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### INDEX INFORMATION / İNDEKS BİLGİLERİ

1. ULAKBİM TR DİZİN (Accepted / Kabul: Nisan 2019)
2. EBSCO (Central & Eastern European Academic Source) (Accepted / Kabul: 30 Ağustos 2018)
3. INDEX COPERNICUS INTERNATIONAL (ICI) (Accepted / Kabul: Nisan 2020)
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6. EBSCO Academic Search Ultimate (Accepted / Kabul: 01 OCAK 2021)
7. EBSCO Academic Search Premier (Accepted / Kabul: 01 OCAK 2021)
8. EBSCO Academic Search Elite (Accepted / Kabul: 01 OCAK 2021)
9. EBSCO Academic Search Main Edition (Accepted / Kabul: 01 OCAK 2021)
10. ULRICH'S PERIODICALS DIRECTORY (Kabul /Accepted: 21.08.2022)
11. ERIH PLUS (Accepted / Kabul: 21 TEMMUZ 2021)

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1. ROAD (Accepted / Kabul: 05 Şubat 2019)
2. Scholar Article Impact Journal Index (SAJI) (Accepted / Kabul:28 Temmuz 2019)
3. İSAM Veri Tabanı / ISAM Articles on Theology Database (Accepted / Kabul: 2017)
4. Scientific Indexing Services (Accepted / Kabul:14 Haziran 2018)
5. DRJI (Accepted / Kabul: 2018)
6. Information Matrix for the Analysis of Journals (MIAR) (Accepted / Kabul:2018)
7. PAPERITY (Accepted / Kabul: 2017)
8. CROSSREF
9. MIAR ((Accepted / Kabul:2017)
10. ASOS İNDEKS (Accepted / Kabul: 2017)

### CONTACT / İLETİŐİM

**Prof. Dr. Ali KARATAŐ**

Sakarya Üniversitesi İlahiyat Fakültesi, Sakarya

Tel: 0543 403 54 86

karatasali5@gmail.com / alikaratas@karatasali.com

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**OWNER / SAHİBİ**

**Prof. Dr. Ali KARATAŞ**  
Sakarya University, Faculty of Theology, Department of Tafsir  
Sakarya, Türkiye  
karatasali5@gmail.com  
alikaratas@karatasali.com

**SPECIAL ISSUE EDITOR / ÖZEL SAYI EDİTÖRÜ**

**Prof. Dr. Murat KAYACAN**  
İzmir Kâtip Çelebi University, Faculty of Theology, Department of Tafsir  
İzmir, Türkiye  
dr.muratkayacan@gmail.com

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**TADER**

## FROM THE EDITOR

### *ON THE SEVENTH YEAR SPECIAL ISSUE*

Dear Readers,

Welcome to the seventh-year special English issue of the Journal of Tafsir Studies (TADER). This issue aims to present important researches and investigations in the field of tafsir. Tafsir is an integral part of the scholarly heritage of the Islamic world, and this journal aims to provide a platform for valuable academics contributing to researches in the field of tafsir.

This special issue, titled “Approaches to the Qur’ānic Text and Commentary,” addresses various aspects of tafsir studies. Two articles on the tafsir of Ṭabarī, a prominent figure in the history of Qur’ānic interpretation, explore theological debates within the context of his commentary, providing us with a comprehensive view of these significant discussions in the field.

Furthermore, we have included an article that examines how orientalist Qur’ānic studies are perceived within the Islamic world and what they signify for a Muslim scholar. This article brings together diverse perspectives, enriching the discussion on this topic. Additionally, an article focusing on the examination of different manuscripts contributes to a better understanding of the historical evolution and diversity of the Qur’ānic text.

Moreover, the articles in this issue concentrate on various periods and schools of thought within the tafsir tradition, showcasing how tafsir has evolved and adapted over time.

Finally, the book review in this special issue provides guidance to readers by discussing the latest studies and literature in the field of tafsir.

As the Journal of Tafsir Studies, we hope that this special issue will make a valuable contribution to research in the field of tafsir. We would like to express our gratitude to all the authors and referee who have contributed to the success of this journal. We wish you an enjoyable reading experience.

Sincerely,

**2023 SPECIAL ISSUE EDITOR**  
**PROF. DR. MURAT KAYACAN**  
*İzmir Kâtip Çelebi University*  
*Faculty of Theology*

**EDİTÖRDEN*****YEDİNCİ YIL ÖZEL SAYI ÜZERİNE***

Değerli Okuyucular,

Tefsir Araştırmaları Dergisi'nin (TADER) yedinci yıl İngilizce özel sayısına hoş geldiniz. Bu sayı, tefsir alanında önemli araştırmaları ve incelemeleri sunma amacı taşımaktadır. Tefsir, İslam dünyasının ilmi mirasının ayrılmaz bir parçasıdır ve bu dergi, tefsir alanındaki araştırmalara katkıda bulunan değerli akademisyenlerin çalışmalarına bir platform sağlamayı hedeflemektedir.

“Approaches to the Qur’ānic Text and Commentary” başlıklı bu özel sayı, tefsir çalışmalarının farklı yönlerini ele almaktadır. Kur'an yorum tarihinin önemli bir figürü olan Taberî'nin tefsiri üzerine iki yazı, tefsir alanındaki teolojik tartışmaları söz konusu tefsir bağlamında incelemekte ve bize bu önemli alanda kapsamlı bir bakış arz etmektedir.

Ayrıca oryantalist Kur'an araştırmalarının İslam dünyasında nasıl algılandığını ve bir Müslüman için ne ifade ettiğini irdeleyen bir makaleye de yer verdik. Bu, farklı düşünce geleneğine sahip araştırmacıların bakış açılarını bir araya getirerek zengin bir tartışma takdiminde bulunmaktadır. Ek olarak farklı el yazmaları üzerinden yapılan incelemeye ilişkin makale, Kur'an metninin tarihsel evrimini ve çeşitliliğini daha iyi anlamamıza yardımcı olmaktadır.

Ayrıca, tefsir geleneğinin farklı dönemlerine ve düşünce okullarına odaklanan makaleler de bu sayıda bulunuyor. Bu çalışmalar, tefsirin nasıl geliştiğini ve değiştiğini göstermektedir.

Son olarak, bu özel sayıda yer alan Taberî konulu kitap değerlendirmesi, tefsir alanındaki en son çalışmaları ve literatürü ele alarak okuyuculara rehberlik etmeyi amaçlamaktadır.

Tefsir Araştırmaları Dergisi olarak bu özel sayının tefsir alanındaki araştırmalara katkı sağlayacağını umuyoruz. Bu derginin başarısında emeği geçen tüm yazarlara ve hakemlere teşekkür eder, iyi okumalar dileriz.

Saygılarımla,

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*İzmir Kâtip Çelebi Üniversitesi İlahiyat*  
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**CONTENTS / İÇİNDEKİLER**

**TADER Journal of Tafsir Studies 7 / Special Issue (September 2023)**  
TADER Tefsir Arařtırmaları Dergisi 7 / Özel Sayı (Eylül 2023)

**RESEARCH ARTICLES / ARAřTIRMA MAKALELERİ**

**1. Anonymous Expressions Regarding the Theological Debates in the Commentary of al-Ṭabarī I: Attributes of God**

*Taberî Tefsirindeki Kelami Tartıřmalarla İlgili Anonim İfadeler I: Allah'ın Sıfatları*  
Doç. Dr. Naif YAŞAR

1-16

**2. Anonymous Expressions Regarding the Theological Debates in the Commentary of al-Ṭabarī II: Some Controversial Issues Regarding the Acts of Human and the Hereafter Life**

*Taberî Tefsirindeki Kelami Tartıřmalarla İlgili Anonim İfadeler II: İnsan Fiilleri ve Ahiret Hayatını İlgilendiren Bazı İhtilaflı Meseleler*  
Doç. Dr. Naif YAŞAR

17-29

**3. What Do Orientalist Qur'ānic Studies Mean For a Muslim?**

*Oryantalist Kur'an Arařtırmaları Bir Müslüman İçin Ne İfade Eder?*

Arş. Gör. Necmettin Salih EKİZ

30-51

**4. Qur'an of Groningen University "uklu Hands 468"**

*Groningen Üniversitesi Kur'an'ı "uklu HANDS 468"*

Öğr. Gör. Betül ÖZDİREK ŞAHİN

52-71

**5. Fluidity of Reading the Qur'an into Late Middle Ages Between the Readers and the Exegetes: the Case of Abū al-Su'ūd/Ebussuud (d. 1574 CE).**

*Kurrâ ve Müfessirler Arasında Geç Döneme Kadar Kur'an Kıraatlerinde Fluluk: Ebussuud ve Tefsiri Örneği*

Dr. Öğr. Üyesi Halil ŞİMŞEK

72-102

**6. The Preferences That Reflect al-Zamakhsharī's Mu'tazilite Thought in al-Kashshāf: A Survey in the Context of the Theory of Luṭf**

*Zemahşeri'nin el-Keşşâf'ında Mu'tezilî Düşüncesini Yansıtan Tercihleri: Lütuf Teorisi Bağlamında Bir İnceleme*

Res. Asst. Muhammed Boşnak - PhD Student Nagihan Ayşe Boşnak

103-121

**7. Influence of the Ottoman Tafsir Tradition in West Africa: An Analysis of the Role of Mollā al-Gūrānī's Ghāyat al-Amānī in Abdullah b. Fodio's Ḍiyā' al-Ta'wīl**

*Batı Afrika'da Osmanlı Tefsir Geleneğinin Etkisi: Abdullah b. Fûdî'nin Ziyâ'ü't-Te'vîl adlı Eserinde Molla Gürānî'nin Gāyetü'l-Emānî'nin Rolünün Analizi*

Doktora Öğrencisi Ifeoluwa Siddiq OYELAMI

122-142

**8. A Study on the Claim that the Amounts of al-Madd al-Far'ī (Secondary Madd) Affect the Meanings of the Verses of the Qur'ān**

*Fer'î Med Miktarlarının Âyetlerin Anlamlarına Etki Ettiği İddiası Üzerine Bir İnceleme*

Dr. Muhammed PİLGİR

143-163

**9. A Turkish Qur'ān Translation According to the Tartīb al-Nuzūl: A Feminist Perspective**

*Nüzul Sıralamasını Esas Alan Türkçe Kur'ân Tercümesi: Feminist Bir Yaklaşım*

Arş. Gör. Feyza Çelik

164-185

**BOOK REVIEW / KİTAP DEĞERLENDİRMESİ**

**10. "Mesut Kaya. Sources of Ṭabarī's Tafsir. Istanbul: Marmara University Faculty of Theology Publications, 2022. 415 Pages"**

*Mesut Kaya. Taberî Tefsirinin Kaynakları. Istanbul: Marmara Üniversitesi İlahiyat Fakültesi Yayınları, 2022. 415 Sayfa.*

Doktora Öğrencisi Abdulkarim Auwal

186-194



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**Naif YAŐAR**

Doç. Dr., Adıyaman Üniversitesi, İslami İlimler Fakültesi  
Temel İslam Bilimleri, Tefsir Ana Bilim Dalı  
Associate Professor, Adıyaman University, Faculty of Islamic Sciences  
Basic Islamic Sciences, Department of Tafsir  
Adıyaman, Türkiye  
nyasar@adiyaman.edu.tr  
<https://orcid.org/0000-0002-7804-2150>

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## Abstract

Muhammad b. Jarir al-Tabari (d. 310/923), in his commentary called *Jami' al-bayān 'an ta'wīl āy al-Qur'ān*, handles the theological debates that emerged until his time. Although he sometimes provides the proper names of the persons and sects to whom theological views belong, he nevertheless mostly does not give the related proper names. Instead of giving proper names, he uses anonymous expressions such as 'some researchers', 'some exegetes', or 'those who believe that the acts of humans are created by themselves, not by God.' Therefore many ideas of the sectarian groups of the first three centuries of Islam remain anonymous in his commentary. In this article, the proper names of persons and sects alluded to by al-Tabari under anonymous expressions will be brought to light within the framework of Islamic literature. Depending on the theological debates he deals with, al-Tabari sometimes transmits traditions related to the views discussed, but sometimes not. We will summarise the views given in the traditions which are quoted by al-Tabari. Therefore, in this study, only the *isnāds* of the traditions referred to by al-Tabari as support for the views discussed will be provided, whereas the texts of the traditions will be left out. In this study we will not present all the anonymous debates, but just those which are related to the essential (al-Şifā al-Dhatiyya) and the anthropomorphic attributes of God.

**Keywords:** Exegesis, al-Tabari, Jami' al-bayān, Islamic Sects, Islamic Theology.

## Öz

Muhammed b. Cerir et-Taberî (ö. 310/923), *Câmi'u'l-beyân 'an te'vili âyi'l-Kur'ân* adlı tefsirinde kendi dönemine kadar ortaya çıkan kelami meseleleri temel olarak ele almıştır. Taberî, ele aldığı kelami tartışmalardaki görüş sahiplerinin özel isimlerini bazen açıkça ifade etse de çoğunlukla ilgili kişi ve fırka adlarının yerine 'bazı araştırmacılar', 'bazı müfessirler', 'fiillerin Allah tarafından değil de kullar tarafından yaratıldığını iddia edenler' gibi anonim ibareler kullanır. Dolayısıyla ilk üç asır İslam fırkalarının görüşleri ve aidiyeti Taberî tefsirinde anonim ifadeler altında yer almaktadır. Bundan dolayı bu makalede Taberî'nin anonim ifadelerle göndermede bulunduğu kişi ve fırkaların kimler olduğu temel olarak İslami kaynaklar çerçevesinde gün yüzüne çıkartılmaya çalışılacaktır. Taberî, ele aldığı kelami tartışmalara bağlı olarak ilgili tartışmalarda taraf olan kişi veya grubun görüşünü desteklemek üzere bazen rivayet aktarırken, bazen de ilgili tartışmalarda herhangi bir rivayet aktarmaz. Biz burada Taberî tefsirindeki rivayetlerde yer alan görüşleri özet olarak aktaracağımızdan, onun kelami tartışmalarda ilgili görüşleri desteklemek üzere aktardığı rivayetlerin sadece isnadlarını vereceğiz, rivayet metinlerini ise vermeyeceğiz. Zira Taberî'nin ilgili kelami tartışmalarda aktardığı tüm rivayet metinlerini vermek bir makalenin hacmini çokça aşacak boyuttadır. Bu makalede Taberî tefsirinde yer alan tüm anonim kelami tartışmaları değil, sadece Allah'ın zâtî ve haberî sıfatlarıyla ilgili tüm anonim tartışmaları özet olarak aktarmaya çalışacağız. Diğer ihtilafli kelami meselelerde yer alan anonim ifadeleri ise başka bir çalışmada ele almayı planlıyoruz.

**Anahtar Kelimeler:** Tefsir, Taberî, Câmi'u'l-beyân, Fırkalar, Kelam.

## Introduction

Muhammad b. Jarir al-Tabari (d. 310/923) completed his voluminous commentary called *Jami' al-bayān 'an ta'wīl āy al-Qur'ān* in 270/884, in which he used all the interpretation methods of his age.<sup>1</sup> al-Tabari, in his commentary, briefly handled the theological debates that took place before 270/884. When we examine his commentary, we see that it includes the theological views of many different sects, especially the theological debates which took place between the groups of Ahl al-Sunna and al-Mu'tazila. al-Tabari criticises them within the framework of his own theological viewpoint.

Although al-Tabari's theological thoughts are similar to those of the sects of Ahl al-Sunna, nevertheless he does not follow any sectarian group's opinions extensively. Therefore,

<sup>1</sup> Abū 'Abd Allāh Yāqūt al-Ḥamawī, *Mu'jamu al-udabā': irshād al-arīb ilā ma'rifa al-adīb*, ed. İhsān 'Abbās (Beirut: Dār al-Gharb al-Islām, 1993), 6/2441, 2452.

although he resembles al-Ash‘arī (d. 324/935) in most of his theological thoughts, he sometimes defends the views of the other Sunni groups, and occasionally differs from all the sects of Ahl al-Sunna.<sup>2</sup>

However, we will not handle al-Ṭabarī’s theological views in this article.<sup>3</sup> On the contrary, our aim here is to determine who were the persons and sects involved in the theological discussions that al-Ṭabarī quoted with anonymous expressions in his commentary, that is, without providing the proper names of persons or sects. He, while handling the theological debates, uses anonymous expressions such as ‘exegetes argued (ikhtalafa ahl al-ta’wīl)’, ‘ulema and exegetes argued (ikhtalafa ahl al-‘ilm wa ahl al-ta’wīl)’, ‘theologians disputed (ikhtalafa ahl al-jadal)’, ‘researchers / scholars argued (ikhtalafa ahl al-baḥṭh)’, or ‘it is disputed (ukhtulifa).’

Therefore the main aim of this article is to make an attempt to reveal who is meant by these anonymous expressions, and similar ones such as ‘some exegetes’, ‘some researchers’, ‘some Basran Arabic experts’, ‘those who believe that acts are created by servants’, or ‘those who deny the torment in the grave.’ Consequently, on one hand the results of this article will contribute to reveal some of the sources of al-Ṭabarī that he used for his commentary, and on the other hand the article will come up with the proper names of the individuals and sectarian groups which al-Ṭabarī presented anonymously.

In this study, we will try to sum up all the anonymous theological views regarding the debates about the attributes of God that we have identified in the entire commentary of al-Ṭabarī. The identification of individuals and sects that are mentioned anonymously in al-Ṭabarī’s commentary related to the theological issues will be, especially, within the framework of the sources which deal directly with the theological debates of the Islamic sects such as al-Ash‘arī’s *Maqālāt al-Islāmiyyīn*, and the other resources of different Islamic sciences.

al-Ṭabarī sometimes refers to traditions related to some of the theological discussions that he handles anonymously in his commentary, but at other times, he does not quote any traditions regarding most of the theological debates. As we will see below clearly, al-Ṭabarī simply quotes different views on the issue under discussion, then makes his own assessment, and ends the topic in this way. Nevertheless, for many theological debates that he handles, he also refers to traditions which each party of the related view uses as evidence. In this study, it will suffice to provide only the *isnāds* (chains of transmitters) of the traditions quoted by al-Ṭabarī, because the traditions are usually used just as support by each sect / party in order to search for a strong authority to strengthen the opinion defended. In addition, we do not feel the need to provide the texts of the traditions, since we will relate all the different views that are put forward in the discussions. Moreover, it would exceed the volume of an article to quote the texts of all the traditions whose *isnāds* are provided here. Since they denote the sources which al-Ṭabarī used for his commentary, the *isnāds* are important regarding the article’s topic.

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<sup>2</sup> Naif Yaşar, *İlk Üç Asır Kelam Tartışmaları ve Taberî* (Ankara: Ankara Okulu Yayınları, 2016), 316-319, 322-326.

<sup>3</sup> See Yaşar, *İlk Üç Asır Kelam Tartışmaları ve Taberî*.

As far as we can see, al-Ṭabarī explicitly mentions only the names of *al-Qadariyya*<sup>4</sup> / *Ahl al-Qadar*<sup>5</sup> and *al-Jahmiyya* in his commentary.<sup>6</sup> He does not use the name *al-Mu'tazila* (that is, *al-Qadariyya* / *Ahl al-Qadar*) directly, but rather, it exists only in a tradition he quotes.<sup>7</sup> Although not as a proper name of a sect, al-Ṭabarī usually uses the following phrases related to the theological debates: *Ahl al-Ḥaqq*,<sup>8</sup> *Ahl al-Jadal*,<sup>9</sup> *Ahl al-Baḥth*,<sup>10</sup> *Ahl al-Ithbāt*,<sup>11</sup> *Ahl al-Islām*,<sup>12</sup> *Ahl al-Tafwīd*.<sup>13</sup>

Now, within the framework of the concepts / titles used in the theological works, we will examine the theological debates regarding attributes of God that al-Ṭabarī referred to anonymously:

## 1. Essential Attributes of God (al-Şifā al-Dhatiyya)

### 1.1. al-'Alī

al-Ṭabarī gives two anonymous views related to the theological debates on God's attribute *al-'Alī* (Truly exalted, al-Baqara 2/255),<sup>14</sup> and does not make any comment regarding the issue:

1. According to some scholars / researchers (ahl al-baḥth), God stated in this expression that there is no one like him, and that he is higher than being similar to anyone / anything. They rejected the claim that this sublimity is spatial, because according to them, it is not possible for any place to be unoccupied by God. Therefore, it makes no sense to describe him with spatial sublimity, because in this case, it would be to describe him as being in one place and not in another place.

2. According to others, the place of God is higher than the place of creatures in the sense that he is higher than creatures, because he is above all his creatures and they are below him. As a matter of fact, God is higher than them, since he describes himself as being on the Throne.<sup>15</sup>

The first view which al-Ṭabarī gives here is supported by most of the Islamic sects, except for al-Mujassima and Ashāb al-Ḥadīth. The second view is not entirely clear. It implies anthropomorphism on the one hand, but on the other hand it resembles the views of Ashāb al-Ḥadīth. For, although Ashāb al-Ḥadīth reject anthropomorphism, but still handle the expressions of the scriptures with extreme literalism.<sup>16</sup>

<sup>4</sup> Muḥammad b. Jarīr al-Ṭabarī, *Jāmi' al-bayān 'an ta'wīli āy al-Qur'ān*, ed. Khalīl al-Mais (Beirut: Dār al-Fikr, 2005), 1/115 (two times); 3/1750; 5/3379, 3683, 3684 (in tradition); 12/7531 (in tradition).

<sup>5</sup> al-Ṭabarī, *Jāmi' al-bayān*, 1/97, 100; 2/1345; 8/5063; 11/6966; 12/7531 (twice, one in tradition).

<sup>6</sup> al-Ṭabarī, *Jāmi' al-bayān*, 1/158.

<sup>7</sup> al-Ṭabarī, *Jāmi' al-bayān*, 13/7932.

<sup>8</sup> al-Ṭabarī, *Jāmi' al-bayān*, 2/1154.

<sup>9</sup> al-Ṭabarī, *Jāmi' al-bayān*, 4/3131.

<sup>10</sup> al-Ṭabarī, *Jāmi' al-bayān*, 3/1537-1538.

<sup>11</sup> al-Ṭabarī, *Jāmi' al-bayān*, 8/5063.

<sup>12</sup> al-Ṭabarī, *Jāmi' al-bayān*, 1/97.

<sup>13</sup> al-Ṭabarī, *Jāmi' al-bayān*, 5/3379.

<sup>14</sup> Muhammad Asad, *The Message of the Qur'ān* (İstanbul: İşaret Yayınları, 2006), 57.

<sup>15</sup> al-Ṭabarī, *Jāmi' al-bayān*, 3/1537-1538.

<sup>16</sup> See Ibn Abī Ya'lā, *Ṭabaqāt al-Ḥanābila*, ed. 'Abd al-Raḥmān b. Sulaimān al-'Uthaimīn (Riyadh: al-Amāna al-'Āmma li al-İhtifāl, 1999), 1/60-62.

## 1.2. al-Ḥayy

al-Ṭabarī gives three anonymous views related to the theological debates on the attribute *al-Ḥayy* (the Ever-Living, al-Baqara 2/255),<sup>17</sup> and does not make any comment regarding the issue:

1. According to some scholars, God calls himself *al-Ḥayy* in this verse, because he is the one who manages everything in the universe. Therefore, he is *al-Ḥayy* in the sense of managing things, or else he is not *al-Ḥayy* in the sense of having ‘a life.’

2. According to some others, God is *al-Ḥayy* in the sense of having ‘a life as an attribute of him.’

3. According to another group of researchers, this is a name with which God calls himself. So, we too, obeying the commandment of God, profess this name.<sup>18</sup>

The first view belongs to the Mu‘tazilis, the Khārijītes, some of the Murjiites and the Zaydites.<sup>19</sup> The second view belongs to the Sunni sects. al-Ṭabarī, too, interprets the name *al-Ḥayy* within this sense.<sup>20</sup> The third view seems to belong to some Mu‘tazilīs such as ‘Abbād b. Sulaimān (d. 250/864).<sup>21</sup>

## 1.3. al-‘Azīm

al-Ṭabarī gives three anonymous views related to the theological debates on the attribute *al-‘Azīm* (Tremendous, al-Baqara 2/255),<sup>22</sup> and does not make any comment or preference regarding the issue:

1. According to some scholars, the attribute *al-‘Azīm* here means ‘the glorification of God,’ because, the creatures exalt him and fear him. Another possibility is that God is *al-‘Azīm* in the sense of ‘occupying a place in space, and weight.’ However, it is clear that this second view is false. Therefore, the correctness of the first statement is self-evident.

2. According to some others, God has a ‘glory,’ which is an attribute of him. However, we do not discuss how or what the circumstance of the attribute ‘glory’ is. On the contrary, we profess this attribute and reject the resemblance of this ‘glory’ to the known greatness of the servants / creatures, because this assumption means that he resembles the creatures. However, God is not like the creatures. This group reject the first view.

3. According to others, God describes himself as *al-‘Azīm* here. Therefore, all creatures other than him are smaller than him in the sense of ‘being small when compared to his glory / majesty.’<sup>23</sup>

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<sup>17</sup> Asad, *The Message of the Qur‘ān*, 57.

<sup>18</sup> al-Ṭabarī, *Jāmi‘ al-bayān*, 3/1528.

<sup>19</sup> See Abū al-Ḥasan ‘Alī b. Ismā‘īl al-Ash‘arī, *Maqālāt al-Islāmiyyīn wa ikhtilāf al-muṣallīn*, ed. Na‘īm Zarzūr (Beirut: Maktaba al-‘Aṣriyya, 2009), 1/135-141.

<sup>20</sup> al-Ṭabarī, *Jāmi‘ al-bayān*, 3/1528; Abū al-Ḥasan ‘Alī b. Ismā‘īl al-Ash‘arī, *Risāla ilā Ahl al-Thaghr*, ed. ‘Abd Allāh Shākir Muḥammad al-Junaidī (Medina: Maktaba al-‘Ulūm wa al-Ḥikam, 2002), 213-218.

<sup>21</sup> al-Ash‘arī, *Maqālāt al-Islāmiyyīn*, 1/136.

<sup>22</sup> Asad, *The Message of the Qur‘ān*, 57.

<sup>23</sup> al-Ṭabarī, *Jāmi‘ al-bayān*, 3/1538.

The first and second opinions that al-Ṭabarī gives anonymously here belong to Ahl al-Sunna, especially to Ashāb al-Ḥadīth. However, since the third view implies anthropomorphism, it is not clear exactly which sect is meant here, if not al-Mujassima.

