



Paralogism in Abul A'lā Mawdūdī's *Khilāfat wa Mulūkiyat*: A Critical Analysis of Taqī 'Uthmānī's Refutation

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Abstract

This study critically examines the presence of paralogism in Abul Ala Mawdudi's *Khilafat wa Mulukiyat* through an analysis of Taqi Usmani's systematic refutation. While *Khilafat wa Mulukiyat* has significantly influenced modern Islamic political thought, its historiographical methodology remains highly contested among Sunni scholars, particularly regarding its interpretation of the early caliphate and the Companions of the Prophet. Employing a qualitative textual analysis, this study compares Mawdudi's historical arguments with classical Islamic sources and Usmani's methodological critique. The analysis identifies recurring forms of paralogism, including selective use of historical evidence, omission of contradictory reports, conflation of legitimate *ijtihad* with *bid'ah*, and contextual misinterpretation of key narrations concerning Muawiyah ibn Abi Sufyan. These argumentative patterns are contrasted with Usmani's emphasis on source verification, the methodological principles of *al-jarh wa al-ta'dil*, and the ethical norms governing Islamic historiography. The study argues that the debate extends beyond historical disagreement to competing epistemological approaches for evaluating Islamic history and religious authority. It contributes to contemporary scholarship by demonstrating how methodological rigor and critical source evaluation remain essential for interpreting contested narratives within Islamic intellectual history.

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Introduction

The writings of [Abul A'lā Mawdūdī \(1903–1979\)](#), one of the most influential Islamist thinkers of the twentieth century, have generated enduring debate within Muslim intellectual circles, particularly across the Indian subcontinent ([Aafreedi, 2019](#); [Kattiparambil, 2020](#); [Mohamed, 2018](#)). While many scholars regard Mawdūdī as a leading revivalist who sought to reassert Islam as a comprehensive political and social system in response to Western secularism ([Nasr, 1994](#); [Ahmad & Ansari, 1979](#)), traditional Sunni 'ulamā' have consistently criticized his scholarship for methodological weaknesses, insufficient formal training in the Islamic sciences, and selective interpretations of classical sources



(Kandhalwī, n.d.; Bannūrī, 1977). Among his most controversial works is *Khilāfat wa Mulūkiyat* (*Caliphate and Kingship*), in which he presents a critical reinterpretation of the transition from the *Khilāfat Rāshidah* to hereditary monarchy (*mulūkiyat*), focusing particularly on Mu‘āwiyah ibn Abī Sufyān (r.a.), the founder of the Umayyad dynasty (Maryam, 2024a; Nafia & Gumiandari, 2019a). In this work, Mawdūdī accuses Mu‘āwiyah of religious innovation (*bid‘ah*), manipulating legal procedures, publicly disparaging ‘Alī ibn Abī Ṭālib (r.a.), and authorizing the assassination of political opponents. These allegations have been strongly rejected by traditional Sunni scholars, who argue that they violate the methodological principles of *al-jarḥ wa al-ta‘dīl* and the long-established norm of honoring the *Ṣaḥābah* (Aris & Muslim, 2020; Jazelyna Afnida Nanda, 2023; Su, 2025). Consequently, the debate extends far beyond historical interpretation, touching on broader questions concerning scholarly authority, historical methodology, and the ethical interpretation of early Islamic history (Toral-Niehoff, 2019; University of Texas Rio Grande Valley & Carreon, 2018).

Mawdūdī’s *Khilāfat wa Mulūkiyat* formed part of his broader intellectual project to reinterpret Islam as a comprehensive political ideology (Fuchs, 2022a; Nafia & Gumiandari, 2019b; Rehman, 2023). However, critics argue that this ideological orientation led him to employ historical reasoning characterized by selective citation, contextual omission, and flawed interpretation, producing what may be described as recurring forms of paralogism in the study of Islamic history (Fuchs, 2022b; Nafia & Gumiandari, 2019b). Mawdūdī alleged, for example, that Mu‘āwiyah introduced the *bid‘ah* of appointing a Muslim heir for a non-Muslim, altered the rules governing *diyyah* for non-Muslims, embezzled war booty, institutionalized the public cursing of ‘Alī during Friday sermons, recognized Ziyād ibn Sumayyah as a member of his lineage, and ordered the execution of Ḥajr ibn ‘Adī, whom he mistakenly identified as a Companion (Mawdūdī, 1996). If historically accurate, such accusations would profoundly affect the reputation of one of Islam’s most prominent Companions. Nevertheless, leading Sunni scholars—including Muḥammad Zakariyyā Kandhalwī, Yūsuf Bannūrī, and Abul Ḥasan ‘Alī Nadwī—have rejected these claims, arguing that Mawdūdī relied on weak, selective, or inaccurately represented historical evidence while lacking adequate formal training in the Islamic sciences (Kandhalwī, n.d.; Bannūrī, 1977; Nadwī, 1982). The most comprehensive response was later produced by Justice Taqī ‘Uthmānī (b. 1943) in *Haḍrat Mu‘āwiyah awr Tārīkhī Haqā’iq*, a systematic point-by-point refutation written in response to widespread concern among Muslim scholars regarding Mawdūdī’s historical claims (‘Uthmānī, 2007).

