

A Translation and Commentary Extending from the Indian Subcontinent to Anatolia: The Transfer of *al-Tafsīr al-Jamālī* to the Ottoman Empire and Its Evaluation from the Perspective of the Science of Tafsīr

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Abstract

Shāh Walī Allāh al-Dihlawī (d. 1176/1762) lived at a critical time and place during the transition from the classical to the modern era. He was a scholar who was named a mujaddid (renewer) because his ideas were both traditional and innovative in religious thought. Shāh Walī Allāh is a figure who deserves serious attention for his works, ideas, and his struggle as a leader of reform. This article discusses the history of the writing of Shāh Walī Allāh al-Dihlawī's Persian translation *Faṭḥ al-Raḥmān fī tarjamat al-Qur'ān* and its Ottoman Turkish translation *al-Tafsīr al-Jamālī*, their transition to the Ottoman Empire, their translation, and the basic characteristics of the translation and commentary. The content of the work is examined from the perspective of exegesis. First of all, this work is important in terms of understanding the cultural relations established between the Indian subcontinent and Anatolia. On the other hand, the author of the Qur'ān translation is a scholar with original ideas on understanding and interpreting the Qur'ān, and therefore, the work, which is the field of application of his thoughts and claims, is worthy of examination. The four-volume *al-Tafsīr al-Jamālī* was read from the original edition, the information mentioned above was identified, and then the classification and evaluation processes were carried out. In the article, the document review method was used, and the relevant sources were subjected to a literal reading. The work is rich in material from the perspective of exegesis. In particular, it contains abundant information about the context of revelation, such as knowledge of the Jahiliyyah period and reports of the reasons for revelation, and a dynamic connection is established with the context of revelation in the translation and exegesis. In the translation and exegesis of some verses, interpretations that can be considered original have been made.

Keywords

Tafsīr, Faṭḥ al-Raḥmān, Indian Subcontinent, Shāh Walī Allāh al-Dihlawī, al-Tafsīr al-Jamālī.

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Hint Alt Kıtasından Anadolu'ya Uzanan Bir Meâl-Tefsir: *et-Tefsîrû'l-Cemâlî*'nin Osmanlı'ya İntikali ve Tefsir İlmi Açısından Değerlendirilmesi

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Öz

Şah Veliyyullah Dihlevî (ö. 1176/1762), klasik dönemden modern döneme geçişte kritik bir zaman ve mekânda yaşamış; düşünceleri itibarıyla bir taraftan geleneğin takipçisi diğer taraftan da dini düşüncenin ihyacısı olması sebebiyle müceddit olarak isimlendirilmiş bir âlimdir. Şah Veliyyullah ortaya koymuş olduğu eserleri, düşünceleri ve bir islah önderi olarak mücadelesi ile üzerinde ciddi olarak durulmayı hak eden bir kişiliktir. Bu makalede Şah Veliyyullah ed-Dihlevî'nin Farsça Kur'an meâli olan *Fethurrahmân fî Tercümeti'l-Kur'ân*'ın yazılış hikayesine, eserin Osmanlı'ya intikal sürecine, Osmanlı Türkçesine *et-Tefsîrû'l-Cemâlî* adıyla tercümesine ve meâl-tefsirin temel özelliklerine yer verilmiş; eserin içeriği tefsir ilmi açısından incelenmiştir. Öncelikle bu eser Hint alt kıtası ile Anadolu coğrafyası arasında kurulan kültürel münasebeti görme açısından önemlidir. Öte yandan Dihlevî Kur'an'ı anlama ve yorumlama konusunda özgün fikirlere sahip bir âlimdir. Onun düşünce ve iddialarının tatbik sahası olması sebebiyle de eser bir kıymet ifade etmektedir. Çalışmada dört ciltten oluşan *Tefsîrû'l-Cemâlî* orijinal baskısından okunmuş, ilgili malumat tespit edilmiş, ardından tasnif ve değerlendirme süreçleri gerçekleştirilmiştir. Makalede doküman inceleme yöntemi kullanılarak, ilgili kaynaklar literal bir okumaya tabi tutulmuştur. Eser, tefsir ilmi açısından zengin bir malzemeye sahiptir. Özellikle Câhiliye bilgisi, sebeb-i nüzûl rivayetleri gibi nüzûl ortamına dair bilgi ve yorumlara bolca yer verilmiş, meâl ve tefsir yapılırken iniş ortamıyla dinamik bir bağ kurulmuştur. Bazı âyetlerin meâl ve tefsirinde ise özgün sayılabilecek yorumlar yapılmıştır.

Anahtar Kelimeler

Tefsir, Fethurrahmân, Hint Alt Kıtası, Şah Veliyyullah ed-Dihlevî, *et-Tefsîrû'l-Cemâlî*.

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Introduction

The interpretation and understanding of the Qur'ân have retained its importance for Muslims from the time of its revelation to the present day. Despite witnessing the revelation of the Qur'ân, speaking its language, and having the Prophet Muhammad among them, the first Muslims sought answers to some questions regarding the understanding of the Qur'ân. As time passed since its revelation, these questions increased. Especially in the 2nd and 3rd centuries AH, serious efforts were made to ensure the correct understanding of the Qur'ân and to preserve the meaning of its words in the context in which the revelation was received. In addition to these studies, which were mostly conducted in Arabic, the conversion of people from different languages and cultures to Islam raised the issue of translating the Qur'ân into these languages and ensuring its comprehension by people from those cultures. To address this issue, translations of the Qur'ân into different languages were undertaken.¹

Although some translations were made during the classical period, modernity brought about a significant change in the intensity and nature of translation activities. As a result of the effects of rational thought and positive science movements on the masses, the need to establish an individual relationship with sacred texts came to the fore. Of course, in this case, there is also the effect of the book becoming an accessible object with the invention and spread of the printing press. The understanding and interpretation of religion independently of institutional structures is an important factor in the shift towards translation. The widespread availability of printed sources as a result of the spread of printing presses is also an important factor in the rapid spread of translations. An important aspect of missionary activity in the Indian subcontinent is the dissemination of the Bible to the general public. However, at this time, the Muslim population, especially madrasa students, is far from understanding the Qur'ân.

The intensification of British activities in the region from the first half of the 18th century onwards, the collapse of the Muslim-dominated Mughal Empire (1526-1858), the introduction of many foreign cultural elements into Muslim life, and the increase in Shiite-Sunni conflict among themselves, as well as the proliferation of other sectarian and doctrinal conflicts, factors such as these have brought Muslims face to face with a serious crisis.²

Within the Islamic world, the Indian subcontinent is the region that encountered modernity most intensely due to British occupation. This region, which has a large Muslim population, also has a multicultural structure due to the coexistence of many different languages, religions and cultures. The prominent figure among Muslims during this period of crisis was Shâh Walî Allâh al-Dihlawî.

Shâh Walî Allâh al-Dihlawî, who lived during the transition from the classical period to modern times and was deemed worthy of the title of mujaddid (renewer) due to his works, was a figure who influenced many regions of the Islamic world with his ideas. This is because he was engaged in a synthesis effort between fiqh and hadith, emphasising the prin-

1 Hidayet Aydar, *Kur'ân-ı Kerim'in Tercümesi Meselesi* (İstanbul: Yeni Zamanlar Yayınları, 2014), 178.

2 Özgür Kavak, "Zor Zamanda Âlim Olmak: Şah Veliyyullah Dihlevî'nin Kendi Kaleminden Hayatı", *Dîvân İlmi Araştırmalar* (December 2004), 117.

ciples of understanding the Qurʾān and living the Sunnah in the face of attacks from bidʿah and false beliefs, while taking into account traditional methods and understanding. Shah Waliullah had a significant impact on many movements and ideas that developed after her.³

His works have been translated into Arabic, English, Persian, Urdu, Turkish and many other languages. In particular, his work entitled *Hujjat Allāh al-baligha* has caused quite a stir. Another notable work of his is *Fath al-Rahmān fī tarjamat al-Qurʾān*. Dihlawī wrote *Fath al-Rahmān fī tarjamat al-Qurʾān*, a Persian translation of the Qurʾān, to make it easier to understand and study. It was translated into Turkish in 1294/1877. The work is an important source for understanding Dihlawī's method of understanding and interpreting the Qurʾān, as well as the practical implications of his claims in his book on the methods of exegesis, *al-Fawz al-kabīr*. His translation is also important for learning the method and approach of a translation and commentary written during the transition from classical to modern times. The Persian translation, *Fath al-Rahmān fī tarjamat al-Qurʾān*, was translated into Turkish by Mawlānā Muḥammad Ḥayrūddīn Khān al-Hindī (d. 1827). The work was also published in modern Turkish by Ahmet Aydın, who romanised it.⁴ In this article, Shāh Walī Allāh al-Dihlawī's method of understanding and interpreting the Qurʾān is examined based on the original text of the work entitled *al-Tafsir al-Jamali ale't-Tanzil al-Jalali*, which is the Turkish translation of the *Fath al-Rahmān fī tarjamat al-Qurʾān* translation focusing on the translation and exegetical explanations, and subjecting them to analysis.