## 2. Anthropomorphic Attributes of God

### 2.1. Coming and Going (Majī' - Ityān - Nuzūl and Dhahāb)

al-Ṭabarī gives four anonymous views related to the theological debates on the anthropomorphic expression *hal yanẓurūna illā an ya'tiyahum Allāhu fī dhulalin min al-ghamāmi* (Are these people waiting, perchance, for God to reveal Himself unto them in the shadows of the clouds? al-Baqara 2/210),<sup>24</sup> and does not make any comment regarding these debates:

1. God describes himself as coming (majī' / ityān), descending (nuzūl) and so on, and the meaning intended here is the natural meaning of these attributes, because it is not possible to make any comment on the names and attributes of God without any information obtained from God or a prophet.

2. What we should understand from the 'coming of God' here is similar to what we should understand from someone's transferring from one place to another.

3. What is understood from this phrase is that 'what is coming here is the commandment of God.' In the same sense, it is said, 'We are afraid that the Umayyads will come to us.' However, what is meant here is 'the judgement of the Umayyads.'

4. What is meant by this phrase is 'God's reward, reckoning, and punishment will come to us.' Just as it is said, 'The governor punished the thief,' but what is meant here is that this action was not carried out by the governor himself, but by his assistants.<sup>25</sup>

The first view belongs to Ashāb al-Ḥadīth as well as to the other Sunni sects.<sup>26</sup> The third and fourth views belong to the Mu'tazilis,<sup>27</sup> and moreover, the third view is supported by al-Akhfash al-Awsaṭ (d. 215/831)<sup>28</sup> himself as the interpretation of the related verse.<sup>29</sup> The second view actually resembles the view of Ashāb al-Ḥadīth, because they profess the attributes of God which are in the scriptures and avoid any comments regarding them, especially anthropomorphic attributes.<sup>30</sup> However, it is possible that the second view belongs to the Mujassimites (anthropotheists, who claim anthropomorphism about God).<sup>31</sup>

<sup>24</sup> Asad, *The Message of the Qur'an*, 45.

<sup>25</sup> al-Ṭabarī, *Jāmi' al-bayān*, 2/1142.

<sup>26</sup> al-Ash'arī, *Maqālāt al-Islāmiyyīn*, 1/168.

<sup>27</sup> Abū al-Ḥasan Sa'īd b. Mas'ada al-Akhfash al-Awsaṭ, *Ma'ānī al-Qur'an*, ed. 'Abd al-Amīr Muḥammad Amīn al-Ward (Beirut: Ālam al-Kutub, 1985), 1/365; 2/473, 706; al-Ash'arī, *Maqālāt al-Islāmiyyīn*, 1/130, 173-174; 2/383-384.

<sup>28</sup> He is a Mu'tazilī scholar.

<sup>29</sup> al-Akhfash, *Ma'ānī al-Qur'an*, 1/365.

<sup>30</sup> al-Ash'arī, *Maqālāt al-Islāmiyyīn*, 1/168.

<sup>31</sup> See Abū Ḥusain 'Abd al-Raḥīm Muḥammad b. 'Uthmān al-Khayyāt, *al-Intiṣār wa al-radd 'alā Ibn al-Rāwandī al-mulhīd*, ed. Doktor Nībarj (Beirut: Maktaba al-Dār al-'Arabiyya, 1993), 5-6, 146; Abū Ja'fer al-Ṭahāwī, *al-'Aqīda al-Ṭahāwiyya* (Beirut: Dār al-Bayāriq, 2001), 13; al-Ash'arī, *Maqālāt al-Islāmiyyīn*, 1/25-27, 44-46, 93, 128, 165, 168-170, 173.

al-Ṭabarī, regarding the interpretation of the expression *fa'dhhab anta wa rabbuka fa qātilā innā hāhunā qā'idūna* ('Go forth, then, thou and thy Sustainer, and fight, both of you! We, behold, shall remain here!'), al-Mā'ida 5/24),<sup>32</sup> gives the following anonymous view:

Some ulema point out that "This phrase does not mean that both of you, that is, you and your Lord with you, go and fight. On the contrary, it means 'Go, O Musa, and may your Lord help you,' because, something like 'going' is not appropriate for God." However, this view is not very consistent, because it is not expressed by a group of believers, but it is a statement that opposes God, slanders him, and is in harmony with those people's blasphemy and perversion. Therefore, there is no point in trying to interpret this phrase.<sup>33</sup>

The opinion that al-Ṭabarī gives above anonymously belongs to Abū 'Ubaida (d. 210/825)<sup>34</sup> who is a Kharijite, but in terms of basic sense, this is the view that al-Mu'tazila also defends regarding this issue.<sup>35</sup>

## 2.2. Mocking and Deceiving (Istihzā' - Makr - Khud'a - Sukhriyya)

al-Ṭabarī gives five anonymous views regarding the theological debates on the anthropomorphic expression *Allāhu yastahzi'u bihim wa yamudduhum fī tughyānihim ya'mahūna* (God will requite them for their mockery, and will leave them for a while in their overweening arrogance, blindly stumbling to and fro, al-Baqara 2/15):<sup>36</sup>

1. What is meant by God's *mocking, deceiving, plotting and making fun of hypocrites* is to punish those people on the Day of Judgement, as it is stated within some verses such as al-Ḥadīd 57/13-14; Āl 'Imrān 3/178.

2. The meaning of God's *mocking, deceiving, plotting and making fun of hypocrites* is to condemn / blame / destroy them for their denial and rebellion, or to give them a respite and to suddenly capture and destroy them when they feel themselves in the safest condition, or to scold them.

3. The verses like these are replies to what these people have said. God *makes fun of* them as a reply to the way they have spoken, for otherwise, God does not *mock people or plot against them*. For example, when a person wins over someone who is trying to deceive him, he says, 'Actually, I deceived you.' In fact, he has not deceived him, but nevertheless, he uses such an expression because the outcome is in his favour.

4. As it is put forward in the verses like *wa jazā'u sayyi'atin sayyi'atun mithluhā* (But [remember that an attempt at] requiting evil may, too, become an evil, al-Shūrā 42/40),<sup>37</sup> and while the first evil stated in the subject verse is a rebellion against God, the second is a just punishment against this rebellion. Although the meanings of the two expressions are different

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<sup>32</sup> Asad, *The Message of the Qur'an*, 146.

<sup>33</sup> al-Ṭabarī, *Jāmi' al-bayān*, 4/2983.

<sup>34</sup> Abū 'Ubaida Ma'mer b. al-Muthannā, *Majāz al-Qur'an*, ed. Aḥmad Farīd al-Miziyadī (Beirut: Dār al-Kutub al-'Ilmiyya, 2006), 70.

<sup>35</sup> See al-Ash'arī, *Maqālāt al-Islāmiyyīn*, 1/130.

<sup>36</sup> Asad, *The Message of the Qur'an*, 5.

<sup>37</sup> Asad, *The Message of the Qur'an*, 746.

from one another, nevertheless they are both expressed within the same word (*sayyi'ah*). Likewise, these kinds of expressions show the similarity in speech. Expressions like these mean that: God informs us that he will punish their mockery and deceit.

5. The meaning of “God *makes fun of hypocrites*” is that he shows them in this world a situation which is opposite to their end in the Hereafter.<sup>38</sup>

The first and fifth views belong to the Sunni ulema such as Muqātil b. Sulaimān (d. 150/767) and al-Ṭabarī. al-Ṭabarī argues here anonymously with those who interpret anthropomorphic attributes of God (in accordance with logic and language data).<sup>39</sup> The second, third, and fourth views belong to the Mu'tazilī ulema such as al-Farrā' (d. 207/823)<sup>40</sup> and al-Akhfash al-Awsat,<sup>41</sup> and to the Khārijite ulema such as Abū 'Ubaida.<sup>42</sup>

al-Ṭabarī, regarding the interpretation of the expression *yukhādi'ūna Allāha* (They would deceive God, al-Baqara 2/9),<sup>43</sup> cites the opinion of Abū 'Ubaida within an anonymous statement 'some persons famous for being grammarians of the Arabic language.' According to Abū 'Ubaida, although this verb is in reciprocal form *yukhādi'ūna*, it actually has the meaning of *yakhda'ūna*. Therefore, this statement means that 'hypocrites express what is not in their hearts.'<sup>44</sup>

### 2.3. Anger / Wrath (Ghaḍab)

al-Ṭabarī, regarding the word *al-maghḍūbi* (condemned, al-Fātiḥa 1/7),<sup>45</sup> expresses the disagreement among ulema about the interpretation of God's attribute *ghaḍab* and gives three anonymous opinions, but does not make any comments related to these opinions:

1. God's *ghaḍāb* means, 'punishing the individual in this world or in the Hereafter.' God has expressed this reality in verses such as al-Mā'ida 5/60 and al-Zukhruf 43/55.

2. God's *ghaḍāb* against some individuals is God's verbal condemnation of them and their actions.

3. God's *ghaḍāb* in this verse is used within the natural meanings of *ghaḍāb* (wrath). However, we accept this meaning just in terms of professing an attribute of God. Actually, his wrath is different from the wrath of humans which disturbs, moves, and torments them psychologically, whereas such conditions do not affect God's essence. Just as knowledge is God's attribute, but it is not similar to the knowledge of humans, and also, might is God's attribute, but it is not similar to the might of humans, which exists at the time of the action and disappears in the absence of the action. Similarly, wrath as an attribute of God is not like wrath as an attribute of humans.<sup>46</sup>

<sup>38</sup> al-Ṭabarī, *Jāmi' al-bayān*, 1/175-178.

<sup>39</sup> Muqātil b. Sulaimān, *Tafsīru Muqātil b. Sulaimān*, ed. 'Abd Allāh Maḥmūd Shaḥāta (Beirut: Mu'assasa al-Tārikh al-'Arabī, 2002), 1/89, 91, 278, 416; 3/772-773; al-Ṭabarī, *Jāmi' al-bayān*, 1/175-178.

<sup>40</sup> Abū Zakiriyyā Yahyā b. Zayād al-Farrā', *Ma'ānī al-Qur'ān* (Beirut: 'Ālam al-Kutub, 1983), 1/64, 116-117, 218; 3/49, 116.

<sup>41</sup> al-Akhfash, *Ma'ānī al-Qur'ān*, 1/193, 354.

<sup>42</sup> Abū 'Ubaida, *Majāz al-Qur'ān*, 25, 48, 88, 219, 267.

<sup>43</sup> Asad, *The Message of the Qur'ān*, 5.

<sup>44</sup> Abū 'Ubaida, *Majāz al-Qur'ān*, 25; al-Ṭabarī, *Jāmi' al-bayān*, 1/159-160.

<sup>45</sup> Asad, *The Message of the Qur'ān*, 2.

<sup>46</sup> al-Ṭabarī, *Jāmi' al-bayān*, 1/111.



All three opinions given above anonymously belong to the sects of the Ahl al-Sunna.<sup>47</sup> In particular, the statement ‘it is not like the power (of humans) which exists at the time of the action and disappears in the absence of the action’ is the exact statement of the Ahl al-Sunna about *istiṭā’a* / *strength (of humans)*.<sup>48</sup> Therefore, al-Ṭabarī did not reject any of the mentioned opinions, and his explanations for the attribute *ghaḍāb* in his commentary include all the views quoted above.<sup>49</sup>

## 2.4. Hand and Qabḍatun

### 2.4.1. Hand

al-Ṭabarī gives four anonymous views related to the theological debates about the expression *bal yadāhu mabsūtātāni* (Nay, but wide are His hands stretched out, al-Mā’ida 5/64),<sup>50</sup> and does not make any preference among the quoted opinions:

1. According to some theologians (ahl al-jadal), what is meant by *hand* in this phrase is ‘two blessings.’ Such usages exist in Arabic.
2. According to some others, what is meant by *hand* in this phrase is ‘might.’
3. According to another group of theologians, what is meant by *hand* in this phrase is ‘dominion / possession.’
4. According to some others, what is meant by *hand* in this phrase is neither ‘two blessings’ nor ‘might’ nor ‘dominion / possession.’ All of these views are wrong. Actually, the *hand* in this phrase is one of the attributes of God, but not an organ. According to this view, God, among all his creatures, states that he created only Adam with both his hands. If this were not so, there would be no need to mention Adam with such a privilege.<sup>51</sup>

The first, second, and third views belong to those who interpret anthropomorphic attributes of God in a figurative way such as the Mu’tazilis, the Jahmites and the Kharijites.<sup>52</sup> Moreover, the first view is supported by some Mu’tazilis such as al-Akhfash al-Awsaṭ<sup>53</sup> and al-Farrā’<sup>54</sup> themselves, and by some Kharijites such as Abū ‘Ubaida himself.<sup>55</sup> Actually, al-Ṭabarī also interprets the *hand* in this verse in coherence with the first view, but surprisingly he inclines towards Sunni ideas when he handles the related theological debates.<sup>56</sup> The fourth view belongs

<sup>47</sup> See al-Ash’arī, *Risāla ilā Ahl al-Thaghr*, 231.

<sup>48</sup> al-Ash’arī, *Maqālāt al-Islāmiyyīn*, 1/173-174, 221-222.

<sup>49</sup> al-Ṭabarī, *Jāmi’ al-bayān*, 1/107; 4/2961; 9/5834, 5940. See also Yaşar, *İlk Üç Asır Kelam Tartışmaları ve Taberî*, 157-159. For two anonymous views in the interpretation of the verse al-Mā’ida 5/16 related to the theological debates on ‘al-Riḍā’ as an anthropomorphic attribute of God see al-Ṭabarī, *Jāmi’ al-bayān*, 4/2961.

<sup>50</sup> Asad, *The Message of the Qur’ān*, 157.

<sup>51</sup> al-Ṭabarī, *Jāmi’ al-bayān*, 4/3131-3132.

<sup>52</sup> al-Ash’arī, *Maqālāt al-Islāmiyyīn*, 1/130, 136-137, 152, 156, 173-174; 2/383-384.

<sup>53</sup> al-Akhfash, *Ma’ānī al-Qur’ān*, 2/473.

<sup>54</sup> al-Farrā’, *Ma’ānī al-Qur’ān*, 1/315.

<sup>55</sup> Abū ‘Ubaida, *Majāz al-Qur’ān*, 74.

<sup>56</sup> al-Ṭabarī, *Jāmi’ al-bayān*, 4/3129-3132; See also Yaşar, *İlk Üç Asır Kelam Tartışmaları ve Taberî*, 167.

to the ulema of Aşhāb al-Ḥadīth such as Aḥmad b. Ḥanbal (d. 241/855), and to the other Sunni sects.<sup>57</sup> al-Ṭabarī also defends the fourth view even if not explicitly.<sup>58</sup>

### 2.4.2. Qabḍatun

al-Ṭabarī interprets the word *qabḍatun* (al-Zumar 39/67) within the meaning ‘the grip / hand of God’ and then, under the anonymous expression ‘some Basran Arabic experts,’ quotes al-Akhfash al-Awsaṭ’s view regarding the commentary of this word. al-Akhfash al-Awsaṭ, who is a scholar of al-Mu‘tazila, interprets the word *qabḍatun* within the meaning ‘to be in one’s power and disposal.’<sup>59</sup>

### 2.5. Istiwā

al-Ṭabarī quotes five anonymous views regarding the theological debates on the concept of *istiwā* (al-Baqara 2/29), and refers to just one tradition related to the fifth view:

1. According to some exegetes, what is meant by *istiwā* here is ‘to return.’
2. According to another group of exegetes, this term explains the act of God, not his movement and transmission.
3. According to some others, in this verse *istiwā* denotes an act related to the heavens which means ‘the heavens are levelled.’
4. According to others, what is meant in this verse is that ‘God’s intention headed towards the heavens.’
5. According to others, *istiwā* means ‘ascension.’ ‘Ascension’ is ‘going up.’ According to some of those who support this view, it is ‘God’ who ‘ascends’ to the sky here and according to others it is ‘smoke’ that ‘ascends.’

\* ‘Ammār b. al-Ḥasan *from* ‘Abd Allāh b. Abī Ja‘far *from* his father *from* al-Rabī‘ b. Anas.<sup>60</sup>

The first view belongs to some of the Mu‘tazilis such as al-Farrā’.<sup>61</sup> al-Ṭabarī, without stating the proper name of al-Farrā’, anonymously argues this view in detail and rejects it.<sup>62</sup> The second view also belongs to some of the Mu‘tazilis such as al-Akhfash al-Awsaṭ.<sup>63</sup> The fifth view belongs to al-Ṭabarī as far as we can follow from his discussion of al-Farrā’’s view related to the subject term.<sup>64</sup> The third and fourth views are not clear enough to determine to whom they belong. However, the fourth view basically resembles the opinions of the Mu‘tazilis.<sup>65</sup>

<sup>57</sup> al-Ash‘arī, *Maqālāt al-Islāmiyyīn*, 1/168-173.

<sup>58</sup> al-Ṭabarī, *Jāmi‘ al-bayān*, 5/3680; Muḥammad b. Jarīr al-Ṭabarī, *al-Tabṣīr fī ma‘ālim al-dīn*, ed. ‘Alī b. ‘Abd al-‘Azīz b. ‘Alī al-Shibl (Riyadh: Dār al-‘Āshima, 1996), 133, 142; See also Yaşar, *İlk Üç Asır Kelam Tartışmaları ve Taberî*, 164, 166.

<sup>59</sup> al-Akhfash, *Ma‘ānī al-Qur‘ān*, 2/674; al-Ṭabarī, *Jāmi‘ al-bayān*, 12/7468-7472.

<sup>60</sup> al-Ṭabarī, *Jāmi‘ al-bayān*, 1/252-254.

<sup>61</sup> al-Farrā’, *Ma‘ānī al-Qur‘ān*, 1/25.

<sup>62</sup> al-Ṭabarī, *Jāmi‘ al-bayān*, 1/252-254.

<sup>63</sup> al-Akhfash, *Ma‘ānī al-Qur‘ān*, 1/218.

<sup>64</sup> al-Ṭabarī, *Jāmi‘ al-bayān*, 1/252-254; See also Yaşar, *İlk Üç Asır Kelam Tartışmaları ve Taberî*, 171-176.

<sup>65</sup> see Jārullāh Abu‘l-Qāsim Maḥmūd b. ‘Umar al-Zamakhsharī, *al-Kashshāf ‘an Ḥaqā’iqi ghawāḍi al-tanzīl wa ‘uyūn al-‘aqāwīl fī wujūhi al-ta’wīl*, eds. ‘Ādil ‘Aḥmad ‘Abd al-Mawjūd and ‘Alī Muḥammad Mu‘awwid (Riyad: Maktabah al-‘Ubayqān, 1998), 1/250.

## 2.6. A Laudable / Glorious Position (Maqāman Maḥmūdan, al-Isrā' 17/79)

### 2.6.1. First Debate

al-Ṭabarī gives two anonymous views related to the debates on the expression *maqāman maḥmūdan*. The views and related *isnāds* of the traditions that al-Ṭabarī refers to are as follows:

1. According to most exegetes, *maqāman maḥmūdan* means *al-shafā'a* / intercession in the Hereafter. The Prophet will be in this position to save people from the violent situation they encounter on that day.

\* Muḥammad b. Bashshār from 'Abd al-Raḥmān from Sufyān from Abū Ishāq from Ṣilah b. Zufar from Ḥudhaifa.

\* Muḥammad b. al-Muthannā from Muḥammad b. Ja'far from Shu'ba from Abū Ishāq from Ṣilah b. Zufar from Ḥudhaifa.

\* Sulaimān b. 'Amr b. Khālīd al-Raqī from 'Īsā b. Yūnus from Rishdīn b. Kuraib from his father from Ibn 'Abbās.

\* Ibn Bashshār from 'Abd al-Raḥmān from Sufyān from Salama b. Kuhail from Abū al-Za'rā' from 'Abd Allāh.

\* Muḥammad b. Bashshār from Ibn Abī 'Adī from 'Awf from al-Ḥasan.

\* Muḥammad b. 'Amr from Abū 'Āṣim from 'Īsā from Ibn Abī Najīḥ from Mujāhid.

\* al-Ḥārith from al-Ḥasan from Warqā' from Ibn Abī Najīḥ from Mujāhid.

\* al-Qāsim from al-Ḥusain from Ḥajjāj from Ibn Juraij from Mujāhid.

\* al-Qāsim from al-Ḥusain from Abū Mu'āwiya from 'Āṣim al-Aḥwal from Abū 'Uthmān from Sulaimān.

\* Bishr from Yazīd from Sa'īd from Qatāda.

\* Muḥammad b. 'Abd al-A'lā from Muḥammad b. Thawr from Ma'mar from Qatāda.

\* al-Ḥasan b. Yaḥyā from 'Abd al-Razzāq from Ma'mar and al-Thawrī from Abū Ishāq from Ṣilah b. Zufar from Ḥudhaifa.

\* Muḥammad b. 'Abd al-A'lā from Muḥammad b. Thawr from Ma'mar from Abū Ishāq from Ṣilah b. Zufar from Ḥudhaifa.

2. According to some other exegetes, '*maqāman maḥmūdan*' means that God makes the Prophet sit on the Throne next to him.

\* 'Abbād b. Ya'qūb al-Asadī from Ibn Fuḍail from Laith from Mujāhid.

(al-Ṭabarī states that): According to the traditions narrated from the Prophet, his companions and successors, the sound view is the first one. (Regarding the second view, Ṭabarī states that): The second view is also possible both intellectually and traditionally, and there is no tradition which contradicts this view.<sup>66</sup>

<sup>66</sup> al-Ṭabarī, *Jāmi' al-bayān*, 9/5561-5565.

The first view given here is the view accepted by many Islamic sects, especially Ahl al-Sunna.<sup>67</sup> The second view belongs to Aşhāb al-Ḥadīth, especially the Hanbalites.<sup>68</sup>

### 2.6.2. Second Debate

al-Ṭabarī tries hard to explain that it is also logical for *maqāman maḥmūdān* to mean that the Prophet will be seated on the Throne. He states that the views of Muslims regarding God and his Throne are divided into three groups. al-Ṭabarī gives three anonymous views related to the issue:

1. According to one group, God created things, but there was no contact between him and the things. He remained in the pre-eternal state of existence. The fact that God does not touch things means that he is absolutely opposite to them. In that case, since God is different from everything he created, it makes no difference for God whether he seats the Prophet on the Throne or on the ground.

2. According to another group, before God created things, there was nothing that touched or opposed him. God created the things and managed them with his power, but he remained as he was in pre-eternity. The things neither touch him nor are opposite to him. Therefore, it makes no difference for God whether he seats the Prophet on his Throne or on the ground.

3. According to another group, before God created things, there was no being with which he was in contact or to which he was opposite. Then he created the things, and a Throne with which he came into contact. God touches anything he wishes and contradicts anything he wills. In their opinion, sitting on the Throne does not mean that God covers the whole Throne. Therefore, it makes no difference for him whether he seats the Prophet on the Throne or seats him on anything else. Likewise, the Prophet's state does not change from worshipping to lordship just by sitting on the Throne.

(al-Ṭabarī continues, stating that): It is clear that the view we narrated from Mujāhid, which states that '*maqāman maḥmūdān* means that God seats the Prophet on the Throne, next to him,' is also logically possible for all sects of Islam.<sup>69</sup>

However, these views are not clear enough to determine to which sectarian groups they belong, and actually they seem to be just an overall brief summary of the thoughts of Islamic sects. Nevertheless, another possibility and more plausible idea is that in fact these views do not belong to the Islamic sects, but on the contrary, they are fabricated by al-Ṭabarī or more probable by the Hanbalites.

### 2.7. Kursī (Throne / Seat)

al-Ṭabarī gives three anonymous views regarding the debates about the expression *kursiyuhu* (al-Baqara 2/255). The views and related *isnāds* of the traditions that al-Ṭabarī refers to are as follows:

1. According to some exegetes, *Kursī* means knowledge.

\* Abū Kuraib and Salama b. Junāda *from* Ibn Idrīs *from* Muṭarrif *from* Ja'far b. Abī al-Mughīra *from* Sa'īd b. Jubair *from* Ibn 'Abbās.

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<sup>67</sup> See Muqātil, *Tafsīru Muqātil*, 2/546.

<sup>68</sup> Yāqūt, *Mu'jamu al-udabā'*, 6/2450-2451; See also Yaşar, *İlk Üç Asır Kelam Tartışmaları ve Taberî*, 178.

<sup>69</sup> al-Ṭabarī, *Jāmi' al-bayān*, 9/5565-5566.

\* Ya'qūb b. Ibrāhīm from Hushaim from Muṭarrif from Ja'far b. Abī al-Mughīra from Sa'īd b. Jubair from Ibn 'Abbās.

2. According to some other exegetes, *Kursī* is the place of God's two feet.

\* 'Alī b. Muslim al-Ṭūsī from 'Abd al-Ṣamad b. 'Abd al-Wārith from my father from Muḥammad b. Juḥāda from Salama b. Kuhail from 'Umāra b. 'Umair from Abū Mūsā.

\* Mūsā b. Hārūn from 'Amr from Asbāt from al-Suddī.

\* al-Muthannā from Ishāq from Abū Zuhair from Juwaibir from al-Ḍaḥḥāk.

\* Aḥmad b. Ishāq from Abū Aḥmad b. al-Zubairī from Sufyān from 'Ammār al-Duhnī from Muslim al-Baṭīn.

\* 'Ammār from Ibn Abī Ja'far from his father from al-Rabī'.

\* Yūnus from Ibn Wahb from Ibn Zaid.

3. According to some others, *Kursī* is *Throne* ('Arsh) itself.

\* al-Muthannā from Ishāq from Abū Zuhair from Juwaibir from al-Ḍaḥḥāk.

al-Ṭabarī states that all three views here have a logical sense, but according to him, the traditions that come from the Prophet show that the most plausible view is the second one. According to al-Ṭabarī, the first view is also quite logical.<sup>70</sup> The second opinion belongs to Aṣḥāb al-Ḥadīth, especially to Aḥmad b. Ḥanbal.<sup>71</sup> The third opinion belongs to al-Ḥasan al-Baṣrī (d. 110/728).<sup>72</sup>

### Discussion and Conclusion

In this article we have handled al-Ṭabarī's method of presenting the theological debates that took place among the Islamic sectarian groups and individuals in the first three centuries of hijra. We have not studied all the theological discussions that al-Ṭabarī has handled, but on the contrary, we have focused just on the expressions regarding the theological debates which he has given under anonymous expressions. As we have seen throughout the article, in many places of his commentary, al-Ṭabarī presents the theological debates of the individuals or sects without mentioning their proper names. He mostly presents anonymously the theological opinions of the sectarian groups such as Ahl al-Sunna, Aṣḥāb al-Ḥadīth, al-Mu'tazila, al-Khārijīyya, al-Jahmiyya, al-Murjīyya and so on. Additionally, he sometimes gives anonymously special opinions of the individuals of the followers of these sects such as al-Farrā' (d. 207/823), Abū 'Ubaida (d. 210/825), al-Akhfash al-Awsaṭ (d. 215/831) and so on. We think that the main groups whose theological views are discussed anonymously by al-Ṭabarī are Ahl al-Sunna and al-Mu'tazila (Qadariyya / Ahl al-Qadar).

