Valerie Hoffman*
Sulaiman bin Ali bin Amir al-Shueili**

Ibâḍî Reformism in Twentieth-Century Algeria: The Tafsîr *of Shaykh Ibrâhîm Bayyûḍ*

Abstract. Shaykh Ibrâhîm b. ʻUmar Bayyûḍ of Wâdî Mzâb (1899-1981), leader of Ibâḍî reformism in Algeria after the death of Muḥammad b. Yûsuf Aṭfiyyash (1820-1914), delivered a public commentary on the Qur'an from 1935-1980, which was recorded beginning with Sûra 17:70. Shaykh Bayyûḍ claimed to follow the goals and methodology of Muḥammad ʻAbduh and Rashîd Riḍâ's *Tafsîr al-Manâr*. This article analyzes Shaykh Bayyûḍ's commentary in comparison to, on the one hand, Aṭfiyyash's two Qur'an commentaries (*Hamayân al-zâd ilâ dâr al-maʻâd* and *Taysîr al-tafsîr*), in order to determine its relationship to earlier modern Ibâḍî reformism, and, on the other hand, to *Tafsîr al-Manâr*, in order to determine its relationship to that strand of Sunni reformism. It finds that Bayyûḍ's commentary, like *Tafsîr al-Manâr*, promotes Islamic unity and eschews theological dogmatism, while attacking customs deemed antithetical to Islamic teaching and making sometimes lengthy digressions on topics of contemporary social and political importance. Nonetheless, Bayyûḍ remains faithful to Ibâḍî doctrine on topics on which Ibâḍîs and Sunnis differ, and there is little evidence that he argued for Islam's compatibility with liberal values; on the contrary, at several points in his commentary he states that modern ideas and customs constitute a real threat to Islam.

Keywords: Ibâḍî reformism, Ibâḍî *nahḍa*, *salafî* reformism, Ibâḍî theology, Mzab, Shaykh Bayyûḍ, Muḥammad b. Yûsuf Aṭfiyyash, Muḥammad ʻAbduh, Rashîd Riḍâ, Qur'an, *tafsîr*, *bidaʻ*, *kufr*, Prophet's Intercession, God's attributes

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* University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign, USA. The research for this article was conducted, in part, thanks to a scholarship from the Carnegie Coporation of New York.
** Sultan Qaboos University, Sultanate of Oman.

Résumé. *Le* Tafsîr *du shaykh Ibrâhîm Bayyûḍ et le réformisme ibâḍite dans l'Algérie du XX^e siècle*

Le Shaykh Ibrâhîm b. 'Umar Bayyûḍ (1899-1981), l'un des leaders du réformisme ibâḍite dans le Mzâb et en Algérie après la mort de Muḥammad b. Yûsuf Aṭfiyyash (1820-1914), donna entre les années 1935 et 1980 des leçons publiques où il commentait le Coran. Une partie d'entre elles furent enregistrées à partir de la sourate 17, verset 70. Shaykh Bayyûḍ prétendait suivre les buts et la méthode de Muḥammad 'Abduh et de Rashîd Riḍâ, qui donnèrent naissance au *Tafsîr al-Manâr*. Cet article analyse son œuvre en la comparant aux deux commentaires coraniques d'Aṭfiyyash (*Hamayân al-ẓâd ilâ dâr al-ma'âd* et *Taysîr al-tafsîr*), afin de mieux cerner d'une part sa relation à la génération antérieure du réformisme ibâḍite, d'autre part ses rapports avec le courant du réformisme sunnite incarné par le *Tafsîr al-Manâr*. Il en résulte que le commentaire de Bayyûḍ, comme le *Tafsîr al-Manâr*, fait la promotion de l'unité islamique et évite le dogmatisme théologique, tout en attaquant des coutumes jugées contraires à l'enseignement de l'islam et tout en se permettant des digressions parfois longues sur les questions politiques et sociales de son temps. Cependant, Bayyûḍ demeure fidèle à la doctrine ibâḍite sur les sujets où celle-ci diffère du sunnisme. De plus, il ne milite aucunement pour la compatibilité de l'islam avec les valeurs libérales; bien au contraire, à plusieurs reprises il souligne dans son commentaire que les idées et les coutumes de la modernité constituent une vraie menace pour l'islam.

Mots-clefs : Réformisme ibâḍite, *nahḍa* ibâḍite, réformisme *salafî,* théologie ibâḍite, Mzab, Shaykh Bayyûḍ, Muḥammad b. Yûsuf Aṭfiyyash, Muḥammad 'Abduh, Rashîd Riḍâ, Coran, *tafsîr*, *bida'*, *kufr*, intercession prophétique, attributs de Dieu

In September 1903, the famous Egyptian reformer and *muftî*, Muḥammad 'Abduh (1849-1905), spent ten days in Algeria, where he reportedly « electrified the crowds » with his discourse on the importance of reviving faith and the Arabic language (Hardman, 2009: 136-37). The Algerian scholar Dabbûz claimed that the impact of 'Abduh and his student, Rashîd Riḍâ (1865-1935), pervaded Algerian society, even exceeding their influence in the eastern Arab world, where it was restricted to the elite (Dabbûz, 1965: 2/31). The leaders of the Algerian renaissance in the Ibâḍî stronghold of Mzâb, he writes, were all 'Abduh's students; they studied his books and pursued his method of reform, seeing him as their imâm and model (*Ibid.*: 2/30). 'Abduh believed that the traditional legal schools suffered from « stagnation and slavish imitation » (Hourani, 1970: 137), and sought to recover the dynamism and rationality of the first centuries of Muslims (*al-salaf al-ṣâliḥ*), reinterpret Islamic law according to the needs of modern society, prove Islam's compatibility with modern science, and promote the unity of the *umma* (*Ibid.*: 140-142, 229). « For 'Abduh, [...] the true Muslim is he who uses his reason in affairs of the world and of religion; the only true infidel (*kâfir*) is he who closes his eyes to the light of truth and refuses to examine rational proofs » (*Ibid.*: 148). Although 'Abduh approved of aspects of Sufism that allowed Muslims to « interiorize their obedience to the law », he regarded aspects of popular Sufism and saint veneration as dangerous to the proper vigor and rationalism of Muslim society (*Ibid.*: 150-51). 'Abduh saw the time of the model *salaf* as extending to the eleventh century, but Riḍâ, who claimed to carry on 'Abduh's mission and

authored *Tafsîr al-Manâr*, based on ʻAbduh's lectures, restricted the *salaf* to the first two generations of Muslims and ultimately moved in the direction of strict Ḥanbalism, inveighing more strongly than ʻAbduh against the spectre of heresy (*bidʻa*) and superstition (*khurâfât*), and enthusiastically supporting the Wahhâbî revival in central Arabia (*Ibid*.: 230). Nonetheless, contemporary Ibâḍî authors tend to overlook such divergences in their enthusiastic embrace of *salafî* reformism.

