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USŪLIYYA (A.), lit. "those who go back to first principles", from *uṣūl*, sing. *aṣl* "root, basic principle" or, considered as a modern abstract noun formation, "the doctrine of going back to first principles".

1. In the legal parlance of classical Islam

More specifically, the term *uṣūliyya* is applied within the Twelver Shīʿī tradition [see ITHNĀ ʿASHARIYYA] to those of its adherents commonly identified as supporting application of the rationalist principles of jurisprudence—especially *idjtihād* [q.v.] to the revelation accepted by the Twelvers to interpret doctrine and practice during the occultation (*ghayba* [q.v.]) of the Imām (beginning in 260/873-4) and the division of the community into *mudjtahid*s and *mukallid*s. The term Uṣūlī does not appear to have been used until the 6th/12th century, and then in conjunction with continuous resistance by the Akhbārīs or Akbbāriyya [q.v.] to the incursions of rationalism into Twelver jurisprudence.

The school's origins lay in the Buwayhid period, when the community came under attack from other Shīʿī and Sunnī groups, especially the Muʿtazila. The latter's attack on the Twelver dependence on revelation struck at the essence of the faith, since the doctrine of the Imāmate [see IMĀMA] hinged on acceptance of the Imāms' revelation as the source of definitive *ʿilm* [q.v.]. Such Imāmīs as al-Shaykh al-Mufīd Muḥammad b. Muḥammad al-Nuʿmān (d. 413/1022), his student al-Sharīf al-Murtaḍā ʿAlī b. Ḥusayn ʿAlam al-Hudā (d. 436/1044), and al-Shaykh al-Ṭūsī, Muḥammad b. Ḥasan (d. 460/1067), later known as Shaykh al-Ṭāʾifa, responded that the Sunnī rationalists' recourse to *ḳiyās* (analogy) [q.v.] and *idjtihād* did not produce *ʿilm* free

from doubt and *ikhtilāf* [q.v.]. Genuine *ʿilm* derived from recourse to the Ḳurʾān, the *tawātur* (the traditions of the Imāms widely transmitted in succeeding generations), and Twelver *idjmāʿ* [q.v.]. Accepting the Imām's return as indefinitely postponed, however, these scholars evolved distinctive doctrines and practices for use over the longer term. In the process they incorporated elements of their opponents' jurisprudential methodologies, including recourse to *ʿaḳl* (rational knowledge) as a source of *ʿilm*.

Al-Ṭūsī, for example, specified that the *muftī* (the giver of a *fatwā* [q.v.]) was to be conversant with the Ḳurʾān, the *sunna*, and the Imāms' traditions. Although he rejected *idjtihād*, given its Sunnī associations, he required application of the Sunnī exegetical principles of jurisprudence to the revelation and the mastery of Arabic. In his writings on *uṣūl al-fiḳh* (principles of jurisprudence), *ḥadīth*, and *fiḳh* [q.vv.], al-Ṭūsī's arguments for and his application of rationalist analyses advanced the importance of deductive jurisprudence and its practitioners. Competence in rationalist jurisprudence presupposed the division of the community between jurist and layman, and the latter's regard for the rulings produced by the former. The Buwayhid-period Twelver rationalists made provision for such a distinction, even if they did not agree on the degree of the lay believer's *taḳlīd* to the *mudjtahid*.

These Imāmī scholars also promoted the role of the practitioners of rationalist jurisprudence in the community's practical affairs. Al-Ṭūsī ruled that attendance at Friday congregational prayer was mandatory in the presence of the Imām or his appointee—usually a reference to Imāmī *sufarāʾ* (sing. *safīr*, representative)—endowed the *faḳīh* with the authority of that appointee to lead these prayers, and required the prayer leader to possess *ʿaḳl* and ability in *fiḳh*. Al-Ṭūsī required the delivery of *zakāt* to the *fukahāʾ*, argued that the Imām had appointed the *fukahāʾ* to undertake the *ḳaḍāʾ* [q.v.] and the *ḥudūd* (legal punishments [q.v.] during the occultation, and denoted those permitted to exercise *ḳaḍāʾ* as those schooled in rationalist jurisprudence.