As we have pointed out above, al-Ṭabarī does not provide the proper names of persons / individuals or sects in most of the theological discussions that he briefly covers in his commentary. On the contrary, he gives the opinions of individuals and sectarian groups within the framework of anonymous expressions such as 'exegetes argued (ikhtalafa ahl al-ta'wīl)' and

<sup>70</sup> al-Ṭabarī, *Jāmi' al-bayān*, 3/1533-1536.

<sup>71</sup> Ibn Abī Ya'lā, *Ṭabaqāt al-Ḥanābila*, 1/60-61.

<sup>72</sup> al-Ṭabarī, *Jāmi' al-bayān*, 3/1534; al-Muṭahhar b. Ṭāhir al-Maqdisī, *Kitāb al-bad' wa al-tārīkh* (Būr Sa'īd: Maktaba al-Thaqāfa al-Dīniyya, n.d.), 1/166.

evaluates them in the context of the views he considers as correct. Likewise, while al-Ṭabarī refers to traditions regarding some theological debates, he mentions most of the theological discussions that he handles in his commentary without referring to traditions.

Regarding this attitude of al-Ṭabarī, an important question arises: Why does al-Ṭabarī not mention the proper names of persons / individuals and sects in detail in his commentary called *Jāmi' al-bayān 'an ta'wīl āy al-Qur'ān*? Taking into account some expressions that we have seen in his commentary and additionally considering the general attitude of the exegetes before him regarding the subject matter, we come to the conclusion that the plausible answers to this question may be as follows:

1. This is not a study of theology, but a commentary on the Qur'an. As a result, al-Ṭabarī avoids going into details about the other Islamic sciences. Therefore, in some parts of his commentary, he points out that he will not provide details about fields such as *theology*, *jurisprudence*, and *qira'at*, and consequently directs the reader to his works in related sciences.<sup>73</sup> For this reason, in his commentary, he does not aim to go into detailed discussions about the other fields of Islamic sciences, but on the contrary, he aims to put forward an interpretation of the Qur'an.<sup>74</sup>

2. It was already known by his contemporaries to whom the theological views belonged. Therefore, there was no need to mention the proper names of persons or sects.

3. al-Ṭabarī does not mention the proper names of persons or sects in most places in his commentary in order not to make the readers feel that he is under the influence of sectarian thoughts while interpreting the Qur'an, and that his commentary is a field where sectarian debates are held. Moreover, in many parts of his commentary, although he actually interprets the Qur'an under the influence of the sectarian debates, he, either consciously or unconsciously, gives the impression that he is not affected by the views of any sect and that he is interpreting the Qur'an completely naturally and regardless of the sectarian debates.

4. The exegesis is a field of expertise. Therefore, the commentaries are written for the experts in the field, not for common people. Consequently, because the experts know the information related to the field, there is no need to mention everywhere the proper names of persons and sectarian groups.

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<sup>73</sup> See al-Ṭabarī, *Jāmi' al-bayān*, 1/645, 648; 2/799, 1200-1201, 1283, 1342, 1394; 3/1542-1543; 4/2356, 3067; 6/4157; 10/6392.

<sup>74</sup> See al-Ṭabarī, *Jāmi' al-bayān*, 1/15.

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**Anonymous Expressions Regarding the Theological Debates in the Commentary of al-Ṭabarī II: Some Controversial Issues Regarding the Acts of Human and the Hereafter Life**

*Taberî Tefsirindeki Kelami Tartışmalarla İlgili Anonim İfadeler II: İnsan Fiilleri ve Ahiret Hayatını İlgilendiren Bazı İhtilaflı Meseleler*

**Naif YAŞAR**

Doç. Dr., Adıyaman Üniversitesi, İslami İlimler Fakültesi  
Temel İslam Bilimleri, Tefsir Ana Bilim Dalı  
Associate Professor, Adıyaman University, Faculty of Islamic Sciences  
Basic Islamic Sciences, Department of Tafsir  
Adıyaman, Türkiye  
nyasar@adiyaman.edu.tr  
<https://orcid.org/0000-0002-7804-2150>

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**Abstract**

The first centuries of Islamic history have witnessed many theological debates. The sectarian groups of that time have used the Qur'ānic text and the traditions in order to support their ideas. Therefore the Qur'ānic text became a field of controversial debates among the theologians of Islam. Being among the forerunner savants of Islam, Muḥammad b. Jarīr al-Ṭabarī (d. 310/923), also handled the main theological debates of the first three centuries of Islam in his commentary called *Jāmi' al-bayān 'an ta'wīl āy al-Qur'ān*. al-Ṭabarī, mostly, presents the theological debates among the Islamic sectarian groups without mentioning the proper names of the persons or the sects to whom the related theological views belong to. He usually uses anonymous expressions such as 'some researchers', 'some exegetes', and so on instead of giving proper names of the sectarian groups or the personalities. Therefore, in this article, the proper names of personalities and sectarian groups alluded to by al-Ṭabarī under anonymous expressions will be brought to light relying mainly on the Islamic literature. As a common method of his commentary al-Ṭabarī, mostly transmits traditions related to the theological debates he deals with, nevertheless he sometimes does not supply any tradition regarding the disputed theological topics. In this study, only the *isnāds* of the traditions quoted by al-Ṭabarī will be provided, whereas every supported view will be briefly summarised. Here we will not handle all the anonymous expressions related to the theological debates, but we will sum up some controversial theological issues regarding the acts of human and the hereafter life such as beatific vision, the definition of faith, free will, the creation of human acts, and so on.

**Keywords:** Exegesis, al-Ṭabarī, *Jāmi' al-bayān*, Islamic Sects, Islamic Theology.

**Öz**

İslam tarihinin ilk asırları birçok kelami tartışmaya sahne olmuştur. Bu dönemlerde teşekkül eden İslam fırkaları savundukları görüşleri desteklemek için Kur'an metnini ve rivayetleri kullanmışlardır. Dolayısıyla Kur'an metni İslam âlimleri arasında ihtilafli meselelerde kullanılan bir alana dönüşmüştür. İslam âlimlerinin öncüleri arasında yer alan Muhammed b. Cerir et-Taberî (ö. 310/923) de ilk üç asır temel kelam tartışmalarını *Câmi' u'l-beyân 'an te'vîli âyi'l-Kur'ân* adlı tefsirinde ele almıştır. Taberî genellikle İslam fırkaları arasında cereyan eden kelami tartışmaları arz ederken ilgili görüşlerin ait olduğu kişi veya fırka ismini vermez. İlgili fırka veya şahsiyetlerin özel isimlerini vermek yerine çoğunlukla 'bazı araştırmacılar', 'bazı müfessirler' gibi anonim ifadeler kullanır. Dolayısıyla bu makalede Taberî'nin anonim ifadeler çerçevesinde göndermede bulunduğu şahıs ve fırkaların özel isimleri temel olarak İslam literatürü bağlamında tespit edilmeye çalışılacaktır. Tefsirinde takip ettiği metot gereği Taberî genellikle ele aldığı kelami tartışmalara bağlı rivayetler aktarırken, bazen de tartışılan konularla ilgili herhangi bir rivayet aktarmaz. Bu çalışmada Taberî'nin naklettiği rivayetlerin sadece isnadları verilecek, metinleri birebir verilmeyecektir. Bununla birlikte Taberî'nin ilgili rivayetlere bağlı olarak arz ettiği ve tefsirinde farklı şahıs veya fırka tarafından savunulan her anonim görüş de özet olarak verilecektir. Bu çalışmada Taberî'nin kelami tartışmalara bağlı olarak ele aldığı tüm anonim ifadeler işlenmeyecek, sadece 'ru'yetullah,' 'imanın tanımı,' 'hür irade,' 'insan fiillerinin yaratılması' gibi insan fiilleri ve ahiret hayatını ilgilendiren bazı ihtilafli meseleler arz edilecektir.

**Anahtar Kelimeler:** Tefsir, et-Taberî, *Câmi' u'l-beyân*, Fırkalar, Kelam.

**Introduction**

Muḥammad b. Jarīr al-Ṭabarī (d. 310/923) uses the main interpretation methods in his commentary which he completed in 270/884.<sup>1</sup> al-Ṭabarī, also, presents the main theological debates that took place in the first three centuries of Islamic history. He presents the ideas of each personality or sect, but mostly without mentioning the proper name of the personalities or the sects. Instead of giving the proper name of the personality or the sect, he uses anonymous expressions such as 'exegetes argued (ikhtalafa ahl al-ta'wīl)', 'ulema and exegetes argued

<sup>1</sup> Abū 'Abd Allāh al-Ḥamawī Yāqūt, *Mu'jamu al-udabā': irshād al-arīb ilā ma'rifa al-adīb*, ed. Iḥsān 'Abbās (Beirut: Dār al-Gharb al-Islām, 1993), 6/2441, 2452.

(ikhtalafa ahl al-‘ilm wa ahl al-ta’wīl)’ and so on. Therefore, as the main object of this article, we will try to determine the proper names of the personalities and sects involved in the theological discussions that al-Ṭabarī deals with in his commentary within anonymous expressions. Consequently, by determining the proper names of the personalities and sects, we will reveal some sources that al-Ṭabarī used in his commentary regarding the theological debates. While trying to determine the proper names of the personalities and the sectarian groups, we will mainly use the related Islamic sources especially al-Ash‘arī’s *Maqālāt al-Islāmiyyīn*.

However, we will not present all the anonymous expressions that al-Ṭabarī uses in his commentary related to the theological debates. The topics which we will present in this study, regarding the anonymous expressions that take place in the commentary of al-Ṭabarī, are as follows: ‘beatific vision (ru’yatullāh),’ ‘the definition of faith,’ ‘free will,’ ‘the creation of human acts,’ ‘being overburdened by the divine law (taklīfu mā lā yutāq),’ ‘mortal sins,’ and ‘torment in the grave.’

al-Ṭabarī, as a common method that he follows in his commentary, supplies traditions regarding the theological discussions that he handles. He quotes traditions which each personality or group uses to support the followed idea/s. Nevertheless he sometimes does not provide any tradition related to the theological debates that he presents. In this study, we will give just the *isnāds* (chains of transmitters) of the traditions related to the anonymous theological discussions, but leave out their texts. However, we will sum up the idea of each anonymous personality or the group who uses the related traditions to support the followed idea/s. Additionally, giving all texts of the traditions exceeds the volume of this article and does not serve its aim which is to determine the proper name of the personality or the group that al-Ṭabarī gives under anonymous expressions. Furthermore, *isnāds* are very important in terms of denoting the sources of al-Ṭabarī which he used for the subject matter.

al-Ṭabarī mentions directly only the names of *al-Qadariyya*<sup>2</sup> / *Ahl al-Qadar*<sup>3</sup> and *al-Jahmiyya* in his commentary.<sup>4</sup> He does not mention the name *al-Mu’tazila (al-Qadariyya)* in his commentary related to the theological debates.<sup>5</sup> He also uses the phrases such as *Ahl al-Jadal*,<sup>6</sup> *Ahl al-Ithbāt*,<sup>7</sup> and so on regarding the theological debates that he deals with in his commentary.

Here we will present the theological debates of the sectarian groups that al-Ṭabarī alluded to anonymously in his commentary, that’s, without mentioning the proper name of the personality or the sectarian group:

## 1. Beatific Vision (Ru’yatullāh)

### 1.1. al-An‘ām 6/103

al-Ṭabarī gives four anonymous views regarding the theological debates on the expression *lā tudrikuhu al-absāru wa huwa yudriku al-absāra* (No human vision can encompass Him,

<sup>2</sup> Muḥammad b. Jarīr al-Ṭabarī, *Jāmi’ al-bayān ‘an ta’wīli āy al-Qur’ān*, ed. Khalīl al-Mais (Beirut: Dār al-Fikr, 2005), 1/115 (twice); 3/1750; 5/3379, 3683, 3684 (in tradition); 12/7531 (in tradition).

<sup>3</sup> al-Ṭabarī, *Jāmi’ al-bayān*, 1/97, 100; 2/1345; 8/5063; 11/6966; 12/7531 (twice, one in tradition).

<sup>4</sup> al-Ṭabarī, *Jāmi’ al-bayān*, 1/158.

<sup>5</sup> al-Ṭabarī, *Jāmi’ al-bayān*, 13/7932.

<sup>6</sup> al-Ṭabarī, *Jāmi’ al-bayān*, 4/3131.

<sup>7</sup> al-Ṭabarī, *Jāmi’ al-bayān*, 8/5063.

whereas He encompasses all human vision, al-An‘ām 6/103)<sup>8</sup> The views and related *isnāds* of the traditions that al-Ṭabarī refers to are as follows:

1. According to some exegetes, what is meant in this verse is not that God cannot be seen, but that he cannot be encompassed. In the Hereafter, believers will look at their Lord with their bare eyes, but their sight will not be able to encompass him. Since God has stated in the verses *wujūhun yawma idhīn nādiratun / ilā rabbihā nāziratun* (Some faces will on that Day be bright with happiness / looking up to their Sustainer, al-Qiyāma 75/22-23)<sup>9</sup> that some faces will look at him.

\* Muḥammad b. Sa‘d *from my father from my uncle from my father from his father from Ibn ‘Abbās.*

\* Bishr *from Yazīd from Sa‘īd from Qatāda.*

\* Sa‘d b. ‘Abd Allāh b. ‘Abd al-Ḥakam *from Khālīd b. ‘Abd al-Raḥmān from Abū ‘Ar-faja from ‘Atiyya al-‘Awfī.*

2. According to some other exegetes, the verse al-An‘ām 6/103 means that ‘the eyes cannot see God, but he sees the eyes.’ The supporters of this view point out that God cannot be seen, either in this world or in the Hereafter. The meaning of the verses al-Qiyāma 75/22-23 is ‘to wait for God’s mercy and reward.’

\* Muḥammad b. al-Ḥusain *from Aḥmad b. al-Mufaḍḍal from Asbāt from al-Suddī.*

\* Hannād *from Wakī‘ from Ismā‘īl b. Abī Khālīd from ‘Āmir from Masrūq from ‘Ā’isha.*

\* Ibn Wakī‘ *from my father from Ismā‘īl b. Abī Khālīd from ‘Āmir from Masrūq.*

\* Ibn Wakī‘ *from ‘Abd al-A‘lā and Ibn ‘Ulayya from Dāvud from al-Sha‘bī from Masrūq from ‘Ā’isha.*

\* Ibn Ḥumaid *from Jarīr from Mughīra from al-Sha‘bī from ‘Ā’isha.*

3. According to some other exegetes, the verse al-An‘ām 6/103 means ‘God cannot be seen.’ However, this is a special case of ‘not being seen.’ In other words, God will not be seen in this world, but will be seen in the Hereafter, because God has stated in the verses al-Qiyāma 75/22-23 that he will be seen in the Hereafter.

4. According to another group of exegetes, the verse al-An‘ām 6/103 means ‘eyes cannot see God’, and this is a general situation and relevant for all time. God cannot be seen with bare eyes, either in this world or in the Hereafter. However, on the Day of Judgement, God will create a sixth sense organ for his friends and they will see their Lord with it.<sup>10</sup>

The first and third views belong to the Sunnis. There is no fundamental difference between the two views, because both of them point out that God will be seen with bare eyes in the Hereafter.<sup>11</sup> al-Ṭabarī attributes the first view to Ahl al-Athar (Aṣḥāb al-Ḥadīth) in *al-Tabṣīr*

<sup>8</sup> Muhammad Asad, *The Message of the Qur‘ān* (İstanbul: İṣaret Yayınları, 2006), 187.

<sup>9</sup> Asad, *The Message of the Qur‘ān*, 913.

<sup>10</sup> al-Ṭabarī, *Jāmi‘ al-bayān*, 5/3509-3514.

<sup>11</sup> al-Ṭabarī, *Jāmi‘ al-bayān*, 5/3513-3514; Muḥammad b. Jarīr al-Ṭabarī, *al-Tabṣīr fī ma‘ālim al-dīn*, ed. ‘Alī b. ‘Abd al-‘Azīz b. ‘Alī al-Shibl (Riyadh: Dār al-‘Āshīma, 1996), 217-219; William Montgomery Watt, *The Formative Period of Islamic Thought* (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 1973), 296. Additionally, while interpreting the verse al-Baqara 2/115, al-Ṭabarī gives some anonymous views regarding the ‘face’ as an anthropomorphic attribute of God and does not make any comment related to the issue. See al-Ṭabarī, *Jāmi‘ al-bayān*, 1/645-646.

*ft Ma'ālim al-dīn*.<sup>12</sup> Additionally, al-Ṭabarī, in *al-Tabṣīr ft ma'ālim al-dīn*, attributes 'seeing God with bare eyes' to Hishām (?) and his followers: Abū Mālik (?), Nakha'ī (?), and Muqātil b. Sulaimān.<sup>13</sup> The second view belongs to most of the Mu'tazilis, the Jahmites, the Kharijites, and some of the Murjites and Zaydites.<sup>14</sup> al-Ṭabarī, in *al-Tabṣīr ft ma'ālim al-dīn*, attributes this view to the Jahmites themselves.<sup>15</sup> The fourth view belongs to Dirār b. 'Amr (d. 184-205/800-820) who is a Mu'tazilī scholar, and to those who follow him regarding the issue in question such as Abū Yaḥyā Ḥaḥṣ al-Fard (d. third/ninth century?) and al-Akhfash al-Awsaṭ.<sup>16</sup> al-Ṭabarī attributes this view to Dirār b. 'Amr in *al-Tabṣīr ft ma'ālim al-dīn*.<sup>17</sup>

## 1.2. al-Qiyāma 75/23

al-Ṭabarī states that, exegetes have disputed about the verse *ilā rabbihā nāẓiratun* (looking up to their Sustainer, al-Qiyāma 75/23)<sup>18</sup> which is about Beatific Vision (Ru'yatullāh). He gives two anonymous views regarding the theological debates on the verse in question. The views and related *isnāds* of the traditions that al-Ṭabarī refers to are as follows:

1. According to some exegetes, this verse means, 'they will look at their Lord (with their bare eyes).'

\* Muḥammad b. Maṣṣūr al-Ṭūsī and Ibrāhīm b. Sa'īd al-Jawharī *from* 'Alī b. al-Ḥasan b. Shaqīq *from* al-Ḥusain b. Wāqīd *from* Yazīd al-Naḥwī *from* 'Ikrima.

\* Muḥammad b. 'Alī b. al-Ḥasan b. Shaqīq *from* my father *from* al-Ḥusain b. Wāqīd *from* Yazīd al-Naḥwī *from* 'Ikrima and Ismā'īl b. Abī Khālid and Ashyākh min Ahl al-Kūfa.

\* Muḥammad b. Ismā'īl al-Bukhārī *from* Ādam *from* al-Mubārak *from* al-Ḥasan.

\* Sa'd b. 'Abd Allāh b. 'Abd al-Ḥakam *from* Khālid b. 'Abd al-Raḥmān *from* Abū 'Ar-faja *from* 'Atiyya al-'Awfī.

2. According to some others, this verse means 'they await reward from their Lord.'

\* Abū Kuraib *from* 'Umar b. 'Ubaid *from* Maṣṣūr *from* Mujāhid.

\* Wakī' *from* Sufyān *from* Maṣṣūr *from* Mujāhid.

\* Ibn Bashshār *from* 'Abd al-Raḥmān *from* Sufyān *from* Maṣṣūr *from* Mujāhid.

\* Ibn Ḥumaid *from* Mihrān *from* Sufyān *from* Maṣṣūr *from* Mujāhid.

\* Yaḥyā b. Ibrāhīm al-Mas'ūdī *from* my father *from* his father *from* his grandfather *from* al-A'mash *from* Mujāhid.

\* Ibn Ḥumaid *from* Jarīr *from* Maṣṣūr *from* Mujāhid.

\* Jarīr *from* Maṣṣūr *from* Mujāhid.

<sup>12</sup> al-Ṭabarī, *al-Tabṣīr ft ma'ālim al-dīn*, 219.

<sup>13</sup> al-Ṭabarī, *al-Tabṣīr ft ma'ālim al-dīn*, 216-217.

<sup>14</sup> See Abū al-Ḥasan 'Alī b. Ismā'īl al-Ash'arī, *Maqālāt al-Islāmiyyīn wa ikhtilāf al-muṣallīn*, ed. Na'im Zarzūr (Beirut: Maktaba al-'Aṣriyya, 2009), 1/128-130, 172-173.

<sup>15</sup> al-Ṭabarī, *al-Tabṣīr ft ma'ālim al-dīn*, 215.

<sup>16</sup> Abū al-Ḥasan Sa'īd b. Mas'ada al-Akhfash al-Awsaṭ, *Ma'ānī al-Qur'ān*, ed. 'Abd al-Amīr Muḥammad Amīn al-Ward (Beirut: Ālam al-Kutub, 1985), 2/531; al-Ash'arī, *Maqālāt al-Islāmiyyīn*, 1/220-221.

<sup>17</sup> al-Ṭabarī, *al-Tabṣīr ft ma'ālim al-dīn*, 216.

<sup>18</sup> Asad, *The Message of the Qur'ān*, 913.

\* Abū al-Khattāb al-Ḥassānī *from* Mālik *from* Sufyān *from* Ismā‘īl b. Abī Khālid *from* Abū Šālih.

\* Abū Kuraib *from* al-Ashja‘ī *from* Sufyān *from* Thuwair *from* Mujāhid *from* Ibn ‘Umar.

\* Ibn Yamān *from* Ashja‘ *from* Abū al-Šahbā’ al-Mawšilī.

al-Ṭabarī regards the first view as correct, but rejects the second one.<sup>19</sup> As pointed out above, while the first view belongs to the sects of Ahl al-Sunna, the second one belongs to sects such as al-Mu‘tazila, al-Jahmiyya, and so on.

## 2. The Definition of Faith

al-Ṭabarī gives three anonymous views related to the theological debates on the verse *qālat al-A‘rābu āmannā qul lam tu‘minū wa lākin qūlū aslamnā wa lammā yadkhul al-īmānu fī qulūbikum* (The Bedouin say, ‘We have attained to faith.’ Say [unto them, O Muhammad]: ‘You have not [yet] attained to faith; you should [rather] say, ‘We have [outwardly] surrendered’ - for [true] faith has not yet entered your hearts,’ al-Ḥujurāt 49/14).<sup>20</sup> The views and related *isnāds* of the traditions that al-Ṭabarī refers to are as follows:

1. According to some exegetes, the reason why the Prophet received such a command is that the society in the verse in question ‘professed faith only with the tongue and did not confirm this profession with their acts / deeds.’ Therefore, they were told, “do not say ‘we believe’,” because faith consists of profession and deeds.

\* Ibn ‘Abd al-A‘lā *from* Ibn Thawr *from* Ma‘mar *from* al-Zuhrī.

\* Ibn ‘Abd al-A‘lā *from* Ibn Thawr *from* Ma‘mar *from* al-Zuhrī *from* ‘Āmir b. Sa‘d *from* his father.

\* Yūnus *from* Ibn Wahb *from* Ibn Zaid.

\* Ibn Ḥumaid *from* Mihrān *from* Sufyān *from* Mughīra *from* Ibrāhīm.

2. According to some other exegetes, the people in question wanted to be called by the names of *immigrants* (muhājir) although they have not immigrated. Thus, God declared that they would be called by the names of ‘bedouins,’ not by the names of *immigrants*.

\* Muḥammad b. Sa‘d *from* my father *from* my uncle *from* my father *from* his father *from* Ibn ‘Abbās.

3. According to some other exegetes, the people in question wanted to make the Prophet feel grateful to them, because of their conversion to Islam willingly (that is, without war or any other troubles). Therefore, God ordered his messenger to say, “You did not believe, but you wanted to surrender because of fear of captivity and being killed.”

\* Bishr *from* Yazīd *from* Sa‘īd *from* Qatāda.

\* Ibn ‘Abd al-A‘lā *from* Muḥammad b. Thawr *from* Ma‘mar *from* Qatāda.

\* Ibn Ḥumaid *from* Mihrān *from* Sufyān *from* Rabāḥ Ibn Abī Ma‘rūf *from* Sa‘īd b. Jubair.

\* Ibn Ḥumaid *from* Mihrān *from* Sufyān *from* a man *from* Mujāhid.

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<sup>19</sup> al-Ṭabarī, *Jāmi‘ al-bayān*, 14/8718-8720.

<sup>20</sup> Asad, *The Message of the Qur‘ān*, 794-795.

\* Yūnus from Ibn Wahb from Ibn Zaid.<sup>21</sup>

al-Ṭabarī states that the correct interpretation of the verse is the first view. The first view, which al-Ṭabarī gives here with the anonymous phrase ‘some exegetes’, belongs to sects such as Aṣḥāb al-Ḥadīth, the Mu‘tazilis, the Shī‘is, the Ash‘aris and the Kharijites, who define faith as ‘confirming with the heart, confessing with the tongue, and acting.’<sup>22</sup>

### 3. Free Will and the Creation of Human Acts

#### 3.1 al-Baqara 2/7

al-Ṭabarī, while interpreting the expression *khatama Allāhu ‘alā qulūbihim wa ‘alā sam‘ihim* (God; has sealed their hearts and their hearing),<sup>23</sup> points out that:

According to ‘some exegetes,’ what is meant by sealing the heart here is that God informs us that the people who are mentioned here do not heed the invitation to the right path, but on the contrary, they respond to it by self-conceit and turning their backs on it. (Regarding the sectarian groups, al-Ṭabarī says here): Then tell us, ‘Are these acts of self-conceit and turning away, people’s own acts which are created by themselves, or are these acts created by God himself?’ If they claim that these acts are created by the mentioned people themselves - *and certainly they claim this* - then they are told that ‘in this verse, God says that he himself has done this sealing ...

al-Ṭabarī continues the polemic with the people whom he refers to with the anonymous expression ‘some exegetes.’<sup>24</sup>

The sect that al-Ṭabarī refers to here within the anonymous expression ‘some exegetes’ is al-Mu‘tazila, because during the polemic, he states that their views about the creation of the acts of humans are that ‘the acts of self-conceit and turning away are the acts of people themselves,’ and therefore, he actually implies the sect with which he is arguing without expressing its proper name. Moreover, it is the interpretation method of al-Mu‘tazila to interpret verses which include meanings such as ‘God seals the hearts; God leads people astray, ...’ in the way mentioned above by al-Ṭabarī.<sup>25</sup>

#### 3.2 al-An‘ām 6/122

al-Ṭabarī, while interpreting the expression *kadhālika zuyyina li al-kāfirīna mā kānū ya‘malūna* ([But] thus it is: goodly seem all their own doings to those who deny the truth),<sup>26</sup> says with an anonymous expression “In this verse God rejects the claim of those who say, ‘God does not interfere with the acts of his servants, and he treats all of them equally in terms of obedience or causes that lead them to rebellion’.”<sup>27</sup>

As it is clearly understood, al-Ṭabarī here refers to al-Mu‘tazila, who say that ‘the servants are the creators of their own acts / deeds.’