The modern Ibâḍî renaissance in Algeria began in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, with the efforts of Abû Zakariyâʾ Yaḥyâ b. Ṣâliḥ al-Afḍalî (d. 1787) and his student, ʻAbd al-ʻAzîz b. Ibrâhîm al-Thamînî (1718-1808); Wilkinson calls the latter's *Kitâb al-Nîl wa-shifâʾ al-ʻalîl* « the Mozabite 'bible' of the renaissance » (Wilkinson, 1985: 232). Aghûsht says that al-Thamînî « fought harmful heresies (*bidaʻ*), ignorance, and sectarian fanaticism (*taʻaṣṣub madhhabî*), calling for harmony, Islamic unity, and sound religious knowledge » (Aghûsht, 1989: 87).

Ibâḍî reformism took firm root with the efforts of Muḥammad b. Yûsuf Aṭfiyyash (1820-1914), known as « the axis (*quṭb*) of the imâms, » or simply « the Quṭb. » The premier Ibâḍî scholar of the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, Aṭfiyyash aimed to « remove corrupt doctrines, such as the use of amulets, the veneration of places, laziness and waiting for miracles. He called them to work, explaining this from the Qur'an ». As a result of his efforts, « various types of veneration of places and pilgrimage sites in his town lessened. [...] He began a new phase of social reform in Wâdî Mzâb, which survived the Quṭb's death, unlike previous efforts » (Wîntin, 1996: 33, 35). Like Islamic reformers elsewhere, Aṭfiyyash saw European imperialism as a direct result of religious ignorance and the tyranny of unsound customs, such as veneration of saints' tombs and the fear of jinn and offering sacrifices to them. A prodigiously productive scholar with a large network of students, Aṭfiyyash's ideas impacted Ibâḍî communities across North Africa and in Oman and East Africa. Despite opposition – in a letter to scholars in Oman, he apologized for the delay in responding to their questions, occasioned by « tremendous forces arrayed against me (*ahwâl ʻiẓâm ʻalayya*) from the Christians and the people of my town » (Aṭfiyyash, letter, 475) – he eventually became head of the mosque and *ʻazzâba* in his home town of Banî Yazqîn. Aṭfiyyash acquired renown among non-Ibâḍîs as well: he received letters from all over the Muslim world, including from ʻAbduh; he traveled twice to the Ḥijâz to make the pilgrimage, during which he discussed Muslim affairs with Aḥmad Zaynî Daḥlân and became the first non-Sunni to be granted permission to teach in the Prophet's mosque in Medina; and he received medals of honor from France and from the sultans of the Ottoman Empire, Zanzibar, and Oman (Dabbûz 1965: 1/352-53; Yaḥyâ b. Buhûn, 2007: 45-46).

Dabbûz says that Atfiyyash wrote extensively on jurisprudence because of « the ossification and sectarian fanaticism that characterized most of the legal scholars of the later Middle Ages, leading to divisions among Muslims and posing a danger to Islamic unity. [...] He wrote great books in which he presented and compared the opinions of all the major Islamic schools, selecting the best

with proofs and demonstration instead of fanatical adherence to his school, not looking at any school with hatred » (Dabbûz, 1965: 1/314). Another author writes that « He rejected all manifestations of intellectual stagnation and sectarian fanaticism » (Yaḥyâ b. Buhûn, 2007: 37), and yet another says that Aṭfiyyash called for Islamic unity (Wîntin, 1996: 40). In a letter addressed to « our brothers among the Ibâḍî-Wahbî people of Oman », however, Aṭfiyyash prayed that God would « grant them victory over the people of all the other schools (*sâ'ir aṣḥâb al-madhâhib*, Aṭfiyyash letters: 466), and in his two complete commentaries on the Qur'ân, *Hamayân al-zâd ilâ dâr al-ma'âd* and *Taysîr al-tafsîr*, Aṭfiyyash retains the tenor of the classical Ibâḍî tradition, with its reliance on traditional theology and its largely sectarian concerns.

Some twentieth-century Ibâḍî scholars of the Maghrib, such as Sulaymân al-Bârûnî of Libya (1870-1940) and Abû Isḥâq Ibrâhîm Aṭfiyyash of Algeria (1886-1965), spent most of their lives in exile because of their anti-colonialist activism. The brutal encounter with European imperialism led them to push sectarian concerns into the background. Pan-Islamic activism in the eastern Arab world also led to the publication of Ibâḍî texts in the eclectic publishing house of Cairo named *Al-Maṭba'a 'l-Salafiyya* (Custers, 2004; Ghazal 2010b). A new attitude toward Sunni writers is also observable in the work of the shaykh who became the leader of Ibâḍî reformists after World War I, Ibrâhîm b. 'Umar Bayyûḍ (1899-1981). Shaykh Bayyûḍ's influence on contemporary Ibâḍîs is reflected in the number of recent books dedicated to his life and work (Bû Ḥijâm, 1991; Bâbâ'ammî, 1996; Fakhkhâr, 2000; Nâṣir *et al.*, 2002; Nâṣir, 2005; Aṭfiyyash, 2009) and in the interest Ibâḍîs as far afield as Oman have in his writings, especially his nineteen-volume commentary on the Qur'ân (Bayyûḍ, 2009).