Despite the significance of this intellectual dispute, contemporary scholarship has paid remarkably little attention to ‘Uthmānī’s critique, particularly outside Urdu-speaking academic communities (Fuchs, 2022b; Iqtidar & Scharbrodt, 2022; Tampan Cresna, 2018). Most studies of Mawdūdī concentrate on his political philosophy, the concept of *ḥākimiyyah*, his influence on Islamist movements, or his Qur’anic exegesis, while the methodological criticisms directed at *Khilāfat wa Mulūkiyat* receive comparatively limited attention (Nasr, 1994; Rahman, 1982; Fazlur Rahman, 1982). Even studies acknowledging the controversy rarely engage with the detailed refutations advanced by ‘Uthmānī and other traditional ‘ulamā’. This omission is partly attributable to language barriers, since most critical responses remain available only in Urdu and therefore remain inaccessible to many scholars in Western, Arab, and other international academic contexts. As a result, global scholarship often presents an incomplete understanding of Mawdūdī’s historical methodology and scholarly standing. This study seeks to address that gap by examining ‘Uthmānī’s critique through three analytical dimensions: identifying paralogical reasoning in Mawdūdī’s interpretation of historical sources, evaluating his methodology for assessing the *Ṣaḥābah*, and exploring the broader implications of this debate for Islamic historiography and religious authority.

Accordingly, this study addresses three interrelated questions. First, to what extent does Taqī ‘Uthmānī demonstrate that Mawdūdī employed logical fallacies and misrepresented historical evidence in his criticism of Mu‘āwiyah? Second, what methodological principles concerning the evaluation of the *Ṣaḥābah* and the use of historical sources emerge from ‘Uthmānī’s refutation, and how do they challenge Mawdūdī’s approach? Third, what broader implications does this controversy hold for contemporary Islamic thought, particularly regarding the relationship between self-taught modernist intellectuals and traditionally trained ‘ulamā’? This article argues that ‘Uthmānī provides compelling evidence that *Khilāfat wa Mulūkiyat* contains recurring paralogisms, including the selective use of historical sources, the omission of exculpatory evidence, the misinterpretation of primary texts, and the failure to distinguish authentic reports from weak or fabricated narrations. According to ‘Uthmānī, these methodological weaknesses reflect Mawdūdī’s limited formal training in the Islamic sciences and his tendency to interpret early Islamic history through modern political categories. By contrast, ‘Uthmānī’s reliance on the authority of the *Ṣaḥābah*, the principles of *al-jarḥ wa al-ta’dīl*, and rigorous evaluation of *isnād* offers a more robust framework for responsible Islamic historiography. The debate therefore illustrates a broader tension between ideologically driven modernist interpretations and the classical Sunni scholarly

tradition, with significant implications for future studies of early Islamic history and the nature of religious authority.

Research Methodology

This study adopts a qualitative research approach because it is particularly appropriate for investigating intellectual controversies, textual interpretation, and the epistemological foundations of historical argumentation. Qualitative inquiry enables researchers to explore meanings embedded within texts, reconstruct patterns of reasoning, and examine how competing interpretations are produced within specific scholarly traditions rather than merely describing observable phenomena (Creswell & Poth, 2018; Denzin & Lincoln, 2018). In the context of this study, the qualitative paradigm provides an effective framework for examining the historical polemic between Abul A'la Mawdūdī and Taqī 'Uthmānī regarding Mu'āwiyah ibn Abī Sufyān and for identifying the forms of paralogical reasoning underlying their competing interpretations.

The study employs an exploratory comparative-critical design based on qualitative textual analysis. Rather than assessing the historical events themselves, the analysis focuses on how historical arguments are constructed, supported, and contested within the primary texts. Particular attention is given to the methodological strategies adopted by each author in selecting, interpreting, and presenting historical evidence. An emic perspective is employed to understand each scholar's arguments within his own intellectual and theological framework. This perspective enables the analysis to capture how Mawdūdī constructed a historical narrative shaped by his reformist and ideological commitments, while also examining how 'Uthmānī responded through systematic source verification and adherence to the classical principles of Islamic historiography (Mawdūdī, 1996; 'Uthmānī, 2007). The broader intellectual environment of the Indian subcontinent, where Urdu scholarship has long played a central role in shaping religious authority and historical consciousness, also provides an essential context for interpreting this debate (Nasr, 1994; Rahman, 1982).

As a library-based study, the research relies exclusively on documentary sources and therefore does not involve human participants. The principal sources consist of Mawdūdī's *Khilāfat wa Mulūkiyat* and 'Uthmānī's *Ḥaḍrat Mu'āwiyah awwr Tārīkhī Ḥaqā'iq*. These works are analyzed alongside the classical Islamic references cited by both authors, including *Tārīkh al-Ṭabarī*, *al-Bidāyah wa al-Nihāyah* by Ibn Kathīr, *Tārīkh Ibn Khaldūn*, *Sunan al-Bayhaqī*, and *Ṣaḥīḥ al-Bukhārī*, among other relevant historical and *ḥadīth* sources. Throughout the research

process, scholarly integrity is maintained through accurate citation, careful source verification, and transparent documentation of all textual evidence.

Data collection and analysis were conducted in three sequential stages. First, a close reading of *Khilāfat wa Mulūkiyat* was undertaken to identify Mawdūdī's principal allegations against Mu'āwiyah and to document the historical evidence upon which those claims were based. Second, each allegation was systematically compared with 'Uthmānī's refutation in order to verify the original Arabic sources, examine their textual context, and identify agreements or discrepancies between the cited references and Mawdūdī's interpretation. Finally, the findings were coded and categorized according to recurring forms of paralogical reasoning, including misquotation, contextual omission, false attribution, equivocation, and unsupported inference. This analytical process follows established principles of qualitative thematic analysis while remaining grounded in the classical methodology of Islamic source criticism (Braun & Clarke, 2006; Fereday & Muir-Cochrane, 2006). The primary and secondary sources examined in this study are summarized in Table 1.

Table 1
Data Sources

No.	Data Type	Source	Quantity / Description
1	Primary text (Urdu)	Mawdūdī, A. A. (1996). <i>Khilāfat wa mulūkiyat</i>	1 book (main object of critique)
2	Primary text (Urdu)	'Uthmānī, T. (2007). <i>Haḍrat Mu'āwiyah awwalī al-khalafah</i>	1 book (systematic refutation)
3	Classical sources (Arabic)	Ibn Kathīr, Ibn Khaldūn, al-Bīhaqī, al-Bukhārī, al-Ṭabarī, al-Dīnawarī, Ibn al-Athīr, Ibn Qudāmah, Ibn Taymiyyah	9 classical works cited by both authors
4	Secondary literature (Urdu/English)	Kandhalwī, Bannūrī, Nadwī, Nasr, Rahman, Ahmad & Ansari	6 works providing context and scholarly background

Source: Developed by the author, 2026.