In the article, the document analysis method was used, the relevant work was subjected to a literal reading, and the data obtained were analyzed by taking into account the life of Shah Veliyullah and the conditions surrounding her. The study centers on the work titled *Fath al-Rahmān fī tarjamat al-Qurʾān*. Shāh Walī Allāh's other works are beyond the scope of this study. However, his concise work on the methodology of exegesis, *al-Fawz al-kabīr*, is an important source used in matters related to the Qurʾānic 'ulumu'l-Qurʾān (Quranic sciences). The reflection of the ideas and arguments in the work is emphasized, and comparisons are made where necessary. The primary motivation for this study is the lack of research on the work in question in Turkish academia. Consequently, there is a significant gap in the literature on this work. This has led to some difficulties in the study.

The article first provides information about the Persian translation entitled Dihlawī and *Fath al-Rahmān fī tarjamat al-Qurʾān*, and then *al-Tafsir al-Jamali ale't-Tanzil al-Jalali*, who translated the work into Turkish and enriched it with exegetical explanations, and the story of the translation of the work, as well as information about the purpose and content of the work mentioned in the introduction and conclusion. In the subsequent sections, the work is first examined in terms of style, and then the interpretations and explanations that stand out from the perspective of exegesis are presented. Additionally, the topics of Qurʾānic sciences discussed in the work are examined and evaluated under separate headings.

3 Ahmet Aydın, "Sömürge Hindistan'ında İslamî Akımlar: Ehl-i Hadis Cemaati", *History Studies* 11/1 (February 2019), 2-7.

4 Mawlānā Muḥammad Ḥayrūddīn Khān al-Hindī, *al-Tafsir al-Jamali ale't-Tanzil al-Jalali*, trans. Ahmet Aydın (İstanbul: İbn Haldun Üniversitesi Yayınları, 2023).

1. Shāh Walī Allāh al-Dihlawī (d. 1176/1762) and His Persian Translation of the Qur'ān Entitled *Faṭḥ al-Raḥmān fī tarjamat al-Qur'ān*

Shāh Walī Allāh al-Dihlawī was born on 3 March 1703 (14 Shawwal 1114) in the town of Pult, Muzaffarnagar, near Delhi.⁵ He belonged to a family with a scholarly tradition that had settled in India towards the end of the 7th (13th) century. His grandfather, Wajihuddin, and his father, 'Abd al-Rahīm, were renowned scholars. Both his grandfather and father were members of the committee that compiled *al-Fatawa al-Hindiyya* (al-Ālemgiriyya).⁶ His mother, Mrs. Fahrūnnisā, was also a learned woman. Shāh Walī Allāh memorised the Qur'ān at a young age and began his studies in Islamic sciences.⁷

Dihlawī studied under many teachers in his homeland, but the teacher from whom he benefited most was Sheikh Muhammad Efdal al-Siyālkūtī. In addition to his madrasa education, Dihlawī also received Sufi training. At the age of fourteen, he completed his seyr and sulūk (spiritual journey) in the Naqshbandi order and became a disciple of his father, who was a sheikh, receiving his khilāfat (succession) from him. After his father's death, he began teaching at the Rahīmiya Madrasa, which his father had founded. He travelled to the Hijaz in 1143 (1731) to perform the Hajj pilgrimage and stayed there for approximately fourteen months. His pilgrimage journey particularly advanced his knowledge of hadith. During this journey, he was significantly influenced by the scholarly and Sufi life of Abū Tāhir Muhammad ibn Ibrahim al-Kurdī, who was in Medina.⁸

Upon his return to India, he established the madrasa known as Delhi Darul-Ulum, taking into account the three different religious educational traditions in India (Delhi, Lucknow, Hyderabad) and placing emphasis on Tafsīr and hadith. Although Dihlevi has many works (the number given ranges from 80 to 200, with widely differing opinions on this subject), his works related to exegesis are as follows: *Faṭḥ al-Raḥmān fī tarjamat al-Qur'ān*, *al-Fawz al-kabīr*, *Muḥaddime der fenn-i tarjamat-i Qur'ān* (*Muḥaddime fī kavānī ni't-tardjamat*), *Faṭḥu'l-ḥabīr bimā lā būdde min ḥuḍḥihī fi 'ilmi't-tafsīr*, *Ta'vī lū'l-eḥādīs fī rumūzi kīṣā'i'l-enbiyā'* ve *ez-Zehrāveyn*.⁹

His father, Abd al-Rahīm, was a scholar who first introduced direct Qur'ānic lessons into his madrasa and began teaching only Qur'ānic verses. It is possible to say that his father's attitude influenced Shāh Walī Allāh's relationship with the Qur'ān.¹⁰ As a result of this interest, he wrote a Persian translation entitled *Faṭḥ al-Raḥmān fī tarjamat al-Qur'ān*. Due to writing this translation, Shāh Walī Allāh faced serious reactions, including assassination attempts, and was accused of being an apostate and a heretic.¹¹ Furthermore, despite having spent many years in madrasa education, Dihlevi was troubled by the fact that students

5 Abdülhamit Birişik, *Hint Altkitası Düşünce ve Tefsir Ekolleri* (İstanbul: İnsan Yayınları, 2001), 53.

6 Aziz, Ahmed. "Şah Veliyullah ed-Dihlevî'nin Dini ve Siyasi Görüşleri", trans. Kadir Özköse, *Journal Of Islamic Research* 14/3-4 (2001), 536.

7 Mehmet Erdoğan, "Şah Veliyullah", *Türkiye Diyanet Vakfı İslam Ansiklopedisi* (İstanbul: TDV Yayınları, 2010), 38/260.

8 Erdoğan, "Şah Veliyullah", 3/260.

9 Enayatullah Azimi, *Şah Veliyullah Dihlevî ve Ailesinin Tefsir İlmine Katkısı* (Eskişehir: Osmangazi University, Institute of Social Sciences, Ph.D. Dissertation, 2025), 35.

10 M. Beşir al-Siyālkūtī, *The Life and Call of Imam al-Mujaddid al-Muhaddith al-Shāh Walī Allāh al-Dihlawi* (Beirut: n.p., 1999), 100–112.

11 Birişik, *Hint Altkitası Düşünce ve Tefsir Ekolleri*, 55.

did not engage directly with the Qurʾān. For this reason, he decided to translate the Qurʾān into Persian, the language of science in the madrasas of the Indian subcontinent. Shāh Walī Allāh, who attracted attention in the field of exegesis, particularly with his concise work *al-Fawz al-kabīr* on translation and exegesis methodology. Shāh Walī Allāh died in Delhi on 20 August 1762 (29 Muharram 1176) and was buried next to his father's grave in the Mughal Cemetery in Old Delhi.¹²

In the introduction to *Faṭḥ al-Raḥmān fī tarjamat al-Qurʾān*, Shāh Walī Allāh states that the work was completed on the day of Eid al-Adha in the year 1150 AH. Furthermore, it is understood from the introduction that the process of revising the work was completed in early Ramadan of the year 1151 AH (November 1738 AD) Shāh Walī Allāh concludes the introduction with verse 11/88 of Sūrat Hud.¹³

Shāh Walī Allāh states that the Qurʾān was revealed as a source of advice and guidance, a guide for people, to save them from the traps of the self, the darkness of ugly deeds, and despicable morals.¹⁴ According to him, Muslims should be advised at all times and in all places. The translation of the Qurʾān should also be written for the purpose of advising Muslims. He states that he wrote his work because he could not find a translation suitable for this purpose, and that another reason for writing it was the request of his friend Shāh Ashiq Ilahi, Shāh Walī Allāh whom addressed as 'my dearest!'.¹⁵

According to Shāh Walī Allāh, the translation of the Qurʾān should be written in a natural style that does not overwhelm people. It should allow for different interpretations and conclusions, be clear enough to appeal to all segments of society, and be accessible to everyone. It should capture the interest and attention of people living in that era, not be tediously long, nor should it be so short as to be inadequate and confusing.¹⁶ The arrangement of words in the translation should be consistent with the rhythm of the Qurʾān and the rhythm of the translation. The reasons for revelation should be mentioned, but this should not be overdone, as it would detract from the conciseness of the translation. The word and sentence structure in the Persian translation should be chosen in a way that children can understand and that preserves their natural disposition. The translation should steer clear of certain misconceptions and ideas that have become ingrained in Sufism. The translation should be read and discussed slowly, without rushing, with explanations given one by one, under the supervision of a teacher, using a method similar to that of the Companions.¹⁷

Shāh Walī Allāh believes that the main purpose of writing a translation is to produce a readable and understandable text. This concern can be seen in almost all of the points mentioned above. Another point he emphasises is that there should be agreement between the wording of the Qurʾān and the wording of the translation. In a way, this is related to the

12 Erdoğan, "Şah Veliyyullah", 38/260.

13 "He said: O my people! If I have clear proof from my Lord and He has provided me with a good livelihood, what do you say to that? I do not wish to act contrary to you by doing the opposite of what I have forbidden you. I only wish to reform as much as I am able. But my success is only through Allah's help. I rely only on Him, and to Him I shall return."