Bayyûḍ first began his commentary in 1921, at the age of twenty. He initially used as his primary exegetical reference the classical Sunni commentary by al-Bayḍâwî, but, according to Muḥammad Ṣâliḥ Nâṣir, by the end of the decade he had shifted to reliance on 'Abduh and Riḍâ's *Tafsîr al-Manâr* (Bayyûḍ, 2009: 1/4-5). 'Isa b. Muhammad al-Shaykh Balḥâj mentions a number of other Sunni commentaries that Bayyûḍ used as sources, in addition to Aṭfiyyash's *Taysîr al-tafsîr*: those of Fakhr al-Dîn al-Râzî (1149-1209), Maḥmûd Shukrî al-Âlûsî (1857-1924), Abû 'Abdallâh Muḥammad al-Qurṭubî (d. 1272), and Sayyid Quṭb (1906-1966). Nonetheless, 'Abduh's influence is consistently given pride of place in the writings of contemporary Ibâḍîs (Wîntin, 1996: 15-16). He pronounced his goal to be « the same as that of Shaykh Muhammad 'Abduh: to create minds that savor (*tatadhawwaq*) the rhetoric (*balâgha*) of the Qur'an, souls in which may be found the purity of the Qur'an, and reformist students (*talâmîdh muṣliḥîn*) who will be soldiers for the Qur'an » (Bâbâ'ammî, 1996: 9). In a brief written for a hearing before an Algerian Assembly committee, Bayyûḍ also described his struggles in terms that echo 'Abduh's:

> I had especially to fight narrow ideas and obscurantism consisting of the erroneous idea that predominated in the Mzab, that [modern] education was the enemy of religion and that learning French and modern sciences would lead to apostasy [...]. I worked, night

> and day, to change attitudes and educate the youth in the idea that the true religion and real civilization can coexist in brotherly harmony and not oppose each other. I fought for this other idea, that the French language and modern sciences are as necessary for human beings as the air and water that make biological life possible (Bendrissou, 2000: 263).

In 1935, Bayyûḍ began his commentary in sequential fashion, beginning with the first verse of Sûra 2, and concluding in 1980, less than a year before his death (Bayyûḍ, 2009: 1/4-5). His lectures were intended for the general public and were delivered in the mosque of his home town, Guerrara (al-Qarâra). The published commentary is based solely on those lectures that were tape-recorded, which was not begun until 1961; hence, the published commentary begins with Sûra 17:70 (Bayyûḍ, 2009: 1/4-5). Given the frequent assertion of Bayyûḍ's adherence to the methodology of Muḥammad 'Abduh and Rashîd Riḍâ and his reliance on *Tafsîr al-Manâr*, it seems appropriate to analyze Bayyûḍ's *tafsîr* at least in part from the vantage point of a comparison with that work. A direct comparison of the commentary on particular verses is impossible, however, because *Tafsîr al-Manâr* covers only Sûras 1-12, whereas Bayyûḍ's *tafsîr* begins with Sûra 17:70. Nonetheless, a number of observations may be made regarding the degree to which the commentaries converge and diverge. What follows is an analysis of Bayyûḍ's methodology and the doctrinal elements of his *tafsîr*, especially those on which Ibâḍîs and Sunnis usually differ, comparing his ideas to those found in Aṭfiyyash's commentaries and *Tafsîr al-Manâr*, in order to place Bayyûḍ's commentary in its dual context of Ibâḍî tradition and twentieth-century Islamic trends in Qur'anic exegesis.

Methodology

Aṭfiyyash's commentaries on the Qur'ân follow the traditional verse-by-verse method and tend not to engage in the long digressions found in twentieth-century commentaries. His methodology is firmly grounded in the Ibâḍî theological tradition, analyzing and strongly denouncing the ideas of his theological opponents. He relies more on Hadith and *isrâ'îliyyât* in his earlier commentary, *Hamayân al-zâd*, than he does in *Taysîr al-tafsîr*, but otherwise there is much consistency. Nonetheless, Aṭfiyyash also evinces an independence of thought, engaging in his own *ijtihâd* and not hesitating to critique the opinions of his Ibâḍî forebears, as we will see below.

Tafsîr al-Manâr bears a number of characteristics that became typical of twentieth-century commentaries on the Qur'ân, including an emphasis on the Qur'ân's organic unity. 'Abduh regarded even the arrangement of the Qur'ân not as random, but as part of its revelation and an indication of the Qur'ân's miraculous quality (*i'jâz*) (Riḍâ, 1947: 7/288-9). Bayyûḍ's approach is similar. He always began his discussion of a sûra with its connection to the chapters that precede and follow it, affirming that the arrangement of the Qur'ân was *tawqîfî*, i.e. revealed by

God to the Prophet (Bayyûḍ, 2009: 1/36). A single sûra is a cohesive unit dealing with a single subject, from Bayyûḍ's point of view, even if it includes a number of tangential topics (*Ibid*.: 4/227).

'Abduh emphasized the importance of interpreting one Qur'ânic verse through reference to another, rather than through ḥadîths and other sayings or stories of dubious authenticity, such as the so-called *isrâ'îliyyât* (Riḍâ, 1947: 8/356). Like *Tafsîr al-Manâr*, Bayyûḍ sought to limit his use of extra-Qur'ânic sources to interpret the Qur'ân. He was often very critical of *isrâ'îliyyât*, seeing them as a deliberate attempt by pseudo-converts to Islam to subvert the religion (Bayyûḍ, 2009: 14/470). He often made a point of mentioning these stories and refuting them (*Ibid*.: 4/149, 8/321, 8/58, 60, 63, 90, 15/123-4, 210-211, 228), though on other occasions he related such stories without refutation (*Ibid*.: 15/145), or with ambivalence (*Ibid*.: 15/219-220). He rejected stories that impugn the integrity of the prophets, such as the story of the *gharânîq* (the « Satanic verses » story) (*Ibid*.: 15/71; see Riḍâ, 1947: 8/356).

Tafsîr al-Manâr eschews detailed philological analysis, prefers common sense over rational theology, and frequently denounces sectarianism. Riḍâ said that theological controversies are « vain and false disputation and the bringing of philosophy into religion, without rational justification or clarification » (Riḍâ, 1947: s4/40). Although *Tafsîr al-Manâr* moves in a sequential fashion through the Qur'ân, Riḍâ frequently inserts long digressions on topics that are controversial or of particular interest to him. Bayyûḍ's discourses on the reasoning behind doctrinal differences are much more limited than those of *Tafsîr al-Manâr*, and he does not hesitate pointedly to prefer interpretations that conform to Ibâḍî doctrine, though, like 'Abduh and Riḍâ, and unlike Aṭfiyyash, he avoids scathing denunciations of the Ibâḍîs' theological opponents.

Riḍâ occasionally appeals to Western sources – whether science, pseudo-science, or the opinions of individuals – to provide proofs from the supposedly more advanced Western civilization that, he believes, prove the wisdom of Islam, as in his lengthy discussion on polygamy (Riḍâ, 1947: 4/351-364; see Gätje, 1976: 252-261). Bayyûḍ, on the other hand, tends not to appeal to Western sources, which he usually mentions only as sources of unbelief and corruption, decrying the modern tendency to make a god of the human intellect (Bayyûḍ, 2009: 15/255), and the influence of Marxism, existentialism (*Ibid*.: 7/69) and Cartesian skepticism (*Ibid*.: 16/225) on Muslim youth.

