss the text as a pseudepigraphical work. Nevertheless, it was an important text for Transoxania’s subsequent theological development, and thus the question of its date and authorship merits a closer look.

Daiber argued for the presumption of Abū l-Layth al-Samarqandī as the author of the *Sharḥ*; this was a thesis that had already been proposed several times before. He mentions three arguments in particular to justify this. First, two of the manuscripts explicitly name Abū l-Layth as the author; second, the text itself names him as an authority two times (lines 188 and 412 of the Daiber edition); and third, the content of the *Sharḥ* confirms this attribution because in various places it supposedly shows literary parallels with the teachings of Abū l-Layth in his Qurʾān commentary.

Nevertheless, Daiber does add that these indications are not weighty enough to dispel any possible doubt. This is why he adds that the text was perhaps “lightly reworked” by later Māturīdite transmitters. He thereby brings into play the influence of a later period, which is plausible given everything we have ascertained on the development of the Māturīdites, since on the basis of our previous observations it can hardly be assumed that Abū l-Layth wrote the *Sharḥ al-fiqh al-akbar*. It is much more probable that the text was only written after the middle of the fifth/eleventh century. The arguments for this are as follows:

1) The fact that two of the seven manuscripts claim Abū l-Layth as the author means little. Both of these copies actually carry a later dating than the others, while in the two oldest manuscripts, another as of yet unidentifiable author (Abū ʿIbrāhīm Ismāʿīl b. ʿIshāq al-Khāṭīrī?) is named.

2) That the text mentions teachings from Abū l-Layth several times is also not a watertight argument. These parallels are always short and also few in number. This does not argue for Abū l-Layth having written the work, but merely indicates that his teachings were known to the author of the *Sharḥ*.

3) It is significant in this context that one can also find a contradiction between the statements of the *Sharḥ* and Abū l-Layth’s views. This is the case in regard to the question of whether prophets ever sin. The *Sharḥ* holds this to be possible (for small offenses); Abū l-Layth, however, believed that a prophet is always completely free of sin.

---

4 Ibid., 7ff.
5 Ibid., 7.
6 Ibid., 9.
7 Ibid., 10.
8 Cf. ibid., 17ff.
9 Cf. ibid., lines 679–688 of text.
10 Abū l-Layth, *ʿAqīda* 1 222.4–223.4 = *ʿAqīda* 11 271.11–16.