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<sup>21</sup> al-Ṭabarī, *Jāmi‘ al-bayān*, 13/7940-7942.

<sup>22</sup> See al-Ash‘arī, *Maqālāt al-Islāmiyyīn*, 1/59-60, 75, 211-214; Watt, *The Formative Period of Islamic Thought*, 292, 314-316.

<sup>23</sup> Asad, *The Message of the Qur‘ān*, 4.

<sup>24</sup> al-Ṭabarī, *Jāmi‘ al-bayān*, 1/152-153.

<sup>25</sup> See al-Ash‘arī, *Maqālāt al-Islāmiyyīn*, 1/206, 208.

<sup>26</sup> Asad, *The Message of the Qur‘ān*, 191.

<sup>27</sup> al-Ṭabarī, *Jāmi‘ al-bayān*, 5/3556.

### 3.3. al-Anfāl 8/17

al-Ṭabarī, in the interpretation of the verse *fa lam taqtulūhum wa lākinna Allāha qatalahum wa mā ramaita idh ramaita wa lākinna Allāha ramā* (And yet, [O believers,] it was not you who slew the enemy, but it was God who slew them; and it was not thou who cast [terror into them, O Prophet], when thou didst cast it, but it was God who cast it),<sup>28</sup> says that:

God states that the act in this verse is not the Muslims', but his own, because he is the main factor for this act and he is the one who delivers the arrow to the target. Therefore, there is the clearest evidence in this verse against the claims of *those who deny the intervention of God in the acts of humans while they are performing them*.<sup>29</sup>

The sect whose opinion is defined here by al-Ṭabarī as *those who deny the intervention of God in the acts of humans while they are performing them* is undoubtedly al-Mu'tazila, because according to al-Mu'tazila, 'God does not interfere in the creation of the acts of humans.'<sup>30</sup> al-Ṭabarī attributes this definition, which he makes anonymously here, to al-Qadariyya (al-Mu'tazila) itself in a derogatory style in the interpretation of the verse al-Fātiḥa 1/7.<sup>31</sup>

### 4. Being Overburdened by the Divine Law (Taklīfu mā lā yutāq)

According to al-Ṭabarī, the verses *khatama Allāhu 'alā qulūbihim wa 'alā sam'ihim wa 'alā abṣārihim ghishāwatun wa lahum 'adhābun 'azīmun* (God; has sealed their hearts and their hearing, and over their eyes is a veil; and awesome suffering awaits them, al-Baqara 2/7)<sup>32</sup> and *yā ayyuhā al-nāsu u'budū rabbakum alladhī khalaqakum wa alladhīna min qablikum la'allakum tattaqūn* (O mankind! Worship your Sustainer, who has created you and those who lived before you, so that you might remain conscious of Him, al-Baqara 2/21)<sup>33</sup> are the clearest verses which indicate that the views of 'those who deny *taklīfu mā lā yutāq*' are invalid.<sup>34</sup>

al-Ṭabarī here refers to al-Mu'tazila without expressing the proper name of the sect, because al-Mu'tazila is famous for denying *taklīfu mā lā yutāq*. Additionally, in the interpretation of the expression *lā tukallafu nafsun illā wus'ahā* (No human being shall be burdened with more than he is well able to bear, al-Baqara 2/233),<sup>35</sup> al-Ṭabarī explicitly and in a derogatory style states that the sect he rejects on this issue is Ahl al-Qadar (al-Mu'tazila).<sup>36</sup>

Nevertheless, it is possible that al-Ṭabarī, if not directly but indirectly, rejects the related views of the Rafīḍites,<sup>37</sup> the Mu'tazilis,<sup>38</sup> and of many ulema of Ahl al-Sunna such as Abū Ḥanīfa (d. 150/767) and al-Ṭahāwī (d. 321/933), who, contrary to al-Ash'arī, reject *taklīfu mā lā yutāq*.<sup>39</sup>

<sup>28</sup> Asad, *The Message of the Qur'an*, 240.

<sup>29</sup> al-Ṭabarī, *Jāmi' al-bayān*, 6/4051.

<sup>30</sup> See Abū Ḥusain 'Abd al-Raḥīm Muḥammad b. 'Uthmān al-Khayyāt, *al-Intiṣār wa al-radd 'alā Ibn al-Rāwandī al-mulḥid*, ed. Doktor Nībarj (Beirut: Maktaba al-Dār al-'Arabiyya, 1993), 50; Watt, *The Formative Period of Islamic Thought*, 94-98.

<sup>31</sup> al-Ṭabarī, *Jāmi' al-bayān*, 1/115-116.

<sup>32</sup> Asad, *The Message of the Qur'an*, 4.

<sup>33</sup> Asad, *The Message of the Qur'an*, 6.

<sup>34</sup> al-Ṭabarī, *Jāmi' al-bayān*, 1/153, 214.

<sup>35</sup> Asad, *The Message of the Qur'an*, 51.

<sup>36</sup> al-Ṭabarī, *Jāmi' al-bayān*, 2/1345. See also al-Ash'arī, *Maqālāt al-Islāmiyyīn*, 1/184.

<sup>37</sup> al-Khayyāt, *al-Intiṣār wa al-radd 'alā Ibn al-Rāwandī*, 6.

<sup>38</sup> al-Ash'arī, *Maqālāt al-Islāmiyyīn*, 1/184, 222; Watt, *The Formative Period of Islamic Thought*, 200.

<sup>39</sup> Abū Ḥanīfa al-Nu'mān b. Thābit, *Sharḥ kitāb al-fiqh al-akbar*, ed. 'Alī al-Qārī (Beirut: Dār al-Kutub al-'Ilmiyya, 2007), 324; Abū Ja'fer al-Ṭahāwī, *al-'Aqīda al-Ṭahāwiyya* (Beirut: Dār al-Bayāriq, 2001), 25; Abū al-



## 5. Mortal / Grave Sins

### 5.1. al-Baqara 2/81

al-Ṭabarī touches on debates about the mortal sins while interpreting the verse *balā man kasaba sayyi'atan wa aḥāṭat bihi khaṭī'atuhu fa ulā'ika aṣḥābu al-nāri hum fihā khālidūna* (Yea! Those who earn evil and by their sinfulness are engulfed - they are destined for the fire, therein to abide)<sup>40</sup> and states that those who have sinned and will stay in Hell eternally are unbelievers, because there are many traditions which declare that 'believers will not stay in Hell forever,' and then he anonymously gives al-Mu'tazila's views and questions, and rejects them as follows. al-Ṭabarī points out that:

(A Mu'tazilī question is that): If someone thinks that 'the believers who will stay in Paradise forever, are those who do good deeds, not those who commit sins,' then regarding the issue we will say that God informs us that if we avoid the mortal sins, our other sins will be forgiven.

(A second Mu'tazilī question is that): 'God assures us that our other sins will be forgiven as long as we avoid the mortal ones. Therefore, what is the evidence that mortal sins are not the sins meant in the verse al-Baqara 2/81, [and that those who commit mortal sins will not remain in eternal Hell]?' (al-Ṭabarī answers this question by saying): There are certain traditions about the issue which are impossible to be refused, and the related traditions point out that the believers who commit mortal sins will eventually enter Paradise ...<sup>41</sup>

### 5.2. Hūd 11/107

al-Ṭabarī gives four anonymous views regarding the theological debates on the expression *khālidūna fihā mā dāmat al-samawātu wa al-arḍu illā mā shā'a rabbuka* (Therein to abide as long as the heavens and the earth endure - unless thy Sustainer wills it otherwise, Hūd 11/107).<sup>42</sup> The views and related *isnāds* of the traditions that al-Ṭabarī refers to are as follows:

1. According to some ulema and exegetes (ahl al-'ilm wa ahl al-ta'wīl), the exception in this verse is for the people of tawḥīd. After God has thrown them into Hell, he will pull them out of Hell whenever he wills.

\* al-Ḥasan b. Yaḥyā *from* 'Abd al-Razzāq *from* Ma'mar *from* Qatāda.

\* Bishr *from* Yazīd *from* Sa'īd *from* Qatāda.

\* Muḥammad b. al-Muthannā *from* Shaybān b. Farrūkh *from* Abū Hilāl *from* Qatāda.

\* Ibn Ḥumaid *from* Ya'qūb *from* Abū Mālik that is, Tha'laba *from* Abū Sinān.

\* Muḥammad b. 'Abd al-A'lā *from* Muḥammad b. Thawr *from* Ma'mar *from* al-Ḍaḥḥāk b. Muzāḥim.

\* al-Muthannā *from* 'Abd Allāh b. Ṣāliḥ *from* Mu'āviya *from* 'Āmir b. Jashīb *from* Khālid b. Ma'dān.

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Ḥasan 'Alī b. Ismā'īl al-Ash'arī, *Risāla ilā Aḥl al-Thaḡhr*, ed. 'Abd Allāh Shākir Muḥammad al-Junaidī (Medina: Maktaba al-'Ulūm wa al-Ḥikam, 2002), 260-265.

<sup>40</sup> Asad, *The Message of the Qur'ān*, 17.

<sup>41</sup> al-Ṭabarī, *Jāmi' al-bayān*, 1/496-497.

<sup>42</sup> Asad, *The Message of the Qur'ān*, 331.

2. According to some others, the exception here is for the people of tawhīd, and it means that if God wishes, he will forgive their sins without putting them into Hell.

\* al-Ḥasan b. Yaḥyā *from* ‘Abd al-Razzāq *from* Ibn al-Taimī *from* his father *from* Abū Naḍra *from* Jābir *or* Abū Sa‘īd al-Khudrī *or* a man from the companions of the Prophet.

3. According to others, the exception here applies to anyone who goes to Hell.

\* al-Musayyāb *from* someone who mentioned him *from* Ibn ‘Abbās.

\* Ibn Ḥumaid *from* Jarīr *from* Bayān *from* al-Sha‘bī.

4. According to another group of ulema and exegetes, God has declared that the people of Paradise will last forever, but he did not inform us about the people of Hell. Therefore, this exception may be about prolonging or shortening their punishment.

\* Yūnus *from* Ibn wahb *from* Ibn Zaid.

al-Ṭabarī states that the first view is correct and that the exception here is about the people of tawhīd who commit mortal sins. Therefore, God finally admits these people into Paradise. There are definite traditions which ascertain this view. He points out that the second view cannot be correct, because in such a case, the view that ‘neither a sinner (fāsiq) enters Paradise nor a believer (mu’min) enters Hell’ will be accepted. He states that this view, on the other hand, is contrary to both the opinions of the ulema (ahl al-‘ilm) and the traditions.<sup>43</sup> Moreover, the third view is based on the idea that Hell will be completely empty or disappear after a long period of time. Therefore, it is not certain to which sect it belongs.

Consequently, the first and fourth views belong to the Sunni sects, because according to them, the people of tawhīd will eventually enter Paradise.<sup>44</sup> al-Ṭabarī rejects the view that ‘neither a sinner (fāsiq) enters Paradise nor a believer (mu’min) enters Hell’, which he gives here anonymously, but attributes it to al-Mu’tazila in *al-Tabṣīr fī ma’ālim al-dīn*,<sup>45</sup> because according to al-Mu’tazila, ‘a sinner (fāsiq), that is, a person who commits mortal sins, does not enter Paradise.’<sup>46</sup>

## 6. Punishment / Torment in the Grave

al-Ṭabarī states that the verse *ḥattā zurtum al-maqābira* (Until you go down to your graves, al-Takāthur 102/2)<sup>47</sup> is clear evidence for the view that supports ‘the existence of torment in the grave.’ al-Ṭabarī says that God threatened these people, whose competition for worldly gain was preoccupying them, by declaring that they will learn what will happen to them when they die and are buried in the graves.<sup>48</sup>

Likewise, after giving many different views regarding the phrases *sanu’adhdhibuhum marratayni* (We shall cause them to suffer doubly, al-Tawba 9/101)<sup>49</sup> and *ma’īshatan ḍangkan* (A life of narrow scope, Ṭā Hā 20/124),<sup>50</sup> al-Ṭabarī states that the correct interpretations of both

<sup>43</sup> al-Ṭabarī, *Jāmi’ al-bayān*, 7/4712-4715.

<sup>44</sup> al-Ṭahāwī, *al-‘Aqīda al-Ṭahāwiyya*, 19, 29; al-Ash‘arī, *Maqālāt al-Islāmiyyīn*, 2/355; Ibn Abī Ya‘lā, *Ṭabaqāt al-Ḥanābila*, ed. ‘Abd al-Raḥmān b. Sulaimān al-‘Uthaimīn (Riyadh: al-Amāna al-‘amma li al-Ihtifāl, 1999), 1/59-60. See also al-Ṭabarī, *al-Tabṣīr fī ma’ālim al-dīn*, 177-186.

<sup>45</sup> al-Ṭabarī, *al-Tabṣīr fī ma’ālim al-dīn*, 178.

<sup>46</sup> al-Ash‘arī, *Maqālāt al-Islāmiyyīn*, 1/109; 2/355.

<sup>47</sup> Asad, *The Message of the Qur’ān*, 973.

<sup>48</sup> al-Ṭabarī, *Jāmi’ al-bayān*, 15/8828.

<sup>49</sup> Asad, *The Message of the Qur’ān*, 279.

<sup>50</sup> Asad, *The Message of the Qur’ān*, 484.

these phrases belong to those who accept ‘torment in the grave’ as the correct interpretation for the torment mentioned in these verses.<sup>51</sup>

Consequently, al-Ṭabarī, in all three verses given above, refers to the views of the Jahmites, the Kharijites, and some of the Mu‘tazilis, who reject ‘the existence of torment in the grave,’ and rejects their opinions;<sup>52</sup> while on the other hand, he defends the views of the Sunni sects who support ‘the existence of torment in the grave.’

### **Conclusion**

As we presented above with many examples, al-Ṭabarī does not provide the proper names of personalities or sectarian groups in many of the theological debates that he briefly handles in his commentary called *Jāmi’ al-bayān ‘an ta’wīl āy al-Qur’ān*. Contrarily, regarding the controversial theological debates, he quotes the idea/s of personalities or sectarian groups within anonymous expressions such as ‘exegetes argued (ikhtalafa ahl al-ta’wīl)’, ‘ulema and exegetes argued (ikhtalafa ahl al-‘ilm wa ahl al-ta’wīl)’ and then evaluates them in accordance within the coherence of his theological viewpoint. As we pointed out before, al-Ṭabarī, while on one hand alludes to the traditions regarding some theological debates that he handles, on the other hand he presents most of the theological debates that he covers in his commentary without providing traditions for the related discussions. Consequently, in this study, we tried to determine and bring to light the proper names of the personalities and sectarian groups which al-Ṭabarī gives within anonymous expressions. While trying to determine the related proper names, we mainly relied on the Islamic literature.

We think that, by determining the proper names of the related persons and sectarian groups which al-Ṭabarī gives within anonymous expressions will enable us to learn or at least to have an idea about the contents of many of the lost books / thoughts of the first three centuries of Islamic history. Consequently, this article will contribute to reveal the sources that al-Ṭabarī used for the theological debates.

It seems that al-Ṭabarī does not want to lengthen his commentary with the proper names of the sectarian groups, their followers and the related theological debates. This is either because al-Ṭabarī does not regard the commentary a place where the controversial theological debates are held in detail, or because he dealt with the related topics in the related works of his, or rather because the theological opinions and their followers are well known among the scholars of his age. Therefore, because the exegesis is an expertise field, he does not need to repeat proper names of the personalities or the sectarian groups regarding the controversial theological debates.

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<sup>51</sup> al-Ṭabarī, *Jāmi’ al-bayān*, 7/4373-4375; 9/5975-5978.

<sup>52</sup> al-Ash‘arī, *Maqālāt al-Islāmiyyīn*, 1/111; 2/318; al-Ash‘arī, *Risāla ilā Ahl al-Thaḡhr*, 279; Ibn Abī Ya‘lā, *Ṭabaqāt al-Ḥanābila*, 1/59; Watt, *The Formative Period of Islamic Thought*, 146.

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**What Do Orientalist Qur'anic Studies Mean For a Muslim?**  
*Oryantalist Kur'an Arařtırmaları Bir Müslüman İçin Ne İfade Eder?*

**Necmettin Salih EKİZ**

Arş. Gör. Düzce Üniversitesi, İlahiyat Fakültesi  
Temel İslam Bilimleri, Tefsir Anabilim Dalı  
Research Assistant, Düzce University, Faculty of Theology  
Basic Islamic Sciences, Department of Tafsir  
Düzce, Türkiye  
[necmettinsalihekiz@duzce.edu.tr](mailto:necmettinsalihekiz@duzce.edu.tr)  
<https://orcid.org/0000-0002-0913-8087>

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### Abstract

The historical venture of the Qur'ān has assumed a paramount role within Orientalist Islamic studies during the previous two hundred years. Orientalists have pioneered the formalization of Qur'ānic history as an independent scholarly discipline in its contemporary manifestation, thereby delineating foundational research themes and methodologies within this domain. In their fundamental paradigm, these scholars reject the notion that the Qur'ān constitutes a divine revelation bestowed upon the Prophet Muhammad. Within the realm of orientalism, proponents of the perspective positing Muhammad's direct authorship or dictation of the Qur'ān have extensively examined the Qur'ān's composition, thereby tracing its developmental phases subsequent to its initial compilation as a Mushaf. These scholars delved into the surrounding religious and cultural context, particularly emphasizing monotheistic traditions, in their quest to trace the roots of Islam. Concurrently, rigorous investigations of Qur'ānic manuscripts were undertaken, striving to unveil the most authentic and critically analyzed rendition of the Qur'ānic text. Beyond the focus on the Qur'ānic text's historical venture, orientalist displayed a profound curiosity regarding its internal composition. Their inquiries encompassed the intricate interrelationship between surahs and ayahs, exploring the textual cohesion and coherence, alongside the meticulous arrangement of surahs and ayahs. On the other hand, the Muslim scholarly community embarked upon a post-orientalist exploration of the Qur'ānic history, engendering a modernized perspective. Their scholarship, often aimed at counteracting and addressing orientalist contentions, has sought to contextualize and respond to these studies. In this study, I embark on an exposition of Western scholarship pertaining the history of the Qur'ān. My endeavour involves a comprehensive survey of the historical epochs, scholarly inquiries, academic factions, notable scholars and their studies, literary contributions, paradigmatic contentions and methodological approaches that have collectively shaped the venture of Western Qur'ānic historiography from its emergence from the contemporary period up to the current moment. Following this systematic presentation of the orientalist tradition and its accrued body of knowledge, the subsequent discourse delves into the implications of these scholarly developments for researchers within the Muslim academic domain. In this discourse, I meticulously account for the underlying presuppositions and paradigmatic distinctions inherent to both Western and Islamic scholarly realms.

**Keywords:** Tafsir, Qur'ān, Muslim, Qur'ānic History, Orientalism.

### Özet

Kur'an tarihi, yaklaşık son iki yüz yıldır oryantalist İslam araştırmalarından en önemli ve en çok çalışma yapılan alanlarından biri olmuştur. İslam'ın en temel kaynağı olması hasebiyle Kur'an her zaman oryantalistlerin ilgisini çekmiş ve Kur'an üzerine muhtelif açılardan pek çok çalışma kaleme almışlardır. Dolayısıyla modern anlamıyla bir ilim dalı olarak Kur'an tarihinin kurucusu oryantalistler olmuşlar, bu alanın temel araştırma konularını ve yöntemlerini ilk olarak onlar belirlemişlerdir. Temel paradigmaları itibarıyla Kur'an'ın ilahi vahiy olduğunu kabul etmeyip onu bizzat Hz. Muhammed'in yazdığı veya yazdırdığı ön kabulüyle hareket eden oryantalistler, Hz. Muhammed'in peygamberliğinin başından itibaren günümüze kadar Kur'an'ın yazıya geçirilişini ve mushaflaştıktan sonra günümüze kadar geçirdiği aşamaları araştırma konusu etmişlerdir. Bu doğrultuda her şeyden önce Abraham Geiger'ın (ö. 1874) öncülüğünde Kur'an'ın kökenini tespit etmeye çalışmışlar, İslam'ın kökenini başta semavi dinler olmak üzere çevre din ve kültürlerde aramışlardır. Hemen hemen eş zamanlı olarak, modern dönemde Kur'an tarihinin kurucu ismi kabul edilen Theodor Nöldeke'nin (ö. 1930) açtığı yoldan giderek Kur'an el yazmaları üzerine yaptıkları çalışmalar üzerinden en otantik metne ulaşma ve kritik edilmiş bir Kur'an metni ortaya koymayı hedeflemişlerdir. Kur'an metninin tarihinin yanı sıra Kur'an'ın iç yapısıyla da ilgilenmişler, sûre ve ayet tertibinin yanı sıra yine sûre ve ayetler arasındaki münasebât, diğer deyişle metniçi bütünlük üzerine de çalışmalar yapmışlardır. Müslümanlar ise modern anlamıyla Kur'an tarihine oryantalistlerden sonra giriş yaparak genelde onların iddialarını cevaplamaya matuf çalışmalar kaleme almışlardır. Bu çalışmada ilk olarak modern dönemde Kur'an tarihinin ortaya çıktığı dönemden günümüze kadar geçirdiği aşamalar, yapılan çalışmalar, ekoller, temel iddialar ve yöntemler ele alınarak Batılı Kur'an tarihi literatürü sunulmuştur. Başta, Kur'an tarihi konularının neredeyse tamamının kurucusu sayılabilecek Alman oryantalist geleneği üzere olmak üzere diğer Batılı geleneklere de dikkat çekilmiş, kronolojikten ziyade ülke ve gelenek bazlı bir anlatım benimsenmiştir. Ekollerin benimsediği

yöntemler arasındaki temel farklar üzerinde özellikle durulmuş, tarihsel süreçte yaşanan kırılma ve dönüşümlere vurgu yapılmıştır. Bu şekilde oryantalist gelenek ve birikim ortaya konduktan sonra bunun Müslüman araştırmacılar için ne ifade ettiği tartışılmıştır. Bu tartışma yapılırken her iki dünya arasındaki ön kabuller ve paradigma farkları göz önünde bulundurulmuştur. Bu mukayese sonucunda Batılı araştırmacılar tarafından oluşturulan birikimin Müslümanlar tarafından uygulanabilirliğinin keyfiyetine ışık tutularak yapılabilecek yeni çalışmalara ve açılacak yeni alanlara işaret edilmiştir.

**Keywords:** Tefsir, Kur'an, Müslüman, Kur'an Tarihi, Oryantalizm.

## Introduction

There are unsurprisingly fundamental and ontological differences between the Western approach to the Qur'ān and the Muslim approach. The reason is that because Orientalists have used the historical-critical methods and approaches to analyze the Qur'ān as a mere "subject of historical research and historical document" or in other words as a "historical material" from which they can learn about the Prophet's actions and thoughts. Muslims, on the other hand, mainly as a result of the element of belief, have an ontological relationship with the Qur'ān, and therefore see it as the eternal divine word revealed by Allah to Prophet Muhammad as the foundation of their belief, worship, law, and even all their actions and thoughts. To put it in different way, when a Muslim study the Qur'ān, they are simultaneously exploring the essence of their own being; a non-Muslim, on the other hand is attempting to study the Qur'ān is engaging with a world that is foreign to them, i.e., the "other". Since their objective is primarily centered around "understanding", it is improbable for them to grasp the full significance of this world as profoundly as a Muslim would. It is crucial to bear this fundamental paradigmatic difference in mind when examining Western Qur'ānic studies.

The reason why the history of the Qur'ān in the modern era, as a subject of Qur'ānic sciences, has been written in detail by the Western scholars for the first time with modern methods and techniques is perhaps due to this paradigm difference. In fact, if the statement is not considered anachronistic, the information provided in classical Islamic sources about the "history of the Qur'ān" was relatively limited compared to the detailed accounts available from the modern period. Classical sources mainly focused on a limited number of narrations and studies concerning the recitation or rasm al-mushaf. Conversely, Western scholars have meticulously traced the history of written materials from the moment the Qur'ān began to be revealed, trying to uncover intricate details of the canonization process during the reigns of Abu Bakr and Uthman. Additionally, they have undertaken thorough investigations into the Qur'ān manuscripts that have survived from both that early period and subsequent times. This comprehensive approach has allowed for a more thorough understanding of the historical development of the Qur'ān and its written transmission, shedding light on significant aspects that were not as extensively explored in classical Islamic sources.

The aim of this paper is to elucidate the history of academic orientalist Qur'ānic studies up to the present-day by employing literature evaluation and discourse analysis methods and explore the implications of these studies for Muslims. The main sources for this research will include the studies on the origins of Abraham Geiger and his contemporaries, the manuscript studies that gained momentum at the outset of the 20th century, and the studies on the Qur'ānic text structure, which has emerged as a prominent trend in recent times.

The paper will classify the main themes that Orientalists have been dealt with in the field of Qur'ānic history over the last two centuries. It will refer to prominent names, studies



and approaches within each classification. The research will be segmented into three sections. The first part will examine the orientalist's studies concerning the origin of the Qur'ān. The second part will focus on the history of the Qur'ānic text, and the third part will analyze the inner-structural features of the Qur'ān, including the chronological orders of surahs and ayahs (tartib) and interrelations between them (munasabat). Finally, the implications of these studies for Muslims will be discussed.

### 1. Origin of the Qur'ān

The Qur'ān's origin has been a central focus in contemporary Western Qur'ānic studies. According to their paradigm presented in the introduction, the orientalist who do not accept that the Qur'ān was revealed to Muhammad by Allah, claimed that it was either written by Muhammad himself or dictated by him, suggesting that it did not originate as divine revelation but as a human creation. Although the orientalist agreed on this premise, they differ in their views on how Muhammad created the Qur'ān. Some asserted that Muhammed borrowed the Qur'ān from Judaism or Christianity, while others propose a more comprehensive framework suggesting that he drew inspiration from both monotheistic religions and other surrounding cultures, including paganism. There are even theories suggesting that the Qur'ān was a product of the collective consciousness of Muslims throughout the second and third centuries AH, possibly not in the Hijaz but in Mesopotamia. Consequently, a significant body of literature concerning the "origin" of the Qur'ān has surfaced within orientalist Qur'ānic studies, incorporating these various claims.