The Struggle against *Bida'*

The struggle against *bida'* – customs and beliefs deemed Islamically inauthentic – is characteristic of all the books under consideration. Some of the customs that Aṭfiyyash and Bayyûḍ particularly criticized were the veneration of people regarded as saints (*awliyâ'*) and making pilgrimages to their tombs, reciting disparate verses

of the Qur'ân as if they were a single sûra, to recite on special occasions, such as weddings (Bayyûḍ, 2009: 11/15, cf. n. 1), reciting the Qur'ân at graves for a fee (*Ibid*.: 17/183), and belief in the power of the jinn. Atfiyyash inveighed against the esoteric interpretations of « Sufi braggarts » (*al-mutashaddiqîn al-ṣûfiyya*) (Aṭfiyyash, 1981-1987: 14/256), and said, « All Sufism that contradicts the teachings of al-Junayd is *bid'a* » (*Ibid*.: 13/213).

Bayyûḍ and Riḍâ both attacked the custom of soliciting the intercession of saints or employing the power of jinn in order to repel harm or attract benefit; they saw this was nothing less than unbelief (*shirk*) and idol worship (Bayyûḍ, 2009: 4/460-461, 560, 13/123-4; Riḍâ, 1947: 1/60, 64, 119, 5/83). Riḍâ devotes a long section to this topic (Riḍâ, 1947: 11/420-426), followed by a section specifically denouncing the Moroccan Sufi, Aḥmad al-Tijânî (1737-1813) (*Ibid*.: 11/426-432). He compares Muslim veneration of saints to Christian worship of Christ and Jâhilî worship of jinn and angels (*Ibid*.: 11/266). In addition to fighting against traditions he considered Islamically illegitimate, Bayyûḍ lamented the weakness of faith among Muslim youth, laying the blame for this at the feet of teachers in the colonial period, whom he accused of ridiculing the Prophet and causing the infidelity of millions of young Muslims (Bayyûḍ, 2009: 11/186-7, 18/84, 485); he also alleged that newspapers encouraged atheism (*Ibid*.: 18/61-2). He decried the immodesty of women's clothing, the spread of moral laxity in modern society, and the desire of young Muslims to pursue romantic love, instead of allowing their guardians to find them a suitable mate (*Ibid*.: 6/324-329, 10/160-174, 11/44-6, 12/545-554).

The Struggle for Islamic Unity

One of 'Abduh and Riḍâ's main concerns was the promotion of unity among Muslims. *Tafsîr al-Manâr* attributes disagreements among Muslims to fanatical sectarianism and the effort of scholars to affirm the correctness of their own schools.

> Were it not for the Muslims' division into different schools and their concern with strengthening their own schools and thwarting and refuting its opponents, these disagreements would have disappeared and most would know the truth in both form and substance. Then no Ash'arî would vilify a Ḥanbalî, nor would a traditionalist vilify a rationalist. For this reason, you see the insightful theologians revert at the end of their lives to the way of the *salaf*, as Abû 'l-Ḥasan al-Ash'arî explicitly stated in *Al-Ibâna*, as did Abû Ḥâmid al-Ghazâlî in *Iljâm al-'awâmm 'an 'ilm al-kalâm* and other books that he wrote at the end of his life (Riḍâ, 1947: 3/202).

Many Muslim thinkers in the twentieth century were concerned that sectarian division weakened the Muslim community and made it vulnerable to foreign exploitation. The Libyan Ibâḍî, Sulaymân al-Bârûnî, who spent most of his life in exile from his homeland, asked the great Omani scholar, Nûr al-Dîn al-Sâlimî (1869-1914), if he believed that sectarian divisions should and could be overcome.

Al-Sâlimî replied that unification is theoretically possible, but impossible in practice, because it derives not only from differences in belief, but also from pride and personal ambition. He proposed, as a first step toward Islamic unity, that people stop using all sectarian identifiers and simply call themselves Muslims. Then, sectarian fanaticism would gradually fade away and people might return to original/instinctive Islam (*al-fiṭra*). He said that the only reason Ibâḍîs identified themselves as Ibâḍîs was to distinguish themselves from others when « every group went its own way », whereas « the religion among us did not change, praise God » (al-Sâlimî n.d.: 122-4). Al-Sâlimî's response contains an unavoidable ambivalence: on the one hand, it would be good for Muslims to stop using sectarian identifiers and ultimately unite, but, on the other hand, it is (only ?) among the Ibâḍîs that the religion did not change; they have Islam in its true, original form.

Bayyûḍ, however, agreed with 'Abduh and Riḍâ that fanatical sectarianism needlessly widened disagreement on questions like God's will and pleasure, whereas, in fact, the matter is simpler than indicated by the scholars' disputes (Bayyûḍ, 2009: 15/286).

Faith and Works

Sunnis have traditionally accepted as believers all who profess faith in Islam, regardless of whether or not they perform their religious obligations or commit sin, though good deeds are considered necessary to attain perfection. Among Sunnis, *kufr* (infidelity) indicates unbelief, whether professed or hidden (Björkman, 1974: 4/407). Ibâḍîs, on the other hand, distinguish unbelief (*kufr al-shirk*) from lesser forms of infidelity, such as minor errors in doctrine, failing to perform religious obligations, committing grave sins, or persisting in minor sins without repentance; those who do such things are infidels (*kuffâr*) in the sense of hypocrisy (*kufr nifâq*) or ingratitude for God's blessing (*kufr ni'ma*) (Cuperly, 1984: 18 ; al-Bahlânî, 2004: 90-91 ; Hoffman, 2012: 67-68). Non-Ibâḍî Muslims were traditionally regarded not as believers, nor are they included among « the Muslims » (*jamâ'at al-muslimîn*) (Ennami, n.d.: 156 ; Ennami 2008: 204; al-Bahlânî, 2004: 335; Hoffman, 2012: 216), but they are monotheists (*muwaḥḥidûn*) who belong to Muḥammad's *umma* (al-Bahlânî, 2004: 66-70; Hoffman, 2012: 58-61). Aṭfiyyash, on the other hand, demonstrates his independence by politely declining to use the usual Ibâḍî terminology for non-Ibâḍî Muslims and sinning Ibâḍîs: he saw the legal definition of faith as belief in the heart, though good deeds are essential for perfect faith; sinning Muslims are deficient believers, but should not be called *kuffâr* (*Hamayân al-zâd*, commentary on Sûra 2:3).