The Buwayhid-period rationalists also permitted an active relationship between the *fukahāʾ* and the established, non-Twelver political institution, albeit in the interests of spreading the faith and protecting the faithful.

Later rationalist scholars further promoted both rationalist jurisprudence and the authority of the *faḳīh* in matters of doctrine and practice. Al-Muḥaḳḳiḳ al-Ḥillī (d. 676/1277 [see AL-ḤILLĪ (2)] admitted that Twelver scholars had been practicing *idjtihād* "most often based on theoretical considerations not deduced from the literal meaning of the texts" (Madelung, *Authority*, 168; Calder, *Doubt*, 66-7). His student al-ʿAllāma al-Ḥillī (d. 726/1325 [see AL-ḤILLĪ (1)] formally adopted *idjtihād* in certain areas of the law (a restriction described as *tadjziʾa* "specialisation"). Both elaborated on the skills required of the *faḳīh*. According to al-ʿAllāma, *sharāʾiṭ al-idjtihād* (the qualifications for exercising *idjtihād*) included mastery of Arabic, knowledge of *idjmāʿ*, mastery of the Imāms' traditions, proficiency in the *dalāʾil ʿaḳliyya* (the intellectual proofs), and expertise in the relevant exegetical terms. The *ʿāmmī* (the unqualified lay believer) was not to practice *taḳlīd* in relation to *uṣūl al-dīn*, but in the *furūʿ* (lit. "the branches", i.e. practical norms of the law) he was to exercise *taḳlīd* in relation to a *ḥukm* or decision reached by application of these skills. Al-ʿAllāma specified that neglect of such a decision constituted a sin, while the *mudjtahid* who reached an "erroneous"

decision having exercised these abilities in good faith was to be forgiven.

Both granted the *faķīh* a pivotal role in the community's daily affairs, understanding him as the Imām's designated deputy in these areas. The *faķīh* who had attained the *sharā'iṭ* was to undertake *ķaḍā'* and had a role in the processes relating to the *zakāt*. Al-'Allāma permitted *al-faķīh al-djāmi' li 'l-sharā'iṭ* ("the *faķīh* who has attained the qualifications"), one of the earliest uses of this reference, to implement the *ḥudūd*; he also required the Friday prayer leader to possess the *sharā'iṭ*. Al-Shahīd al-Awwal (d. 786/1384 [see MUḤAMMAD B. MAKKĪ]) echoed this definition of the *sharā'iṭ*, ruled that *al-faķīh al-djāmi' li 'l-sharā'iṭ* was to undertake *ķaḍā'*, and supported the concept of "specialised" *idjtihād*. All permitted a wide degree of interaction between the *faķīh* and the political institution.

Immediately following the Ṣafawids' [q.v.] establishment of Twelver Shī'ism in Persia, such Uṣūlīs as 'Alī al-Karakī (d. 940/1534) and al-Shahīd al-Thānī (d. 965/1557 [q.v.]) elaborated the concept of *niyāba 'āmma* (general deputyship to the Imām) and identified *al-faķīh al-djāmi' li 'l-sharā'iṭ* as *nā'ib 'āmm* (general deputy), who was delegated authority over the practical areas of the community's life. The *nā'ib khāṣṣ* was understood, if not always explicitly, to refer to the earlier *sufarā'*. Al-Karakī's defence of his association with the early Shāhs as that permitted between the *faķīh/nā'ib* and claimants to the Imāmate, however, was disavowed by such Uṣūlī contemporaries as al-Shahīd al-Thānī, who rejected the Ṣafawid claim to any special relationship with the faith and avoided Ṣafawid territory.