14 Shāh Walī Allāh, *Faṭḥ al-Raḥmān*, 607.

15 Shāh Walī Allāh, *Faṭḥ al-Raḥmān*, 605.

16 Shāh Walī Allāh, *Faṭḥ al-Raḥmān*, 605.

17 Shāh Walī Allāh, *Faṭḥ al-Raḥmān*, 606.

desired conciseness of the text for reading. An important point he emphasises is how the translation should be read. Shāh Walī Allāh does not recommend individual reading, but rather reading in a group under the supervision of a teacher. His view is that a translation alone is not sufficient for understanding and interpreting the Qur'ān, and therefore reading under the supervision of a qualified teacher will help to eliminate any potential problems.

Shāh Walī Allāh states that the hadith narrations in the translation must be authentic and must not contain any weak, fabricated, or Israiliyat (Jewish) elements. He specifically mentions hadith sources such as al-Bukhārī, al-Tirmidhī, and Ḥakīm as references.¹⁸ He emphasises the importance of drawing upon sciences such as hadith, fiqh, nahw, sarf, and irab when writing the translation. He specifically mentions the works of Jalālayn and *al-Muḥarrar al-wajīz* from among the sources of tafsīr.¹⁹

2. al-Tafsīr al-Jamālī ale't-Tanzīl al-Jalālī

Dihlawī's, *Fatḥ al-Raḥmān* a Persian translation of the Holy Qur'ān, has been translated into Turkish under the title *al-Tafsīr al-Jamālī ale't-Tanzīl al-Jalālī*. The person who requested the translation into Turkish was Muhammad Jamaluddin al-Hindī ed-Dihlawī (d. 1882)²⁰, a student of Sheikh Ishaq b. Muhammad Efdal al-Dihlawī (d. 1262/1845), one of Dihlawī's grandsons.²¹

18 Shāh Walī Allāh, *Fatḥ al-Raḥmān*, 607.

19 Shāh Walī Allāh, *Fatḥ al-Raḥmān*, 608.

20 Abu Suleiman Ishaq ibn Muhammad Efdal is the grandson of Shah Abdulaziz (1745–1824), the eldest of Shāh Walī Allāh al-Dihlawī's four sons, through his daughter. Sheikh Ishaq was born in Delhi in 1197/1783. He studied Arabic, including Sarf, Nahw and Kafiye, under Abd al-Hay ibn Hibetullah al-Burhānevī, and read other books from Abdülkādīr ibn Walī Allāh ed-Dihlawī. He learned Hadith from his grandfather, Shah Abd al-Aziz. He held a very important place in his grandfather's life. Shah Abd al-Aziz appointed Sheikh Ishaq as his successor, leaving him all his property and books, and transferring his teaching circle to him. Sheikh Ishaq travelled to the Two Holy Mosques in 1240, during which time he performed the pilgrimage. During this journey, he received hadith from Sheikh Omar b. Abd al-Karim b. Abd al-Rasul al-Mekki (d. 1247/1832) and then returned to India. After continuing his teaching activities in Delhi for 16 years, he returned to Mecca with his family and resided there until his death. Many people from India studied under him. He taught and narrated hadith to figures such as Sharif Muhammad ibn Nasir al-Hazimi, Abd al-Gani ibn Abi Sa'id, Sayyid Nezir Husayn ibn Javad Ali al-Husayni, and Sayyid Alim Ali al-Muradabad. He died in Mecca in 1262/1846 while fasting due to a general plague. He was buried in the Jannat al-Mualla cemetery. See 'Abd al-Ḥayy al-Ḥasanī, *Nuzhat al-khawātir wa-bahjat al-masāmi' wa-l-nawāzīr*, (Beirut: Dār Ibn Ḥazm 1420/1999), 7/911–912. It is seen that the members of the Ahl al-Hadith community made statements supporting the thesis mentioned above. This community traces its scholarly chain of transmission through Shāh Walī Allāh, his sons, then Ismail al-Shahid and Ishaq ibn Muhammad Efdal, his brother Yaqub ibn Muhammad Efdal (d. 1282/1865) and Shah Mahsussullah (d. 1856) to Nazir Hussein. See Aydin, "Sömürge Hindistan'ında İslāmî Akımlar: Ehl-i Hadis Cemaati", 6.

21 Salih Jamaluddin ibn Wahiduddin ibn Muhyiddin ibn Husameddin al-Siddiqi al-Kutani al-Dihlawī is known by the epithet 'the interpreter of the Hadith and the Qur'ān, a blessing among the blessings of the age.' He is a descendant of Abu Bakr. He was born in 1217/1802 in the city of Kūtāne, 30 miles from Delhi, and grew up there. He later went to Delhi to study, where he benefited from scholars such as Mawlana Mamluk al-Ali, Yaqub b. Afdal al-Dihlawi, Ishaq b. Afdal, and Abdulaziz ibn Waliullah. He affiliated himself with Sheikh Muhammad Afak al-Naqshbandi for a while, but later separated from him and affiliated himself with Sheikh Yakub. He migrated to the city of Bhopal and stayed there for 30 years. He married Iskander Beykemle, the queen of that city, and held important government positions until 1263/1846. He was a calm, generous, humble, and sincere person. Throughout his life, he was engaged in teaching the Qur'ān, inviting people to Islam, and charitable work. He devoted himself to charitable causes such as marrying off orphans, educating them, and preparing dowries for girls. He made a special

The person who fulfilled Jamaluddin al-Hindî's request and translated the meaning into Turkish was Mawlânâ Muḥammad Ḥayrûddin Khân al-Hindî.²² This translation, commissioned by Jamaluddin al-Hindî, was given the title *al-Tafsir al-Jamali ale't-Tanzil al-Jalali*. The task of delivering the completed translation to the famous Bulak (Matbaa-i Âmire) printing house in Egypt was carried out by Sheikh Muhammad Husayn-ibn- Muhammad Ismail al-Hindî al-Dihlawî. The Turkish proofreading of the work was done by Antakya-born Muf-tizade Musahhih Necip Efendi. The work was printed in early Zilkade of the Hijri year 1294. The printing process took approximately three months and was carried out in Kufi script.²³

The work on which this study is based is registered under number 20391 in the Marmara Faculty of Theology Library and consists of four volumes. The cover is burgundy, and the edges are brown. On the first volume, under the registration number, there is a date, 1956, which is thought to be the date of registration with the Şişli Mosque Foundation. There is also a stamp indicating that it was donated to the Marmara Faculty of Theology Library by the Şişli Mosque Foundation in 1985. On the first page of the first volume, where the index is located, there is a handwritten note in Ottoman Turkish that reads: 'As a gift to my fellow believers... I have donated it to the Şişli Mosque for the sake of Allah. Ali Rıza... 19.01.1952'. It appears that this volume, endowed in 1952, was registered in the mosque library in 1956 and then transferred to the Marmara Faculty of Theology Library in 1985. The first volume begins with the Fatiha Sûrat and continues to the end of the al-Mâ'ida Sûrat. The inside covers of the other volumes of the work bear the inscription: 'Endowed by Kosovan Ali Yakup Cençiler Hoca Efendi (1913-1988) to the Marmara University Faculty of Theology Library, Istanbul 1988'. The second volume begins with the Sûrat al-An'âm and ends with the Sûrat al-Isrâ', the third volume begins with the Sûrat al-Kahf and ends with the Sûrat Yâ Sîn, and the fourth volume begins with the Sûrat al-Şâffât and ends with the Sûrat al-Nâs.

The work begins with a sentence of praise: "نحمد لمن تفرّد بالعدم و كل شئ مسبوق بالعدم" (We praise the One who is unique in His existence, for everything else is devoid of existence), and continues with sentences praising the Qur'ân. This is followed by a poem composed of Persian verses on the theme of praise, then sentences of salawat for the Prophet and poems and expressions about the revelation of the Qur'ân.²⁴ On the third page, there is a Persian

effort to spread knowledge. He purchased copies of the Qur'ân and had books printed, facilitating their distribution to students. He took special care in the printing and distribution of Shâh Walî Allâh's works *Fath al-Rahmân fi tarjamat al-Qur'ân*, *Hujjat Allâh al-baligha* and. He had *Fath al-Rahmân's*, a Persian translation of the Holy Qur'ân, translated into the languages of India, Turkistan, Afghanistan and Anatolia so that it could be read in those regions, and ensured its distribution. He facilitated the construction and restoration of many mosques and madrasas in the city of Bhopal. He himself worshipped in these mosques, performing his prayers on time with the congregation. Despite his means, he lived a simple life, tried to do his own work, did not require any formalities, and anyone who wished could knock on his door. He passed away in 1299/1882. See al-Ḥasanî, *Nuzhat al-khawâṭir wa-bahjat al-masâmi' wa-l-nawâzîr*, 7/946-947.