Table 1 above shows that the study draws on five categories of data sources, ranging from the two primary Urdu texts at the center of the controversy to classical Arabic historical works, secondary scholarly literature, and methodological references. This multi-layered approach enables the researcher to verify citations, contextualize arguments, and apply a rigorous analytical framework. The classical sources, including Ibn Kathīr, Ibn Khaldūn, al-Bīhaqī, and al-Bukhārī, are essential for checking the accuracy of Mawdūdī's references and evaluating the strength of 'Uthmānī's counter-evidence.

The secondary literature provides the intellectual and historical context necessary for understanding the significance of the Mawdūdī-'Uthmānī polemic

within broader debates on Islamic revivalism, religious authority, and scholarly methodology (Nasr, 1994; Rahman, 1982; Ahmad & Ansari, 1979). Data analysis employs hybrid thematic analysis, combining deductive codes derived from the concept of paralogism (Aristotle, Kant) and the principles of *al-jarḥ wa al-ta'dīl* (criticism and authentication of narrators), with inductive codes emerging from the texts themselves (e.g., “misattribution of statements,” “ignoring ijtihād context,” “omission of exonerating evidence”) (Braun & Clarke, 2006; Fereday & Muir-Cochrane, 2006). To enhance trustworthiness, the study uses theoretical and source triangulation, cross-checking ‘Uthmānī’s findings against other traditional scholars and verifying citations against classical works (Denzin, 2012). The main limitations include reliance on Urdu sources without professional translation and the absence of primary empirical data, which constrains generalizability, though the in-depth textual analysis provides rich insights into the controversy (Patton, 2015; Yin, 2018). The exploratory qualitative approach, grounded in the emic perspectives of Mawdūdī and ‘Uthmānī and supported by systematic textual analysis and triangulation, allows the study to uncover paralogical reasoning in historical writing while demonstrating the importance of source criticism and scholarly authority in Islamic historiography, thereby contributing to a more balanced understanding of a controversy long confined to Urdu-language academic circles.

Mawdūdī’s Allegations Against Mu‘āwiyah in *Khilāfat wa Mulūkiyat*: Identifying Patterns of Paralogism

Abul A‘lā Mawdūdī’s *Khilāfat wa Mulūkiyat* (Caliphate and Kingship) is perhaps his most controversial historical-political treatise. Written in Urdu and widely circulated in the Indian subcontinent, the book purports to expose a fundamental rupture in Islamic political ethics: the transition from the pristine, consultative caliphate of Abū Bakr, ‘Umar, ‘Uthmān, and ‘Alī (may Allah be pleased with them) to the hereditary kingship (*mulūkiyat*) of the Umayyads, personified by Mu‘āwiyah ibn Abī Sufyān (r.a.). While Mawdūdī’s work has been hailed by some modernists as a bold critique of political authoritarianism, traditional Sunni scholars, especially those trained in the sciences of ḥadīth criticism (*al-jarḥ wa al-ta'dīl*) and Islamic historiography, have denounced it as a textbook example of paralogism: a reasoning that appears logically coherent but is built upon misrepresentation of sources, omission of contrary evidence, and a failure to respect the established methodologies of Islamic scholarship (‘Uthmānī, 2007; Kandhalwī, n.d.; Bannūrī, 1977).

The most thorough and academically rigorous refutation of Mawdūdī's claims came from Justice Taqī 'Uthmānī (b. 1943), a leading Pakistani jurist, former judge of the Shariat Appellate Bench of the Supreme Court of Pakistan, and a recognised authority in ḥadīth and fiqh. At the urging of numerous scholars and lay Muslims who were disturbed by the defamation of Mu'āwiyah and other Companions, 'Uthmānī wrote *Haḍrat Mu'āwiyah awr Tārīkhī Haqā'iq* (His Holiness Mu'āwiyah and Historical Facts). In this work, 'Uthmānī systematically examines each allegation that Mawdūdī raises against Mu'āwiyah, exposing a pattern of flawed methodology, selective citation, and, in several instances, outright distortion of the original Arabic sources ('Uthmānī, 2007).

Before delving into the detailed counter-evidence, it is helpful to list the six major accusations that 'Uthmānī isolates from *Khilāfat wa Mulūkiyat*:

