




Abu Ya'la ibn al-Farra' (990-1066 CE) and the influence of his ideas on the formation of the views of Ibn Taymiyyah (1263-1328 CE)

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Abstract

The research relevance is predefined by the ideas of the religious figure Abu Ya'la ibn al-Farra' and his influence on the formation and development of the ideas of another religious figure Ibn Taymiyyah and the insufficient study of idea formation in the modern stage. The research aims to examine the impact of Abu Ya'la's religious views on the formation and development of Ibn Taymiyyah's religious concepts. The main research objective is to analyse the doctrines of Abu Ya'la ibn al-Farra' and Ibn Taymiyyah and to determine how the ideology of one figure influenced the views of the other. The following research methods were used: structural-functional, dialectical, synthesis, logical, generalisation, and comparative analysis. The research findings demonstrate that Ibn Taymiyyah frequently consulted the works of Abu Ya'la and actively endorsed philosophy while developing his own ideological concepts. Throughout their lives, Abu Ya'la and Ibn Taymiyyah followed the tanzih aqidah and later began to follow the tashbih aqidah. They led an active political life and organised insurgencies. The research's practical significance is predefined by the theoretical provisions, conclusions and recommendations that can be used in educational institutions by teachers and students to improve knowledge about the formation of two religious concepts, and the influence of Abu Ya'la ibn al-Farra's ideas on the formation of Ibn Taymiyyah's ideas, as well as by other scholars studying Islam in general, as well as the Hanbali school.

Keywords: Islam, Hanbali school, doctrine, extremism, tanzih aqidah and tashbih.

Introduction

The research relevance is predefined by the fact that nowadays the concepts of the medieval Syrian theologian Ibn Taymiyyah, characterised by radicalism and extremism, have become widespread. These ideas are especially widespread in Wahhabi (a reformist movement within Sunni Islam) and neo-Wahhabi groups, including the Islamic State of Iraq and the Levant (ISIL). However, this idea was formed based on the religious views of their predecessors, who were also characterised by radicalism. One of them is Abu Ya'la ibn al-Farra' (990-1066). The ideas and views of those who were transformed throughout his life under the influence of external factors, played a significant role in shaping the concept of doctrine. Maevskaya (2020) concluded that Ibn Taymiyyah referred to the later ideas of Abu Ya'la ibn al-Farra'. This defines the issue's relevance, as the question of how Abu Ya'la's ideas influenced the formation of Ibn Taymiyyah's religious views is currently insufficiently studied.



Following Islam and Eryiğit (2022), Abu Ya'la al-Farra is one of the most authoritative representatives of the Hanbali school (the strict traditionalist school of jurisprudence in Sunni Islam), a theologian and legist in his lifetime, as well as a mujahid – a theological scholar in Islam. Abu Ya'la al-Farra's power came in the eleventh century when the scholar was offered the position of qadi (judge) in Baghdad. At first, the position was refused by Abu Ya'la, but later it was agreed to, with three requirements put forward: participation in state meetings would not be enforced, visits to the palace would not be made, and mention of the name in official greetings would be avoided.

Following Fanani (2021), Abu Ya'la ibn al-Farra' is the author of many legal texts following the Hanbali school. Theoretical developments in law found popularity among legal experts of the time, including ideological opponents (Dudchenko et al., 2023). Following Bichi (2022), it is widely believed that scholar's works are in line with Sunni beliefs, following the early theory and methodology of explaining the attributes of God, a doctrine known as al-tafweed, and actively used by the first three generations of Muslim salafis (a revival movement). However, Abu Ya'la's subsequent works exhibit a unique view of Allah's attributes, deviating from the established methodology. The anthropomorphic interpretation of attributes is not in line with the traditional practice of Islam and is regarded as apostasy and disbelief (kafir). For this reason, some scholars suggest that Abu Ya'la was an anthropomorphist who assigned the creation of the attributes to Allah, which is contrary to Islamic traditions. The scholar suggests that the Hanbali school has been distorted to such an extent that it cannot be corrected and restored to its original purity to this day.