22 Hayrûddin b. Masum el-Hüseynî was born in Medâris in 1188/1775. He studied under scholars such as Sheikh Eminüddin Ali, al-Hâfiz Hüseyn, and Sheikh Alâüddin al-Kühnevi in Medâris. He later moved to Hyderabad, where he began teaching for a monthly salary of 500 rupees and continued his life there. He passed away in Hyderabad in 1242/1827. See al-Ḥasanî, *Nuzhat al-khawâṭir wa-bahjat al-masâmi' wa-l-nawâzîr*, 7/965.

23 Mawlânâ Muḥammad Ḥayrûddin Khân al-Hindî, *al-Tafsir al-Jamali ale't-Tanzil al-Jalali* (Cairo: Bulak, 1294/1877), 4/235.

24 *al-Tafsir al-Jamali*, 1/1-2.

poem praising the Prophet, along with sentences of salat-u salam and tahiyyat.²⁵

The text begins with the classical phrase 'emmā ba'd'. The introductory letter was written by Sheikh Muhammad Husayn b. Muhammad Ismail al-Hindī al-Dihlawī, who brought the work to Egypt. This gentleman begins the introduction with the humble words, 'the most humble of the caliph's servants, in truth nothing, worthless...' followed by praise for Muhammad Jamaluddin al-Hindī al-Dihlawī, who facilitated the translation, with the words 'Pride of India, noble descendant, beloved of the faithful, protector of the Muslims.' It is stated that the work was translated into the Afghan language and printed in their script 'so that they may see the benefits of understanding Allāh's words,' and was later translated into Turkish for the Turkish elite and commoners.²⁶ The translator, Mawlānā Muḥammad Ḥayrūddin Khān al-Hindī, is praised with the words 'scholar, perfect, comprehensive, knowledgeable, containing both branches and principles, learned, intelligent, skilled in the Turkish language, master of humanity and the soul'.²⁷ It is stated that the work was named *al-Tafsīr al-Jamālī* in reference to Jamaluddin el-Hindī al-Dihlawī, who requested the translation.²⁸ The introduction contains the characteristics of Shāh Walī Allāh al-Dihlawī's *Faṭḥ al-Raḥmān*, written in Persian, the purpose for which it was written, sentences praising Shāh Walī Allāh al-Dihlawī, and a couplet. It also lists the names of some of the works written by Shāh Walī Allāh.²⁹ There is a Persian poem praising Shāh Walī Allāh al-Dihlawī on a page close to the beginning, and at the end of the page, the names of Shāh Walī Allāh al-Dihlawī's children and grandchildren are mentioned, and prayers are offered for them.³⁰

Another person who wrote the introduction is Ibrahim bin Abd al-Gaffar ed-Dessûki (d. 1883), the proofreader of the printing press. Dessûki describes the work as follows: 'Sufficient in explanation, a cure for those afflicted with ignorance, not tediously long, yet not so short as to be inadequate or confusing in its narration.'³¹ The Turkish proofreader, Antakyalı Müftizâde Necip Efendi, also wrote a preface to the work. In his preface, Necip Efendi summarised the translation of the original work into other languages as follows: "Shāh Walī Allāh al-Dihlawī's *Faṭḥ al-Raḥmān*, written in Persian, was first translated into Hindi for the 'rindān-ı Hindüstān', into Afghan for the 'āshikān-ı Afghanistan', and then into Uyghur Turkish for the 'yārān-ı Türkān' living in what is now known as East Turkistan. Later, with the request and efforts of Cemaleddin el-Hindi, the work was translated into Turkish by, Mawlānā Muḥammad Ḥayrūddin Khān al-Hindī for the Muslims living in Anatolia, who are referred to in the work as "dilteşengān-ı Rûmiyān".³²

At the end of the commentary, emphasis is placed on topics such as the reward for reading the Qur'ān, the beauty of understanding and acting upon it, and the positive de-

25 *al-Tafsīr al-Jamālī*, 1/1-3.

26 *al-Tafsīr al-Jamālī*, 1/1-3.

27 *al-Tafsīr al-Jamālī*, 1/1-3.

28 *al-Tafsīr al-Jamālī*, 1/1-4.

29 *Faṭḥ al-Raḥmān fī tarjamat al-Qur'ān* (Persian), *Hujjat Allāh al-balīgha* (Arabic), *Asrār al-sharī'a* (Arabic), *İkd al-cid* (Arabic), *Ahkām al-taklīd ve'l-ictihād* (Arabic). See *al-Tafsīr al-Jamālī*, 1/4.

30 *al-Tafsīr al-Jamālī*, 1/1-5.

31 *al-Tafsīr al-Jamālī*, 1/1-6.

32 *al-Tafsīr al-Jamālī*, 1/1-7.

velopments it will bring about in a person.³³ In recent times, complaints have been made about the weakening of religious life and the distancing of generations from religion, as seen in the following statements: ‘...Alas, what a pity that in these latter days, the weakness of faith has preoccupied the People of Islam with the world to such an extent that the love of religious knowledge and good deeds has suddenly disappeared from their hearts.’³⁴ Furthermore, the lack of sufficient religious education in schools is criticised; behaviours such as shaving beards, wearing clothes similar to those of non-Muslims, and not greeting others are condemned.³⁵ In these final pages, the society’s relationship with the Qur’ān is also criticised. It is emphasised that if one merely recites, pronounces correctly, and memorises without striving to understand and interpret, nothing will penetrate the heart. It is stated that many hafiz, unable to understand and interpret, are unaware of God and His Messenger, and in this context, emphasis is placed on verse 54/17 of Sūrat al-Qamar: ‘And verily, We have made the Qur’ān easy to understand. Is there anyone who will take heed?’

In response to these problems, ‘as a favour and mercy from Allah for the understanding and guidance of people, Muhammad Jamaluddin al-Hindi al-Dihlawī from the city of Bhopal in India’ printed and distributed commentaries in the Indian, Afghan and Turkish languages.³⁶ Furthermore, at the end of the work, ‘in order for beginners to be taught and understand in the easiest way, to become aware of the meaning of the Qur’ān in a short time, and to gain aptitude and skill in this matter,’ A reading guide entitled ‘Terkīb-i Ta’lī m-i Tefsīr-i Rabbi Kerīm’ was prepared by Muhammad Jamaluddin al-Hindi al-Dihlawī, which was also translated into Turkish and added to the commentary. Muhammad Jamaluddin put into practice the recommendation stated by Shāh Wali Allāh in the introduction to his translation, namely to read with ‘tertil, tebyīn and vukuf-u ber kelām-ı tām’ (recitation, explanation and understanding of the complete meaning). The method is for the teacher to read the verse and give the meanings of the words one by one, then give a collective translation, and the student repeats using the same method. Naturally, repeating the same verse at regular intervals is also a requirement of this method.³⁷

On the last page of the book, the contributors have noted the date of the Turkish edition, which is the Hijri year 1294. Muhammad Jamaluddin al-Hindi al-Dihlawī concludes with a Persian verse, Sheikh Muhammad Husayn ibn Muhammad Ismail al-Hindi al-Dihlawī with a 14-line Persian poem, and the Turkish proofreader, Antakya-born Muftizade Necip Efendi, with a 14-line Turkish poem.³⁸

The following sections provide information and evaluations about the style of the work, its thoughts on controversial topics in the tradition of Tafsir, and its salient features; the traces of Shāh Wali Allāh’s thoughts and preferences in his concise work on the methodology of Tafsir, *al-Fawz al-kabir*, are followed in the selection of relevant topics.

33 *al-Tafsir al-Jamali*, 4/232-235.

34 *al-Tafsir al-Jamali*, 4/232.

35 *al-Tafsir al-Jamali*, 4/232.

36 *al-Tafsir al-Jamali*, 4/232-233.

37 *al-Tafsir al-Jamali*, 4/233.

38 *al-Tafsir al-Jamali*, 4/234.