In the next century, official patronage insured that Twelver centres in Arab 'Irāķ, the Gulf and Djabal 'Āmil were eclipsed by such Persian centres as Iṣfahān. The latter attracted and sustained prominent Arab and Persian Twelver scholars and thereby permitted considerable development of both the Uṣūlī and opposition Akhbārī polemics. In his *Munyat al-mumārisīn*, 'Abd Allāh al-Samāhidjī (d. 1135/1723) catalogued the nature of the disagreements between and within each group, giving perhaps the fullest exposition of the Uṣūlī doctrine as it had developed by this period. Uṣūlīs required the *mudjtahid* to master *kalām* (theology), *naḥw* and *taṣrīf* (Arabic syntax and morphology), *lughat al-'arab* (lexicography), *manṭiķ* (logic), and the *uṣūl al-fiķh al-arba'a* (the four fundamental sources of law). The latter comprised the Ķur'ān, the *sunna*, *idjmā'* and *dalīl al-'aķl*. Uṣūlīs divided the community into *mudjtahids* or *mukallids*, permitting the former to err, and forbade *taķlīd al-mayyit* (following the ruling of a dead *mudjtahid*). Al-Samāhidjī also recorded the presence of "extreme" Uṣūlīs dismissive of any recourse to the revelation and requiring expertise in fifteen rationalist disciplines, over and above "the six principal" ones. These "extreme" elements may have comprised those who argued that, as illegitimate rulers, the Ṣafawid shāhs were to be replaced by the *fuķahā'*. By contrast, some "moderate" *mudjtahids* were portrayed as agreeing with some Akhbārīs on such issues as *idjmā'*.

In this period, Uṣūlīs continued to disagree on the extent of *taķlīd*. Aḥmad b. Muḥammad al-Ardabīlī (d. 993/1585) offered strong support for *taķlīd*. Like the Buwayhid rationalists, Ḥasan b. al-Shahīd al-Thānī (d. 1011/1602) held that *taķlīd* was not incumbent concerning fundamental matters of the faith, but otherwise obligatory where the lay believer determined that his *muftī* had acquired the *sharā'iṭ*. Bahā' al-Dīn al-'Āmilī or Shaykh Bahā'ī (d. 1030/1631 [q.v.]) held

that in matters of the *uṣūl al-dīn*, *taķlīd* was "safer".

Uṣūlīs of the Ṣafawid period generally agreed that the lay believer was free to chose his own *mudjtahid*, based on personal assessment of the abilities of particular scholars. They disagreed over the division between "specialised" or "partial" *idjtihād* and *idjtihād muṭlaķ* (absolute, or general *idjtihād*). Ḥasan b. al-Shahīd al-Thānī argued against "partial" *idjtihād* and for the authority of *al-mudjtahid al-muṭlaķ*. Shaykh Bahā'ī endorsed such a division, as did Muḥammad Bāķir al-Sabzawārī (d. 1090/1679). Al-Samāhidjī's reference to "partial" and "absolute" practitioners of *idjtihād* suggests that by the late 11th/17th century, this division was very nearly formalised.

The institutionalisation of this distinction facilitated the triumph of the Uṣūlī school over the Akhbārīs at the hands of such scholars as Muḥammad Bāķir al-Bihbihānī (d. 1205/1791), known as al-Waḥīd, and the further differentiation of a clerical hierarchy by Muḥammad Ḥasan al-Nadjafī (d. 1266/1850) and, especially, Murtaḍā al-Anṣārī (d. 1281/1864). Their contributions allowed for the evolution of such concepts as that of *mardja'-i taķlīd* (the source of emulation [q.v.]), the rankings of *ḥudjdjat al-islām* and *āyatullāh* [q.v. in Suppl.], and, eventually, the principle of government by an expert in rationalist jurisprudence embodied in the term *wilāyat-i faķīh*.