Following Turner (2022), negative statements about Abu Ya'la's activities are especially evident in the works of Ibn Taymiyyah. This indicates that Abu Ya'la's concepts were still relevant several centuries after death. However, Ibn Taymiyyah was still a supporter of Abu Ya'la's philosophy and researched and developed the anthropomorphic doctrine. According to the author's research, at the first stage of Abu Ya'la's life, the scholar believed that God could not be endowed with the attributes of the created. This concept was called tanzih (Bazaluk & Nezhyva, 2016). Later, the researcher began to follow the idea that God has the characteristics of the creation, which was called tashbih. This change in views and its impact on Ibn Taymiyyah's religious views is the main subject of this study.

Thus, following the aforementioned, the research aims to examine the influence of Abu Ya'la ibn al-Farra's religious views and beliefs on the formation of Ibn Taymiyyah's religious ideas. The research will achieve this goal by solving the following research tasks:

1. Analyse each of the religious ideas of Abu Ya'la ibn al-Farra' and Ibn Taymiyyah separately.
2. Determine what is common in the concepts of the two theologians.
3. Determine to what extent Abu Ya'la's religious views influenced the formation of Ibn Taymiyyah's views.

Material and Methods

To explore the influence of Abu Ya'la ibn al-Farra's worldview on the formation of Ibn Taymiyyah's views, theoretical research methods were used, namely, analysis, generalisation, synthesis, as well as dialectical, structural, and functional methods.

The structural-functional method is fundamental, which allows to define the research goal and to define the tasks, as well as to develop a plan for conducting the study. It was used to identify the research basis, namely, the concept of the Hanbali madhhab was studied, the meaning of the doctrines of "aqidah tashbih", "aqidah tanzih", and "anthropomorphist doctrines" was determined, and the religious groups that existed were investigated. The biographies of Abu Ya'la ibn al-Farra' and Ibn Taymiyyah are studied. Their activities are analysed separately, as well as the goals of Abu Ya'la ibn al-Farra' and Ibn Taymiyyah. The authors examine the ideological views of Abu Ya'la ibn al-Farra', the concepts by the scholar supported and condemned, the factors influencing the formation of his religious concepts, and the content of Ibn Taymiyyah's religious concepts. The political activities of both figures are studied. Some of the fundamental works of both theologians



were analysed, and based on this, it was determined what influence Abu Ya'la ibn al-Farra's doctrine had on the formation of Ibn Taymiyyah's views.

Another method used in the research is dialectical. For an in-depth study of the topic, the study was conditionally divided into several parts. In the first part, a general study of the main concepts of this research was carried out, the personality was analysed in general, and the activities of Abu Ya'la ibn al-Farra's predecessors and successors before Ibn Taymiyyah's life were partially studied. It is determined what religious views Abu Ya'la ibn al-Farra' held and why the theologian changed them to the opposite. The authors examine the place in society occupied by one of the authorities of the Hanbali school and what activities were. The second part of the study analyses the content of Ibn Taymiyyah's ideological and political views, examines the theological activities and some of the most famous works. The study examined what views and concepts Ibn Taymiyyah opposed and what factors influenced the change in the religious views. On this basis, the doctrine of both figures was compared, and common features were identified. This allows to conclude how the doctrines of Abu Ya'la ibn al-Farra' influenced the formation of Ibn Taymiyyah's religious positions.

Logical methods, namely the analysis and synthesis methods, play an important role in research. With the help of logical methods, all theoretical and practical studies were analysed, and on their basis, a complete picture of the religious and political views of Abu Ya'la ibn al-Farra' and Ibn Taymiyyah was formed, and it was determined how Abu Ya'la's philosophy influenced the formation of Ibn Taymiyyah's views. The second method, synthesis, was used to form all the information obtained into logically structured research.

Comparative analysis is an essential research method that holds a pivotal position in this study. This task entails a methodical examination and comparison of the religious and philosophical beliefs, actions, and impacts of two prominent individuals, namely Abu Ya'la ibn al-Farra' and Ibn Taymiyyah. This analysis will be conducted within the framework of their specific historical and ideological contexts. This approach enables a thorough analysis of the parallels and distinctions in their teachings, revealing the influence of Abu Ya'la's philosophical and religious ideas on the formation of Ibn Taymiyyah's religious stances. The researchers aim to gain a deeper understanding of the intellectual evolution and theological influences of these two influential figures by conducting a comparative analysis to identify commonalities and distinctions. Comparative analysis is an important tool in this study, allowing scholars to make significant conclusions about the interaction of ideas and doctrines within the wider context of Islamic thought and history.