2.1. Style of the Work

Hayreddin Efendi, who translated the work into Turkish, sometimes uses a didactic style and sometimes an enthusiastic one. This impassioned style can be seen in the translation of verse 23/2 of Sūrat al-Baqara, 'Tahkik sen bilici, sen hikmet-i bālīga ile muttasıf sen...' (You are the knower, you are endowed with perfect wisdom...),³⁹ and verse 51/35 of Sūrat al-Nisā': "O Muslims! Be fair, reveal the truth, for Allah's sake..."⁴⁰ Sometimes the translator repeats words to convey the emphasis in the original. 'Say and say...' ⁴¹ "...surely, surely we will be among the losers."⁴² This lively translation style is also seen in the following verse: Sūrat al-Baqara 2/243. The verse begins with *أَلَمْ تَرَ إِلَى الَّذِينَ* elemtera illellezine, which the translator renders as "O look, did you not see? O you who are watchful, look at those who..."⁴³ The translator explains the Qur'ān's use of this style by saying that the Qur'ān was revealed in the language of its servants: 'Allah Almighty revealed this Sūrat in the language of His servants so that they would say it like this.'⁴⁴

The translator sometimes tries to establish a connection by inserting sentences to remind the reader of transitions between topics, mentioning the words of the first verses in the relevant section. 'This verse and the verse "mine-n nāsi yu'cibūke" explain the rules of Hajj.'⁴⁵ 'Now that the rules of Hajj are complete, Allah Subhānehū describes and explains the circumstances of the disbelievers and the believers, and Allah Almighty knows best.'⁴⁶ When translator Hayrettin Efendi wishes to provide additional explanations in some verses, he introduces them with phrases such as 'Shāh Walī Allāh says.'⁴⁷ Shāh Walī Allāh al-Dihlawī, who exceptionally provides linguistic explanations in his translations and commentaries, emphasises the importance of the oath, its effect on meaning, and its functions, based on the oath in verse 43/2 of Sūrat al-Zukhruf.⁴⁸

Shāh Walī Allāh followed a method that prioritised the meaning in translation and the comprehension of the source text. The method he followed indicates an approach that goes beyond what we refer to in Turkish as 'translation' and also includes a portion of interpretative explanations. This method, which aims primarily at the correct understanding of the Qur'ān, also requires a portion of explanation and interpretation.

2.2. Shāh Walī Allāh al-Dihlawī's Preferences and Interpretations

In his commentary, Shāh Walī Allāh generally adheres to the classical exegetical tradition in his explanations and interpretations. However, he sometimes draws attention with his own interpretations, preferences, and ideas. This section focuses particularly on some of Dihlawī's noteworthy interpretations and thoughts. The examples chosen here are vers-

39 *al-Tafsîr al-Jamālî*, 1/9.

40 *al-Tafsîr al-Jamālî*, 1/164.

41 *al-Tafsîr al-Jamālî*, 1/22.

42 *al-Tafsîr al-Jamālî*, 2/38.

43 *al-Tafsîr al-Jamālî*, 1/64.

44 *al-Tafsîr al-Jamālî*, 1/2.

45 *al-Tafsîr al-Jamālî*, 1/48-49.

46 *al-Tafsîr al-Jamālî*, 1/51.

47 *al-Tafsîr al-Jamālî*, 2/30; 2/33; 2/45.

48 *al-Tafsîr al-Jamālî*, 4/60.

es that are particularly characteristic of the exegetical tradition and are subject to different interpretations.

Shāh Walī Allāh al-Dihlawī interpreted the meaning of the basmala as ‘I recite in the name of Allah, the Most Gracious, the Most Merciful.’ Instead of the words ‘I begin’ or simply ‘by His name’, the translator preferred the word ‘recite.’⁴⁹ He interpreted the word *Rab* in the first verse of Sūrat al-Fātiḥa as ‘nourisher’.⁵⁰ The word *muttaḥīn* in verse 2/2 of Sūrat al-Baqara was translated as ‘those who are cautious’.⁵¹ Similarly, Shāh Walī Allāh translated the word *ṭayyibāt* in verse 2/57 of Sūrat al-Baqara⁵² as ‘pure and lawful’.⁵³ The term *ṣābiʿīn* mentioned in verse 2/62 of Sūrat al-Baqara is understood by the translator as ‘non-believers,’ while the exegete interprets it as ‘the *ṣābiʿīn* are a sect who believe in Ibrahim (pbuh).’⁵⁴ In verse 3/41 of Sūrat Āl ‘Imrān, the translator interprets the silence of Prophet Zakariya as follows: ‘Your sign is that you cannot speak to a man for three days except by gesture.’⁵⁵ He makes a similar interpretation in verse 19/10 of Sūrat Maryam, stating that Prophet Zakariya’s ability to speak was taken away.⁵⁶

Shāh Walī Allāh interprets some verses in connection with religious and political disputes that occurred among Muslims and addresses these issues. When translating verse 3/103 of Sūrat Āl ‘Imrān, he perceives sectarian divisions such as the Mu’tazila and Shi’a as a fundamental division within religion: ‘That is, it is forbidden to cause division in the fundamentals of religion, so that one group becomes Mu’tazila and another becomes Shi’a.’⁵⁷ In verse 7/43 of Sūrat al-A’rāf, the translator brings up the disagreements between Ali, Aisha, Talha, and Zubayr and emphasises that, as mentioned in the verse, the resentment they carry in their hearts will be removed when they enter Paradise.⁵⁸ In verse 10/39 of Sūrat Yūnus, the polytheists are described as ‘not comprehending the knowledge of the Qur’ān.’ The translator dwells on what it means to comprehend the Qur’ān and explains the subject as follows: ‘That is, they reject it without knowing its meaning, without contemplating its subtleties and truths, and without understanding its interpretation.’⁵⁹

In verse 11/32 of Sūrat Hūd, Noah’s people accuse him of ‘engaging in excessive conflict with them.’ The translator refers to their accusation of Noah of excessive argumentation as ‘mūkābere’: ‘Did you argue with us, O Noah? You argued with us excessively.’⁶⁰ In verse 11/67 of Sūrat Yūsuf, Yūsuf (pbuh) states that he possesses the attributes of ‘hafiz and alim’ when requesting a position of authority. The translator renders his being hafiz as ‘capable

49 *al-Tafsīr al-Jamālī*, 1/2.

50 *al-Tafsīr al-Jamālī*, 1/2.

51 *al-Tafsīr al-Jamālī*, 1/3.

52 “Eat of the good things We have provided for you.” *al-Baqara* 2/257.

53 *al-Tafsīr al-Jamālī*, 1/13.

54 *al-Tafsīr al-Jamālī*, 1/15.

55 *al-Tafsīr al-Jamālī*, 1/88.

56 *al-Tafsīr al-Jamālī*, 3/24.

57 *al-Tafsīr al-Jamālī*, 1/101.

58 *al-Tafsīr al-Jamālī*, 2/42.

59 *al-Tafsīr al-Jamālī*, 2/125.

60 “Mūkābere means to persistently talk in a debate or discussion in an attempt to overpower or silence one’s opponent, even when one knows they are in the wrong.” See Kubbealtı Lugatı, “MÜKABERE” (Access 25 March 2024); *al-Tafsīr al-Jamālī*, 2/140.

of preservation' and his being alim as 'knowledgeable in management'. The exegete explains Yusuf's (pbuh) request to be put in charge of the treasuries with an interesting approach, stating that it was 'in order to be far from the company of the people of the world.'⁶¹

Sūrat al-Hijr 13/73 mentions *şayha*, one of the types of punishment. The translator translates *şayha* as 'a terrifying voice.'⁶² In Sūrat Tā Hā 20/25-35, the translator concisely translates the prayer of Prophet Musa (pbuh):

"O my Lord, open my breast and make my task easy for me, and untie the knot from my tongue so that they may understand my speech, and appoint my brother Aaron as my minister from among my family, Strengthen me through him, and make him my partner in my task, so that we may glorify You abundantly. You are the One who observes our condition."⁶³

In verse 24/35 of Sūrat al-Nūr, Allah describes Himself as the light of the heavens and the earth, and then expresses this with a simile. Shāh Walī Allāh interpreted this as follows: 'The essence of this matter is that the light that arises in the hearts of Muslims due to their perseverance in purification and worship is likened to the light of a lamp, which is extremely bright, and this is said to indicate that perseverance.'⁶⁴ The nature of the concept of trust mentioned in verse 33/24 of Sūrat al-Aḥzāb, known as the verse of, *emānet* has been debated by exegetes. Shāh Walī Allāh interpreted the concept of *emānet* mentioned here as 'the ability to remove Allah's commands and prohibitions.' Furthermore, he understood the mention of man's tyranny and ignorance at the end of the verse as meaning, 'That is, although justice and knowledge are not actually present in Adam, he has the capacity to bring them about.'⁶⁵

Shāh Walī Allāh has concisely translated the word *tabaraka*, which appears in verse 25/1 of Sūrat al-Furqān, considering all its meanings. 'Allah, the Most Gracious, the Most Merciful, whose essence is fixed and exalted.'⁶⁶ The translator renders the phrase *yetûbe* in verse 33/24 of Sūrat al-Aḥzāb as 'those whom He guides to repentance through His mercy,'⁶⁷ He translated the word *ḥalīm* as 'slow to anger,'⁶⁸ the phrase *edjāsü ahlām* in 1/62 as 'a restless sleep',⁶⁹ and the phrase *leyestahlifennehüm* in Sūrat al-Nūr 24/55 as 'the caliphate will last thirty years after me,' interpreting it with the hadith.⁷⁰ The exegete explains in detail the manner of destruction in verse 11/67 of Sūrat Hūd: 'While they were all asleep at night, an angel came and shouted loudly, and their hearts were torn to pieces and they were destroyed.'⁷¹ Again, in verse 11/94 of Sūrat Hūd, he describes the phrase *cāsīmī n* as follows: 'They fell lifeless in their own homes, collapsing with their chests down...'⁷²

61 *al-Tafsîr al-Jamālî*, 2/163.