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(A.J. NEWMAN)

2. In modern Islamic theologico-political parlance

Since the middle to late 1970s, *uṣūliyya* has been in general use, first in the Arabic press and then in Arabic scholarly writings as well, as the equivalent of "fundamentalism". Earlier, e.g. as recently as in the writings of Rashīd Riḍā [*q.v.*], *uṣūlī* meant "a specialist in the science of the *uṣūl al-dīn* [*q.v.*] or, more predominantly, the science of the *uṣūl al-fiḳh* [*q.v.*]". In less formal Egyptian Arabic, Islamic "fundamentalists" are often called *islāmiyyīn, al-sunniyya*, or, in the singular, by terms like *ikhwangī* or *rāgil sunnī*. No matter how awkward the term "fundamentalism" may actually be, it is improbable that it will be replaced by a term like "revolutionary extremist neotraditionalist ultra-Islamic radicalism" (Marty and Appleby, *Fundamentalisms*, i, p. viii).

The word "fundamentalism" itself was coined around 1920 in the North American Christian milieu. It appears to have been derived from a series of pamphlets called *The fundamentals. A testimony to the truth*, published in America during 1909-15 (Lawrence, *Defenders*, 166; Barr, *Fundamentalism*, 2).

It is often argued, with great obstinacy, that fundamentalism is a typically Christian, Protestant phenomenon, hence the term is useless and even misleading when used in order to describe phenomena which take place in the world of Islam. Christian fundamentalism certainly differs in many ways from its Islamic (or Jewish) assumed equivalents. Nevertheless, several modern scholars suspect that the movements described as fundamentalist have a number of common characteristics.

Fundamentalism, it is often asserted since the late 1980s and early 1990s, reduces a religious tradition to a specific political ideology. This ideology is attractive to the politically excluded, who try to fight their way back to the centre of power by pleading that they simply want to implement neglected duties which their religion has imposed from old. In order to rearrange the world in accordance with what they see as the will of God, they are ready to kill and to die. The belief in the literal inerrancy of the revealed scriptures is only a minor detail within the framework of the return of society and state to what God commands.

It can be argued convincingly that North-American Protestant fundamentalism is the religious continuation of the Southern Confederacy that in 1865 lost the American Civil War. After a political and military defeat in the Civil War the South nevertheless wanted to teach the modern North a lesson. The modern North had to learn about God's intentions with the universe—if not with the United States of America (see e.g. Bloom, *American religion*, 197). With the help of Christianity reduced to a religious ideology, the excluded managed to strike back at the dominating élites.

Religion was marginal in the world of the Zionist pioneers who built a Jewish state and society on Palestinian soil in the first half of the 20th century. Traditional Jewish piety and *halakha* were looked upon with disdain and sometimes even contempt. Religious Judaism hardly participated in the gradual putting-together of a modern Jewish state. It is Judaism reduced to an ideology which in the 1990s gives those who were formerly excluded the power and the motivation to strike back, and perhaps even to take over the whole state. Since, however, the exclusion of the orthodox is not absolute—they, after all, can vote and be elected—they do not have to go as far as the Muslim fundamentalists and can safely accept the existing structure of a state that was built by others as legitimate, as something they at a certain point in the future expect to take over.

Islamic fundamentalism can be interpreted in a similar way. In roughly the second quarter of the 20th century, the colonial powers left the Middle East, both under pressure from "the masses" and under pressure from the international situation that after the end of the Second World War did not make allowances for the continuation of British, French or other colonial régimes within the world of Islam. The former colonial rulers, however, did not hand over their power to the "masses", but to military élites. After the decolonisation process, the populations of the Middle East were almost completely prevented from playing the game of politics: no effective political parties were allowed to exist, and no elections that mattered were held.

Once they were independent from their former colonial masters, the governments in the Muslim Middle East put great effort into getting support from both sides in the Cold War. They looked to Washington and Moscow, but did not, however, look for support at home. Moreover, within their own territories they went far in annihilating all social networks, except, of course, family and religion. In such a world, opposition movements could not but be religiously inspired or else become an insignificant family affair. There were simply no other sources of ideas or recruits other than family or religion. In such a perspective, Islamic fundamentalism is an unprecedented attempt by the masses to re-enter the game, by force if necessary.