Both Sunnis and Ibâḍîs have reevaluated their perspectives on the relationship of faith and works in the modern period. Many modern Sunnis emphasize the role of good deeds as an integral component of faith and, like Riḍâ, the Wahhâbîs, and radical Islamists, have not hesitated to denounce the veneration of saints as a form

of unbelief (*shirk*). Ibâḍîs, on the other hand, have embraced pan-Islamism and moved away from the denunciation of Muslim theological opponents.

Hence, *Tafsîr al-Manâr* and Bayyûḍ's commentary concur in asserting that faith is of two types: on the one hand, faith that is limited to verbal affirmation, and, on the other hand, sound faith, which is accompanied by good deeds (Riḍâ, 1947: 3/99; Bayyûḍ, 2009: 12/107). Bayyûḍ nonetheless deems those who abandon good deeds while affirming the pillars of faith to be guilty of *kufr ni'ma*. He sees Sûra 25:68-70, which describes God's true servants not only as those who pray only to God, but also as those who do not commit grave sins, and which threatens severe punishment for those who commit grave sins, « except for him who repents, believes, and does good deeds », as sufficient indication that those who commit grave sins are stripped of faith. He supports his interpretation with a hadith from the Prophet: « No adulterer commits adultery while he is a believer; no thief steals while he is a believer; no one drinks wine while he is a believer » (al-Rabî', 1930: 4/19, nº 983; Ibn Mâja, 2000: nº 3936).

> So while he commits one of these sins, or one that is similar, he is stripped of faith until he repents, at which point his faith is restored to him. That is why He says « except for him who repents » – repenting of his *shirk*, his murder, his adultery – « and believes » – renewing his faith, because the rope of faith was cut because he committed these abominations (Bayyûḍ, 2009: 7/252).

'Abduh also inclines toward this view. He cites the same ḥadîth and explains it by saying that no one who believed in the teachings of Islam could fail to fear arousing God's wrath by committing such sins (Riḍâ, 1947: 1/373-4).

Eternity in Hellfire and the Prophet's Intercession

All Muslims believe that God will grant the Prophet Muḥammad the right to intercede for Muslims on the Day of Judgment, and that this intercession hastens the entrance of believers into paradise. However, whereas Sunnis have generally believed that the Prophet's intercession is for all believers, even grave sinners, and that his intercession will remove sinners from hellfire and enable them to enter paradise (Wensinck, 1932: 163-183), Ibâḍîs deny both these doctrines, saying that the Prophet will not intercede for grave sinners (Cuperly, 1984: 65, 84), and that punishment in hellfire is eternal (*Ibid.*: 314). The great Ibâḍî scholar of early-nineteenth-century Oman, Abû Nabhân Jâ'id b. Khamîs al-Kharûṣî, believed that even piously observant Sunnis will be doomed to hellfire because of their doctrinal errors (Abû Nabhân, n.d.).

Just as Sunnis and Ibâḍîs have narrowed the gap between them in the past century concerning the definitions of faith and infidelity, so have they done regarding the efficacy of the Prophet's intercession. 'Abduh asserted that those who « think little of the commands and prohibitions of religion and rely on

intercession » are deluded, for the Qur'ân mocks those who put their trust in intercession after turning away from the teachings of the Qur'ân (Sûra 74:48-49; see Riḍâ, 1947: 1/308). Riḍâ says that such people « are like those who commit crimes in full view of the people and in expectation of arrest and a sentence in court, relying on [the assumption] that the governor or authority will waive the sentence. No one would disagree that that is stupidity » (Riḍâ, 1947: 1/300). He rejects the idea that the Prophet's intercession can override God's preexistent knowledge of one's fate in the afterlife; his intercession should be seen as nothing more than a prayer of supplication (*Ibid*.: 3/33).

It is no surprise that Bayyûḍ agrees with 'Abduh and Riḍâ that only someone who takes his religion very lightly would rely on the expectation of intercession rather than good works to guarantee salvation. While the Prophet's intercession for righteous believers increases their virtue, he will not intercede for those who persist in sin and die without repentance (Bayyûḍ, 2009: 12/36). Furthermore, no one can enter paradise without repenting of sin. Not all sinners will be in hellfire for all eternity – after all, everyone sins – but if sin issues from a heart that does not fear God and desist from evil, the sinner is barred from entering paradise (*Ibid*.: 13/527). Bayyûḍ believes that the doctrine that sinners may be released from hellfire emboldens them to sin, to the point that religion loses its hold on them.

> Nothing instills caution in a person or prevents him from crookedness, slipping, and abandoning what is good but the fear of death and what follows death. If this belief ceases to exist, the hold of religion is loosed and everything disintegrates; no amount of exhortation or guidance will benefit such a person (*Ibid*.: 3/247).

'Abduh and Riḍâ agreed with this point of view. In his commentary on Sûra 2:81 – « Truly, those who commit evil (*sayyi'a*) and whose sin engulfs them shall be inmates of the Fire, where they will dwell forever » – 'Abduh said that the reason some will remain in hellfire for all eternity is that they abandoned themselves (*al-istirsâl*) to sin and persisted in it. In this he disagrees with the interpretation of some Sunni exegetes, who restricted « evil » to unbelief (*shirk*) and denied that believers would remain in hellfire forever. 'Abduh said this is a misunderstanding of the verse and an evasive maneuver by which Sunni commentators tried to distance themselves from the teachings of the Mu'tazila (Riḍâ, 1947: 1/363-4). On this he agrees with Aṭfiyyash, who wrote in his commentary on this same verse, in *Taysîr al-tafsîr*, that « evil » means a grave sin or persistence in a minor sin, and that there is no basis for restricting its meaning to *shirk* (Aṭfiyyash, 1981: 1/112). He also said that Sûra 10:27 offers proof that sinners remain in hellfire eternally (*Ibid*.: 5/243). 'Abduh appears to agree: « Not everything that is called 'faith' protects one from eternity in hellfire » (Riḍâ, 1947: 3/98-99).