Results

Following most researchers, Abu Ya'la ibn al-Farra' and Ibn Taymiyyah are rather controversial and ambiguous personalities. Throughout their lives, the religious views of one or the other representative changed dramatically, i.e., the early and later concepts were opposite in nature. Most researchers are convinced that such a radical transformation of Abu Ya'la's religious views could have occurred as a result of the influence of his mentor Ibn Hamid al-Warak, who was a teacher at the Baghdad Mosque Bab al-Shayr and spread the ideas of anthropomorphism (Rahiman et al., 2021). After analysing the life of mentor, it can be concluded that the transformation of Abu Ya'la's views took place at a young age. In one of the works, Abu Ya'la quotes the mentor's words and explains that the "al-Istiwa" concept should be understood as follows: God sits on His Throne, leaving a little space for the Prophet Muhammad to sit there on the Day of Judgement (DeVoogd, 2023). Ibn Hamid's views contradict Islamic beliefs by describing the Almighty as having two eyes and a face, while denying that He has a head. Ibn Hamid actively supported those who claimed that God had the attributes of a lower leg. Having studied this issue in more detail, scholars of the Hanbali madhhab refuted Ibn Hamid's views. This allows to conclude that at that time, among those who considered themselves representatives of the Hanbali school, two camps were formed, which were adherents of opposite concepts regarding the attributes of God (Doszhan, 2022; Kadyraliyeva et al., 2019).



Following the studies, Abu Ya'la often debated with the colleague Abu Hamid al-Isfaraini (Bsoul, 2022). Ibn Hamid, Abu Ya'la teacher, was a student of Abu Bakr al-Khallal, who in turn was a student of Abu Bakr al-Marwaziyyah, who was a student of the eponymous Hanbali school Ahmad ibn Hanbal. However, during the studies, al-Marwaziyyah changed the doctrine of predecessor. The main slogan of Ahmad ibn Hanbal is that God is unlike anything humankind can imagine. Al-Marwaziyyah distorted Hanbal's doctrine by attributing human attributes to him. The reason for the active discussion in the books was that the author claimed that on the Day of Judgement, the Almighty would sit next to the Prophet Muhammad. Such a statement, which does not comply with Islamic norms, caused an armed conflict in Baghdad between supporters and opponents of Abu Bakr al-Marwaziyyah.

It is worth noting that Abu Ya'la and predecessors were the leaders of a popular movement that emerged in Baghdad in 1040 (Aga & Maevskaya, 2021). From time to time, popular uprisings occurred in the city. Abu Ya'la tried to pay considerable attention to the development of political concepts and noted that the imam should be put forward by a special group of citizens with considerable influence in society, not by a single person. Ibn Taymiyyah also led an active political life, like Abu Ya'la, and was the organiser of a rebellion against the authorities when a fatwa on the execution of a Christian who had insulted the Prophet Muhammad was passed. In addition, the scholar agitated the rulers of the Mamluk state to change the form of government and move to more stringent and anti-Christian laws.

It can be inferred that proponents of the aqidah tashbih have consistently participated in the political affairs of the states in which they resided in the past and continue to do so presently. During certain episodes, they successfully established autonomous nations with legal systems rooted in their respective ideologies. Advocates of anthropomorphist factions, like the Mansurites and Qarmatians, employed terrorist tactics to combat proponents of alternative ideological frameworks. Abu Bakr al-Marwaziyyah was involved in political affairs as well. The scholar and the supporters engaged in armed conflict with their adversaries. In the Abbasid Caliphate, al-Barbakhari's followers instigated uprisings against citizens who resisted the implementation of radical laws and regulations, under the guidance of their teacher (Islam and Eryigit, 2022). Abu Ya'la, Ibn Taymiyyah, and the early Wahhabis endeavoured to eradicate the Shia and other groups who strongly opposed the anthropomorphist belief system. Furthermore, it is important to acknowledge the ongoing efforts of the ISIS group's followers in propagating their ideology, which draws inspiration from the aqidah tashbih concept, through coercive means (Table 1).