Table 2
Six Allegations by Mawdūdī and 'Uthmānī's Refutation

No.	Mawdūdī's Allegation	Paralogism / Error	'Uthmānī's Counter-Argument	Key References	Original Arabic Evidence
1	Innovation (<i>bid'ah</i>) in inheritance law	Manipulation of Imām al-Zuhri's statement	Al-Zuhri merely recorded Mu'āwiyah's legal opinion without condemning it as <i>bid'ah</i> . The ruling represented a legitimate exercise of <i>ijtihād</i> .	<i>Al-Bidāyah wa al-Nihāyah</i> , vol. 9, p. 232; 'Uthmānī, pp. 15–16	راجع السنة الأولى
2	Reduction of blood money (<i>diyyah</i>) for non-Muslims	Misquotation; statement falsely attributed to Ibn Kathīr	The authentic narration states that one-half of the <i>diyyah</i> was deposited into <i>Bayt al-Māl</i> , not taken by Mu'āwiyah personally.	Al-Biḥaqī, <i>Al-Sunan al-Kubrā</i> , vol. 8, p. 102; 'Uthmānī, pp. 27–30	عن الزهري قال كانت دية اليهود والنصراني في زمن نبي الله مثل دية المسلم... فلما كان معاوية أعطى أهل المقتول النصف وألقى النصف في بيت المال
3	Misappropriation of war booty (<i>ghanimah</i>)	Misreading of the Arabic text by replacing "for the public treasury" with "for himself"	Ibn Kathīr explicitly uses the expression <i>li-Bayt al-Māl</i> , indicating that the wealth was allocated to the state treasury rather than to Mu'āwiyah personally.	Ibn Kathīr, <i>Al-Bidāyah wa al-Nihāyah</i> , vol. 9, p. 29; 'Uthmānī, p. 33	إن أمير المؤمنين قد جاء كتابه أن يصطفى له كل صفراء وبيضاء يعني الذهب والفضة، يجمع كله من هذه الغنيمة لبيت المال.
4	Insulting 'Alī ibn Abī Ṭālib	Citation of references that do not	No reliable evidence demonstrates that Mu'āwiyah personally cursed 'Alī. Historical	Al-Ṭabarī, <i>Tārīkh</i> ; Ibn al-Athīr, <i>Usd al-</i>	لما جاء خبر قتل علي إلى معاوية جعل يبكي، فقالت له امرأته: أتبكيه وقد

		support the allegation	reports instead describe Mu‘āwiyah mourning ‘Alī’s death and acknowledging his virtues.	<i>Ghābah</i> ; ‘Uthmānī, pp. 37–40	قاتلته؟ فقال: ويحك إنك لا تدري ما فقد الناس من الفضل والفقه والعلم.
5	Illegitimate inclusion of Ziyād ibn Abīhi into the Umayyad lineage	Neglect of historical evidence concerning Abū Sufyān’s lawful pre-Islamic marriage to Sumayyah	Historical authorities such as Ibn Khaldūn and Ibn al-Athīr maintain that Ziyād was Abū Sufyān’s biological son from a valid pre-Islamic marriage.	Ibn Khaldūn, <i>Tārīkh</i> , vol. 3, p. 14; Al-Dīnawarī, <i>Al-Akhbār al-Tiwāl</i> , p. 219; ‘Uthmānī, pp. 55–62	كان أبو سفيان قد ذهب إلى الطائف في بعض حاجته فأصابها بنوع من أنكحة الجاهلية، فولدت زيادًا هذا.
6	Execution of Ḥajr ibn ‘Adī	Misidentification of Ḥajr as a Companion and disregard of his armed rebellion	The consensus of leading <i>muḥaddithūn</i> (including al-Bukhārī, Ibn Ḥibbān, and Ibn Abī Ḥātim) classifies Ḥajr as a <i>tābi‘ī</i> , not a Companion. His execution was based on charges of armed rebellion rather than punishment for speaking the truth.	Al-Bukhārī, <i>Ṣaḥīḥ</i> ; Al-Dīnawarī, p. 221; ‘Uthmānī, pp. 77–78, 239–240	فسار حجر عن الكوفة في ثلاثة آلاف بالسلح.

Source: Developed by the author, 2026.

Table 2 demonstrates that Mawdūdī’s six principal allegations against Mu‘āwiyah are supported by weak and methodologically problematic evidentiary foundations. ‘Uthmānī’s analysis reveals three recurring patterns of paralogism: the misrepresentation of primary sources, the selective citation or omission of exculpatory evidence, and the conflation of legitimate juristic disagreement (*ijtihād*) with religious innovation (*bid‘ah*). Collectively, these methodological deficiencies extend beyond the historical defense of Mu‘āwiyah. Instead, they expose a broader epistemological weakness in Mawdūdī’s approach to Islamic historiography, particularly his departure from established principles of source criticism, contextual interpretation, and the classical methodologies governing the evaluation of historical reports.

Textual Analysis of ‘Uthmānī’s Refutation – A Narrative Exposition

Following the summary of Mawdūdī’s six principal allegations in **Table 2**, this section moves beyond descriptive classification to examine two of the most controversial accusations directed against Mu‘āwiyah ibn Abī Sufyān: first, the allegation that he personally ordered or participated in the public cursing of ‘Alī

ibn Abī Ṭālib, and second, the claim that he illegitimately attributed Ziyād ibn Sumayyah to Abū Sufyān. These two cases are particularly significant because they illustrate the methodological core of Taqī ‘Uthmānī’s refutation. Rather than merely denying Mawdūdī’s conclusions, ‘Uthmānī systematically returns to the original Arabic historical sources, verifies every citation, and compares the cited passages with their broader textual context. His analysis demonstrates that many of Mawdūdī’s conclusions are based on selective quotation, contextual omission, and unsupported inference, thereby revealing recurring patterns of paralogical reasoning.

Among all the allegations presented in *Khilāfat wa Mulūkiyat*, the accusation that Mu‘āwiyah habitually cursed ‘Alī during Friday sermons is arguably the most serious (Ortakci, 2022). Mawdūdī asserts that Mu‘āwiyah and his governors routinely reviled ‘Alī, even within the Prophet’s Mosque, citing several historical authorities, including al-Ṭabarī, Ibn al-Athīr, and Ibn Kathīr, as evidence (Mawdūdī, 1996). ‘Uthmānī carefully re-examined every reference cited by Mawdūdī, including the surrounding passages, and concluded that none explicitly states that Mu‘āwiyah himself cursed ‘Alī (‘Uthmānī, 2007). Instead, the historical reports indicate that certain provincial governors tolerated or promoted anti-‘Alī rhetoric in particular political contexts without attributing those actions directly to the Caliph. Significantly, even Malik Ghulām ‘Alī, a prominent defender of Mawdūdī, acknowledged in *Tarjumān al-Qur’ān* that the cited sources do not establish Mu‘āwiyah’s personal involvement in such acts (cited in ‘Uthmānī, 2007). Consequently, ‘Uthmānī identifies this allegation as an example of paralogism in which the conduct of subordinate officials is incorrectly attributed to the supreme political authority.