The Role of Theology

Classical commentaries on the Qur'ân, both Sunni and Ibâḍî, often include complex theological arguments in support of particular interpretations. Aṭfiyyash continues in this tradition, providing detailed theological arguments in support of Ibâḍî doctrine and detailed refutations of the arguments of competing schools, as in his extensive commentary in *Hamayân al-zâd* regarding God's words to Moses in Sûra 7:143, « You will never see Me ». Despite the fact that both schools in the classical period utilized theology extensively in their commentaries on the Qur'ân, their attitude toward the efficacy of human reason has differed. Ibâḍîs, like the Mu'tazila, believe that human reason can know the essential doctrines of monotheism, without the benefit of a prophetic message (al-Bahlânî, 2004: 71-72, 93-95; Hoffman, 2012: 69-71). They also believe that Qur'ânic verses that describe God in anthropomorphic terms – sitting on a Throne, having a hand and eyes – must not be taken literally, but must be taken as metaphors (Cuperly, 1984: 169-70; al-Bahlânî, 2004: 176 ; Hoffman, 2012: 114-15). Ash'arite theologians denied that God has a body (McCarthy, 1953: 11-12), but refrained from explicitly metaphorical interpretation of anthropomorphic descriptions of God, saying that they must be accepted without explaining how they can be true (*bi-lâ kayf*) (Wensinck, 132: 190). Ibn Ḥanbal believed that these descriptions must be accepted as literally true (Williams, 2002: 449-50). On the other hand, Ibâḍîs agree with the Ash'arite school that the human intellect cannot know good from evil; this can only be known through divine revelation (Cuperly, 1984: 168; al-Thamînî, 1986: 1/291-94; Hoffman, 2012: 272-76).

These perspectives have direct consequences on Qur'ân interpretation. Different interpretations of Sûra 3:7 offer a window into attitudes toward human ability to interpret the Qur'ân beyond its literal meaning. The verse begins as follows:

> It is He Who sent down to you the Book. Some of its verses are categorical (*muḥkamât*) – they are the foundation of the Book – and others are ambiguous (*mutashâbihât*). Those in whose hearts is perversity pursue what is ambiguous, seeking discord and seeking its interpretation (*ta'wîl*).

Much space is devoted in exegeses to diverse definitions of the *muḥkamât* and the *mutashâbihât*, but what concerns us here is the final sentence of the verse, which, thanks to the lack of punctuation in Arabic and the subsumption of subject pronouns in the verb, can be understood in two very different ways:

> No one knows its meaning except God. Those who are well-rooted in knowledge say, « We believe in it [...] ».
> No one knows its meaning except God and those who are well-rooted in knowledge. They say, « We believe in it [...] ».

The majority of Sunni exegetes have understood this verse in the first manner, but those who emphasize the efficacy of human reason, and those who believe that the

Qur'ân contains hidden meanings, interpret it in the second way. Aṭfiyyash confidently affirms that the true interpretation of ambiguous verses is known not only to God but also to those who are well-grounded in knowledge. In fact, in his interpretation of Sûra 67:16 (« Are you confident that He Who is in heaven will not cause the earth to cave in beneath you? ») in *Taysîr al-tafsîr*, Aṭfiyyash decries acceptance of the verse's literal meaning as ignorance and injustice to God, and that *ta'wîl* is an obligation, « as long as one has knowledge and light ». However, he is not always consistent on the permissibility of interpreting Qur'ânic anthropomorphisms as metaphors; in most cases, He interprets God's throne as an allusion (*kinâya*) to His dominion and denounces acceptance of its apparent meaning as *kufr*, but in his interpretation of Sûra 20:5 in *Taysîr al-tafsîr* (unlike his interpretation of this same verse in *Hamayân al-zad*), he says that one cannot interpret the throne as mere metaphor, because that would negate hadiths like the one that says that angels carry the throne above the heavens, as if it were a dome.

Tafsîr al-Manâr prefers common sense over rationalism; despite frequent references to the arguments of classical theologians, Riḍâ argued that the ordinary believer should not be told about theological debates, lest they be led astray and promote division among Muslims (Riḍâ, 1947: 3/12). One should occupy oneself with matters on which there is consensus, and avoid disputation. Riḍâ wrote:

> When we began studying, we thought that the way of the early Muslims (*al-salaf*) was weak and that they didn't interpret the text as the later scholars did because they lacked their level of knowledge and understanding, especially the Ḥanbalîs [...]. But once we immersed ourselves in the study of theology and the books that reflected the acme of Ash'arite philosophical theology, it became clear that the way of the *salaf* is best, especially the books of Ibn Taymiyya, [...] and that all else is supposition and imagination and does not yield any truth (*Ibid*.: 3/197).

Riḍâ said that there are no words to express God's attributes besides expressions that represent human realities, such as limbs, movements and emotions. When applied to God, these expressions should not be taken literally, but neither should they be seen as metaphors (*Ibid*.: 3/198-9). Although Riḍâ admits that Hanbali traditionalists (*al-âthâriyyîn*) and others come close to anthropomorphism (*al-tajsîm*), he admires the approach of Ibn Taymiyya, who said, « The theologians' gravest error is their denial of the attributes; the traditionalists' gravest error is their affirmation [of the attributes] » (cited in Riḍâ, 1947: 3/202).

Shaykh Bayyûḍ likewise preferred to avoid discussing theology in his commentary, and in this way his commentary diverges from Ibâḍî tradition, perhaps because it was designed for public consumption, not just students of theology. For example, Sunni theologians said that God's attributes, such as His life, hearing and power, are distinct from His essence. Ibâḍîs, like the Mu'tazila, say that God's attributes are human concepts that have no objective reality; if God's attributes were eternal and real, there would be a multiplicity of eternal beings, which is tantamount to polytheism. However, such analyses are for specialists, not

for the general public. Bayyûḍ said that it is enough to understand that our saying « God is hearing » is a denial that He is deaf, but that whatever is said of God cannot grasp His reality, which transcends the limits of human speech (Bayyûḍ, 2009: 15/480-481). He said that one should not try to understand the meaning of God's sitting on the throne, because no one can know its true meaning but God, but neither should we take such passages as meaning that God has a body (*Ibid*.: 12/30-33). We also should not try to understand how God spoke to Moses, for such debates are potentially dangerous.

> We must cling to the doctrine of the early Muslims (*al-salaf*) on all that pertains to matters of God Most High and His attributes and beautiful names, and leave all such matters to God, and not try to philosophize in order to understand the reality of the attribute, whether it is the same as the essence (*'ayn al-dhât*) or something additional to the essence (*zâ'ida ilâ 'l-dhât*) (*Ibid*.: 8/359).