62 *al-Tafsîr al-Jamālî*, 2/197.

63 *al-Tafsîr al-Jamālî*, 3/37.

64 *al-Tafsîr al-Jamālî*, 3/98.

65 *al-Tafsîr al-Jamālî*, 3/204.

66 *al-Tafsîr al-Jamālî*, 3/105.

67 *al-Tafsîr al-Jamālî*, 3/192.

68 *al-Tafsîr al-Jamālî*, 1/62.

69 *al-Tafsîr al-Jamālî*, 2/161.

70 *al-Tafsîr al-Jamālî*, 3/10.

71 *al-Tafsîr al-Jamālî*, 2/146.

72 *al-Tafsîr al-Jamālî*, 2/150.

In verse 2/55 of Sūrat al-Baqara,⁷³ the commentator interprets the incident of the Children of Israel wanting to see Allah as follows: When Moses went to Mount Tur, he took seventy people from his people with him. Although they witnessed Prophet Moses receiving revelation from Allah, they committed the sin of impudence by demanding to see Allah openly.⁷⁴ In verse 7/143 of Sūrat al-Aʿrāf, the exegete raises the issue of ruyetullah and explains the matter as follows: “It became known that it is possible to see Allah, Subhanahu, for He appeared on the side of the mountain, but the worldly body could not bear it and the mountain crumbled to pieces, and Moses (pbuh) fell and fainted. However, the body of the hereafter is capable of bearing it, and it is certain that Allah Subhanahu will be seen in the hereafter.”⁷⁵ Again, while discussing the same incident, the exegete explains Moses’ request to see Allah as follows: ‘Allah Almighty granted Moses (pbuh) a great favour and spoke to him directly, and it became a source of longing and pleasure for him that he would see Allah Almighty...’⁷⁶ When interpreting verse 20/97 of Sūrat Ṭā Hā , he brings up the Khawarij and insinuates that they resemble the Children of Israel by disobeying the imams of the Muslims.⁷⁷

In verse 2/94 of Sūrat al-Baqara, Allah Almighty responds to the Jews’ claim that only they will enter Paradise by saying, ‘(O Muhammad, tell them) If the abode of the Hereafter belongs to you alone, and not to other people, and if your claim is true, then wish for death (and see what happens).’ The exegete comments on this verse as follows: ‘The sign of the people of Paradise is their eagerness and love to meet their Lord.’⁷⁸

Sūrat al-Baqara 2/251 mentions the granting of dominion to David (pbuh). In our opinion, Shah Wali Allah gives the following answer to those who are friends with the colonialist British and advocate a religious understanding without jihad, based on the jihad of Prophet David “After Talut, David became king. The ignorant say that fighting is not the work of prophets. This story makes it clear that the command to wage jihad is eternal and will remain so until the Day of Judgement. If there were no jihad, the corrupt would destroy the order of the world.”⁷⁹

3. Preferences and Interpretations Related to Sciences of the Qurʾān

The work contains explanations and interpretations on certain topics related to sciences of the Qurʾān. Shāh Walī Allāh, who presented his views on these topics in his work *al-Fawz al-kabīr* on the methodology of exegesis, in a way, applied or proved his own views in this (*Faṭḥ al-Raḥmān*) work as well.

3.1. Context of Revelation

Dihlawī’s translation places significant emphasis on the context of revelation. When

73 “Once upon a time: O Moses! You said, ‘We will never believe in you until we see Allah plainly,’ and yet, even as you were gazing, a thunderbolt struck you.” al-Baqara 2/55.

74 *al-Tafsīr al-Jamālī*, 1/13.

75 *al-Tafsīr al-Jamālī*, 2/57.

76 *al-Tafsīr al-Jamālī*, 2/57.

77 *al-Tafsīr al-Jamālī*, 3/45.

78 *al-Tafsīr al-Jamālī*, 1/22.

79 *al-Tafsīr al-Jamālī*, 1/68.

providing the translation of verses, he frequently refers to the context in which the revelation occurred. He focuses on the society or audience to whom the verses were revealed and the message intended to be conveyed through them. An example of his approach to the context of revelation is his explanation of the word *ṭayyibāt* in verse 5/4 of Sūrat al-Mā'idā, where he states, 'that is, that which the Arabs consider beautiful.' The strong connection he establishes between the Qur'ān and the context in which it was revealed can also be seen in his interpretation of the stories of the Prophets. When interpreting the story of Noah, he uses the phrase 'be warned that the state of the Meccan polytheists corresponds to that of Noah's people.' Sūrat al-Naḥl 16/81 mentions the possibility of protecting oneself from the heat with clothing. The exegete attributes the emphasis on protection from the heat, despite the possibility of protection from both heat and cold, to the fact that the environment in which the revelation was received was a place where heat prevailed over cold.⁸⁰

Shāh Walī Allāh, while interpreting Sūrat al-An'ām 6/114, draws attention to the different circumstances in the context of revelation and explains the different attitudes of the Jews in Mecca and Medina and their reasons.⁸¹ Shāh Walī Allāh frequently establishes a connection between the circumstances and environments in which the prophets lived and the environment in which revelation occurred. In this context, he states that the reign of Prophet David and his provision of sustenance with his own hands bear similarities to the Prophet Muhammad.⁸² He considers Prophet Moses' ten years of shepherding and the Prophet Muhammad's ten-year stay in Medina before returning to conquer Mecca as similar situations.⁸³ He draws a parallel between Prophet Noah's salvation by ship and the Companions' safe arrival in Abyssinia, where they found refuge from the disbelievers.⁸⁴ He emphasises that just as Prophet Lot's people wanted to expel him from his homeland, the Meccans also wanted to expel the Prophet from his homeland.⁸⁵ He draws attention to the similarity between Pharaoh and the Meccan polytheists, whom he calls the Meccan Pharaohs, and states that the story is narrated because of this similarity.⁸⁶ Similarly, the exegete establishes a connection between the Prophet Moses' departure from the city and the Prophet Muhammad's migration.⁸⁷

The work draws attention to the relationship between the environment in which the revelation descended and the verses, interpreting and commenting on the verses in the context of the environment of their descent. Successful examples of linking sirah knowledge with Tafsîr are presented. At the same time, this choice prepares the ground for the reader to better understand the meaning and relate it to their own reality. Presenting the verse text in isolation from the context often creates gaps in the reader's mind, and not knowing the omissions makes it difficult to connect with the text. Shah Waliullah frequently emphasises the connection between the conditions surrounding revelation and revela-

80 'Just as one can hide from the heat with shirts, one can also hide from the cold, but since the heat is intense in Arab countries, the heat is mentioned...' See *al-Tafsîr al-Jamālî*, 2/211.

81 *al-Tafsîr al-Jamālî*, 2/23.

82 *al-Tafsîr al-Jamālî*, 4/15.

83 *al-Tafsîr al-Jamālî*, 3/146.

84 *al-Tafsîr al-Jamālî*, 3/158.

85 *al-Tafsîr al-Jamālî*, 3/137.

86 *al-Tafsîr al-Jamālî*, 3/119.

87 *al-Tafsîr al-Jamālî*, 3/144.

tion itself. He attaches particular importance to historical information, which we might call pre-Islamic knowledge, and provides much information on this subject.

3.2. Pre-Islamic (Ignorance) Knowledge

When interpreting the verses of Dihlawi, he refers to the understanding and practices of people during the period of revelation, also mentioning the knowledge of the Jahiliyyah, naming those responsible for these wrong understandings and practices as ‘Ehl-i Jahiliyyah’ (People of Ignorance), and sometimes describing their false beliefs and practices as ‘Cāhiliyenin muherrafāti’ (the innovations of the Jahiliyyah). Many examples of this can be found in the work.