Rather than limiting his response to textual criticism, ‘Uthmānī presents affirmative historical evidence demonstrating Mu‘āwiyah’s respect for ‘Alī. Ibn Kathīr records that upon hearing of ‘Alī’s assassination, Mu‘āwiyah wept and declared: «وَيْحَكَ، إِنَّكَ لَا تَدْرِيْنَ مَا فَقَدَ النَّاسُ مِنَ الْفَضْلِ وَالْفَقْهِ وَالْعِلْمِ» “Woe to you. You do not realize what the people have lost in virtue, jurisprudence, and knowledge.” (Ibn Kathīr, *al-Bidāyah wa al-Nihāyah*, vol. 8). Likewise, when Ḍirār al-Ṣadā’ī described the virtues of ‘Alī before Mu‘āwiyah, the latter responded: «رَحِمَ اللَّهُ أَبَا الْحَسَنِ، كَانَ» “May Allah have mercy upon Abū al-Ḥasan. By Allah, he was exactly as you have described.” (*al-Iṣābah*, vol. 3). ‘Uthmānī further cites reports indicating that Mu‘āwiyah frequently consulted ‘Alī on legal matters and later remarked: «ذَهَبَ الْفَقْهُ وَالْعِلْمُ بِمَوْتِ ابْنِ أَبِي طَالِبٍ» “Jurisprudence and knowledge departed with the death of Ibn Abī Ṭālib.” (‘Uthmānī, 2007).

These testimonies, omitted entirely by Mawdūdī, substantially weaken the allegation of personal hostility toward ‘Alī and instead portray a relationship

characterized by political rivalry without denying scholarly respect. The omission of such evidence illustrates another recurring paralogical pattern in Mawdūdī's historical methodology. A second major controversy concerns the genealogy of Ziyād ibn Sumayyah, commonly known as Ziyād ibn Abīhi. Mawdūdī argues that Mu'āwiyah falsely recognized Ziyād as the son of Abū Sufyān for political purposes, thereby fabricating a genealogical relationship prohibited under Islamic law (Mawdūdī, 1996). In response, 'Uthmānī begins by clarifying an important juristic principle. Certain forms of marriage recognized during the pre-Islamic (*Jāhiliyyah*) period were legally valid within their historical context, and Islamic law did not retroactively invalidate the legitimacy of children born from such unions. Accordingly, if Abū Sufyān had entered into a recognized marital relationship with Sumayyah before Islam, the attribution of Ziyād to him would remain legally valid.

To support this argument, 'Uthmānī cites Ibn Khaldūn, who records that Abū Sufyān travelled to al-Tā'if and entered into a form of pre-Islamic marriage with Sumayyah, from which Ziyād was born: «كَانَ أَبُو سُفْيَانَ قَدْ ذَهَبَ إِلَى الطَّائِفِ فِي بَعْضِ حَاجَتِهِ، فَأَصَابَهَا بَنُوْعٌ مِنْ أُنْحَاةِ الْجَاهِلِيَّةِ، فَوَلَدَتْ زِيَادًا» (Ibn Khaldūn, *Tārīkh*, vol. 3). The same account is corroborated by Ibn al-Athīr, while Abū Ḥanīfah al-Dīnawarī reports that Abū Sufyān himself publicly acknowledged Ziyād as his biological son ('Uthmānī, 2007). Furthermore, after the lineage became widely recognized, both 'Umar ibn al-Khaṭṭāb and 'Ā'ishah referred to him as "Ziyād ibn Abī Sufyān." 'Uthmānī reproduces a letter beginning: «مِنْ عَائِشَةَ أُمِّ الْمُؤْمِنِينَ إِلَى زِيَادِ بْنِ أَبِي سُفْيَانَ» "From 'Ā'ishah, Mother of the Believers, to Ziyād ibn Abī Sufyān." ('Uthmānī, 2007). Collectively, these reports indicate that Mu'āwiyah's recognition of Ziyād was not the fabrication alleged by Mawdūdī but rather a public affirmation of an already acknowledged lineage. Once the broader historical evidence is considered, the accusation loses its evidentiary basis.

A similar pattern emerges in Mawdūdī's treatment of Ḥajr ibn 'Adī. He portrays Ḥajr as a Companion (*Ṣaḥābī*) unjustly executed by Mu'āwiyah for opposing political tyranny (Mawdūdī, 1996). However, 'Uthmānī notes that leading authorities in *ḥadīth* scholarship – including al-Bukhārī, Ibn Ḥibbān, and Ibn Abī Ḥatīm – consistently classify Ḥajr as a *tābi 'ī*, not a Companion ('Uthmānī, 2007). Moreover, historical reports describe his execution within the context of armed rebellion rather than political persecution. Al-Dīnawarī records: «فَسَارَ حُجْرٌ» "Ḥajr departed from Kūfah with three thousand armed men." (cited in 'Uthmānī, 2007). This evidence, omitted from Mawdūdī's narrative, substantially alters the legal and political interpretation of the event and further illustrates his selective treatment of historical sources. Overall, 'Uthmānī's refutation demonstrates that the principal allegations advanced

in *Khilāfat wa Mulūkiyat* rely on recurring methodological deficiencies, including selective citation, contextual omission, and the misrepresentation of primary evidence. By contrast, ‘Uthmānī consistently applies the classical principles of Islamic historiography through source verification, contextual analysis, and careful evaluation of historical reports. The contrast between these two methodologies extends beyond the historical assessment of Mu‘āwiyah, offering broader insights into the standards of evidence, scholarly authority, and responsible historical writing within the Islamic intellectual tradition.