Table 1. Comparative characteristics of aqidah tashbih and aqidah tanzih

	Aqidah tashbih	Aqidah tanzih
Representatives	Hashawites, wahhabis	Ash'arists
Contents	Use of human attributes such as size, movement, colour, and attributes of any of His creatures to Allah.	Denial of the application of any characteristics (ausaf) and boundaries (hudud) to Allah because of the absence of anything similar to Him among Allah's creations.

Source: compiled by the authors.

In cases where the supporters of the aqidah tashbih failed to form an independent state, they tried to involve rulers or representatives of other states in their activities. Therefore, the spread of Ibn Hamid's religious views became real only after the involvement of the ruling circles, namely the representative of the Buyid dynasty, Abdullah Abdul Kadir (Lange, 2021). The discussions between Ibn Hamid and the Shafis took place in public and with the involvement of caliphal assistance (Bsoul, 2022). The search for support from the ruling circles in Ibn Taymiyyah did not always end in success, and the Wahhabis made a deal with Ibn Saud, who concentrated secular power in his hands, i.e. was the emir, and Muhammad ibn Abd al-Wahhab received legislative and religious power (Hoover, 2019).



Most researchers argue that supporters of the *aqidah tashbih* attempted to use administrative resources even during Abu Ya'la's time. They did everything possible to ensure that the ruler of the Ghaznavid state, Mahmud ibn Subuktuktukin – Sebuk-Tegin (Ghaznavid), opposed the Ash'arists in general, and Abu Bakr ibn Furak in particular (Omar et al., 2017). The religious figure engaged in discussions with anthropomorphists and published works denying their ideology, as well as interpreting the meaning of some ayahs (verses) and hadith *mutashabihat* (ambiguous verses) based on the *tanzih aqidah*. Abu Bakr ibn Furak argued that the ideological concepts of the anthropomorphists are the teachings of Islam, of which the Prophet Muhammad was a supporter (Turner, 2022; Dzhansarayeva et al., 2014). During Abu Ya'la's lifetime, around 1015, several events occurred: the caliphate, believing that the philosopher had been misled and slandered by anthropomorphists, released Ibn Furak and presented the gifts. The supporters of the *Tashbih* doctrine were very angry, and they poisoned Ibn Furak (Arikewuyo, 2022).

Abu Ya'la ibn al-Farra' is the founder of a radical group whose members have periodically attacked supporters of the Shafi school to protect their political and religious interests (Al-Azmeh, 2020). The physical destruction of religious opponents as a tactical tool has been used by supporters of anthropomorphism for many centuries, and this tactic is still actively used. Today, anthropomorphists continue to refute the ideological views of Ibn Furak, Imam al-Ghazali and other Ash'arists (Hoover, 2019). It is worth noting that the rulers had different attitudes towards this religious group. This is since supporters of one ideology, seeking support from the authorities, turned them against their opponents, or it is directly related to the rulers' commitment to a particular ideology.

As already noted, the change in Abu Ya'la's ideological views to the opposite ideas attributing human attributes to God was due to the influence of his mentor Ibn Hamid. Abu Ya'la's *Ibtal al-Tawilat* traces the changing religious views and ends by contradicting the earlier statements (Dankanich, 2021). Therefore, it can be concluded that the change in ideological concepts took place during the period of writing the above-mentioned book. It is known that Islamic theologians opposed the ideas of Abu Ya'la al-Farra', in the book presented the concept of anthropomorphism. As an example, the work of the famous Hanbali theologian Imam Ibn al-Jawziyya "*Daf' Shubah al-Tashbih*" will be cited. At the beginning of the book, the theologian categorically forbade giving the Almighty attributes of what He created, citing facts and evidence that this should not be done, and at the end, the scholar wrote openly that Allah sits on His throne, which occupies the appropriate place and has the appropriate direction.

Abu Ya'la's anthropomorphic ideas involved giving the Almighty a soul and boundaries. At the same time, the scholar quite clearly outlined the lower boundary, which, in his opinion, is in contact with the throne. It is worth noting the inconsistency of religious views and the confirmation of some limitations of the parties in the direction of right, left, up, forward, and backwards. The researcher was convinced of a certain weight of the Almighty, asserting that God sat on a throne and that this weight caused it to creak under gravity. After analysing Ibn Taymiyyah's work, it can be concluded that similar views can be traced in the works. Abu Ya'la and his disciples initially denied that God has physical appearance and boundaries, and then retracted their statements and began to assert their presence, citing the arguments of the concept of *tashbih*. Ibn Taymiyyah points to this evolution of religious views (Watt, 2019).