Despite the first examples of origin claims dating back to the time when the Qur'ān was revealed, they were largely superficial. The first academic and comprehensive study in the modern period was conducted by the German-Jewish Reformist Rabbi Abraham Geiger (1810-1874). In his doctoral thesis titled *Was hat Mohammed aus dem Judenthume aufgenommen?* (What did Muhammad borrow from Judaism?) written in 1832, Geiger drew parallels between the Qur'ān and Jewish sacred sources in terms of beliefs, concepts, worships, stories ect. Based on these parallels, he claimed that Muhammad wrote the Qur'ān by drawing upon the knowledge he acquired from the Jews around him, implying that he borrowed it from Judaism.

Following Geiger's methodology, a consistent endeavour emerged among both Jewish and Christian writers to explore the origin of Islam, particularly through the Qur'ān.<sup>1</sup> To delineate the "origin literature" that surfaced after Geiger's work, some researchers have contended that orientalist almost "hunted for biblical material in the Qur'ān"<sup>2</sup> and that an "influence paradigm"<sup>3</sup> emerged. Although the expressions employed by authors in these studies may vary, the method and essence of the claim, which involves attributing a specific origin, remained unchanged.<sup>4</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Bernard Lewis, *İslâm Dünyasında Yahudiler*, Trans. Belgin Çınar (Ankara: Akılçelen Kitaplar, 2018), 119.

<sup>2</sup> Walid Saleh, "In Search of Comprehensible Qur'ān: A Survey of Some Recent Scholarly Works", *Bulletin of the School of Oriental and African Studies* 5 (2003), 155.

<sup>3</sup> Michael Pregill, "Some Reflections on Borrowing, Influence, and the Entwining of Jewish and Islamic Traditions; or, What an Image of a Calf Might Do", *Islamic Studies Today*, ed. Majid Daneshgar - Walid Saleh (Leiden: E. J. Brill, 2017), 181.

<sup>4</sup> Pregill, "Some Reflections on Borrowing, Influence, and the Entwining of Jewish and Islamic Traditions; or, What an Image of a Calf Might Do", 168.

The authors initiate their investigation by identifying foreign (non-arabic) words in the Qur'ān and then attempt to demonstrate their Hebrew origin. Subsequently, they compare the stories of the Qur'ān with the biblical passages, arguing that these stories must have been borrowed by Muhammad from the Bible. In doing so, they endeavor to depict Islam as a derivative religion, contending that Muhammad fashioned an imitative religion by borrowing from Judaism or Christianity. While claiming this, the terms they generally use have been “borrowing, influence, origins of Islam, Muhammedanism”.<sup>5</sup>

In this context, several scholars can be mentioned who have claimed that Islam and the Qur'ān have Jewish origins. These scholars include Isaac Gastfreund<sup>6</sup> (d. 1880), Gustav Weil<sup>7</sup> (d. 1889), Heinrich Graetz<sup>8</sup> (d. 1891), Ignaz Goldziher<sup>9</sup> (d. 1921), Hartwig Hirschfeld<sup>10</sup> (d. 1934), W. Clair Tisdall<sup>11</sup> (d. 1928), Theodor Nöldeke<sup>12</sup> (d. 1930), Joseph Horovitz<sup>13</sup> (d. 1931), C. Snouck Hurgronje<sup>14</sup> (d. 1936), Arent Jan Wensinck<sup>15</sup> (d. 1939), Eugen Mittwoch<sup>16</sup> (d. 1942), Charles Cutler Torrey<sup>17</sup> (d. 1956), Julian Obermann<sup>18</sup> (d. 1956), Israel Schapiro<sup>19</sup> (d. 1957), Arthur Jeffery<sup>20</sup> (d. 1959), Alfred Guillaume<sup>21</sup> (d. 1965), Sholomo Dov Goitein<sup>22</sup> (d. 1985), Abraham Katsh<sup>23</sup> (d. 1998).

On the other hand, there are scholars who have argued for a Christian origin of Islam and the Qur'ān. This group includes Clair Tisdall<sup>24</sup> (d. 1928), Alphonse Mingana<sup>25</sup> (d. 1937),

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<sup>5</sup> Özcan Hıdır, *Yahudi Kültürü ve Hadisler* (Istanbul: İnsan Yayınları, 2018), 419.

<sup>6</sup> Isaac Gastfreund, *Mohammed nach Talmud und Midrasch* (Berlin: Hansebooks, 2019).

<sup>7</sup> Gustav Weil, *The Bible, the Koran, and the Talmud or Biblical Legends of the Mussulmans* (London: Longman, Brown, Green and Longmans, 1846).

<sup>8</sup> Heinrich Graetz, *History of the Jews*, Eng. Trans. Bella Löwy (London: Myers, 1904).

<sup>9</sup> Ignaz Goldziher, *Muhammad and Islam* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1917).

<sup>10</sup> Hartwig Hirschfeld, *Judische Elemente im Koran* (Berlin: Selbstverl, 1878); Hartwig Hirschfeld, *New Researches into the Composition and the Exegesis of the Qor'an* (London: Royal Asiatic Society, 1902).

<sup>11</sup> W. Clair Tisdall, *The Sources of Islam* (Edinburg: Edinburg University Press, 1905).

<sup>12</sup> Theodor Nöldeke, *Geschichte des Qorans* (Leipzig: Dieterich'sche Verlagsbuchhandlung, 1919).

<sup>13</sup> Joseph Horovitz, “Jewish Proper Names and Derivatives in the Koran”, *Hebrew Union College Annual 2* (1925), 145-227.

<sup>14</sup> C. Snouck Hurgronje, *Mohammedanism* (New York: G. P. Putnam's Son, 1916).

<sup>15</sup> Arent Jan Wensinck, *Mohammeden de Joden the Medina* (Leiden: E. J. Brill, 1908).

<sup>16</sup> Eugen Mittwoch, *Zur Entstehungsgeschichte des Islamischen Gebets und Kultus* (Berlin: Verl. D. Königl, 1913).

<sup>17</sup> Charles Cutler Torrey, *The Jewish Foundation of Islam* (New York: Jewish Institute of Religion Press, 1933).

<sup>18</sup> Julian Obermann, “Islamic Origins: A Study in Background and Foundation”, *The Arab Heritage*, ed. Nabih A. Faris (New Jersey: Princeton University, 1964).

<sup>19</sup> Israel Schapiro, *Die Haggadischen Elemente im erzählenden Teil da Korans* (Berlin: Forgotten Books, 2018).

<sup>20</sup> Arthur Jeffery, *The Foreign Vocabulary of the Qur'ān* (Baroda-Indien: Oriental Institute, 1938).

<sup>21</sup> Alfred Guillaume, *Islam* (New York: Penguin Books, 1954).

<sup>22</sup> Sholomo Dov Goitein, *Jews and Arabs*; Sholomo Dov Goitein, “Muhammad's Inspiration by Judaism”; Sholomo Dov Goitein, *Muhammad's Islam: How a New Religion Developed in the Shadow of Judaism*; Goitein also wrote an article in Hebrew titled "Who Were the Most Important Teachers of Muhammad" see, (*Tarbiz*, 23, 1952).

<sup>23</sup> Abraham Katsh, *Judaism and Islam* (New York: Sepher Hermen Press, 2009).

<sup>24</sup> Clair Tisdall, *The Sources of Islam* (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 1905).

<sup>25</sup> Alphonse Mingana, *Syriac Influence on the Style of the Koran* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1927).

Tor Andrea<sup>26</sup> (d. 1947), Richard Bell<sup>27</sup> (d. 1952), Gabriel Said Reynolds,<sup>28</sup> Christoph Luxenberg,<sup>29</sup> Günter Lüling,<sup>30</sup> J. B. Witztum<sup>31</sup> and Emran al-Bedawi.<sup>32</sup>

Studies on the origin of the Qur'ān have extended beyond Judaism and Christianity. In the last four decades, a group of orientalists, known as Revisionists, has garnered attention for their claims suggesting that the origin of Islam should not be confined solely to these two religions. Instead, they propose that it should be explored within the context of the first two centuries of the Hijrah period of the Muslim community, which spread from the Hijaz to Mesopotamia, along with the influence of surrounding religions and cultures. Given the Qur'ān's diverse text types in terms of style and content, it cannot be attributed solely to Prophet Muhammad.

For instance, John Wansbrough (d. 2002) introduced the "source skepticism" approach, which had been observed to some extent observed in orientalist literature before him, and argued that the narrations of this period, defined as the "salvation history", were later fabricated by Muslims to "preserve their history". Consequently, Wansbrough proposed the necessity of writing history based on external sources. This extreme skepticism, which can be viewed as an extension or continuation and developed version of the Goldziher-Schacht tradition, was also embraced simultaneously by Patricia Crone and Michael Cook.<sup>33</sup> Christoph Luxenberg<sup>34</sup> and Gerd R. Puin<sup>35</sup> can also be mentioned among the names who followed a similar approach.<sup>36</sup>

In orientalist literature, in addition to studies seeking the origin of the Qur'ān in the surrounding religions or cultures, there are also research endeavors that concentrate on foreign words found in the Qur'ān, aiming to unveil its origin through linguistic analysis. Arthur Jeffery's work *The Foreign Vocabulary of the Qur'ān* exemplifies this genre. In this renowned work, Jeffery employs linguistic methods to ascertain the origins of the Qur'ānic words from languages other than Arabic. He argues that Syriac was the most influential language on the Qur'ān, besides Hebrew, Abyssinian, and other Semitic languages. By providing examples from these languages, Jeffery presents his findings and analysis in support of his claims.<sup>37</sup>

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<sup>26</sup> Tor Andrea, *Der Ursprung des Islams und das Christentum* (Uppsala, 1926).

<sup>27</sup> Richard Bell, *The Origins of Islam in its Christian Environment* (London: Routledge, 1968).

<sup>28</sup> Gabriel Said Reynolds, *The Qur'ān in its Biblical Context* (New York: Routledge, 2010).

<sup>29</sup> Christoph Luxenberg, *The Syro-Aramic Reading of the Koran* (New York: Prometheus Books, 2007).

<sup>30</sup> Günter Lüling, *A Challenge to Islam for Reformation* (New Delhi: Motilal Banarsidass, ts.).

<sup>31</sup> J. B. Witztum, *The Syriac Milieu of the Quran* (New Jersey: Princeton University Press, 2017).

<sup>32</sup> For a comprehensive study of the claims regarding the Jewish origin of the Qur'ān, see, Necmettin Salih Ekiz, "Oryantalist Literatürde Kur'an'ın Yahudi Kökenli Olduğu İddiası: Abraham Geiger Örneği"; For a detailed evaluation of the Christian origin claims, see, Özcan Hıdır, *Hıristiyan Kültürü ve Hadisler*.

<sup>33</sup> Patricia Crone - Michael Cook, *Hagarism: The Making of the Islamic World* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1977).

<sup>34</sup> Christoph Luxenberg, *The Syro-Aramic Reading of the Koran* (New York: Prometheus Books, 2007).

<sup>35</sup> Gerd R. Puin, "Methods of Research on Qur'ānic Manuscripts – A Few Ideas"; Gerd R. Puin, "Observations on Early Qur'ān Manuscripts in San'a"; Gerd R. Puin, "Vowel Letters and Ortho-Epic Writing in the Qur'ān".

<sup>36</sup> For a detailed study on the revisionists' approach to the Qur'ān, see, Akgün, *Kur'an Tarihinde Revizyonist Oryantalistler: John Wansbrough, Christoph Luxenberg ve Gerd-R. Puin*.

<sup>37</sup> Bilal Gökkr, "Kur'an'da Yabancı Kelimler Meselesine Oryantalist Bir Yaklaşım", *Marife* 2/3 (2002), 135-142.

## 2. Textual History of the Qur'ān

As Tayyar Altıkulaç, one of the prominent scholars in the history of the Qur'ān in Turkey, asserted, orientalist attempted to construct the history of the Qur'ān until the 1930s based on contradictory narrations. Subsequently, they tried to reach some conclusions by examining old manuscripts and grounding on some textual differences between them.<sup>38</sup> Consequently, they collected and micro-filmed Qur'ān manuscripts from diverse regions around the globe, conducting thorough studies. It must be acknowledged that Western scholars were pioneers in investigating critical aspects such as the dating of manuscripts, the material used, information about the copiers, orthography, orthographical similarities or differences, among other relevant topics.

The German orientalist Theodor Nöldeke (d. 1930) is credited with providing the foundational framework for modern Qur'ānic historiography. His seminal work, initially published by Nöldeke as *Geschichte des Qorāns* in 1860, underwent subsequent additions by his students Friedrich Schwally (d. 1919), Gotthelf Bergsträßer (d. 1933) and Otto Pretzl (d. 1941), before reaching its definitive form in 1938. To elucidate the subject matter, the book can be summarized into three main volumes as follows: "The Emergence of the Qur'ān" in the first volume, "The Collection of the Qur'ān" in the second, and "History of the Text of the Qur'ān" in the third.

Early in the 20th century, the absence of a Qur'ānic text that had undergone criticism through historical-critical methods became a prominent topic of discussion within the orientalist circles. Undoubtedly, the influence of historical-critical studies on the Bible played a significant role in bringing this issue to the forefront. Gotthelf Bergsträßer (1886-1933) took the initiative to prepare an expanded edition of Nöldeke's renowned work *Die Geschichte des Qorāntexts*. However, it was Otto Pretzl (1893-1941) who ultimately published this work, as mentioned earlier. Additionally, in 1930, Bergsträßer's himself published his well-known work on the critique of the Qur'ān, titled *Plan eines apparatus criticus zum Koran*. Through his works, Bergsträßer spearheaded the project of studying the history of the Qur'ān by scrutinizing the Mushaf manuscripts during that century. Continuing his teacher's project, Bergsträßer's student Otto Pretzl established a valuable archive by capturing photographs and microfilms of the Qur'ānic manuscripts as part of this comprehensive program.<sup>39</sup> During the same period, Arthur Jeffery also engaged in discussions concerning the absence of a criticized Qur'ānic text and actively worked towards this goal.<sup>40</sup>

This archive, consisting of more than 450 photographs captured by Pretzl, was entrusted to Angelika Neuwirth (b. 1943) by his successor Anton Spitaler (1910-2003). Founded in 2007 by Angelika Neuwirth (Head of the Department of Arabic at Freie University in Berlin), Nicolai Sinai (University of Oxford, Oriental Seminar) and Michael Marx (Current Corpus Coranicum Project Research Director) *The Corpus Coranicum Project* is based on Bergsträßer and Pretzl's archives on the text and history of the Qur'ān. Undoubtedly, this ambitious project stands as

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<sup>38</sup> Tayyar Altıkulaç, *Günümüze Ulaşan Mesahif-i Kadime* (Istanbul: IRCICA, 2015), 151.

<sup>39</sup> Esra Gözeler, "Corpus Coranicum Projesi: Kur'an'ı Geç Antik Döneme Ait Bir Metin Olarak Okumak", *Ankara Üniversitesi İlahiyat Fakültesi Dergisi* 53/2 (2012), 222.

<sup>40</sup> Arthur Jeffery, "Progress in the Study of the Qur'ān Text", *Muslim World* 25 (1935), 4-16; Arthur Jeffery, "The Qur'ān Readings of Zaid B. 'Ali", *Rivista Degli Studi Orientalia* 16/3-4 (1936), 249-289; Arthur Jeffery, *Materials for the History of the Text of the Qur'ān* (Leiden: E. J. Brill, 1937).

one of the most significant endeavours in the field of modern Qur'ānic history studies, aiming to systematically compile and provide access to all the documents related to the Qur'ān.<sup>41</sup>

Up until now, the archives of Gotthelf Bergsträßer have been largely digitized as part of the project, and numerous materials have been made available on the project's website. Within the scope of the project, the Qur'ānic recitations found in the manuscripts are also subject to meticulous examination, leading to the identification of noteworthy parallels between certain Qur'ānic passages and texts written in the languages of late antiquity prevalent in the geographical region where the Qur'ān was revealed.<sup>42</sup> On the other hand, it is acknowledged that additional textual material from the early period such as London (MS. Or. 2165, British Library, London) and Saint Petersburg manuscripts, exists and deserves further scholarly attention.

Another prominent figure known for his significant contributions to Qur'ānic manuscripts studies is the renowned French orientalist François Déroche (b. 1952). Between 1978-1983, Déroche worked at the Bibliothèque Nationale de France (National Library of France) and published a catalog detailing the characteristics of the Mushaf manuscripts held in this library. Additionally, he has been actively involved in coordinating numerous projects dedicated to the exploration of Mushaf manuscripts.

Notably, Déroche has played a pivotal role in initiatives like the "Coranica"<sup>43</sup> and "Paleocoran"<sup>44</sup> projects, which endeavour to investigate the history of the Mushaf manuscripts and the linguistic structure of the pre-Islamic Arab society by accessing the oldest existing Mushaf manuscripts. As a research director at École Pratique Des Hautes Études, a prestigious institutions in France, Déroche has been supervising numerous dissertations since 1990<sup>45</sup> with a particular focus on manuscripts in general and Mushaf manuscripts specifically.

François Déroche is a distinguished scholar known for his extensive research on manuscripts, particularly Mushaf manuscripts. Several of his prominent works are worth mentioning:

1. *Manuel de codicologie des manuscrits en écriture arabe*, (BNF, 2000): This handbook provides fundamental information about Arabic manuscripts. It has been translated into English and Arabic.
2. *Le Coran* (Presses Universitaires de France: Paris/France, 2005): In this concise volume, Déroche addresses key issues related to the Qur'ān, including the pre-revelation Arab society, the historical context of the Qur'ān's revelation, its linguistic structure, the oral and written transmission of the Qur'ān, Muslim societies' perspectives on the Qur'ān, and Western perception of the Qur'ān.

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<sup>41</sup> Gözeler, "Corpus Coranicum Projesi: Kur'an'ı Geç Antik Döneme Ait Bir Metin Olarak Okumak", 225.

<sup>42</sup> Gözeler, "Corpus Coranicum Projesi: Kur'an'ı Geç Antik Döneme Ait Bir Metin Olarak Okumak", 227-248.

<sup>43</sup> Launched in 2011, the Project, apart from Déroche, was managed by experts in this field in the West, such as Christian Robin, Michael Marx, Angelika Neuwirth. For further information about the project, see <http://www.coranica.de/>. Accessed March 23, 2023. [Erişim tarihi?](#)

<sup>44</sup> It is a project that aims to understand better the history of the Qur'ān by considering the mushaf manuscripts in Egypt with different readings. For detailed information about the project, see. <https://paleocoran.eu/>.

<sup>45</sup> For some of the dissertations that Déroche supervised, see. <http://www.theses.fr/026825635#> Accessed March 23, 2023.

3. *Le livre manuscrit arabe, Préludes à une histoire* (BNF, January 2005): Published version of Déroche's four lectures on manuscripts delivered at the National Library of France in November 2001. This work has also been translated into Arabic.

4. *Qur'āns of the Umayyads* (Leiden: Brill, 2014): This work focuses on subjects such as the Parisino Petropolitanus Mushaf manuscript, believed to have been copied in the early period, and the transmission of the Qur'ān through Mushafs written in Hijazi script. It emerged from a series of lectures given by Déroche at the Leiden University Center for the Study of Islam and Society.

5. *The Abbasid Tradition: Qur'āns of the 8th to 10th Centuries AD.* (The Nour Foundation, 1992): This publication is part of the Islamic Art Collection of Nasser D. Khalili, an Islamic art researcher and collector. It includes catalog information and images of 98 mushaf manuscripts.

6. *La Transmission écrite du Coran dans les Débuts de l'islam: Le codex Parisino petropolitanus* (Leiden: Brill, 2009): This study centers on a manuscript known as *Parisino petropolitanus*, of which initial copies were found in the Amr b. al-As Mosque in Fustat, Egypt, in the 18th century, with its leaves scattered across different parts of the world. Déroche's evaluation suggests that it is a comprehensive work dealing with the Mushaf manuscript, copied by five calligraphers, encompassing all its elements. Déroche has also published the Paris and London Mushafs. Through his works, he has become one of the most prominent scholars in the field of Qur'ānic manuscripts.<sup>46</sup>

Another contemporary orientalist who draws attention out by his studies and assertions regarding Qur'ānic manuscripts is Gerd R. Puin (b. 1940). Puin gained recognition through his research on the Qur'ān manuscripts discovered in al-Jamiu'l-Kabir in Sana'a in 1972, which drew the attention of the scholars working in the field due to his sceptical theories. Between 1981 and 1984, Puin led the project "Restoration and Cataloging of Arabic Manuscripts" (Restaurieren und Katalogisieren arabischer Handschriften) in Sana'a, funded by the German Ministry of Foreign Affairs. Among his renowned works are the articles "Vowel Letters and Ortho-Epic Writing in the Qur'ān" and "Observations on Early Qur'ān Manuscripts in San'a". Puin posited that the San'a manuscripts could challenge Muslims' unwavering belief that the Qur'ān has been transmitted unchanged from generation to generation until the present day, arguing that the text of the Qur'ān never had a fixed and unchanging structure.<sup>47</sup> Puin's skeptical perspectives on the history of the Qur'ān created a stir, particularly when Toby Lester, in his article titled "What is the Qur'ān?" published in the Atlantic Monthly in January 1999, based his claims about the authenticity of the Qur'ān on Puin's views.<sup>48</sup> Notably, other significant works

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<sup>46</sup> For more information on his works, see Ahmet Harman, "Fransız Müsteşrik François Déroche'un Mushaf Yazmaları Çalışmalarına Dair Birkaç Not", 269-271.

<sup>47</sup> Karl-Heinz Ohling vd., "Kur'an Araştırmalarının Yeni Yolları", Trans. Günay Özer, *KSÜ İlahiyat Fakültesi Dergisi* 4 (2004), 121-141.

<sup>48</sup> For Lester's article, see. <https://www.theatlantic.com/magazine/archive/1999/01/what-is-the-koran/304024/>, Accessed April 04, 2022. Lester's article was later published as a book chapter. See. Toby Lester, "What Is the Koran?", *What the Koran Really Says*, ed. Ibn Warraq (New York: Penguin Books, 2002), 107-128.

have also been conducted on the San'a manuscripts by scholars such as Asma Hilali,<sup>49</sup> Éléonore Cellard,<sup>50</sup> Behnam Sadeghi, and Mohsen Goudarzi.<sup>51</sup>

In Russia, the St. Petersburg Public Library and the Asian Academy of Sciences initiated research on ancient Mushafs found within the country in 1881. These Mushafs were compiled and preserved, resulting in a collection of pieces at the Russian National Library and another collection of 171-piece at the St. Petersburg Branch of Institute of Oriental Studies. The most important components of these collections include Mushaf copies and fragments written in Kufic calligraphy. Among the renowned specimens in this collection is the Tashkent Mushaf.<sup>52</sup>

In England, the inception of Qur'ānic manuscript studies in its modern sense can be attributed to Alphonse Mingana (1878-1937), an Iraqi-born Chaldean traveler who later settled in England. Mingana made significant contributions to Mushaf manuscript studies through textual analysis and orthographic examinations. In his work titled *Leaves from Three Ancient Qur'āns Possibly Pre-Othmanic*, published in 1914, he posited that three distinct Qur'ān fragments belonged to a period preceding the reign of the third caliph, Uthman. A contemporary scholar, Alba Fedeli, thoroughly examined Mingana's fragments, which remain preserved in the collections of the Cadbury Library of the University of Birmingham, as part of her PhD dissertation. Employing carbon testing, she revealed that these fragments, written on sheep or goat skin, date back to the years between 569-645 CE.<sup>53</sup>

Additionally, several prominent scholars should be noted for their recent and ongoing studies on the history of Mushaf manuscripts. Among these scholars are Nabia Abbot (d. 1981),<sup>54</sup> Yasin Dutton,<sup>55</sup> Alba Fedeli,<sup>56</sup> Nicolai Sinai,<sup>57</sup> Marijin Van Putten,<sup>58</sup> Heythem Sidky<sup>59</sup>

<sup>49</sup> Asma Hilali, *The Sanaa Palimpsest: The Transmission of the Qur'ān in the First Centuries AH*. (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2017).

<sup>50</sup> Éléonore Cellard, "The Şan'ā' Palimpsest: Materializing the Codices", *Journal of Near Eastern Studies* 80/1 (ts.), 1-30.

<sup>51</sup> Behnam Sadeghi - Mohsen Goudarzi, "Şan,â 1 and the Origins of the Qur'an", *Der Islam* 87 (2012), 1-129.

<sup>52</sup> Necmettin Gökür, "Giriş", *Kur'an Araştırmaları ve Oryantalizm*, 5.

<sup>53</sup> Necmettin Gökür, "Batı'da Kur'an Tarihi Araştırmaları: Tematik Alanlar, Paradigmalar ve Yöntemler", *Kur'an Araştırmaları ve Oryantalizm*, ed. Bilal Gökür vd. (İstanbul: İfav Yayınları, 2022), 19.

<sup>54</sup> Nabia Abbot, *The Rise of North Arabic Script and its Qur'anic Development*, *Studies in Arabic Literary Papyri* I-III.

<sup>55</sup> Yasin Dutton, "Red Dots, Green Dots, Yellow Dots & Blue: Some Reflections on the Vocalisation of Early Qur'anic Manuscripts—Parts I", *JQS* 1 (1999), 115-140; Yasin Dutton, "Red Dots, Green Dots, Yellow Dots, Blue Part II", *JQS* 2 (2000), 1-24; Yasin Dutton, "An Early Mushaf According to the Reading of Ibn 'Āmir", *JQS* 3 (2001), 71-90; Yasin Dutton, "Some Notes on the British Library's 'Oldest Qur'ān Manuscript' (Or. 2165).", *JQS*, (2004), 43-71; Yasin Dutton, "An Umayyad Fragment of the Qur'ān and its Dating", *JQS* 9 (2007), 57-87.

<sup>56</sup> Alba Fedeli, "Early Evidences of Variant Readings in Qur'anic Manuscripts", *Die dunklen Anfänge*, ed. Karl-Heinz Ohlig - Gerd R. Puin (Berlin: Hans Schiler, 2005), 293-316; Alba Fedeli, "Mingana and the Manuscript of Mrs. Agnes Smith Lewis, One Century Later", *MO* 11 (2005), 3-7; Alba Fedeli, "A.Perg.2: A Non-Palimpsest and the Corrections in Qur'anic Manuscripts", *MO* 11 (2005), 20-27.

<sup>57</sup> Nicolai Nicolai Sinai, "Beyond the Cairo Edition: On the Study of Early Qur'anic Codices", *Journal of the American Oriental Society* 140/1 (2020), 189-204; Nicolai Sinai, "When did the consonantal skeleton of the Qur'ān reach closure?", *Bulletin of the School of Oriental and African Studies* 77 (2014), 273-292.