He argued that it is ridiculous to be attached to particular formulas (*Ibid*.: 12/383); what matters is that one recognize God's absolute transcendence, and that, even if the words used to describe God's attributes are similar to words that describe our own, the reality is dissimilar.

The emphasis on God's dissimilarity to His creation is typical of Ibâḍî thought, but *Tafsîr al-Manâr* also emphasizes that God transcends all similarity to human beings, though it declines to say that the anthropomorphic descriptions of God in the Qur'ân are mere metaphors (Riḍâ, 1947: 3/198). Bayyûḍ, on the other hand, does not refrain from interpreting such descriptions as metaphors. For example, references to God being in the heavens (e.g. Sûra 67:16) cannot be taken as meaning that He is in a place; they mean He has an exalted rank (*makâna*), not that He is in a high place (*makân*) (Bayyûḍ, 2009: 12/39). Likewise, when the Qur'ân says that on the Day of Judgment the whole earth « will be but His handful, and the heavens will be rolled up in His right hand » (Sûra 39:67), Bayyûḍ says this is merely an allusion (*kinâya*) to God's power over all things (Bayyûḍ, 2009: 15/459).

Will Believers See God?

One of the great doctrinal conflicts between Ibâḍîs and Sunnis revolves around Ibâḍî denial of the possibility of seeing God in the afterlife, whereas Sunnis affirm that believers will see Him in the afterlife, citing Sûra 75:23, « Faces will be radiant, looking at/to their Lord (*ilâ rabbihâ nâẓira*) » and a number of hadiths to that effect, and explaining away the apparently contradictory Sûra 6:103, « No vision can grasp Him (*lâ tudrikuhu 'l-abṣâr*) ». Ibâḍîs reject Sunni hadiths affirming the vision and counter them with sayings of the Companions and Successors indicating that God can never be seen, either in this life or the next. Like the Mu'tazila, Ibâḍîs say that *ilâ rabbihâ nâẓira* in Sûra 75:23 means « looking *to* their Lord [in expectation of reward] » or « waiting for their Lord [to grant them their reward]. » In his

commentary on these verses, Aṭfiyyash refutes at length the possibility of seeing God, using the classic arguments that perceptibility applies only to bodies, as it requires being in a particular direction, occupying space, and existing in time, all of which are impossible for God. In his commentary on Sûra 6:103, he says that even an image pictured by the mind (*ṣûrat al-qalb*) requires that God have volume. He ridicules the Ash'arite argument that vision is linked to everything that exists, pointing out that the jinn and angels cannot be seen, nor can accidents (*a'râḍ*), such as sound or scent, though they exist. Aṭfiyyash asserts that Sûra 6:103 is one of the *muḥkamât*, whereas Sûra 75:23 is one of the *mutashâbihât* requiring *ta'wîl* to make it conform to what reason tells us about God.

Related to this question is Moses' request that God show Himself to him, to which God replied, « You will never see Me » (*lan tarânî*, Sûra 7:143). Did Moses think this would be possible ? If he thought so, despite its impossibility, doesn't that undermine the doctrine that prophets are preserved from error (*'iṣma*) ? The ninth-century Ibâḍî exegete, Hûd b. Muḥakkam al-Hawwârî, said that Moses asked to see God because he thought this was possible for him, but most Ibâḍîs do not take this view. Aṭfiyyash cites al-Hawwârî's view but labels it erroneous; Moses knew God's attributes too well not to know that it is impossible to see Him. Rather, as indicated by Ibâḍî Hadith (al-Rabî', 1930: 3/34, nº 869), he did this for the benefit of his people, who had made the same request (Sûra 2:55, 4:153). The Sunni scholar, Abû Manṣûr al-Mâturîdî (d. 944), pointed out that this interpretation is illogical, because Moses had asked God to show Himself to *him*, not to his people. He believed that Moses' request is an indication that the vision of God is possible, even if the request was not granted at that time. He also rejects the interpretation of *nâẓira* as « waiting », arguing that waiting occurs in this life, not in the next (al-Mâturîdî, n.d.).

Bayyûḍ departs from the typical Ibâḍî interpretation that Moses' request was for the benefit of his people. He said, « Moses delighted in the sweetness of intimate conversation (*al-munâjât*) [with God] and wanted to prolong the conversation [...]. He aspired to what was even greater than that, to see God » (Bayyûḍ, 2009: 8/354). Like *Tafsîr al-Manâr*, which insists that the impediment to Moses' ability to see God came from Moses, not from God's imperceptibility (Riḍâ, 1947: 9/126-7), Bayyûḍ said that Moses did not have the aptitude (*isti'dâd*) to see the divine light, though he did have the exceptional aptitude to hear the divine speech (Bayyûḍ, 2009: 8/354). This interpretation is surprising, as it leaves open the possibility that God could be perceptible, something Ibâḍî scholars vehemently deny.

Riḍâ offers a lengthy discussion of the topic, saying that both sides on this debate have proofs to support their arguments, so each should ask the other's forgiveness and avoid sectarianism. Unlike most Sunni exegetes, he says that the Qur'ânic indication of the impossibility of seeing God is more explicit than that of its possibility (Riḍâ, 1947: 9/134), in a sense agreeing with Aṭfiyyash that 6:103 is *muḥkam*, but 75:23 is not. Nonetheless, he saw no reason why the vision of God in the afterlife could not be spiritual, rather than ocular (*Ibid*.: 9/162-3).

God's Speech

Sunni Muslims identify the Qur'ân with God's eternal attribute of speech, whereas the Mu'tazila and Ibâḍîs deny the reality of God's attributes and the possibility of any eternal besides God's essence. Many Sunni theologians have held that the written or spoken Qur'ân is only an expression or imitation of God's speech, whereas His essential speech (*al-kalâm al-nafsî*) is an idea subsistent in God and does not consist of sounds, words or letters. Many Ibâḍîs make a similar distinction between God's essential speech and the revealed scriptures, which are created indicators (*madlûlât*) of His knowledge and consist of letters and words. As Oman's current Grand Mufti writes, there is no indication that God's essential speech should be identified with the Qur'ân (al-Khalili, 2001: 103). Aṭfiyyash, on the other hand, rejects the very concept of God's essential speech and denies that the Qur'ân is an expression (*tarjama*) of the essential speech, denouncing such a teaching as unsubstantiated and ignorant (*Hamayân al-zâd* 1980: 1:447-8). He also argues that what is eternal cannot be called miraculous (*lâ yuqâl bi-i'jâzihi*) (*Taysîr al-tafsîr*, on Sûra 7:206).