According to Ernest Gellner (d. 1995), the success of Islamic fundamentalism is largely due to the "contamination" of Islamic popular culture by the ideals of Islamic High Culture. According to him, an Islamist régime is nothing but a "political roof" which is put in place in order to protect and to implement the ideals of Islamic High Culture. According to others, no meaningful distinction can be made between Islam and Islamic fundamentalism: both want to rule and to implement the laws of Islam.

Islamic fundamentalists, in their own words, believe that "to carry out God's prescripts [is] an obligation for the Muslims. Hence, the establishment of an Islamic State is obligatory, because something without which something which is obligatory cannot be carried out becomes itself obligatory. If such a state cannot be established without war, then this war is an obligation as well. The laws by which the Muslims are ruled today are [not the laws of Islam but] the laws of Unbelief. The rulers of this age are [hence] in apostasy from Islam. An apostate has to be killed even if he is unable to carry arms and go to war".

('Abd al-Salām Faradj, one of Sādāt's assassins, quoted in Jansen, *Dual nature*, p. xvi).

Fundamentalists select a limited number of the precepts of their religion and make these absolute. Jewish fundamentalists see it as obligatory (not any longer as only recommendable) to live in the Holy Land, hence they want to remove all others from the sacred soil. Christian fundamentalists see everything connected with the end or the beginning of life as God's exclusive domain. Hence they reject philological exegesis of the story of the Creation as recounted in Genesis, and they fight abortion, euthanasia and contraceptives. Muslim fundamentalists want to see the *Sharī'a* applied by an Islamic government, and they have only a limited interest in the other aspects of Islam. If poverty, as some people believe, were to drive people to fundamentalism, its support would be even stronger than it is today.

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(J.J.G. JANSEN)

USUMAN DAN FODIO [see 'UTHMĀN B. FŪDĪ].

USWĀN, conventionally AswĀN, a town in Egypt situated on the eastern bank of the Nile (lat. 24° 05' N., long. 32° 56' E.).

1. Up to the 9th/15th century

Originally, it was a small town (Swēnet, Syene, Suan) facing the island of Elephantine, which was a much more important settlement in ancient Egypt. When the Muslim Arabs overran Egypt, the conquest of Upper Egypt [see AL-ṢA'ĪD] was entrusted to 'Abd Allāh b. Sa'd [q.v.]. The Arabs fixed their camp at Suan, facing the Byzantine settlement of Elephantine. An expedition of 31/652 by 'Abd Allāh penetrated into Nubia [see AL-NŪBA] but judged it prudent to withdraw, on the basis of the ancient *pactum*, now the *baḳṭ* [q.v.] or treaty, which envisaged non-aggression, freedom for merchants to circulate, and an annual tribute by the Nubians of slaves in return for the equivalent value in corn, wine, clothing and horses. Uswān then became the second military centre of Egypt after Fusṭāṭ [q.v.] with a governor of second rank responsible to the governor in Fusṭāṭ, and new contingents of Arab immigrants, mainly Ḳaysīs, from the Ḥidjāz.

The governors' role in Aswān was essentially to prevent incursions by the Nubians and to regulate the exchanges foreseen under the terms of the *baḳṭ*. In al-Mas'ūdī's time, the contingent of slaves due from the Nubians comprised 365 for the *bayt al-māl*, 40 for the governor in Fusṭāṭ, 20 for the governor in Uswān, five for the town's *ḳāḍī* and twelve for the twelve professional witnesses there ('*udūl*); for further details on the working out of this arrangement, see BAḲṬ. The governor in Uswān had finally to keep guard against the Bedja [q.v.] nomads of the deserts between the Nile and the Red Sea, who sometimes acted in consort with the Nubians (certain of the Bedja were Christians), and Bedja incursions led to the construction of a wall round Uswān in 212/827. The governor was further responsible for the tracks between the river and the Red Sea and for the safety of the pilgrims' sea passage from 'Aynūna (near 'Aḳaba at the head of the Red Sea)

and then by land to Uswān, and negotiated at Uswān a treaty of protection with the Bedja chiefs. A new factor was the rediscovery of gold mines in the Wādī 'Allāḳī to the southeast of Uswān; for details of the subsequent exploitation of this precious metal, extending over a century, see AL-ṢA'ĪD.