<sup>58</sup> Marijin Van Putten, *Qur'anic Arabic: From its Hijazi Origins to its Classical Reading Traditions* (Leiden: E. J. Brill, 2022).

<sup>59</sup> Heythem Heythem Sidky, "On the Regionality of Qur'anic Codices", *JIQSA* 5 (2020), 133-210.

and Keith Small.<sup>60</sup> A thorough examination of their works reveals that they have extensively scrutinized the Qur'ānic manuscripts that have survived to the present day using various methodologies, thereby making significant contributions to the field.

Last but not least, it can be asserted that orientalist perspectives on the history of the Qur'ān can be broadly classified into two primary approaches. The first approach is the "traditional orientalist approach", exemplified by scholars like Theodor Nöldeke, wherein the focus is on constructing a historical narrative based on Islamic sources and traditional accounts. On the other hand, the second approach entails the "revisionist orientalists" represented by figures such as John Wansbrough and Gerd R. Puin, who adopt a more skeptical stance by critically analyzing and scrutinizing Islamic literature and narrations as historical sources.

### 3. Inner Structure of the Qur'ān

In conjunction with research on the Qur'ān's origin and Qur'ānic manuscripts, the inner structure of the Qur'ān has also been a significant area of interest for Orientalists. Studies conducted in this direction can be divided into two primary themes: "Discussions on the Order of the Chapters and Ayahs of the Qur'ān" and "Discussions on the Textual Unity of the Qur'ān".

#### 3.1. Order of the Chapters and Ayahs of the Qur'ān

The order of the Qur'ānic surahs and verses has been first discussed in the Western orientalist context by the German orientalist Gustav Weil (1808-1889). In his work *Historisch-Kristische Einleitung in der Koran*, published in 1844, Weil highlighted the challenge of comprehending the Qur'ān in the traditional Mushaf order, which does not follow the chronological sequence of revelation. He proposed an alternative chronological order based on factors such as Asbab an-Nuzul narrations and changes in subject and style. Subsequent scholars who delved into this matter shared the common goal of rendering the Qur'ān more intelligible, historically coherent, and a complete text.

Theodor Nöldeke remains again the primary source for Western researchers investigating the history and chronology of the Qur'ān. He extensively addressed this subject in his aforementioned work on Qur'ānic history. Nöldeke's classification of the Meccan period into sub-periods in terms of the chronology of the Qur'ān has been widely accepted and regarded as a reliable chronology in the Western scholarship.

In his book titled *The Corān: Its Composition and Teaching*,<sup>61</sup> William Muir adopts a different approach from the dual Meccan-Medinan distinction in the Islamic tradition, dividing the chronology of the Qur'ān into six periods. According to Muir, the first five periods are Meccan, while only the last period is Madinan. Notably, Muir does not consider the 18 short suras as divine revelations from God during the first Meccan period; instead, he dates them to a time preceding the initiation of the Prophet Muhammad's prophethood mission.

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<sup>60</sup> Keith Small, *Textual Criticism and Qur'ān Manuscripts* (Plymouth: Lexington Books, 2011).

<sup>61</sup> William Muir, *The Corān: Its Composition and Teaching and the Testimony It Bears to the Holy Scriptures* (Londra: Society for Promoting Christian Knowledge, 1878).



Hubert Grimme, in his works *Mohammed I: Das Leben*,<sup>62</sup> which focuses on the life of the Prophet Muhammad, and *Mohammed II: Einleitung in den Koran*,<sup>63</sup> which attempts to explore the systematic and theology of the Qur'ān, not only delved into the subject of chronology but also proposed a specific chronology of the Qur'ān.

Hartwig Hirschfeld proposed an alternative approach, suggesting the division of the Meccan surahs based on six distinct literary criteria: 1. First Proclamation 2. The Confirmatory Revelations 3. The Declamatory Revelations 4. The Narrative Revelations 5. The Descriptive Revelations 6. The Legislative Revelations. However, in the Medinan period, Hirschfeld refrained from forming sub-categories as found in his prior works. Furthermore, his classification encountered challenges in determining the chronological order of certain verse groups.<sup>64</sup>

Richard Bell's scholarly focus primarily centered on verse groups rather than surahs, and he adopted a methodology for dating individual verses by distinguishing between Meccan and Madinan contexts.<sup>65</sup> In a later period, W. Montgomery Watt further advanced Richard Bell's approach, implementing more substantial modifications and refinements to the methodology.<sup>66</sup>

In his scholarly work titled *Discovering the Qur'ān: A Contemporary Approach to a Veiled Text*, Neal Robinson dedicated two separated chapters to the dating of Qur'ānic revelation. In the fourth section of his book, he ascertained the chronological order of the surahs by drawing upon traditional sources, incorporating aspects such as Asbab an-Nuzul, Naskh and Meccan-Medinan distinctions. The fifth section of his work involved an evaluation of Western approaches, exemplified by Theodor Nöldeke and Richard Bell.<sup>67</sup>

Among the studies carried out in the Western academia in this context, the *Encyclopaedia of the Qur'ān*,<sup>68</sup> stands out as a significant resource, encompassing numerous articles on the subject. In particular, Gerhard Böwering's article titled "Chronology and the Qur'an" merits mention, as he tackled the matter of the verse order in relation to Islamic tradition and assessed Western approaches. Furthermore, he deliberated the feasibility of examining and dating the verses based on their contents.<sup>69</sup>

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<sup>62</sup> Hubert Grimme, *Mohammed I: Das Leben* (Münster: Aschendorff, 1892).

<sup>63</sup> Hubert Grimme, *Mohammed II: Einleitung in den Koran, System der Koranischen Theologie* (Münster: Aschendorff, 1895).

<sup>64</sup> Hartwig Hirschfeld, *New Researches into the Composition and Exegesis of the Qoran* (Londra: Royal Asiatic Society, 1902).

<sup>65</sup> Richard Bell, *The Qur'ān Translated with a Critical Re-arrangement of the Surahs* (Edinburgh: T. & T. Clark, 1937-1939). Also see. *Bell's Introduction to the Qur'ān.*, prepared by W. Montgomery Watt (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 1970).

<sup>66</sup> W. Montgomery Watt, *Companion to the Qur'ān* (Londra: George Allen and Unwin Ltd., 1967).

<sup>67</sup> Neal Robinson, *Discovering the Qur'ān: A Contemporary Approach to a Veiled Text* (Londra: SCM Press, 2003).

<sup>68</sup> *Encyclopaedia of the Qur'ān* (I-VI), Jane Dammen McAuliffe (ed.) (Leiden-Boston-Köln: Brill, 2000-2006).

<sup>69</sup> Gerhard Böwering, "Chronology and the Qur'ān," *EQ*, v.1, pp. 316-335. For more detailed information on the issue of dating the Qur'ānic suras and verses, see. Esra Gözeler, *Kur'an Ayetlerinin Tarihlendirilmesi* (Istanbul: KURAMER, 2016), pp. 127-199.

### 3.2. Discussions on the Textual Unity of the Qur'ān

For a long time, in the Western literature, the Qur'ān has often been characterized as a text lacking chronological order, literary coherence and containing numerous repetitions. However, upon closer examination, Nöldeke's proposed chronological sequence, for instance, reveals minimal divergence from the traditional Meccan-Medinan classification. This convergence may stem from the insufficiency of historical data essential for establishing an unequivocal chronological arrangement of surahs and verses. Consequently, the proposed orders have predominantly aligned with the traditional lists, subject to scholarly debate, and generally, have remained confined to overarching conjectures grounded in stylistic and contextual analyses.

The final quarter of the 20th century marked a juncture wherein the pursuit of chronological arrangement reached an impasse, leading to the emergence of novel inquiries within the realm of Qur'anic studies. Preceding this era, endeavours to establish the dating of verses had achieved limited advancement, and numerous literary intricacies attributed to the text remained unsolved. Therefore, during this period, prompted by the influence of contemporary literary theories, the paradigm of "history-based" readings, characterized by attempts to organize verses and surahs in chronological succession, underwent a transition toward "literature-based" analyzes aimed at comprehending the rationale behind the Mushaf order.

This evolving approach not only critiques the pursuit of chronology due to limitations encompassing historical data, subjectivity, reductionism, generalization, and eclecticism, but also introduces a fertile ground for fresh avenues of research, fortified by elements such as intertextuality, rhetorical analysis, oral and textual context.<sup>70</sup>

As elucidated by Ersin Kabakçı in his study on this historical progression, along with Angelika Neuwirth's<sup>71</sup> "Literary-historical Approach", names such as Mustansir Mir,<sup>72</sup> Neal Robinson,<sup>73</sup> Mathias Zahniser<sup>74</sup> and Nevin Reda<sup>75</sup> have contributed to this discourse thorough

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<sup>70</sup> For detailed information on text integrity discussions, see. Ersin Kabakçı, *Çağdaş Batı Literatüründe Kur'an Metnine Yaklaşımlar: Metin Bütünlüğü Arayışları* (Ankara: Fecr Yayınları, 2020).

<sup>71</sup> Angelika Neuwirth, *Studien Zur Komposition der Mekkanischen Sûren* (Berlin: de Gruyter, 2007); Angelika Neuwirth, *Scripture, Poetry and The Making of a Community: Reading the Qur'an as a Literary Text* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2014); Angelika Neuwirth, "Form and Structure in the Qur'ān", *Encyclopedia of the Qur'ān* (Leiden: E. J. Brill, 2006).

<sup>72</sup> Mustansir Mir, *Coherence in the Qur'an: A Study of Islâhî's Concept of Nazm in Tadabbur-i Qur'an* (Indianapolis: American Trust Publications, 1986); Mustansir Mir, "Unity of the Text of the Qur'ān", *Encyclopedia of the Qur'ān* (Leiden: E. J. Brill, 2006).

<sup>73</sup> Neal Robinson, *Kur'an'ı Keşfetmek: Örtülü Bir Metne Çağdaş Bir Yaklaşım*, Trans. Süleyman Kalkan (Istanbul: Kuramer, 2018).

<sup>74</sup> Mathias Zahniser, "Major Transitions and Thematic Borders in Two Long Suras: al-Baqara and al-Nisa", *Literary Structures of Religious Meaning in the Qur'ān*, ed. Issa Boullata (New York: Routledge, 2000); Mathias Zahniser, *The al-Baqara Crescendo: Understanding the Qur'ān's Style* (Montreal: McGill University Press, 2017).

<sup>75</sup> Nevin Reda, "Holistic Approaches to the Qur'an: A Historical Background", *Religion Compass* 4/8 (495M.S.), 2010.

the “Thematic-Structural Approach”. Concurrently, Michael Cuypers<sup>76</sup> and Raymond Farrin<sup>77</sup> have engaged with the subject employing the “Search for Symmetrical Integrity in the Context of Semitic Rhetoric” methodology. While these approaches exhibit methodological disparities, a shared theme prevailing across the works of these scholars lies in their concerted emphasis on the existence of a literary cohesion within the current Mushaf arrangement. Their collective intention resides in the direct scrutiny of the Qur’ānic text, underscoring its literary significance, as opposed to embarking upon historical-critical investigations of the Qur’ān.<sup>78</sup>

## Conclusion

Upon juxtaposing the historical trajectory of investigations into the history of the *Qur’ān* within the West and the Islamic context, a notable observation arises indicating that Orientalist Qur’ānic studies determined and shaped the thematic contours and principal areas of discourse within this domain. This phenomenon is primarily attributed to the genesis of Mushaf manuscripts studies within the Western hemisphere, commencing from the latter half of the 19th century. Over time, these studies have acquired institutional recognition and gradually evolved into a professional discipline, facilitated by the integration of technological advancement like carbon testing.

The endeavours undertaken by orientalists to construct a critical edition of the Qur’ān have spanned a duration of slightly over a century. However, this undertaking has not culminated in the realization of its intended objective. Andrew Rippin (d. 2016), a prominent contemporary Western scholar in Qur’ānic studies, attested to this reality by asserting that the limited availability of historical data precludes the imminent attainment of this ambition.<sup>79</sup> Nevertheless, it remains a perpetual requirement for Western scholars specializing in Qur’ānic research, and the aspiration to address this exigency shall endure unabated.

Conversely, a segment of the Muslim scholars contend that the pursuit of Orientalists in this endeavour encompass motives extending beyond the realms of mere scientific or academic exploration; their objectives, as posited by these scholars, subsume the generation of an alternative text that diverges from the prevailing monolithic Mushaf revered among Muslims. Tayyar Altıkulaç, for instance, maintains that due to the inherent paradigmatic disparities in the analytical approach between orientalist scholars and their Muslim counterparts concerning Mushaf manuscripts, discrepancies such as erroneous writings or a subsequent corrections identified within these manuscripts were construed by certain orientalists as indicators of modification and corruption. In contrast, Muslim scholars interpreted such discrepancies as minimal scribe errors.<sup>80</sup> Put succinctly, the orientalists’ identification of divergences within the

<sup>76</sup> Michael Cuypers, *The Banquet: A Reading of the Fifth Sura of the Qur’an* (Miami: Convivium, 2009); Michael Cuypers, *The Composition of the Qur’an: Rhetorical Analysis* (London: Bloomsbury, 2015); Michael Cuypers, *A Qur’anic Apocalypse: A Reading of the Thirty Three Last Sûrahs of the Qur’an* (Atlanta: Lockwood Press, 2018); Michael Cuypers, “The Semitic Rhetoric in the Koran and a Pharaonic Papyrus”, *US China Foreign Language* 8 (2010), 8-13.

<sup>77</sup> Raymond Farrin, *Structure and Qur’anic Interpretation: A Study of Symmetry and Coherence in Islam’s Holy Text* (Ashland-Oregon: White Cloud Press, 2014).

<sup>78</sup> For detailed information on text unity discussions, see, Ersin Kabakçı, *Çağdaş Batı Literatüründe Kur’an Metnine Yaklaşımlar: Metin Bütünlüğü Arayışları* (Ankara: Fecr Yayınları, 2020), 3rd chapter.

<sup>79</sup> Andrew Rippin, “The Present Status of Tafsir Studies”, *The Muslim World* 72 (1982), 224.

<sup>80</sup> Altıkulaç, *Günümüze Ulaşan Mesahif-i Kadime*, 151.

manuscript copies they scrutinized was construed as evidence of desperate "Qur'āns". This preposition may best be elucidated by positing that it is intended to facilitate the formulation of an alternative textual rendition.

This objection assumes significance in light of the endeavours pursued by orientalists to "compose a critical Qur'ānic text". As expounded by Necmettin Gökkır, the outcomes engendered by Western scholars engaged in Qur'ānic historiography tend to transcend the confines of epistemological and methodological significance, and instead, acquire a distinctly existential essence.<sup>81</sup> For the vantage point of the Muslim perspective, characterized by an unwavering belief in the Qur'ān as the "unchanging divine word," the crux of the matter becomes manifest. Stated differently, irrespective of the methodologies employed or the deductions drawn within these scholarly inquiries, the conviction concerning the Qur'ān undergoes a transmutation into an identity delineation that transcends the realm of mere knowledge.

It is precisely this divergence in perspective and paradigm that delineates the viability of Western methodologies and spheres of investigation, as adopted by Muslims within the domain of Qur'ānic historiography. In essence, the faith of a Muslim researcher, irrevocably grounded in the Qur'ān's preservation, imposes a constraint beyond which he cannot traverse. Consequently, the methodologies and outcomes in question may hold utmost epistemological significance for him, with no further implications. In truth, it appears that historically and in the modern era alike, this unwavering conviction has served as the foundational impetus behind Muslims refraining from undertaking the exploration of the Qur'ānic history akin to their Western counterparts and abstaining from endeavours such as manuscript analysis and the pursuit of an authentic corpus. The disparities that can be observed between the ancient copies of a text already preserved will hold no significance in the perspective of a devout believer who has this belief—keep in mind that it is already known that until now, no substantial deviations have come to light substantiating the existence of an alternative alternative text beyond scribal discrepancies and variant readings.

To elucidate further, as expounded by Gökkır stated, the chronological arrangement of surahs and verses holds limited significance for a Muslim when utilized to substantiate notions of human intervention or a human-centered ontological conception pertaining to the nature of the Qur'ān. Conversely, its acceptance gains credence when its function pertains to the acquisition of knowledge and meaning within the realms of epistemology and methodology. In other words, if the chronological arrangement fails to yield an epistemological benefit and merely serves as a repository for data concerning the Qur'ān's existence and definition, it aligns with the orientalist paradigm, rendering its endorsement impossible. Similarly, methodologies employed to date ancient manuscripts such as the Carbon-14 test, are deemed permissible as long as they contribute to historical understanding; however, if they assert a role in shaping the identity of the Qur'ān, both the methodology and its outcomes are relegated to a marginal position. The linguistic and scriptural attributes of ancient Mushafs are embraced when they facilitate the comprehension of the Qur'ān, yet dismissed when suggestive of a human origin devoid of divine revelation.<sup>82</sup>

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<sup>81</sup> Gökkır, "Batı'da Kur'an Tarihi Araştırmaları: Tematik Alanlar, Paradigmalar ve Yöntemler", 23.

<sup>82</sup> Gökkır, "Batı'da Kur'an Tarihi Araştırmaları: Tematik Alanlar, Paradigmalar ve Yöntemler", 24.

It is imperative to clarify that these assertions are not intended to preclude Muslims from engaging in Qur'ānic studies parallel to their Western counterparts. On the contrary, methodologies cultivated within Western scholarship possess the potential to elucidate and improve Muslims' comprehension of the sacred text, provided they operate within the stipulated parameters. Indeed, the pioneering endeavours of Tayyar Altıkulaç, emblematic of recent progresses made by Muslims in the historiography of the Qur'ān, stands as compelling and illuminating instances that underscore this potential.

However, it is noteworthy that the studies and initiatives undertaken within the Western context have, thus far, yet to realize their intended objectives; instead, they seem to reaffirm the beliefs held by Muslims.

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**Qur'ân of Groningen University "uklu Hands 468"**  
*Groningen Üniversitesi Kur'an'ı "uklu HANDS 468"*

**Betül ÖZDİREK ŞAHİN**

Öğr. Gör., Sakarya Üniversitesi İlahiyat Fakültesi  
Temel İslam Bilimleri, Tefsir Anabilim Dalı ve  
Istanbul Üniversitesi Sosyal Bilimler Enstitüsü, Doktora Öğrencisi  
Lecturer, University of Sakarya, Faculty of Theology  
Basic Islamic Sciences, Department of Tafsir and Ph. D. Candidate  
Istanbul University Institute of Social Sciences  
Sakarya, Türkiye  
betulozdirek@sakarya.edu.tr  
<https://orcid.org/0000-0002-9884-7087>

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### Abstract

This article focuses on the Qur'ān, identified as an "early Qur'ānic manuscript" in Europe, cataloged as "uklu HANDS 468" in the library of the University of Groningen. The Qur'ān is not a complete Qur'ān and is a "mixed Qur'ān". 1/4 of this Qur'ān is written in Kufic script and the rest is written in Maghribi script. All the verses are collected in a single volume. The section written in Kūfic calligraphy shows the characteristics of the 3rd Hijri period. On the other hand, the section written in Maghribī script belongs to the later period. Moreover, this Qur'ān was both transliterated and translated into Latin by Johann Heinrich Hottinger. The Qur'ān of "uklu HANDS 468" uses an ancient Qur'ān unlike previous studies. In this respect, the Qur'ān cataloged in "uklu HANDS 468" is significant. This article's main purpose is analyzing this Qur'ān from the point of view of "Mushaf science". It is especially important because it reveals the "Muṣḥaf history" of the Qur'āns thought to belong to the early period. For the purpose of the article, the Qur'ān is analyzed in terms of its codicological, paleographic, orthographic and content features. In conclusion, the section written in Kūfic script has features from the last part of the third century Hijri. The section written in Maghribi script seems to be from the fifth or sixth century. Qur'āns from different locations and time periods could be assembled and bound together by the purchaser. This Qur'ān belongs to the category of "mixed Qur'āns". It seems to be one of the first translations using an early Qur'ānic manuscript. Based on its ornamentation, it can be said that the Qur'ān has been interfered with in some places. Considering the script features of the Qur'ān, the scribe's hand was shaking, especially in the section written in Kūfic script, and this is evident in the writing. In other words, it may be a Qur'ān copied in later years based on an early Qur'ān manuscript. There is no clear information on this subject.

**Keywords:** Tafsīr, Early Qur'ān Manuscripts, History of the Qur'ān, Maghribī Script, Kūfic Script.

### Özet

Bu makalede, Avrupa'da "erken dönem Kur'an elyazması" olarak tanımlanan Groningen Üniversitesi kütüphanesi "uklu HANDS 468" kayıtlı Kur'an ele alınmaktadır. Kur'an tam bir Kur'an değildir ve "karma Kur'an" özelliğine sahiptir. Bu Kur'an'ın 31 sayfası Kūfî hat ile 120 sayfası ise Mağribî hat ile yazılmıştır ve ayetlerin tamamı tek ciltte toplanmıştır. Kūfî hat ile yazılan kısım hicrî üçüncü döneme ait özellikler göstermektedir. Mağribî hat ile yazılan kısım ise geç döneme aittir. Dahası, bu Kur'an'ın kūfî hat ile yazılan kısmının hem transkripsiyonu yapılmış hem de Johann Heinrich Hottinger tarafından Latince'ye tercüme edilmiştir. Kur'an'ın tercüme faaliyetleri aslında Kettonlu Robert ile 1143 yılında başlamıştır. Hottinger Kur'an'ı ise 1650 tarihlidir. Bu süre içerisinde tercüme faaliyetlerinde erken dönem Kur'an elyazmaları yerine yazıları daha okunaklı olan hareke ve noktalamaları tamamlanmış geç dönem Kur'anlarının tercih edildiği bilinmektedir. Bu yönüyle "uklu HANDS 468" kayıtlı Kur'an önemlidir. Makalenin temel amacı, bu Kur'an'ın "Mushaf ilmi" açısından incelenmesidir. Özellikle erken döneme ait olduğu düşünülen Kur'anların Mushaf tarihini ortaya çıkarması sebebiyle önem arz etmektedir. Makalenin amacı doğrultusunda Kur'an; kodikolojik, paleografik ve ortografik özellikleri ile muhtevası açısından incelenmektedir. Sonuç olarak, Kūfî hat ile yazılan kısım hicrî üçüncü yüzyılın sonuna ait karakteristik özelliklere sahiptir. Mağribî hat ile yazılan kısım ise hicrî beş veya altıncı yüzyıla ait gibi görünmektedir. Farklı bölgelere ve dönemlere ait Kur'anlar satın alınan kişi tarafından bir araya getirilip ciltlenebilmektedir. Bu Kur'an da bir araya getirilmiş "karma Kur'an" kategorisine girmektedir. Bu Kur'an, erken dönem Kur'an elyazması kullanılarak yapılan ilk tercümelemelerden gibi görünmektedir. Tezyinatından hareketle, Kur'anlara yazıldıkları dönemden sonra farklı kişiler tarafından hem tezyinat açısından hem de i'cam ve rakş açısından müdahale edilmiştir. Kur'an'ın yazı özellikleri dik-kate alındığında, özellikle Kūfî hat ile yazılan kısımda kâtibin eli titremiştir ve bu da yazıda belli olmaktadır. Yani, erken dönem Kur'an elyazması örnek alınarak daha sonraki yıllarda kopyalanmış bir Kur'an olabilir. Bu konuda net bir bilgi bulunmamaktadır.

**Anahtar Kelimeler:** Tefsir, Erken Dönem Kur'an'ı, Kur'an Tarihi, Mağribî Yazı, Kūfî Yazı.

## Introduction

Orientalists' studies on the Qur'ān started with translation activities. Although it is said that a complete translation into Greek, this translation is not available. It is known that translation activities began with Robert of Ketton in 1143, and thus the first complete translation of the Qur'ān was printed in Latin. His translation *Lex Mahumet pseudo-prophete que arabiche Alcoran* was a reference in Europe for a long time. It was also criticized for the quality of the translation. The translation of *Liber Alcorani* written by Mark of Toledo in 1210 was also written with a hostile attitude. The translation did not become widespread. Another translation was that of Juan de Segovia between 1454 and 1456. It included the Arabic version of the Qur'ān and was translated into Sicilian and then into Latin. In this respect, it was a work of three languages. There are some mistakes in the translation.<sup>1</sup> This was followed by Juan Gabriel's translation, which is an important translation that includes notes on the tafsīr.<sup>2</sup> In 1543 Robert Ketton's translation was published by Theodor Bibliander with an introduction and some notes for Christian readers.<sup>3</sup> These translations did not use any of the early Qur'ān manuscripts.

There are many studies of early Qur'ānic manuscripts based on material. In Western Europe, the work in this method can be traced back to Jakob George Christian Adler. Adler published Kufic manuscript fragments from the Abbasid period in 1780. In this work, transliteration and paleographic analysis were carried out.<sup>4</sup> Michele Amari classified the Qur'ānic fragments that came to France from the Mosque of 'Amr ibn al-'Āṣ. He also has some evaluations on these Qur'ān fragments.<sup>5</sup> However, after Gotthelf Bergstrasser, these studies started to gain more importance. Bergstrasser studied the early Qur'ānic fragments and adopted the idea of "reconstructing the Qur'ānic text". After him, his student Otto Pretzl continued this work and developed a set of rules.<sup>6</sup> Alphonse Mingana, in his *Leaves from Three Ancient Qurans*,<sup>7</sup> claims that early Qur'ānic manuscripts date from the period before the 'Uthmān. Arthur Jeffrey in *Materials for the History of the Text of the Qur'ān*<sup>8</sup> aimed to publish a critical edition of the Qur'ān using early Qur'ānic manuscripts. *The Corpus Coranicum project*<sup>9</sup> involves many researchers in the study of early Qur'ānic manuscripts in terms of transcription, calligraphy, qirā'āt, tafsīr, etc. It is one of the most important projects in terms of collecting early Qur'ān

<sup>1</sup> Hartmurt Bobzin, "Kur'an'ın Latince Tercümeleri: Kısa Bir Bakış" trans. Yusuf Öztel, *Uludağ Üniversitesi İlahiyat Fakültesi Dergisi*, 18/1 (2009), 617; Ulli Roth, "Juan of Segovia's Translation of the Qur'ān" *al-Qantara*, 35/2 (2015), 555-578.

<sup>2</sup> Katarzyna K. Starczewska "The Law of Abraham the Catholic' Juan Gabriel as Quran Translator for Martin de Figuerola and Egidio da Viterbo" *al-Qantara*, 35/2, (2014), 409-459.