Methodological Implications – Paralogism, Scholarly Authority, and the Principles of Islamic Historiography

The preceding analysis demonstrates that Taqī ‘Uthmānī’s systematic refutation of Mawdūdī’s allegations against Mu‘āwiyah extends far beyond a disagreement over historical events. Rather, it reflects a fundamental methodological dispute concerning how early Islamic history should be interpreted and how religious authority should be established (Ahmed, 2022). At the center of this controversy lies the contrast between two distinct epistemological approaches. Mawdūdī, a self-educated journalist and Islamist activist, interpreted historical narratives through a modern ideological framework that viewed Islam as a comprehensive revolutionary system (Majid et al., 2022; Mohamad Latief et al., 2023a). By contrast, ‘Uthmānī represents the classical scholarly tradition of the ‘ulamā’, which emphasizes rigorous source criticism, evaluation of chains of transmission (*isnād*), and the principle of *ḥusn al-ẓann* (presumption of good faith) toward the *Ṣaḥābah* (Aziz & Manj, 2019). Consequently, the debate concerns not merely the historical reputation of Mu‘āwiyah but the broader standards governing Islamic historiography.

First, the concept of **paralogism** provides a useful analytical framework for understanding the methodological deficiencies identified in *Khilāfat wa Mulūkiyat* (Miles, 2022; Mollison, 2022). As demonstrated throughout this study, Mawdūdī’s arguments consistently exhibit recurring patterns of flawed reasoning. Historical reports are selectively paraphrased, actions performed by provincial governors are attributed directly to Mu‘āwiyah, and evidence that weakens his conclusions is systematically omitted (Ridho Nur, 2021; Safran, 2023). These are not isolated factual inaccuracies but structural weaknesses arising from an interpretive framework that prioritizes ideological conclusions over historical verification. In contrast, ‘Uthmānī’s method begins with a comprehensive re-examination of the original Arabic sources, verification of every citation, and consideration of additional reports omitted by Mawdūdī (Aafreedi, 2019; Hakak et al., 2022). His approach demonstrates that responsible

Islamic historiography depends upon contextual reading, textual verification, and balanced evaluation of the entire evidentiary record rather than selective citation designed to support predetermined conclusions.

Second, the controversy underscores the importance of traditional scholarly formation in addressing sensitive issues related to Islamic history. Unlike classically trained scholars, Mawdūdī did not receive systematic instruction in the sciences of *ḥadīth*, *uṣūl al-fiqh*, or *al-jarḥ wa al-taʿdīl*, resulting in an approach that treated historical reports primarily as material for ideological interpretation (Dadah et al., 2023). By contrast, ʿUthmānī applies the established methodology of the *muḥaddithūn*, evaluating the reliability of narrators, distinguishing authentic from weak reports, and respecting the consensus of earlier authorities (Hamim & Abdillah, 2023; Pulungan, 2023). This methodological commitment reflects the Prophetic instruction concerning the status of the Companions:

النُّجُومُ أَمَنَةٌ لِلسَّمَاءِ، فَإِذَا ذَهَبَتِ النُّجُومُ أَتَى السَّمَاءُ مَا تُوعَدُ، وَأَنَا أَمَنَةٌ لِأَصْحَابِي، فَإِذَا ذَهَبَتْ أَتَى أَصْحَابِي مَا «يُوعَدُونَ» (Muslim, 2004). وَأَصْحَابِي أَمَنَةٌ لِأُمَّتِي، فَإِذَا ذَهَبَ أَصْحَابِي أَتَى أُمَّتِي مَا يُوعَدُونَ

Accordingly, *al-jarḥ wa al-taʿdīl* functions not merely as a technical discipline but as an ethical safeguard that protects the integrity of historical transmission and preserves the honor of those whom the Qurʾān and the Prophet ﷺ praised. Ignoring these principles risks undermining both scholarly rigor and the ethical foundations of Islamic historical inquiry (Mohamad Latief et al., 2023b; Tampan Cresna, 2018).

Third, this debate highlights the evolving relationship between contemporary Muslim intellectuals and traditionally trained *ʿulamāʾ*. The increasing accessibility of Islamic literature has enabled many self-educated writers to engage with complex theological and historical questions without undergoing the rigorous scholarly apprenticeship historically required in the Islamic sciences (Momen, 2023). Although this democratization of knowledge has broadened public engagement, the Mawdūdī case illustrates the potential risks when historical interpretation is detached from methodological competence in *uṣūl al-ḥadīth* and *uṣūl al-tārīkh* (Qadafy, 2022). Consequently, scholars such as ʿUthmānī, Muḥammad Zakariyyā Kandhalwī, Yūsuf Bannūrī, and Abū al-Ḥasan ʿAlī Nadwī demonstrate the continuing importance of critical scholarly engagement through detailed, evidence-based refutations rather than purely polemical responses (Rahman, 2019; Saeed, 2019). Likewise, contemporary academic scholarship should evaluate Mawdūdī's writings using the same standards of textual criticism and historical methodology applied to other historical authors rather than accepting his interpretations as authoritative without critical examination (Iqtidar & Scharbrodt, 2022; Wani, 2024). Intellectual authority in Islamic studies remains inseparable from competence in the classical

sources and their methodological traditions (Auda, 2021; Coppens, 2021; Ramle et al., 2022).