In one of the books, Ibn Taymiyyah mentions the idea of the eternal existence of the Almighty (Fallahi, 2021). Recalling Abu Ya'la's position on this idea, Ibn Taymiyyah argues that people hold different views on the existence of eternity. One idea is that God's eternal existence is categorically denied, both now and in the past and future. The founder of the DJahmit group, Jahm bin Safwan, and the founder of mutualism, Abu al-Khuzail, are the representatives of this religious position (Abbasi, 2023). The opposite religious position is that the infinity of the Almighty is possible in distances and sizes. And in this case, opinions are divided: some are convinced that Allah is comprehensively infinite, while others believe that God is infinite on all sides but is limited by the *Arsh*. In one of the works, Al-Ashari notes the above position and argues that God exists infinitely



and that His existence is not related to time, space, and boundaries. The supporters of the second opinion are Abu Ya'la, the Karmati, and other theologians who are convinced that the past, which has a beginning, cannot be infinite, but assume infinity in the present.

Ibn Taymiyyah's works show that Abu Ya'la religious views and ideology influenced the theologian's beliefs. In one of his most famous works, "Bayan Talbis al-Jahmiyyah", Ibn Taymiyyah mentions that Abu Ya'la often refuted the existence of the Almighty on the side-lines, and, like his supporters, in particular Abu al-Hasan Ibn al-Zaghuni, the scholar denied Allah's existence in space. Then Abu Ya'la retracted his statements while continuing to confirm both opinions and then the author began to insist on the concept of tashbih, which is contrary to Islam. In the book, Ibn Taymiyyah states that Allah is on the Throne and the Throne is aside, and although it is repeatedly forbidden in this book to attribute being aside to Allah, the truth is that it is permissible, since Ahmad confirmed this attribute, which is the Ascension to the Throne. The scholar also confirmed that Allah is above, and anyone who confirms this also confirms that He is on the side-lines, and this was also confirmed by the followers of Ibn Karram and the hadith scholar Ibn Manda al-Asbahani (DeVoogd, 2023).

Researchers have extensively debated the lives and religious beliefs of Abu Ya'la ibn al-Farra' and Ibn Taymiyyah. Both individuals experienced profound changes in their religious convictions, with earlier and later ideas frequently being completely contradictory. Many researchers believe that these transformations were influenced by mentors and theological debates of the era. Abu Ya'la initially adhered to the belief of aqidah tanzih, which emphasises the transcendence of God, but later adopted the belief of aqidah tashbih, which ascribes human-like qualities to God. Similarly, Ibn Taymiyyah's writings show a similar progression, as the scholar initially rejected these attributes but later came to support the concept of tashbih (Kelman & Kelman, 2022). The changes in religious ideology were frequently influenced by mentors, debates, and the dominant theological discourse of their time. Furthermore, both individuals were actively involved in political endeavours, demonstrating the interdependence of religious and political ideologies during their respective eras. Collectively, their experiences demonstrate the intricate and ever-changing characteristics of theological ideas and how they intersect with the sociopolitical environment.

Discussion

Rahman (2021) conducted a study and analysed in detail the ideological concepts that Abu Ya'la ibn al-Farra' held at different periods of life. In many sources, Abu Ya'la is quoted saying that it is necessary to distance oneself from the supporters of innovations, namely: anthropomorphists, Ash'arists, mutazilites, rafidites, murjites, qadarites, jahmites, harijites, salimites, qarmatians, and other religious groups. In one of his books, Abu Ya'la argues that it is impossible to assume that God is found in one place or is everywhere. It is worth agreeing with the scholar's research, but there is a paradox in that Abu Ya'la opposed the Ash'arists, while the scholar was a supporter of the ideas of the dissimilarity of the Almighty to everything He created. At the same time, Abu Ya'la began opposing the school of Kalam, changing the views under the influence of Tashbih adherents and aided by Ibn Hamid's doctrines.