<sup>3</sup> Hartmurt Bobzin, "Translations of the Qur'ān" *Encyclopaedia of the Qur'ān*, ed. McAuliffe (Leiden: E.J. Brill, 2004), 5/344-345; Ramazan Adıbelli, "İlk Fransızca Kur'an Tercümesi: Andre Du Ryer ve L'alcoran de Mahomet Adlı Eseri" *Bilimname: Düşünce Platformu*, 43/3, 2020, 213-245.

<sup>4</sup> Esra Gözeler, "ŞE 4141 Rulo: Türk ve İslam Eserleri Müzesinde Kufi Bir Kur'an Elyazması" *Ankara Üniversitesi İlahiyat Fakültesi Dergisi*, 63/1, 2022, 2; Ronny Vollandt, "Jakob Georg Christian Adler (1756-1834) and His Books", *Jewish Manuscript Cultures: New Perspectives*, ed. Irina Wandrey, (Boston: De Gruyter, 2017), 285.

<sup>5</sup> David Powers, Muhammad is not the father of any of your men : the making of the last prophet, *International Journal of Middle East Studies*, 44/1, (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania, 2009), 166-167.

<sup>6</sup> François Déroche, Sergio Noja Nosedá, *Sources Del La Trasmision Manuscrite Du Texte Coranique I*, 59-60.

<sup>7</sup> Alphonse Mingana, Agnes Smith Lewis, *Leaves From Three Ancient Qurans: Possibly pre-Othmanic with a list of their variants*, (England: Cambridge University, 1914), vii.

<sup>8</sup> Arthur Jeffery, *Materials for the History of the Text of the Qur'ān: the Old Codices*, (Leiden: Brill, 1937).

<sup>9</sup> Corpus Coranicum. Accessed April 09 2023. <https://corpuscoranicum.de/en>.

manuscripts and analyzing them from many perspectives. François Déroche is one of the important names working on early Qur'ān manuscripts. He has analyzed the Umayyad and Abbasid periods from a paleographic point of view and has studied the early Qur'ānic manuscripts in detail with editions such as Paris (328a), London (Or. 2165) and Parisino Petropolitanus. He is also one of the most important names followed by Western scholars.

The Qur'ān at issue was earlier briefly discussed in an article titled "*A Peculiar Manuscript of the Qur'ān in Groningen*".<sup>10</sup> This article discusses the physical characteristics of the Qur'ān by compiling information from the library, such as the size of the Qur'ān and the number of pages. It also mentions that some mistakes were made in the transcription. Moreover, it shares the conclusion that the Qur'ān is a forgery. The section with the Maghribī script is not evaluated, only some points from the section written in Kūfīc script are mentioned. The fundamental aim of this article analyzing the Qur'ān cataloged in "uklu HANDS 468" in terms of Muṣḥaf science. The related Qur'ān is important as it is a "mixed Qur'ān" and contains early Qur'ānic manuscript. In accordance with the main purpose, the Qur'ān will be analyzed codicologically, paleographically, orthographically and evaluated in terms of content. In addition, the reasons for the transcription and translation added at the end of the Qur'ān will be discussed.

### 1. Presentation of the Qur'ān

The Qur'ān registered in "uklu HANDS 468" at the University of Groningen measures 315x205 mm. It has 76 pages. The format structure of the book; quires 1-5, 8, 10-15 each consists of 4 leaves, quires 6-7 and 9 of 2. The page numbering system in the Qur'ān is in the upper left corners of the pages. The ink in the Maghribī script has corrosion and smells. Leaves 1-53 and 57-70 appear to be glued together. All leaves are very thick and appear to be independent of each other.<sup>11</sup> The first 7 pages and the last 3 pages of the Qur'ān are blank.

On the first page of the Qur'ān, there is an informative text about the Qur'ān in Latin. On page 1a there is an inscription in German, and on page 1b there are verses written in Maghribī script. The verses continue until leaf 54a. On the next page there is a note in Latin, followed by verses written in Kūfīc script from folio 56a to folio 71a. Between the 73-76 leaves, the verses are transcribed and translated Kūfīc script. In other words, considering the verses, the Qur'ān has two different handwriting styles. There are verses written in Maghribī script between the There are verses written in Maghribī script between folios 1-54, and verses written in Kūfīc script between folios 56-71. Apart from the section with verses, there are sections written in Latin and German.

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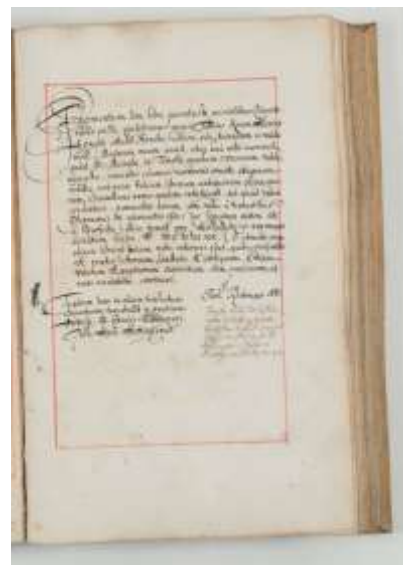
<sup>10</sup> Fred Leemhuis, "A Peculiar Manuscript of the Qur'ān in Groningen" *The Transmission and Dynamics of the Textual Sources of Islam*, (Leiden, Brill, 2011), 89/91-105.

<sup>11</sup> See. University of Groningen, "Quran uklu HANDS 468". Accessed June 16 2023. <https://rug.on.worldcat.org/search/detail/860901023?queryString=quran%20manuscript&clusterResults=true&groupVariantRecords=false&page=2>.

## 2. Additions to the Qur'ān in Latin and German



The first page of the Qur'ān is written in Latin and contains information about the content of the Qur'ān.<sup>12</sup> The text includes information on the two different parts of the Qur'ān, the Sūrat with which the Qur'ān begins and ends, the typefaces are Kūfic and Mauritanian, and that the codex was brought from Switzerland. L. Offerhaus, librarian and professor of history at the Groningen Library, took the manuscript into his library. One of the most



important information contained in the text is a comment made in 1770 by Nicolaus Schroeder, a famous philologist from Groningen. Schroeder expressed that the paper was not actually ancient because of its appearance.

The Latin note is followed by a text in German. According to the German note, in the photo on the left, the Maghribī fragment was purchased in 1535 by Johannes Marquart von Kungbeck during Charles V's occupation of Tunisia.<sup>13</sup> There is one more inscription in Latin before the part written in Kūfic calligraphy. The information in the text photographed on the right, has beautiful ornaments, a person named Krum bought this manuscript from Saint-Gall, and this piece came from a certain temple in Memphis in Egypt, the temple was decorated with six hundred marble columns, this temple contained many chests full of ancient books, no one knew the character of the writing of these books, and this manuscript, which was not very valuable, was presented to him by the Praefectus of this temple.

### 3. Section in Maghribī Script

#### 3.1. Features of a Section of the Qur'ān Written in Maghribī Script: Codicological, Paleographic and Orthographic Aspects



In the section of the Qur'ān written in Maghribī script, not all the pages follow the order of the verses and the pages are mixed up. It was probably re-assembled randomly after the binding was dispersed. The section in Maghribī script begins with the first folio and goes to the

<sup>12</sup> Information on the Latin inscriptions in the Qur'ān was provided by Mert Aysoysal, and I would like to thank him for his support in translation.

<sup>13</sup> Leemhuis, "A Peculiar Manuscript of the Qur'ān in Groningen", 93.



54th folio. There are nine lines on almost every page. Two pages correspond to the beginning of the Sūrat. However, since these pages have a large space for the beginning of the Sūrat, the designated number of lines could not be preserved. As for *i'jām* and *raqsh*, the gestures of *fathah*, *ḍammah* and *kasrah* are colored in red, while *shaddah* and *jazm* are colored in green. Most of the dotted letters have dots, but there are also places where the letter is without a dot. Considering the nature of the reed, the verses were written with a reed with a much wider reed width, while the lettering was written in a later period with a much narrower reed width. The end of verse markings are circular, colored in red and decorated with green lines around them. The colors used throughout the Qur'ān are black, red, green, gold and orange.



(Vr. 10b)

(Vr. 28a)

Some pages of the verses are damaged (see 28a). Especially after the 41st leaf, the destruction is intensely observable. It appears that black iron-gall ink was used in the writing of the verses. On some pages, the ink has corroded, giving the paper a rusty color. The pages have yellowed because of the iron content.<sup>14</sup>

It is observed that attention was made to the layout in the Maghribī section. The verses are bordered with red color. However, what is noteworthy here is that the frame was made later. In some places this red frame goes over the text. This shows that there was a scribe who paid attention to the layout without the frame. There is no trace of a ruler, and in some places there is a slight skewing of the line layout.

If we look at the ornaments in the section written in Maghribī script, we see only simple forms at the end of the verse markings and in the *shamsah*. Exceptionally, at the beginning of al-An'ām, there is an ornamentation that differs from the rest of the Qur'ān. Both the ornamentation and the writing within the ornamentation seem to be added later. The red color used for the diacritical marks and the red color used for the end-of-verse marks have very similar tones. In addition, the red color used for the *qaṭ' hamzah* is very close to this color but slightly darker. If the painting was done by the same person, he may have darkened the color of the paint by one shade to draw attention to it.

<sup>14</sup> Information on the damage to the Qur'ān was provided by restorer Beraat Hilal Üzümcü, and I would like to thank her for her support.



(Vr. 18a)

This section also contains a rosette. There are no rosettes in the sections of al-Mā'ida. Al-An'ām (beginning with the 18th folio), rosettes (beginning with the 29th folio) are placed every five verses. These places are as follows; a circular rosette at the end of Al-An'ām 6/19, a pear-shaped rosette at the end of verse 24, a pear-shaped rosette at the end of verse 34 (due to the faulty binding, the ornamentation remained on the folds of the book), a circular rosette at the end of verse 35, a circular rosette was added at the end of verse 40, a pear-shaped rosette after verse 45, a pear-shaped rosette after verse 64, a round rosette at the end of verse 70, a pear-shaped rosette next to verse 85, and a round rosette at verse 90. Al-An'ām 6/66 end of verse sign was forgotten and then tried to be added slightly at the end of the line.

Among the end-of-verse signs, there is an undecorated sign (Vr. 37b). The photographs of the rosettes in order are as follows;





(Vr. 29a)



(Vr. 24a)



(Vr. 27b)



(Vr. 28a)



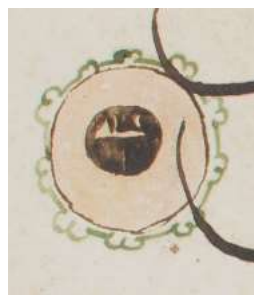
(Vr. 30b)



(Vr. 31)



(Vr. 37b)



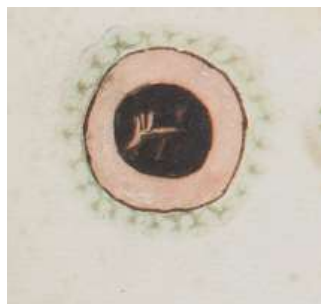
(Vr. 40a)



(Vr. 41b)



(Vr. 44a)



(Vr. 45a)



(Vr. 48b)

As for the paleographical features of the Maghribī script, if we look at the characteristics of the *shākulī* (vertical) letters and the *ufkī* (horizontal) letters, the *shākulī* letters have an angle of almost 90 degrees. The letters such as *sīn*, *ṣād*, *nūn*, etc. are large enough to attract attention in the writing, and their chambers are made in a soft manner. The trembling of the copyist's hand can be seen in many letters. Several reasons could be responsible for this. The copyist may have looked at another manuscript and tried to make the same letters, it may have been a

forged manuscript, or he may have been a novice copyist who had just started scribing. Some letters show shaking. However, this situation raises the possibility that the copyist was a novice or that the Qur'ān was copied from an original source. A physical examination of the Qur'ān is necessary to reach a definitive conclusion.

In terms of orthography and tajwīd features;<sup>15</sup> *waṣl hamzah*'s are shown in the Qur'ān by drawing a full circle on it. A red filled circle is placed above or below the *qaṭ' hamzah* according to its movement. Regarding the presence of the letter 'alif in writing, the long *fathah* (madd letters) is present in most words but not in a few. A fixed rule could not be identified in this regard. There is a verse in al-Mā'idā 5/95 where the issue of the spelling of the long *fathah* in words whose original is *wāw* can be examined. The word "عَفَا" here is written with the letter " 'alif " in accordance with the orthography. After examining the issues that are important in terms of spelling, the conclusion is as follows: based on the existing words, it can be said that, the scribe obeyed the rules of orthography.

### 3.2. The Content of the Chapter in the Qur'ān Written in Maghribī Script

A photograph of the first page of the verses written in Maghribī script is shown on the right. The red-colored section reads " اعوذ بالله من الشيطان الرجيم " in Arabic. Al-Mā'idā begins with the verse 5/82 and continues without interruption until the end of the Sūrat. Whereas in al-An'ām, there is a section from the beginning of the Sūrat until the 110th verse. Either the scribe intended to write up to this part, or he stopped writing when he got to this part for some reasons. Since the verses are completed on half of the page, it is understood that there is no rest of the verses. The words are divided, whether at the end of lines or at the end of pages.



The copyist made mistakes in many places in the verses;

1) Al-Mā'idā 5/105, after " أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا " , the next verse was skipped due to the similarity of the beginning of the verse, but the correct one was written in a small margin.

2) The word "الْعُيُوبِ" at the end of al-Mā'idā 5/109 and the expression " إِذْ قَالَ اللَّهُ " at the beginning of verse 110 have been forgotten and added slightly at the beginning of the line.

3) In al-An'ām 6/1, the part " الْحَمْدُ لِلَّهِ الَّذِي خَلَقَ السَّمَاوَاتِ وَالْأَرْضَ وَجَعَلَ الظُّلُمَاتِ وَالنُّورَ " is considered as a verse and the end of the verse is marked, and another end of verse mark is

<sup>15</sup> The two most important sources on the orthography of the Caliph 'Uthmān are Abū 'Amr al-Dānī, *al-Muqni' fī rasm maṣāḥif al-amṣār*. ed.: Muḥammad al-Ṣādiq Qamḥāwī. (al-Qāhirah: Maktabat al-Kulliyāt al-Azharīyah, n.d.); Abū Dāwūd Sulaymān b. Najāḥ, *Mukhtaṣar al-tabyīn li-hijā' al-tanzīl*, (al-Madīnah: Majma' al-Malik Fahd, 2002/1423).

placed after the word "يَعْدِلُونَ" at the end of the verse. In other words, there are two signs in one verse.

4) In al-An'ām 6/2, the part "لَقَالَ الَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا إِنَّ" was forgotten, but it was added in the same size as the text, breaking the Misanpage.

5) After the word "أَخَذْنَا هُمْ" at the end of al-An'ām 6/44, it should have continued as "مُتْلِسُونَ هُمْ فَإِذَا بَعَثْنَا". Instead, the scribe returned to verse 41 and started writing again from "مِنَ أُمَّمِ إِلَىٰ أَرْسَلْنَا وَقَدْ". He continued until the 42nd verse "تُنشِرُونَ مَا وَتَنسُونَ شَاءَ إِنَّ إِلَيْهِ تَدْعُونَ". When he came to this verse, he probably realized that he had made a mistake and returned to 44th verse and continued the verse starting from the word "بَعَثْنَا" again. He should have put the end of verse sign next to the word "مُتْلِسُونَ" but he put it after the word "فَقَطَعَ" at the beginning of the next verse and continued the verse.

6) The verses from "وَأَصْلَحَ" in al-An'ām 6/48 to "قُلْ لَا أَقُولُ لَكُمْ" in verse 50 are written in small print at the bottom of the page.

7) From "بِالشَّاكِرِينَ بِأَعْلَمَ اللَّهُ أَلَيْسَ" at the end of verse al-An'ām 6/53 to the word "قُلْ" at the beginning of verse 56 has been omitted. When he came to verse 58, the scribe realized the situation and completed the verses from where he had forgotten, without any indication that he had gone back, after coming to the part of the verse "قُلْ لَوْ أَنَّ عِنْدِي مَا تَسْتَعْجِلُونَ بِهِ". After writing every word he forgot, he returned to his former place and continued from where he had left off.

8) He skipped from the end of verse al-An'ām 6/77 to the middle of verse 80 and started with "يَتَّبِعُونَ الْآيَاتِ" and continued until the end of the verse. He did not notice the part he forgot.

If we evaluate the content of the Sūrat in the section written in Maghribī script, from al-Mā'idā 5/82 to al-An'ām 6/110, there are verses on the Jews and polytheists who stand against Muslims, the rewards given to those who believe and the punishments given to those who associate others with polytheism, the expiation of oaths, fortune-telling and magician, avoiding alcohol and gambling, the prohibitions of the Ihram, the Prophet as a messenger, the issue of wills, the Prophet's being a messenger, the miracles of Jesus, the food sent down to Mary, the glory of Allah, the creation of man and the universe, and the Day of Judgment. This section was neither transliterated nor translated by Hottinger. It can be assumed that he was not interested in this part.

#### 4. Section in Kūfic Script

##### 4.1. Features of a Section of the Qur'an Written in Kūfic Script: Codicological, Paleographic and Orthographic Aspects

The section written in Kūfic script continues according to the order of the verses, and the pages are organized according to the first section. This section begins on the 56th folio and continues until the 76th, directly after the section written in Maghribī script. There are 10 lines on almost every page. There is a space for one line at the beginning of the Sūrat. As for i'cam and raksh, there are no dots and diacritics in the basic text. Later, dots seem to have been added in red color to indicate the letters. For *fathah*, a dot is placed above the letter; for *kasrah*, a dot is placed below the letter and for *dammah*, a dot is placed to the left of the letter. The same punctuation applies to the *tanwīns*, but they are shown as two dots. Letter dots were added to

the Qur'ān much later with a thin reed pen. Throughout the Qur'ān, the colors black, red, green and gold are used.



(Vr. 59a)

The Kūfī script is slightly deformed, and the writing on the back of the paper has slightly transformed to the front. There is a slight oxidation. Based on these indicators, it can be determined that iron-gall ink was used.

In the section written in Kūfī script, as in the section written in Maghribī script, the layout was given importance. The verses are surrounded by a red frame; however, as in the previous section, this frame was drawn later and sometimes crosses over the writing. There is no trace of a *miṣṭarah*, but there is a very slight shifting of the line arrangement.

When the verse endings are analyzed, the end of each verse is marked with sign. Considering the form of these signs, it can be said that they were added in later periods. When the writing of the verses is taken into account, there are no gaps left at the end of the verses for the signs to be placed. This is evidence that the signs were added later. For example, in al-Shūrā 42/17 (vr. 50b), the end-of-verse sign was added at the beginning of the line because there was no space. In al-Shūrā 42/31 and 32 (vr. 62a), however, no sign is placed at the end of the verse. This section does not contain any notes on the schema or additional information.



(Vr. 56)



(Vr. 56b)

As for the paleographical features of the part written in Kūfic script in general, the *shākulī* letters are generally drawn at an angle of 90 degrees. *Ufkī* letters with bowls such as *sīn*, *ṣād*, *nūn* are completely edged and sharp. The ends of the letters *mīm*, *yā'* and *wāw* are parallel to the line. The letters *'alif* have an oval form in their lower parts. In terms of its character, this writing points to the end of the third century. There is slight shaking in the drawing of some letters. This raises the possibility that the scribe was a novice or that it was copied from an original manuscript. A physical examination of the Qur'ān is necessary for a definitive conclusion.

In terms of orthography, *madd* letters are present in the writing. The word "فُرَأْنَا" in al-Zukhruf 43/3 is written with the letter *'alif* in accordance with the orthography. The number of verses is limited, so it can be said that the words in the chapter are in accordance with the orthography of Caliph 'Uthmān.

#### 4.2. The Content of the Chapter in the Qur'ān Written in Kūfic Script

The section written in Kūfic script begins with the "لَنَا أَعْمَالُنَا وَلَكُمْ أَعْمَالُكُمْ" part of the 42/15th verse of al-Shūrā. The first page of the chapter is shown in the next photo. It is written until the 43/13th verse of al-Zukhruf "لِنَسْتَوُوا عَلَىٰ ظُهُورِهِ ثُمَّ تَذْكُرُوا نِعْمَةَ"

While the verse was completed in the previous section, the verse in this section was left unfinished. One of the striking features of this section is that the scribe stopped writing the verse without even finishing it. If the words are written at the end of a line or at the end of a page, they are divided.

The copyist's mistakes in the writing of the verses are less than in the previous section. After "ضَلَالٍ" at the end of verse 42/18 of al-Shūrā, he skipped to "كَانَ يُرِيدُ" at the beginning of verse 20 and continued until "أَمْ لَهُمْ شُرَكَوًا شَرَعُوا لَهُمْ مِنَ الدِّينِ مَا لَمْ" in the first verse. At this point he realized his mistake and went back to the last word of the 18th verse, "بَعِيدٍ" and completed the part he had left incomplete. The scribe forgot to write the part from the end of verse 47/42 "وَمَا لَكُمْ مِّن تَكْوِيرٍ" to the end of verse 48 "وَإِنْ تُصِيبُهُمْ سَيِّئَةٌ".



Considering the content of the sūrats in the section written in Kūfic calligraphy, al-Shūrā continues from verse 42/15 to verse 43/13 of al-Zukhruf.

The call to Islam and the punishment of non-Muslims, the Day of Judgment, the reward of those who work for the Hereafter, Allah's all-knowing, acceptance of repentance and punishment of sinners, the glory of Allah, the reality of the Day of Judgment, and the situation of those who do not believe in the prophet sent. Unlike the chapter written in the Maghribī script, some of the verses are transcribed here. These sections will be explained in the following section. (Vr. 57a)

When we look at the part of the Qur'ān written in Kūfic script, the characters of the letters point to the end of the third century. Therefore, it is described as an early period Qur'ān. Scribal mistakes are less common than in the other sections, but it is surprising that the verse is left unfinished at the end of the Muṣḥaf.

## 5. Transcription and Translation of the Qur'ān

There is a transcription and a Latin translation added at the end of the Qur'ān. This transcription and translation were done by Heinrich Hottinger (1620-1667). Photographs of these sections are available here.

When the transcription section is examined, first, it starts with "لَنَا أَعْمَالُنَا وَلَكُمْ أَعْمَالُكُمْ" in al-Shūrā 42/15, where the Kūfic section begins, and continues until al-Shūrā 42/45; however, the transcription process is finished at "أَنْ يَأْتِيَ يَوْمٌ" before the verse is completed. It is interesting that he left the transcription unfinished without even completing the verse. It can be said that this section in Hottinger's handwriting is clear and legible.

Many mistakes are made in the transcription process. All the errors have been identified.

- 1) The word "من" was forgotten in "مِنْ بَعْدِ" in al-Shūrā 42/16.
- 2) In al-Shūrā 42/18, he wrote "الَّذِينَ لَا يُؤْمِنُونَ بِهَا" twice.
- 3) In al-Shūrā 42/19, he wrote "بِعِبَادِهِ" with the letter "ة".
- 4) In al-Shūrā 42/21, he added a word that is not at the beginning of the verse. He also did not write the word "شُرَكَاء" as in the Kūfic section. He has written the word "الْفُضِيِّ" as "تَقْضِي".
- 5) In al-Shūrā 42/22, he wrote the word "وَأَقِمْ" with the letter "م". The word "يَسْتَأْذِنُ" is not written as in the Kūfic section. He wrote "الْكَبِيرُ" twice because he thought that the word "الْكَبِيرُ" would not stay at the end of the line.
- 6) In al-Shūrā 42/23, he wrote "عَذَابًا" instead of "عَفُورٌ شَكُورٌ".
- 7) In al-Shūrā 42/2 he has skipped "أَمْ يَقُولُونَ افْتَرَى عَلَى اللَّهِ كَذِبًا" from the beginning of the verse.
- 8) In al-Shūrā 42/25 he wrote "من" instead of "عَنْ".
- 9) In al-Shūrā 42/26, the word "فَضْلِهِ" has been crossed out and rewritten.
- 10) In al-Shūrā 42/29, he wrote the word "فِيهِمَا" as "فِيهِ". The word "يَجْمَعُ", which is not in the verse, was added immediately after "وَهُوَ".



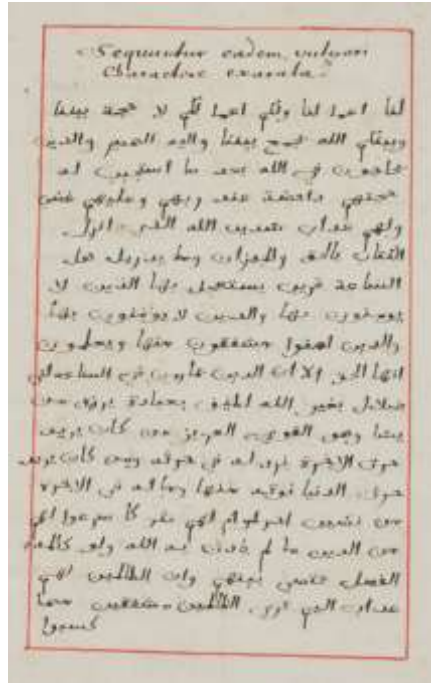
- 11) In al-Shūrā 42/20, the word "كَثِيرٌ" was crossed out and rewritten.
- 12) In al-Shūrā 42/33, he added a hamzah at the end of the word "يَتَسَاءَلُونَ" which is not in the Kūfic section.
- 13) In al-Shūrā 42/34, the word "يُؤَيِّقُهُنَّ" has been scratched out and rewritten.
- 14) In al-Shūrā 42/35, he wrongly wrote the end of the word "مَجِيصٍ".
- 15) In al-Shūrā 42/36 he has written the word "الْحَيَاةِ" with "ت". He mixed up the words "وَعَلَى رَبِّهِمْ" and "يَتَوَكَّلُونَ".
- 16) In al-Shūrā 42/38, he wrote "الصلوات" instead of "الصَّلَاةَ".
- 17) In al-Shūrā 42/40 he wrote "لَمَنْ" instead of "فَمَنْ".
- 18) In al-Shūrā 42/45, the word "خَسِرُوا" has been scratched out and rewritten.

