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Logical and Linguistic Analysis of Religious Propositions: Ibrāhīm al-Kūrānī on *Kalimat al-Tawḥīd*

The *Kalimat al-tawḥīd*, which expresses the unity of God, and the *basmala*, which is the first verse of the Qurʾān as well as the commonest prayer of the Muslim's daily life, are arguably the most significant key formulae of Islamic belief, and there is huge literature devoted to these two sentences in various areas of Islamic thought. However, the works by two Ottoman Sufi scholars, Ibrāhīm al-Kūrānī (d. 1690) and Abū Saʿīd al-Khādimī (d. 1762) have a special place in this literature because they analyse the sentences in terms of logic and as two propositions. In his work on the *Kalimat al-tawḥīd*, Kūrānī dedicates a good number of pages to explicate logical aspects of the *kalima* as a proposition. In the same vein, Khādimī writes a treatise on the *basmala*, in which he features an in-depth analysis of the *basmala* in terms of logic. Khādimī introduces the chapter with an apologia of logic and its use in the religious sciences.

By a thorough examination of relevant passages of Kūrānī's and Khādimī's treatises, I will argue in the paper that their work is a rare expression of the efforts by Muslim scholars to reconcile, or even justify, religious knowledge and belief of monotheism through such rational tools as logic. It is also significant in showing the high status logic was given by the orthodox Islamic scholarship in a process started influentially by Ghazālī (d. 1111).



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