Religious judge Abu Ya'la notes that the Prophet Muhammad said that Allah has the attribute of nuzul, but not in the sense of movement and displacement. The scholar also noted that it is forbidden to assume that nuzul has the meaning of going down and that istiva is interpreted as sitting and facing something. Following Abbasi (2023), this view is similar to the beliefs of the Ash'arists, who are adherents of the aqidah tanzih. But these are his early beliefs, which the researcher later changed. After analysing some of the works of Abu Ya'la's son, the researcher concluded that at the time when the theologian was a supporter of the aqidah of disgrace, the scholar was opposed to the use of the word jism (body) concerning the Almighty. Abu Ya'la accused of disbelief all those who believed that God has a body and other attributes of living beings. Following the researcher, it can be concluded that Abu Ya'la at the beginning of the activity was a supporter of ideas that consist in the belief in the absolute disfigurement of the Almighty and had the following views: it is impossible to believe that Allah has certain boundaries; it is impossible to believe that the Almighty is a supporter



of anthropomorphists; it is forbidden to believe that Allah has a human body and is capable of movement. At this stage, the influence of the Ash'arists doctrine on Abu Ya'la's doctrine can be seen, and it can be concluded that Abu Ya'la's work in Al-Mutamad has certain similarities with Imam Al-Bakili's Al-Insaf.

After analysing the works of Abu Ya'la ibn al-Farra', Fata and Riduan (2022) note that in later works one can find anthropomorphic descriptions of Allah, after analysing which Ibn Qayyim al-Jawziyya concluded that the theologian, having changed his ideological views, became a supporter of the Mushabbiha. With their assistance, Abu Ya'la was convinced that Allah is from above and sits on His Throne. It is worth supplementing the research of scholars and emphasising that a short period of time passed between the lives of Abu Ya'la ibn al-Farra' and Ibn Qayyim al-Jawziyya, which allows to exclude the forgery of Abu Ya'la's works.

Despite the opinion of Dankanich (2021) that in all works Abu Ya'la is a supporter of anthropomorphism and corporeality, in his writings the scholar briefly spoke about the benefits of corporeality as necessary. This fact allows Ibn al-Jawziyya to argue that the theologian and student Ibn Zaghuni were supporters of the Mushabihis. It is worth mentioning that Abu Ya'la often cited facts about dubious expressions attributed to the Prophet Muhammad. This caused a wave of indignation among many theologians and led to a fierce debate against Abu Ya'la. Arikewuyo (2022) notes that Abu Ya'la is an opponent of the use of the tawil method in explaining the ayahs of mutashabihat, and categorically disagrees with the Ash'arists in this regard. Ibn Taymiyyah supported the position of his predecessor. This is confirmed by Ibn Taymiyyah's writings, where the scholar received the knowledge of the concept of God from the books of Abu Ya'la.

It is worth paying attention to the research of Aga and Maevskaya (2021), which contains an interesting statement. Recounting information from Abu Bakr al-Marwaziyyah, Musaddid, and Harb al-Kirmani, Abu Ya'la said that Marwaziyyah and others cited a few controversial issues and attributed them to the statements of Imam Ahmad ibn Hanbal. In addition, there are many references to the fact that during Abu Ya'la's time, a negative attitude towards the blessing at the burial place of the Prophet Muhammad in Medina began to emerge. The theologian did not consider such an act to be part of the Sunnah. Therefore, in Abu Ya'la's lifetime, pseudo-Hanbalis attacked the Quraysh cemetery in Baghdad. Thus, Fanani (2021) suggested that this robbery was committed by a group of supporters of the Tashbih aqida, which Abu Ya'la had previously formed. This issue requires a more detailed study, as it is not known whether this act related to the denial of Ziyarat or with the hatred of pseudo-Hanbalis for Shiites.

Turner (2022) conducted a study and concluded that Abu Ya'la became a supporter of the views held by members of the Ismaili Qarmat group and the hadith scholar Ibn Manda. Ibn Manda's surname suggests that the predecessors were Mandeans, who were adherents of Mandeism, an ancient Gnostic religion. Thus, based on the scholar's research, it can be concluded that there is a possibility that Abu Ya'la borrowed some concepts from other faiths. However, Abu Ya'la always argued that following Qur'an, Allah is on the throne above, and that this is confirmed by the words of the Prophet Muhammad. Abu Ya'la argued that Paradise is the dwelling place of the Almighty, the Throne and Paradise are the respective places where Allah resides, and they are in different cities. After analysing studies by Maevskaya (2020), it can be concluded that based on the traditions of Islam, the Throne is the ceiling of Paradise. However, following Hoover (2019), the theologian came to this conclusion due to an incorrect interpretation of the Qur'anic ayahs-mutashabihat. The main principle that should guide persons interpreting the Holy Scriptures is that the interpretation of ayahs and ayahs-mutashabihat should not contradict the content of ayahs-mukhamat (Bazaluk, 2019). However, in this case, there is a direct contradiction in the meaning, which is that there is nothing like the Creator.