Uswān was a lively centre in the 3rd/9th century, and scholars of Mālikī *fiḳh* and *ḥadīth* are mentioned there. After being for long only loosely attached to Lower Egypt, it gradually became more integrated within Egypt in general, with Uswān as a stage on the route from Fusṭāṭ to the Ḥidjāz. It flourished particularly under the early Fāṭimids, and it is from the first half of the 5th/11th century that the main surviving mausolea date. A feature of the period was the ascendancy in the Uswān region of Ḳaysī Arab tribes, with the chief of Rabī'a acquiring the title of Kanz al-Dawla (see on this process, AL-ṢA'ĪD). Nāṣir-i Khusraw passed through the town in mid-century and mentions its fortifications and gardens, with everything animated by the departure of caravans for the Red Sea port of 'Aydhāb [q.v.]. From this time onwards, too, Uswān had a Jewish community. In the next century, however, al-Idrīsī's evidence shows that the trade of the Ḥidjāz had been deflected from the town, and only its commerce with Nubia remained. This change seems to have been connected with internal convulsions within the Fāṭimid caliphate when the vizier Badr al-Djamālī [q.v.] came to power, and Ḳūṣ [q.v.] became the administrative centre of the upper Ṣa'īd, attracting the Ḥidjāz trade and the pilgrim traffic.

The Ayyūbid period was one of peace for Upper Egypt with the Banū Kanz, the former Rabī'a, now dominating Uswān and the town gradually making the transition to Sunnism, although Shī'ism remained strong there. The Mamlūks resumed an activist policy towards Nubia in 671/1273 and 674/1275, and Uswān was raided by the Nubians. The Kanz al-Dawlas were more strictly controlled by the Mamlūks, but remained responsible for order in the region and seem to have received for this the revenues of Uswān as an *iḳṭā'*, so that they had a dominating influence in the town, which nevertheless continued to decline, its three *madrasas* serving strictly local needs. With the revolt of the Ḳaysī tribes, including the Kunūz, as they are now termed, in 767/1365-6, the balance there was upset; the latter lost their *iḳṭā'* of Uswān, and a Mamlūk governor was now appointed there. For the remainder of the century, Uswān was frequently attacked and sacked by the tribes, with the last Mamlūk governor appointed in 801/1399. The ensuing crisis of the Mamlūk state removed Uswān from the control of Cairo [see AL-ṢA'ĪD], and al-Maḳrīzī recorded for the year 815/1412-13 that Uswān no longer existed, with no governor, notables, markets or houses. In the course of the century, the Mamlūks sent expeditions in the hope of re-establishing control in Upper Egypt, without lasting effect. Egypt's southern frontier was now Kōm Umbū, and one can conclude that mediaeval Uswān disappeared at the opening of the 9th/15th century.

Bibliography: There are many bibliographical references in J.-Cl. Garcin, *Un centre musulman de la Haute-Égypte médiévale: Qūs*, Cairo 1976. On the architecture and epigraphy of Uswān during this period, see Creswell, *The Muslim architecture of Egypt*, i, Oxford 1952, and 'Abd al-Rahman 'Abd al-Tawab, revisions of and notes on S. Ory, *Stèles islamiques de la nécropole d'Assouan*, 3 vols. Cairo 1977-86.

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2. The post-1500 period

Uswān passed under Ottoman control at an unknown