Fourth, the debate offers broader methodological lessons for studying controversial episodes in early Islamic history. Classical Sunni scholarship recognized that political conflicts (*fitan*) occurred among the Companions while maintaining that such events should be interpreted through the framework of *ijtihād* rather than moral condemnation (Shaddel, 2017; Su, 2021; Vaid, 2018). This principle is articulated by Ibn Taymiyyah in *al-‘Aqīdah al-Wāsiṭiyyah*:
«إِنَّ هَذِهِ الْأَثَارَ الْمَرْوِيَّةَ فِي مَسَاوِيهِمْ، مِنْهَا مَا هُوَ كَذِبٌ، وَمِنْهَا مَا قَدْ زِيدَ فِيهِ وَنُقِصَ وَغَيْرَ، وَالصَّحِيحُ مِنْهَا هُمْ»
«فِيهِ مَعْدُورُونَ، إِمَّا مُجْتَهِدُونَ مُصَيَّبُونَ وَإِمَّا مُجْتَهِدُونَ مُخْطِئُونَ» This principle does not discourage critical historical inquiry but requires that historical reports be evaluated through rigorous source criticism while avoiding sectarian or ideological distortion. ‘Uthmānī’s methodology reflects this balance by acknowledging historical conflict without abandoning the principles of fairness, contextual analysis, and evidentiary rigor.

Finally, the Mawdūdī-‘Uthmānī controversy demonstrates the importance of engaging with Urdu scholarship in global Islamic studies. Much of the most substantive criticism of Mawdūdī—including ‘Uthmānī’s *Ḥaḍrat Mu‘āwiyah awr Tārīkhī Ḥaqā’iq*—remains inaccessible to non-Urdu-speaking scholars (Kainz et al., 2018). Consequently, international scholarship often presents an incomplete account of Mawdūdī’s intellectual legacy while overlooking the extensive body of traditional scholarly responses. Translating these works into English and Arabic would significantly enrich contemporary discussions of Islamist thought, Islamic historiography, and religious authority by introducing perspectives that remain largely absent from current academic discourse.

Overall, the Mawdūdī-‘Uthmānī debate represents more than a historical disagreement over Mu‘āwiyah; it reflects a broader confrontation between ideologically driven historical interpretation and the classical methodology of Islamic scholarship. As ‘Uthmānī’s analysis demonstrates, responsible Islamic historiography requires comprehensive source verification, careful contextual analysis, respect for the *Ṣaḥābah*, and adherence to the principles of *ḥadīth* criticism. The paralogisms identified in *Khilāfat wa Mulūkiyat* therefore serve as a reminder that historical interpretation must remain grounded in methodological rigor rather than ideological commitment, a lesson that continues to hold relevance for both Muslim and non-Muslim scholars engaged in the study of early Islamic history.

Theorizing Paralogism: Logical Fallacies and Epistemological Flaws in Mawdūdī's *Khilāfat wa Mulūkiyat*

The empirical findings presented in the preceding sections reveal that the weaknesses in Mawdūdī's *Khilāfat wa Mulūkiyat* extend beyond isolated historical inaccuracies. Rather, they reflect a recurring pattern of flawed reasoning characterized by selective quotation, contextual omission, false attribution, and the conflation of legitimate juristic disagreement (*ijtihād*) with religious innovation (*bid'ah*) (Maryam, 2024b; Melchert, 2020). To explain why these shortcomings represent structural rather than incidental errors, this section interprets the findings through the complementary perspectives of Aristotle's theory of paralogism, Kant's epistemology of *paralogismus*, and Max Weber's typology of legitimate authority (Hovhannisyan, 2022; Li et al., 2018). Together, these theoretical perspectives illuminate both the internal logic of Mawdūdī's historical reasoning and the sociological conditions that enabled his interpretation to gain broad intellectual influence despite its methodological deficiencies.

Aristotle defines a paralogism as an argument that appears logically persuasive while resting upon invalid premises, equivocal language, or defective inference (Aristotle, trans. 1955). The historical arguments advanced in *Khilāfat wa Mulūkiyat* closely resemble this pattern. For example, Mawdūdī interprets Imām al-Zuhri's discussion of inheritance law as evidence that Mu'āwiyah introduced a religious innovation (*bid'ah*). However, the original report preserved by Ibn Kathīr simply refers to a return to an earlier legal practice rather than the creation of a prohibited religious innovation: «رَاجَعَ السُّنَّةَ الْأُولَى» "He returned to the earlier practice." (Ibn Kathīr, 2002, vol. 9). By shifting the meaning of *bid'ah* from a neutral linguistic sense ("something new") to its technical theological meaning ("an unlawful religious innovation"), Mawdūdī commits the fallacy of equivocation. A similar pattern appears in his treatment of war booty. Ibn Kathīr records: «الْأَمِيرُ الْمُؤْمِنِينَ قَدْ جَاءَ كِتَابُهُ أَنْ يُصْطَفَى لَهُ كُلُّ صَفْرَاءَ وَبَيْضَاءَ، يَغْنِي» «الذَّهَبَ وَالْفِضَّةَ، يُجْمَعُ كُلُّهُ مِنْ هَذِهِ الْغَنِيمَةِ لِبَيْتِ الْمَالِ» which explicitly states that the gold and silver collected from the spoils were designated for *Bayt al-Māl* rather than for Mu'āwiyah personally (Ibn Kathīr, 2002, vol. 9). By reinterpreting public revenue as personal enrichment, Mawdūdī reverses the original meaning of the text. These examples demonstrate that the problem lies not in occasional historical mistakes but in a recurring argumentative structure that consistently privileges ideological coherence over textual fidelity.

Kant's concept of *paralogismus* provides an additional epistemological perspective. In the *Critique of Pure Reason*, Kant describes paralogisms as errors arising when reason projects subjective categories onto external reality (Kant,

1781/1998). Mawdūdī's historical interpretation exhibits a similar tendency. His commitment to portraying the transition from the *Khilāfah Rāshidah* to the Umayyad period as a decisive shift from legitimate caliphate to illegitimate monarchy shapes his reading of the historical evidence before that evidence is critically examined. Rather than allowing the primary sources to determine his conclusions, the sources are interpreted through an already established ideological framework. In contrast, 'Uthmānī adopts the opposite methodological orientation. His analysis begins with the original Arabic texts, evaluates their linguistic and historical contexts, compares multiple narrations, and openly acknowledges ambiguity where the evidence is inconclusive. Consequently, his approach represents a process of epistemological correction in which historical interpretation is subordinated to textual evidence rather than ideological expectation.