Al-Azmeh (2020) also conducted a study and concluded that Abu Ya'la's descendants were also anthropomorphists. The theologian Atiq ibn Abdullah al-Baqri was an opponent of the Tashbih doctrine. After Abu Ya'la's death, Atiq ibn Abdullah al-Baqri arrived in Baghdad at the invitation of



Vizier Nizam al-Mulk and began teaching the concept of *aqidah tanzih* in the Nizaimiyya madrasa and the al-Mansur Mosque. Later, a group of supporters of Atiq ibn Abdullah al-Baqri was formed, and they became active opponents of the *Mushabiha*, who at that time had a certain authority in society. The supporters of the Maghribi sheikh were engaged in robberies of the al-Farra family's houses and took away religious books (Kim et al., 2022).

Ultimately, the examination of Abu Ya'la ibn al-Farra' and his developing theological convictions uncovers an intricate trajectory characterised by changes in his ideological principles. At the beginning of his professional life, Abu Ya'la espoused beliefs that were in line with the *aqidah tanzih*, which emphasised the distinction between God and creation and rejected any physical characteristics attributed to God. Nevertheless, as his convictions developed, possibly under the influence of the concepts of *aqidah tashbih* and the teachings of his mentor Ibn Hamid, the scholar embraced anthropomorphic depictions of Allah, which included the belief in God's positioning above and His presence on His Throne. This transformation incited debates and encountered opposition within the theological community, as scholars such as Ibn Qayyim al-Jawziyya labelled him as a proponent of the *Mushabbiha*. Abu Ya'la's changing beliefs prompted him to question the Ash'arists and their utilisation of the *tawil* technique. His intricate intellectual odyssey mirrors the ever-changing theological discussions of his time, shaped by diverse theological institutions and religious factions. Moreover, the participation of his offspring in theological discussions and the emergence of conflicting perspectives within the religious community emphasise the lasting influence of his concepts.

Conclusions

This study has investigated the impact of Abu Ya'la ibn al-Farra's changing religious beliefs on the development of Ibn Taymiyyah's theological ideas. Both individuals underwent significant changes in their beliefs throughout their professional trajectories, as indicated by the analysis. Abu Ya'la initially advocated the belief of *aqidah tanzih*, which highlights the complete dissimilarity between God and creation. However, the scholar later adopted the contrasting anthropomorphic ideology of *aqidah tashbih*, influenced by his mentor Ibn Hamid. The profound transformation sparked heated discussions among the Muslim scholarly community. Initially, Ibn Taymiyyah's writings dismissed the idea of ascribing human characteristics to God. However, in his later works, the author embraced these concepts, potentially due to the influence of Abu Ya'la's revised ideas.

The research also emphasises the interaction between religious and political beliefs for both individuals. They were actively involved in political activities with the goal of promoting their respective ideological stances. Their involvement in rebellions and efforts to influence political leadership highlight the inseparable connections between religion and sociopolitical circumstances in their respective time periods.

Moreover, the analysis demonstrates the enduring influence of Abu Ya'la's adaptable doctrines, as indicated by Ibn Taymiyyah's citations of his works while formulating his own theological positions. The responses and disapproval generated by Abu Ya'la's modified beliefs, as expressed by individuals such as Ibn Qayyim al-Jawziyya, highlight his significant ideological impact. This research ultimately enriches scholarly comprehension of how Abu Ya'la's evolving theological concepts influenced and accelerated theological debates in subsequent centuries by being incorporated into Ibn Taymiyyah's highly influential religious ideology. Further analysis of Ibn Taymiyyah's elaboration on Abu Ya'la's revised concepts could provide further understanding of the transfer of theological ideas across different time periods.

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