Sūrat al-Baqara 2/158 states that al-Şafā and al-Marwa are among the symbols of Allah. When interpreting this verse, the exegete discusses the meanings attributed to al-Şafā and al-Marwa by the pre-Islamic society and their idolatrous practices. He then emphasises how the Qur’ān reformed these understandings and practices.⁸⁸ When interpreting verse 2/168 of Sūrat al-Baqara, he focuses on the pre-Islamic Arabs declaring what they considered lawful to be unlawful and what they considered unlawful to be lawful, explaining the issue in detail. When interpreting verse 21/78 of Sūrat al-Baqara, known as the verse of retribution, he describes and criticises the understanding of the Jahiliyyah with the following words: “The people of the Jahiliyyah would not kill a noble and high-ranking person in exchange for a lowly one. The retribution ruling revealed by Allah SubKhānahu is based on equality and reciprocity between genders.”⁸⁹ Dihlawi conveys the understanding prevalent in the Jahiliyyah that the deceased’s heir was only his son, stating, “This was one of the images of the Jahiliyyah...” and indicates that this understanding was reformed by the verse concerning inheritance.⁹⁰ He also mentions the practice in the Jahiliyyah period of considering the wife of a deceased person as part of the inheritance, like a piece of property.⁹¹ Another example given is the custom of the Jahiliyyah polytheists of entering houses through the roofs and walls while in ihram. He criticises this situation with the words, “This was one of the corrupt practices of the Jahiliyyah...”⁹² On the other hand, it also touches upon the place of the belief in the sacred months in the pre-Islamic society and the attitude of Muslims towards it.⁹³

Criticising the pre-Islamic understanding that regarded travelling unprepared and without provisions during the pilgrimage months as an act of piety, the exegete states: “One of the errors of the people of ignorance was that they believed it was a good deed to perform the pilgrimage without provisions or a camel, and even if they were wealthy, they would go on pilgrimage relying on God. Allah Almighty said, “If you have the means, take provisions and supplies with you on your pilgrimage, but do not go begging and asking for alms.”⁹⁴ The commentator describes the understanding of the Meccan people of the Jahiliyyah, who did not consider it appropriate to perform the standing at Arafat, saying, ‘Arafat

88 *al-Tafsir al-Jamali*, 1/36.

89 *al-Tafsir al-Jamali*, 1/41.

90 *al-Tafsir al-Jamali*, 1/42.

91 *al-Tafsir al-Jamali*, 1/130.

92 *al-Tafsir al-Jamali*, 1/45-46.

93 *al-Tafsir al-Jamali*, 1/46.

94 *al-Tafsir al-Jamali*, 1/50.

is outside the haram,' and only performed the standing at Muzdalifah, with the words, 'One of the errors of the people of the Jahiliyyah was this...' in his interpretation of verse 2/198 of Sûrat al-Baqara. The exegete also mentions the custom of the Jahiliyyah ancestors boasting about the pilgrimage in his interpretation of verses 2/200-201 of Sûrat al-Baqara.⁹⁵

Dihlawî emphasises that the rulings of the Jahiliyyah are invalid and that the true Shariah will prevail, explaining as follows: Shariah is established in the realm of the angels and will gain popularity in the world day by day. Jahiliyyah, however, is not permanent in the realm of the divine; even if it spreads among people for a while, it will eventually become false and disappear.⁹⁶

3.3. Reasons for Revelation (asbāb al-nuzūl)

In his work *al-Fawz al-Kabîr*, Shāh Walî Allāh emphasizes the proper understanding of the reasons for revelation, systematically classifying the narrations concerning them from various analytical perspectives. While he indicates that some narrations directly state the reason for revelation, he also considers a significant portion of them to be the exegesis of the Prophet, his companions, and their followers, or information they provided about the context of revelation.⁹⁷ Indeed, this can also be seen in his translation.

While referring to the narrations of the reasons for revelation, which are important sources of classical exegesis, the author sometimes interprets events that occurred in the context of revelation as elements of the reasons for revelation, even without an exclusive narration. For example, the reason for the revelation of Sûrat Yûsuf is given as the questions asked of the Prophet by the Quraysh based on information they learned from the Jews, and the information that this Sûrat was revealed in response to these questions.⁹⁸ Similarly, it is stated that verse 9/24 of Sûrat al-Tawba was revealed to remind the believers who were weary and distressed during the Battle of Hunayn that they had been victorious through Allah's grace.⁹⁹ It is also stated that the verse in the same Sûrat, which expresses the wrongness of comparing good deeds such as giving water to pilgrims and renovating the Masjid al-Haram with deeds such as believing in Allah, the Last Day, and striving in the way of Allah, was revealed following a dispute between Ali and Abbas.¹⁰⁰

It is evident that Dihlawî frequently draws upon knowledge of the reasons for revelation (asbāb al-nuzūl) in his interpretations of verses concerning Muslims' relations with Jews and the Children of Israel. For example, Dihlawî when translating verse 2/48 of Sûrat al-Baqara, commented that this verse was revealed to criticise the Children of Israel's understanding that 'our prophets, who are our forefathers, will save us'.¹⁰¹ In addition, he conveyed the information that Sûrat al-Hashr was revealed in connection with relations with the Banu Nadir Jews.¹⁰² He stated that verse 2/124 of Sûrat al-Baqara was revealed

95 *al-Tafsîr al-Jamâlî*, 1/51.

96 *al-Tafsîr al-Jamâlî*, 2/186.

97 Shāh Walî Allāh al-Dihlawî, *al-Fawz al-kabîr*, (Cairo: n.p., 1986), 43-44, 64-67.

98 *al-Tafsîr al-Jamâlî*, 2/155.

99 *al-Tafsîr al-Jamâlî*, 2/94.

100 *al-Tafsîr al-Jamâlî*, 2/93.

101 *al-Tafsîr al-Jamâlî*, 1/12.

102 *al-Tafsîr al-Jamâlî*, 4/140.

in response to the Jews' statement, 'We are from the lineage of Abraham, and Allah has blessed his lineage.'¹⁰³ He explained the revelation of verse 7/129 of Sūrat al-A'raf with the similarity between the oppression of the Muslims in Mecca and that of the Children of Israel, interpreting it as a sign that the Muslims would also be saved from this situation: '...He conveyed this message to inform the Muslims, and this Sūrat was revealed in Mecca at a time when the Muslims were oppressed like the Children of Israel, and this good news arrived with a hidden sign.'¹⁰⁴

Furthermore, the author considers the events that took place in Mecca and Medina as the reason for the revelation. In this context, he believes that the hardship and distress mentioned in verse 23/75 of Sūrat al-Mu'minūn¹⁰⁵ refers to the famine experienced by the Meccans at that time.¹⁰⁶ He interprets verse 39/10 of Sūrat al-Zumar, which states that the earth is vast and the reward for those who are patient is immeasurable, in relation to the Muslims who migrated to Abyssinia.¹⁰⁷ Similarly, verse 29/56 of Sūrat al-'Ankabūt is also mentioned in connection with the migration to Abyssinia and Medina.¹⁰⁸ Dihlawi relates as a narrated piece of information the excuse fabricated by the hypocrites for not participating in jihad, stating that the hypocrites based their request, 'give us permission and do not expose us to temptation,'¹⁰⁹ on the excuse, 'that is, do not take me to the land of the Romans, for I will see their beautiful appearance and fall into temptation.'¹¹⁰

Shāh Walī Allāh attaches particular importance to the relationship between the text and the phenomenon. However, his approach to this subject does not imply a departure from tradition. Like classical exegetical sources, he makes use of information about the reasons for revelation and knowledge of the pre-Islamic era. However, he expresses his belief that some of the narrations about the reasons for revelation may be based on the exegesis of the Companions. Furthermore, in his commentary, he does not engage in any debate regarding the universal message content of the text or the eternal validity of its rulings, and he adopts the classical approach on this matter.

3.4. Abrogation (Naskh)

Shāh Walī Allāh placed particular importance on the subject of abrogation. Taking into account the meanings of the word abrogation in the language, he classified the verses considered abrogated and, as a result of this classification, reduced the number of abrogated verses to five, meaning those whose ruling had been cancelled.¹¹¹ This approach is also re-

103 *al-Tafsir al-Jamali*, 1/29.

104 *al-Tafsir al-Jamali*, 2/54.

105 "If we had relented towards them and removed the hardship they were experiencing, they would have become even more blinded and stubborn in their rebellion." Sūrat al-Mu'minūn 23/75.

106 *al-Tafsir al-Jamali*, 3/84.

107 *al-Tafsir al-Jamali*, 4/25.

108 *al-Tafsir al-Jamali*, 3/165.

109 "Among them are those who say, 'Grant me permission; do not put me to trial.' Know that they have already been put to trial. Hell will surely encompass the disbelievers." Sūrat al-Tawba 9/49.

110 *al-Tafsir al-Jamali*, 2/101.