While Aristotle and Kant explain the internal structure of Mawdūdī's reasoning, Weber's theory of legitimate authority explains its broader sociological appeal. Weber (1978) distinguishes three forms of legitimate authority: traditional, charismatic, and legal-rational. The traditional 'ulamā' represented by scholars such as Muḥammad Zakariyyā Kandhalwī, Yūsuf Bannūrī, and Taqī 'Uthmānī derive their authority from recognized scholarly lineages, formal training, *ijāzah*, and established institutions of Islamic learning. Their authority is collective, cumulative, and accountable to long-standing scholarly traditions. By contrast, Mawdūdī's influence largely reflects charismatic authority. His intellectual leadership emerged not from classical scholarly certification but from persuasive writing, political activism, and his ability to articulate Islam as a comprehensive ideological system. Weber's framework therefore helps explain why Mawdūdī felt able to reinterpret early Islamic history independently of the established interpretive conventions maintained within the madrasa tradition. The dispute between Mawdūdī and 'Uthmānī is thus not simply a disagreement over historical facts but a contest between competing forms of epistemic authority: one grounded in inherited scholarly methodology and another rooted in charismatic intellectual leadership. This theoretical synthesis also explains why Mawdūdī's interpretation continues to influence many educated Muslims despite the detailed refutations offered by 'Uthmānī. Well-constructed paralogisms often appear persuasive because they imitate valid reasoning while concealing subtle logical shifts. Readers unfamiliar with the original Arabic sources or the principles of *uṣūl al-ḥadīth* and *uṣūl al-tārīkh* may therefore accept such arguments without recognizing their methodological weaknesses (Fuchs, 2022c). At the same time, charismatic authority encourages followers to place confidence in the intellectual vision of a

respected leader even when empirical evidence points in another direction (Davis & Vila-Henninger, 2021; Fuchs, 2022c). Consequently, ‘Uthmānī’s meticulously documented textual refutations are often more persuasive to audiences already committed to traditional scholarly authority than to readers whose confidence rests primarily on Mawdūdī’s charismatic influence.

The present analysis therefore suggests that responsible Islamic historiography requires continuous methodological self-reflection. Historians influenced by ideological commitments—whether Islamist, liberal, Marxist, or otherwise—remain vulnerable to projecting contemporary assumptions onto the historical record, thereby reproducing the kind of epistemological distortion described by Kant. The most effective safeguard lies in rigorous source verification, careful contextual interpretation, critical evaluation of transmission chains, and a willingness to revise conclusions in light of stronger evidence. Although traditional scholarship is not beyond criticism, the methodological principles embodied in the classical disciplines of *uṣūl al-ḥadīth*, *al-jarḥ wa al-ta’dīl*, and historical source criticism continue to provide essential safeguards against paralogical reasoning. Viewed through the combined perspectives of Aristotle, Kant, and Weber, the Mawdūdī-‘Uthmānī controversy ultimately illustrates that historical interpretation depends not only on the availability of evidence but also on the epistemological assumptions and forms of authority through which that evidence is interpreted. It therefore serves as an instructive case study of how methodological rigor, rather than ideological commitment, should remain the foundation of responsible scholarship.

Conclusion

This study has examined the paralogical reasoning underlying Abul A‘lā Mawdūdī’s *Khilāfat wa Mulūkiyat* through a critical analysis of Taqī ‘Uthmānī’s systematic refutation. By evaluating six major allegations directed against Mu‘āwiyah ibn Abī Sufyān, the study demonstrates that Mawdūdī’s historical arguments are characterized by recurring methodological deficiencies, including the misquotation of primary sources, the omission of exculpatory evidence, the conflation of legitimate *ijtihād* with *bid‘ah*, and, in several instances, the distortion of textual meaning. In contrast, ‘Uthmānī’s careful verification of historical reports, his direct engagement with original Arabic sources, and his reliance on corroborating evidence exemplify the classical methodology of Islamic historiography grounded in *al-jarḥ wa al-ta’dīl*, rigorous source criticism, and respect for the *Ṣaḥābah*.

Beyond reassessing the historical reputation of Mu‘āwiyah, this study demonstrates that the Mawdūdī-‘Uthmānī debate reflects a broader

epistemological contest between ideologically driven historical interpretation and the methodological standards of the classical Sunni scholarly tradition. Interpreted through Aristotle's concept of paralogism, Kant's theory of *paralogismus*, and Weber's typology of legitimate authority, the findings indicate that Mawdūdī's historical conclusions were shaped less by the evidence itself than by an interpretive framework that privileged ideological coherence over textual fidelity. At the same time, Weber's distinction between charismatic and traditional authority helps explain why Mawdūdī's historical narrative continues to attract considerable influence despite extensive scholarly refutation. The study also highlights an important gap within contemporary Islamic Studies. Much of the critical scholarship responding to Mawdūdī remains available only in Urdu, limiting its accessibility to international researchers and contributing to an incomplete understanding of his intellectual legacy. Translating major works such as *Haḍrat Mu'āwiyah awr Tārīkhī Ḥaqā'iq* into English and Arabic would substantially enrich global scholarship on Islamic historiography, Islamist thought, and the methodology of historical criticism. More broadly, this study argues that influential intellectual figures should be evaluated through the same standards of textual verification, methodological rigor, and critical source analysis applied to all historical scholarship. Ultimately, responsible scholarship on Islam's formative period must remain grounded in methodological integrity, critical engagement with primary sources, and intellectual accountability rather than ideological commitment or personal authority.

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Ethical Approval

This study is a literature review based exclusively on secondary data from published academic journals, official reports, and policy documents. It does not

involve primary data collection from human subjects or any form of direct intervention. Therefore, ethical approval was not required for this research.

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