'Abduh explained the theologians' debates on God's speech in his *Risâlat al-tawḥîd*, saying that God is characterized by speech from all eternity, by which He may speak whenever He wishes; that is God's essential speech (*kalâm Allâh al-nafsî*). But it is impermissible to investigate the manner (*kayfiyya*) of God's eternal speech or of how He speaks to His Messengers and gives them revelation (cited in Riḍâ, 1947: 3/4). In his lesson, he said that God's speech is unknowable except by the prophet to whom it was addressed, so we should not investigate it, but should simply believe in it (*Ibid*.). Elsewhere, he explicitly states that the Qur'ân is eternal and is a mirror of God's eternal knowledge. Although its subsistence in God's essence is different from its subsistence in the soul of an angel or human being, just as its subsistence in air when it is recited is distinct from its subsistence in a phonographic record, all of these are God's eternal speech (*Ibid*.: 9/187).

Bayyûḍ, on the other hand, says that Sûra 43:3, « We made it an Arabic Qur'ân », indicates that the Qur'ân is created, not eternal. Nonetheless, he agrees with 'Abduh that discussion of this topic is best avoided, and that delving into it leads to unbelief and schism.

> I like what Shaykh Maḥmûd Shukrî al-Alûsî [a Sunni scholar of Iraq, 1802-1924], author of *Tafsîr rûḥ al-ma'ânî*, said on this topic [...]. He was a contemporary of Shaykh Atfiyyash, who quotes him a great deal in his *Taysîr al-tafsîr* [...]: « This verse has been taken as proof that [the Qur'ân] is created. I say that if it proves createdness, it proves no more than the createdness of the verbal speech, on which there is no dispute ». This is a true and correct word, and we say the same. Because concerning the essential attributes of God Most High – that He is speaking, hearing, seeing, powerful and willing – the least that we can say, so the masses may understand, is that His speaking means that He is not mute, His seeing means that He is not blind, His hearing means that He is not deaf, and His willing means that He is not compelled. That is close to the meaning. No creature can ever comprehend the reality of the Creator's attributes (Bayyûḍ, 2009: 17/421-2).

And elsewhere:

> The exegetes debated how God spoke to Moses, pondering whether Moses heard it with his ear as one hears human speech, or whether he heard it from all his limbs, or whether it came from only one direction, such as that of the [burning] tree, or from the four directions, or from six [...]. Leave all these debates, and cling to the way of *al-salaf*, in which is safety (Bayyûḍ, 2009: 8/359, 361).

He said that the entire controversy that prompted the *Miḥna* (inquisition), instituted in 833 to enforce the doctrine of the createdness of the Qur'ân, was caused by people who entered Islam in order to subvert it. Although Ibâḍîs agree with the doctrine of the createdness of the Qur'ân, which is rejected by Sunnis, Bayyûḍ decried the suffering caused by the *Miḥna*, including that of « the great, pious, godfearing man who clung to the Sunna, Aḥmad ibn Ḥanbal, may God have mercy on him » (*Ibid*.: 8/359). Such an accolade for a man usually denounced by Ibâḍîs as ignorant is surprising and noteworthy.

Conclusion

An analysis of Atfiyyash's project and his reformist orientation indicates that, on the one hand, his goals were similar to those of fundamentalist movements aiming to « purify » Islam of all *bida'*, but, on the other hand, his embrace of theology contrasts with the literalism of Sunni fundamentalists. Ibâḍism can, in general, be described as favorable to the use of reason in theology — within the limits allowed by the Qur'ân and the rules of Arabic grammar — and puritanical in law, and Aṭfiyyash's scholarship and reformism are true to that tradition. There is nothing in Aṭfiyyash's approach that reflects a modernist desire to reconcile Islam with the mores and achievements of Western civilization. For example, his interpretation of Sûra 4:3, which recommends marrying up to four women or having relations with one's female slave if one fears treating female orphan wards unfairly, is entirely traditional, reflecting none of the concerns of Muslim modernists with the abolition of slavery and the promotion of monogamy. While his scholarship was undoubtedly influenced by his older brother Ibrâhîm's studies at al-Azhar, and he makes frequent references to Ash'arite scholarship, Ibrâhîm's early-nineteenth-century sojourn in Egypt predated the emergence of modernism.

Bayyûḍ admired *Tafsîr al-Manâr* and allegedly used it as the foundation of his commentary, which reflects 'Abduh and Riḍâ's promotion of Islamic unity and eschewal of theological dogmatism, while attacking customs deemed antithetical to Islamic teaching and making sometimes lengthy digressions on topics of contemporary social and political importance. Nonetheless, Bayyûḍ remains faithful to Ibâḍî doctrine, and, more significantly, there is no trace of a modernist orientation. On the contrary, on questions of morality and law, as far as we can tell (we do not have Sûras 2 through 4, which contain some of the most important

legal content in the Qur'ân), Bayyûḍ is extremely conservative. He believes that the freedom of young people in choosing their marriage partners should be restricted to the right to veto the choice of their guardians, and he decries at length the moral laxity of modern youth. 'Abduh and Riḍâ despised European imperialism in Muslim lands, but they lived at a time when, not only in science, but also in the moral domain, Europe was seen as a possible model, in its abolition of slavery and its promotion of monogamy and liberal values. 'Abduh and Riḍâ felt compelled, on the one hand, to defend Islam against European attacks, but, on the other, to argue that some elements of traditional Islamic law were human products that were damaging to modern Muslims, and that Islam could be interpreted as promoting liberal values. Bayyûḍ, however, did not argue for Islam's compatibility with liberal values, but that modern social customs constituted a real threat to Islam.

In his discussion of the modern Ibâḍî renaissance, which he says began in the eighteenth century as a reassertion of the old traditions, Wilkinson describes its trajectory in the late nineteenth century, embodied in the leadership of Aṭfiyyash in the Maghrib and al-Sâlimî in Oman, as « neo-Ibâḍî » and essentially fundamentalist, seeking « a return to pure orthodoxy and the sweeping away of all innovation: in this way the true community would be protected from the moral as well as the physical assaults of the outside world » (Wilkinson, 1987: 243-5). Despite some similarities between Bayyûḍ's commentary and *Tafsîr al-manâr*, his goals and attitude were remarkably similar to those of these two most influential scholars of modern Ibâḍism. His commentary may resemble that of 'Abduh and Riḍâ in form, but in spirit he was a true disciple of Aṭfiyyash.

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