111 Shāh Walī Allāh al-Dihlawi, *al-Fawz al-kabir*, 53–54; Ali Can, "Şah Veliyullah Dihlevî'nin el-Fevzül-kebir Adlı Eserinde Kur'an İlimlerine Yaklaşımı", *Bozok Üniversitesi İlahiyat Fakültesi Dergisi* 6/6 (2014), 79–80; Güneş Öztürk, *el-Fevzu'l-Kebir Bağlamında Şah Veliyullah Dihlevî'nin Ulûmu'l-Kur'an Anlayışı* (Konya: Selçuk University, Institute of Social Sciences, Master's Thesis, 2006), 55.

flected in his translation and commentary. Dihlawî avoided the subject of abrogation as much as possible, referring to it in only three places that we could identify: Dihlawî states that verse 2/106 of Sûrat al-Baqara, which is accepted as evidence for the existence of abrogation in the Qur'ân, was revealed in response to the Jews' taunts that there is abrogation in the Qur'ân and that this is a deficiency in it.¹¹² Regarding verse 60/11 of Sûrat al-Mumtahina, Dihlawî states that this verse is considered abrogated, but he does not share this view, saying: "These rulings were abrogated after the conquest of Mecca, but in my humble opinion, the abrogation of these rulings has not been established, so if a situation like the peace of Hudaibiyyah were to occur again, it would be possible to act upon these rulings."¹¹³ Shâh Walî Allâh also considers the obliteration mentioned in verses 87/6-7 of Sûrat al-A'la to be a type of abrogation. The exegete narrates this situation as follows: 'Shâh Walî Allâh says that obliterating the verse from the blessed memory of His Holiness is a type of abrogation.'¹¹⁴

3.5. Clear and Ambiguous

The exegete has addressed the topic of clear and ambiguous verses, which is one of the important subjects of the sciences of the Qur'ân. He believes that the mutashabih verses discussed in verse 3/7 of Sûrat Âl 'Imrân can only be understood by those who are muhkem and established in knowledge. The method to be followed here begins with the process of understanding these verses together with the muhkem verses. If they find a meaning consistent with the muhkem verses, they interpret the mutashabih verses. If they cannot find one, they know that it is obligatory for them to believe and leave the knowledge of these mutashabih verses to Allah.¹¹⁵ Understanding and interpreting the mutashabih in this manner implies adherence to the beliefs and methods of the Salaf.

The translator interprets the word *istivâ* in verse 10/39 of Sûrat Yûnus as '*istilâ*' (conquest), translating it as '...and established the throne of this kingdom upon the Throne.'¹¹⁶ The work discusses what it means for Allah to create with His two hands. The phrase 'I created with My two hands' in verse 38/75 of Sûrat Şâd is translated as 'I created with My own power,' meaning 'the body with visible power and the soul with unseen power.' Allah, subhanahu, created things in the unseen with one kind of power and created things in the visible with another kind of power, and He created man with both powers."¹¹⁷ Regarding the isolated letters, which are considered mutashâbihât, Shâh Walî Allâh al-Dihlawî adhered to the Salafî school of thought without offering any interpretation. He refrained from interpreting with phrases such as 'Allah Sübhânehû a'lem' ('Allah knows best')¹¹⁸ or 'Allah bilür ândan muradî' ('Allah knows what He intends').¹¹⁹

3.6. Isrâ'iliyyât

Isrâ'iliyyât, the classic Tafsîr literature's important source of information, has been in-

112 *al-Tafsîr al-Jamâlî*, 1/25.

113 *al-Tafsîr al-Jamâlî*, 4/149.

114 *al-Tafsîr al-Jamâlî*, 4/211.

115 *al-Tafsîr al-Jamâlî*, 1/181.

116 *al-Tafsîr al-Jamâlî*, 2/118.

117 *al-Tafsîr al-Jamâlî*, 4/22.

118 *al-Tafsîr al-Jamâlî*, 4/35.

119 *al-Tafsîr al-Jamâlî*, 4/141.

tensively referred to in the work. Generally, information sourced from *Isrāʾīliyyāt* has been included without any questioning, and efforts have been made to benefit from it. Rarely, it is seen that some of these narrations have been rejected. It is stated that the reference in *Sūrat Ṭā Hā* 20/96 is about Adam and Eve, and that the devil harassed them regarding the children they would have, prompting them to give their children a name indicative of polytheism; however, the commentator does not accept this narrative and critiques it from various aspects.¹²⁰

Especially, it is observed that many *Israiliyat*-sourced pieces of information are included regarding various stories. The commentator provides some details about the Children of Israel turning away from fighting the Amalekites, which resulted in God causing them to wander in the deserts for forty years.¹²¹ Furthermore, interesting information regarding the manna and quail granted to the Children of Israel is mentioned.

“Manna is a sweet thing like a type of resin, which would rain down like dew in the mornings and gather around the soldiers. In the morning, everyone would gather as much as they could carry.” “The term ‘quail’ refers to a type of bird, which would gather around the soldiers in large numbers at the time of sunset, and each person would take as much as they needed and eat it roasted; they lived in this manner for a long time.”¹²²

The interpreter explains the reason for the prominent figures of Prophet Noah’s people wanting to drive away those who believed in him with the statement that “they were engaged in trade, and the disbelievers regarded engaging in trade as a contemptible situation.”¹²³

Additionally, based on a narration from Abdullah-bin-Abbas regarding the number of the Companions of the Cave, there is a preference for their number being seven.¹²⁴ There are also details regarding the origin of Gog and Magog and their relation to the Turks,¹²⁵ the details of al-Sāmīrī’s calf story and the information he provided regarding his relationship with Gabriel,¹²⁶ some details and narrations related to the story of Prophet Jonah,¹²⁷ the fact that Pharaoh’s wife was the daughter of Prophet Moses’ uncle, that Prophet Moses’ mother received one dinar a day for nursing him,¹²⁸ that Dhul-Kifl was the son of Prophet Job, and that he had pledged for someone and therefore spent several years in prison, which he accepted for the sake of Allah’s pleasure,¹²⁹ as well as a bathing story related to Prophet Moses conveyed by the interpreter,¹³⁰ and the issue of the corpse on the throne of Solomon and the details related to it, can all be found among many pieces of information sourced from *isrāʾīliyyāt*.¹³¹

120 *al-Tafsīr al-Jamālī*, 2/69.

121 *al-Tafsīr al-Jamālī*, 1/13.

122 *al-Tafsīr al-Jamālī*, 1/13-14.

123 *al-Tafsīr al-Jamālī*, 2/140.

124 *al-Tafsīr al-Jamālī*, 3/7.

125 *al-Tafsīr al-Jamālī*, 3/20.

126 *al-Tafsīr al-Jamālī*, 3/145.

127 *al-Tafsīr al-Jamālī*, 3/61.

128 *al-Tafsīr al-Jamālī*, 3/142-143.

129 *al-Tafsīr al-Jamālī*, 3/60.

130 *al-Tafsīr al-Jamālī*, 3/204.

131 *al-Tafsīr al-Jamālī*, 4/18.

The author frequently resorts to information that can be termed Israiliyat in verses related to the stories. This situation, which can be encountered in many classical Tafsir sources, is also observed in the work. For the translator and interpreter who lived in the years that can be considered a transition from the classical period to the modern era, this situation can be regarded as understandable. It should also be reiterated that some Israili knowledge, albeit scant, is not accepted.

Conclusion

Living at a time when Muslims began to decline militarily, politically, and economically, Shāh Walī Allāh al-Dihlawī was a scholar who faced all the hardships of this period, especially when the British occupied his homeland. In this environment of turmoil and increasing cultural erosion, Shāh Walī Allāh al-Dihlawī strived to ensure that the Qur'ān and the Sunnah were correctly understood and practiced. He strived to ensure that Sufism and jurisprudence were aligned with the Sunnah, and that beliefs and practices were aligned with the Qur'ān. He was a reformer of the Qur'ān in his efforts to reform. As a reflection of these efforts, he continued the Qur'ān-centered educational method implemented by his father, Abdurrahim Efendi, in the madrasas. To this end, he translated the Qur'ān into Persian, the language of the madrasas of the time.

This translation, titled *Fath al-Rahmān fī tarjamāt al-Qur'ān*, a novelty for the region in which he lived, has been the target of serious criticism and criticism from some quarters. Throughout the work, Shāh Walī Allāh al-Dihlawī offered interpretations consistent with traditional methods and understanding. He particularly emphasized the Isra'iliyyat, generally using narrations from Isra'iliyyat without any criticism. Theological and jurisprudential disagreements were largely avoided, and linguistic explanations were omitted except for a few places. No interpretations were made on the muqattaah huruf, following the path of the Salaf, but some ambiguous verses were interpreted. Generally accepted interpretations from exegetical sources were included, and interpretations generally agreed with these interpretations. Several features of the work stand out. The first of these is the importance given to interpreting the verses in relation to the context of their revelation. When translating and interpreting verses, it is observed that the environment of revelation was frequently visited, comparisons were made with that environment, and agreements were reached. Shāh Walī Allāh al-Dihlawī reflected his understanding of abrogation in his translation, making very little reference to the abrogation of verses, and sometimes expressing his opinion that some verses claimed to be abrogated were not abrogated, as was commonly believed.

This work, which translated a Persian translation written in the Indian subcontinent into Turkish and transmitted to Anatolia, reflects the understanding and interpretation of the Qur'ān at the time and demonstrates the cultural interaction between the two regions. Based on this study, two further topics deserve the attention of researchers. The first is a comprehensive examination of Shāh Walī Allāh al-Dihlawī's work on understanding and interpreting the Qur'ān. The second is to trace the effects of this work, which was translated into Turkish in the last years of the Ottoman Empire, on Ottoman scientific and cultural life.

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