After the transcription section comes the Latin translation section. In this section, there is only a translation of the transcribed part. That is, there is no translation of the part written in Maghribī script. There is also no translation of the entire section written in Kūfic script. Only the part between verses al-Shūrā 42/15-45 in the Kūfic script has been translated. Hottinger did the translation. However, as in the transcription section, the translation section was translated without considering the section written in Kūfic script. Therefore, this translation cannot be said to be an original translation. Leemhuis is of the opinion that Hottinger's translation was taken from Biblander's translation.<sup>16</sup> Moreover, when the translated part is analyzed, there is information about the unity of God and the Day of Judgment. The translation of verse al-Shūrā 42/15, where both the Kūfic section and the translation begin, means, "for us (is the responsibility for) our deeds, and for you for your deeds. There is no contention between us and you. Allah will bring us together, and to Him is (our) Final Goal."<sup>17</sup> These verses may have captured Hottinger's attention at the beginning. There are verses that inform us that "Allah is one, that the Day of Judgment is real, that those who believe and do good will get glad tidings of Paradise, that those who disbelieve and do evil will go to Hell, that Allah is omniscient and forgiving, and that the life of this world is temporary." Therefore, this translation may have been done to examine and publicize some of these verses.

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<sup>16</sup> Leemhuis, "A Peculiar Manuscript of the Qur'ān in Groningen", 97.

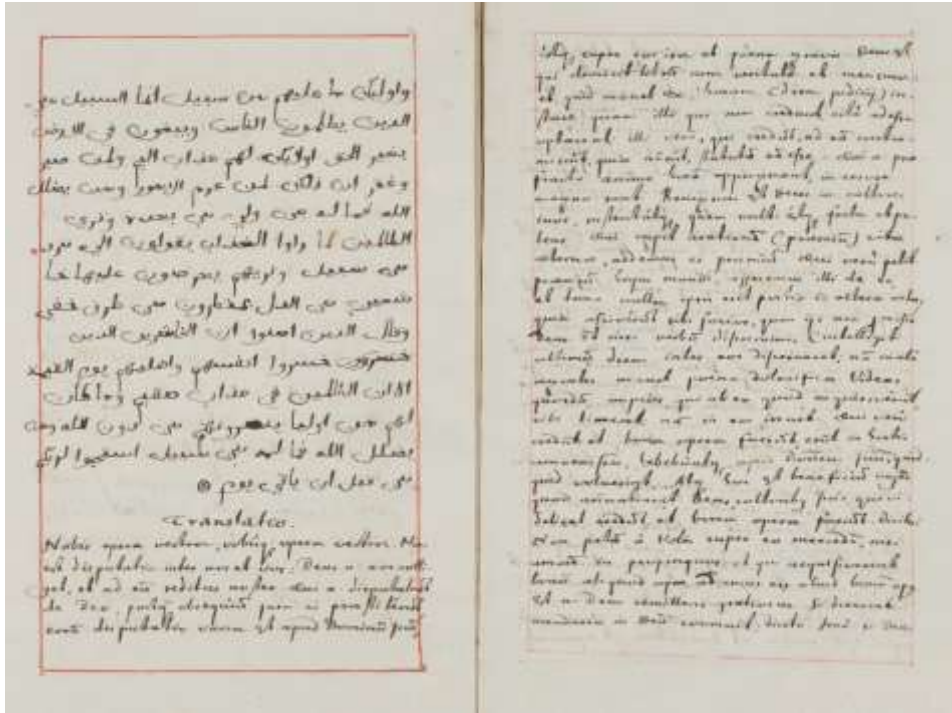
<sup>17</sup> This part is translated from the following translation, see. Yūsuf 'Alī, *The Holy Qur'an*, (Istanbul: Asır Media, 2013), al-Shūrā 42/15.



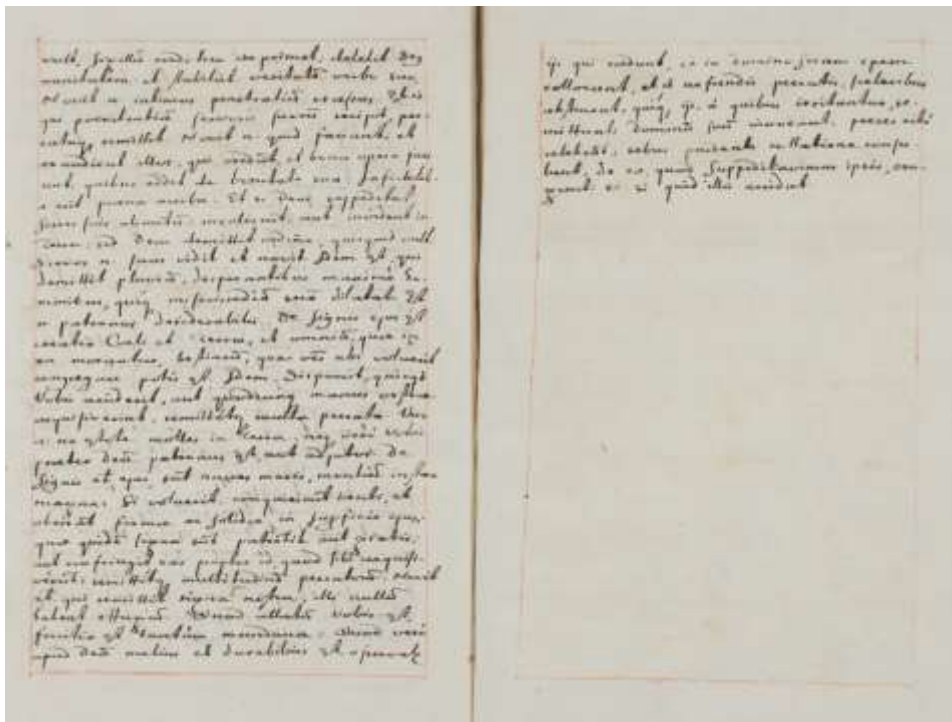
(Vr. 75b)



(Vr. 74b-75a)



(Vr. 73b-74a)



(Vr. 72b-73a)

## Conclusion

The Qur'ān numbered "uklu HANDS 468" at the University of Groningen contains handwriting in two different characters. This indicates that it is a "mixed Qur'ān". That is to say, the Qur'ān's fragments were collected in one volume by a person who bought the different fragments. The Qur'ān has an introduction in Latin and German. From these notes, it appears that the Maghrib manuscript was purchased during Charles V's occupation of Tunisia. Two manuscripts of the Qur'ān in a single volume were presented to the library by Hottinger in 1776. The verses in the Maghribī script are not in regular arrangement. Presumably, at some point the binding was scattered, and then the binding was reconstructed by assembling the leaves in a random manner. In general, nine lines of verses are written on each page. The gestures and punctuation seem to have been added later. The frame drawn around the text of verse was made after the verses were written. As a matter of fact, this red line can be seen in some of the writings. The same red color also appears in the decoration. The decoration was made with a much smaller reed. Black, red, green, gold and orange colors were used in the Maghribī section. There are traces of corrosion on the pages. This corrosion was caused using iron-maz ink. There are traces of rust on the paper because of the ink. There are signs of tahmīs and ta'şīr after certain parts of the verses. There is a mark every five verses. When we look at the paleographic features, there is an angle of almost 90 degrees in the shākūlī letters. In the horizon letters, letters such as *sīn*, *şād* and *nūn* are large enough to attract attention in writing and their chamber parts are made in a soft manner. Sometimes there is a shaking in the drawing of the letters. It can be assumed that the scribe was a novice. As a matter of fact, he made mistakes in many places while writing the words. He has a system that is in accordance with the spelling of the Caliph 'Uthmān. The verses in the section written in Kūfic script are in a regular shape. Black, red, green colors and gold were used in the section. There is a little deformation and the ink was identified as iron-mase due to corrosion. The color of the frame drawn for the layout is the same as the color used in the ornament. Therefore, it seems to have been made in the same period. End-of-verse signs were added to the section later, and in most places they were stuck between the text. Shākūlī letters are generally drawn at an angle of 90 degrees. In the Ufkī letters, the chambered letters such as *sīn*, *şād* and *nūn* are completely angular and drawn in a sharp manner. The ends of the letters *mīm*, *yā'* and *wāw* are parallel to the line. An oval form is seen in the lower parts of the letters 'alif. In terms of its character, this writing points to the end of the third century. There is an orthography system that matches up with the Uthmanic rasm. The scribe made mistakes in the spelling of some verses. The chapter was interrupted by the scribe halfway through before the verse was finalized and the reason for this is unknown. The transcription section contains many errors. Some errors indicate that the transcription was done without consulting the Kūfic section. Similarly, the translation section is translated without depending on the Kūfic section. The translation is not a unique translation. There is no verse translated from the Maghribī section. In the Kūfic section, from the beginning of the chapter to verse 45 has been translated. So the whole section is not translated. Possibly the content of the verses caught Hottinger's attention. For this reason, he may have translated the verses up to a certain verse and then left them.

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Bu çalışmanın hazırlanma sürecinde bilimsel ve etik ilkelere uyulduğu ve yararlanılan tüm çalışmaların kaynakçada belirtildiği beyan olunur. / It is declared that scientific and ethical principles have been followed while carrying out and writing this study and that all sources used been properly cited.

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**Fluidity of Reading the Qur'ān into Late Middle Ages Between the Readers and the Exegetes: the Case of Abū al-Su'ūd/Ebussuud (d. 1574 CE).**

*Kurrā ve Müfessirler Arasında Geç Döneme Kadar Kur'an Kiraatlerinde Fluluk: Ebussuud ve Tefsiri Örneđi*

**Halil ŐİMŐEK**

Dr. Öğr. Üyesi, Ankara Sosyal Bilimler Üniversitesi, İlahiyat Fakültesi  
Temel İslam Bilimleri, Tefsir Anabilim Dalı

Lecturer Dr., Ankara Sosyal Bilimler Üniversitesi, Faculty of Theology  
Basic Islamic Sciences, Department of Tafsir

Ankara, Türkiye

hllsmk@gmail.com

<https://orcid.org/0000-0002-3990-1071>

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### Abstract

A significant topic of the Qur'ānic studies is the subject of variant readings. According to Muslim tradition, the Qur'ān can be read at least in seven variant readings. Primary sources of Muslim scholarly tradition on the history of the Qur'ān exhibit, to some degree of variance, two distinct historical tiers: one is on the written form of the Qur'ān; and the other is on the oral features of the Qur'ān. Although the history of the written form of the Qur'ān seems to have culminated with the collection of the caliph 'Uthmān (r. 26-36/646-656), the oral character of it continued to entertain variances in unspecified numbers. Attempts to limit, systematize, and canonize these variances, despite political backing at times, have failed to find reception with the scholars of Qur'ānic readings and the scholars of Qur'ānic exegesis well into the late Middle Ages. The latter, in their exegetical works, have continued to revive, utilize, and assess the readings that had been deemed non-canonical by the former. The Muslim tradition in general purports that the Qur'ānic readings have been limited and systematized in non-exegetical settings, and the scholars of Qur'ānic readings have allowed for the utilization of non-canonical readings for exegetical purposes. Our study here aims to assess this claim and re-examine if it can be corroborated with historical developments. We hope to demonstrate that not only does this claim stand on shaky grounds, but the exegetical literature well into the late Middle Ages strove to maintain the liberal ground for the oral aspect of the Qur'ān. We have tackled the issue through the exegetical work of Abū al-Su'ūd al-Īmādī, *Irshād al-'aql al-salīm ilā mazāyā al-Kitāb al-Karīm*, with references to earlier exegetical works on which Abū al-Su'ūd seems to have drawn. We would like to demonstrate that the exegetes contested the Qur'ānic readers in the oral features of the Qur'ān and stood their ground in keeping the liberal approach that allowed for some degree of fluidity and which was guided and governed by several different and non-fixed criteria such as tradition, meaning, literary excellence, linguistic reasoning, etc. **Key words:** Qur'ānic exegesis, History of the Qur'ān, Qur'ānic/variant readings, al-aḥruf al-sab'a, Ottoman exegetical heritage, Abū al-Su'ūd, *Irshād al-'aql al-salīm*.

### Öz

Kur'ân arařtırmalarının en önemli konularından birisi de Kur'ân kıraâtleridir. Yerleşik Sünnî İslami anlayışa göre Kur'ân en az yedi deęişik vecihle okunabilir. İslam literatürünün ana kaynakları, kendi aralarında bazı farklılıklar arzetsede de Kur'ân lafızları ve tarihi hakkında iki katmanlı bir tarihsel süreç önermektedir: Birincisi, yazılı Kur'ân metni; ikincisi ise, şifâhî okuma farklılıkları. Geleneksel ve yerleşik öğreti, yazılı kanonik metni Hz. Osman'a dayandırsa da şifâhî okuma farklılıkları devam ede gelmiş ve bu farklılıkların sayısını tahdit etme girişimleri, siyasi iktidar desteğine rağmen hem kurrâ nezdinde hem de tefsir uleması nezdinde zorlu bir sınavla karşılaşmıştır. Kurrâ uleması 9/15. yy itibarıyla bu kıraatleri yedi ve/veya on ile sınırlandırarak kanonize etmiş olsa da, kanonik addetmedikleri okumaların tefsir amaçlı kullanılmasına göz yummuşlar, kanonik olmayan okumaların tefsir dışında kullanılması gerektiğine hükmetmişlerdir. Bizim bu çalışmamız bu iddianın tarihsel doğruluğunu mercek altına almakta, tefsircilerin böyle bir ayırımı kabul etmeden Kur'ân metninin esnek yapısının kurrâ'nın çizdiği sınırlarla tahdit edilemeyeceği yönünde eğilim sergilediklerini ve böylece de oral yapısını tahdit eden kriterlerin birtakım tarihi verileri göz ardı ettiğini ortaya koymaya çalışmaktadır. Araştırmamız Ebussuud'un tefsiri *İrşâdu'l-akli's-selîm ilâ mezâyâ'l-Kitâbi'l-Kerîm* ve bu tefsire kaynaklık ettiğini düşündüğümüz daha erken dönem tefsir literatürü ile karşılaştırılarak bir değerlendirme sunmaktadır. Bu araştırmamızda, tefsircilerin Kur'ân'ın şifâhî özellikleri konusunda kurrâyaya, karşı bir söylem benimsediklerini, bu söylemleriyle Kur'ân'ın şifâhî karakterine rivayet, anlam, belağat, lügavi kıyas, vb. deęişken ve farklı kriterler doğrultusunda fluluk, yani esneklik ve serbestiyet atfettiklerini göstermeyi hedeflemekteyiz.

**Anahtar kelimeler:** Tefsir, Kur'ân tarihi, kıraatler, el-ahrufu's-seb'a, Osmanlı tefsir mirası, Ebussuud, *İrşâdu'l-akli's-selîm*.

## **1. Introduction: The Traditional Account on The History and Development of the Qur'ānic Text and its Reading<sup>1</sup>**

### **1.1. The Qur'ānic Text**

Before we delve into *Irshād* on variant readings<sup>2</sup>, we would like to present here a brief Muslim traditional account on the history of Qur'ānic text in order to prepare the ground for the discussion of Abū al-Su'ūd's and other Muslim scholars' attitude towards the phenomenon of variant Qur'ānic readings.<sup>3</sup> The modern western scholarship has raised objections to the traditional Muslim narrative and produced alternative accounts for the history of Qur'ānic text, an aspect of Qur'ānic studies that is beyond the scope of this study.<sup>4</sup>

According to Muslim traditional account, the Qur'ān, held to be the revealed speech of God, was received piecemeal by Muḥammad over the course of 23 years from 610 to 632 CE. These revelations received by Muḥammad were preserved either in memory or in writing in primitive materials, such as flat animal bones and stones, and pieces of cloth and wooden boards, or even both in memory and writing. We do not know if the written fragments of the Qur'ān into abovementioned primitive materials constituted collectively the entire Qur'ān, but the circumstantial evidence may indicate that it was the case. That the Qur'ān as we have it today in a uniform book was never *in toto* written during the time of the Prophet may strongly indicate that it was meant to be preserved in memory and recitation.<sup>5</sup> The traditional narrative also preserved several traditions which clearly indicate that the Prophet taught these revelations to his Companions in an unspecified number of variances in reading, probably reflecting the variances in the dialects of tribes to which those Companions belonged.<sup>6</sup> At any rate, when Muḥammad died, the Qur'ānic revelations had not been collected into a uniform written book. Though the generally accepted tradition propounds that the Qur'ān had been collected/preser-

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<sup>1</sup> This article is extracted with slight revisions from my doctorate dissertation entitled "The Missing Link in the History of Quranic Commentary: The Ottoman Period and the Quranic Commentary of Ebussuud/Abū al-Su'ūd al-ʿImādī (d. 1574 CE) *Irshād al-ʿaql al-salīm ilā mazāyā al-Kitāb al-Karīm*" supervised by Walid Saleh (Ph.D. Dissertation, University of Toronto, Toronto, Canada, 2018).

<sup>2</sup> The concept of variant readings is a convention of western scholarship, and it denotes that there is a standard reading to which others are considered variant. But the Muslim scholarship does not differentiate between various Qur'ānic readings and all canonical readings are considered just as standard.

<sup>3</sup> The kernel of the following historical account can also be found, with slight variances, in several recent modern studies. See for example, Claude Gilliot "Creation of a Fixed Text" *The Cambridge Companion to the Qur'ān*, ed. Jane Dammen McAuliffe (Cambridge: Cambridge Univ. Press, 2006), 41-58; Fred Leemhuis, "From Palm Leaves to the Internet" *The Cambridge Companion to the Qur'ān*, ed. J. D. McAuliffe, (Cambridge: Camb. Univ. Press, 2006), 145-161, pp. 145-153; François Déroche, "Witten Transmission" *The Blackwell Companion to the Qur'ān*, ed. A. Rippin (Massachusetts: Blackwell Publishing Ltd., 2006), 172-186; Fred Leemhuis, "Readings of the Qur'ān", *Encyclopedia of the Qur'ān [EQ]*, ed. J. D. McAuliffe, (Leiden: Brill, 2004), 4/353-366.; Abdülhamit Birişik, "Kıraat", *Türkiye Diyanet Vakfı İslam Ansiklopedisi [DİA]*, (Ankara: TDV Yayınları, 2002), 25/426-433.

<sup>4</sup> For a recent assessment on the alternative accounts of western scholarship, see Harald Motzki, "Alternative accounts of the Qur'anic formation" *The Cambridge Companion to the Qur'ān*, ed. J. D. McAuliffe, (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2006), 59-79.

<sup>5</sup> The word Qur'ān lexically means, according to some views and though not exclusively, recitation and/or reading. The issue at hand is much more complex, but for the sake of brevity, we are operating on the presumption that the Prophet, or God for that matter, intended these revelations to be collected into a book form, a task that was carried out by the Prophet's Companions after his passing away.

<sup>6</sup> This phenomenon of variances in reading during the Prophet Muḥammad's time is predicated on the doctrine of *al-ahruf al-sab'a* (the Seven Modes [of reading]) about which more will be discussed in the following pages.

ved by heart by a number of individuals before Muḥammad died, unorthodox views that interpret the same and different evidence otherwise are also encountered.<sup>7</sup> The traditional account tells us that there were two collection attempts after the death of the Prophet: the first one was by the first caliph Abū Bakr (r. 11-13/632-634); and the second one by the third caliph ‘Uthmān. Abū Bakr commissioned Zayd b. Thābit (d. 45/665), a Companion of the Prophet who, according to the Muslim narrative, was also one of his secretaries who wrote down the revelations as they descended, to collect the Qur’ān. This attempt of collecting the Qur’ān into a binder of sheets, traditionally known as *Muṣḥaf*<sup>8</sup>, was instigated by the fact that most of those who had been preserving the Qur’ān in their memories had perished in the late battles that Abū Bakr had waged against the rebels on the wake of Muḥammad’s death. Zayd thus proceeded and wrote the Qur’ānic revelations into sheets, coupled with the oral testimony of other Companions, which had previously been recorded on the abovementioned primitive materials. These sheets that Zayd collected formed the *Muṣḥaf*, or *Ṣuḥuf*, which was then entrusted to the care of Abū Bakr, the first caliph/head of the Muslim community. We have no way of ascertaining if the collection of Abū Bakr was predicated on a single mode of reading or if it was written in a way that reflected a number of possible variances representing the ones sanctioned by the Prophet. When Abū Bakr died, the *Muṣḥaf/Ṣuḥuf* passed to ‘Umar (r. 14-26/634-646), who succeeded the former in caliphate, and, upon ‘Umar’s death to Ḥafṣa, the latter’s daughter and one of Muḥammad’s widows. We are here to infer, based on the events that were to unfold, that though there was a written uniform Qur’ān, Muslims in various and remote parts of the realm continued learning the Qur’ān from Companions, who, now dispersed in far-off lands, must have passed it onto their students in the variance(s) that they claimed they had received from the Prophet.<sup>9</sup> Though these variances seem not to have engendered any controversy or disputation amongst most of the Companions, those who were unaware of the variance phenomenon and/or the generation of Successors (*al-Tābi’ūn*) began raising serious problems over the correct reading of Qur’ān. During the caliphate of ‘Uthmān, who succeeded ‘Umar, Ḥudhayfa b. al-Yamān, a military commander of one of the expeditions, became concerned about the disputes that arose amongst his soldiers over the correct reading of the Qur’ān and brought it up with the caliph. ‘Uthmān thus formed a commission of four or five Companions headed by Zayd b. Thābit for the collection of the Qur’ān for a second time. ‘Uthmān requested the sheets that were collected by Abū Bakr and were now in Ḥafṣa’s possession, and ordered the commission to produce a codex on the basis of Abu Bakr’s collection. He further instructed them that if there was any discrepancy and/or disagreement in dialect, they should record it according to the dialect of

<sup>7</sup> See: Gilliot, “Creation of a fixed text”, 44 where Gilliot opined that the Mu’tazilite Abū al-Qāsim al-Balkhī’s (d. 319/931) contradictory report that “no one had collected (or memorized “*jama’ a*”) the Qur’ān during the life of the Prophet” could also be understood to mean “no one had memorized it”. See for a further detailed discussion on the technical term *jama’ a*, Claude Gilliot, “Collecte ou mémorisation du Coran. Essai d’analyse d’un vocabulaire ambigu (Collection or memorization of the Koran. An attempt to analyse an ambiguous vocabulary)” in Lohlker (Rüdiger) (hrsg.von), *Hadīstudies – Die Überlieferungen des Propheten im Gespräch. Festschrift für Prof. Dr. Tilman Nagel*, (Hambourg: Verlag dr. Kovac, 2009), 77-132.

<sup>8</sup> The etymology and meaning of this word has been the subject of a number of studies: See for example, John Burton, “Muṣḥaf”, *Encyclopedia of Islam* (New Edition [E<sup>2</sup>]), 7/668-69; and Harald Motzki, “Muṣḥaf” *EQ*, 3/463-66.

<sup>9</sup> This argument presupposes that those Companions who carried the Qur’ān forward to new members of the Muslim community had received it, in toto, from the Prophet directly in a given reading; however, the lack of credible evidence requires us to question this premise, even if we ultimately fail to provide counter evidence as well. Nonetheless, we would like to note our preservation that not only may the Companions have been teaching the Qur’ān only partially because of the fact that they had not learned all of it from the Prophet, but also there is circumstantial evidence indicating that they were given the choice of reading the Qur’ān in an unspecified way(s) provided that they observe the meaning.

## Fluidity of Reading the Qur'ān into Late Middle Ages Between the Readers and the 76 Exegetes: the Case of Abū al-Su'ūd/Ebussuud (d. 1574 CE). |

Quraysh, the tribe to which Muḥammad belonged. Upon the completion of this copy which came to be known as the 'Uthmanic Codex (*al-Muṣḥaf al-'Uthmānī*), 'Uthmān ordered for the reproduction of four or five, or yet according to some other accounts, six more copies which were to be sent to the central cities of Makka, Baṣra, Kūfa, and Damascus. The city of Madina, the seat of the caliphate, was to preserve the Imām/original copy. 'Uthmān further ordered his governors in those cities to burn and destroy all other copies that may have been circulating and were in non-compliance with his copy. His attempt to procure a uniform text did not initially achieve conclusive success and other Companions, now dispersed in various central and remote cities of a vast Muslim realm, and spearheaded by the likes of Ibn Mas'ūd (d. 33/653), Ubayy b. Ka'b (d. 18/639 or 28/649), and Abū Mūsā al-Ash'arī (d. 42/662), all of whom were eminent Companions of the Prophet, produced their own codices that differed in reading and writing from the codex of 'Uthmān. The copies of the codices produced by other Companions did not survive, but contents of them have survived in oral transmissions until recorded in early *tafsīr* works.<sup>10</sup>

### 1.2. The Qur'ānic Readings

Reports about variant ways of reciting and/or reading the Qur'ān even during the life of Muḥammad abound. These variances involved the whole range of lexical points from simple pronunciation through different case endings, synonyms, to variances in entire phrases. Islamic tradition predicated these variances during the lifetime of Muḥammad on the doctrine of *al-aḥruf al-sab'a* (the Seven Modes [of reading/reciting]) which involved a number of variances in reading/recitation according to which Gabriel recited the Qur'ān to Muḥammad and the latter allowed his followers to freely choose to recite/read the Qur'ān in accordance with one of those modes.<sup>11</sup> Traditional accounts indicate that the Qur'ān was equally canonically being read and recited in one of these various modes until 'Uthmān collected it for a second time into a relatively uniform written text in a volume of sheets—*Muṣḥaf*—, had it reproduced into four more copies, or six more copies according to some accounts, and sent it to major cities of the Muslim realm. We would like to note our reservation by saying that the *Muṣḥaf* collected by 'Uthmān was relatively uniform, because there were two significant characteristics to it: first was that not all of the five copies were identical in script; and second is that it was defective (*scriptio defectiva*), without vowels and/or diacritical marks in the sense that it allowed for a number of possible different readings.<sup>12</sup>

There arose the phenomenon of variant readings of the Qur'ān. On the one hand there was a group of variant readings that were predicated on the doctrine of *al-aḥruf al-sab'a*, and on the other, there was a group of readings that was engendered by *scriptio defectiva*. Though

<sup>10</sup> Based on Ubeyy b. Ka'b's death date, the terminus ante quem for 'Uthmān's collection should be 649, or it is also not unlikely that the former, along with other Companions, had already collected the Qur'ān in writing into a codex years before 'Uthmān, thence the latter's order that all the other codices be burnt and destroyed.

<sup>11</sup> For a collection of *ḥadīth*s on *al-aḥruf al-sab'a*, see Shihāb al-Dīn 'Abd al-Raḥmān b. Ismā'il b. Ibrāhīm Abī Shāma al-Maqdisī, (d. 665/1266-67), *al-Murshid al-wajīz ilā 'ulūm tata'allaq bi al-Kitāb al-'Azīz*, ed. Ibrāhīm Shams al-Dīn (Bairut: Dār al-Kutub al-'Ilmiyya, 2003), 78-86; and for a somehow systematic presentation and study of these traditions see, Shady Hekmat Nasser, *The Transmission of the Variant Readings of the Qur'ān: The Problem of Tawātur and the Emergence of Shawādhidh*, (Leiden: Brill, 2013), 18-29.

<sup>12</sup> For a number of sample variances see, Ibn al-Jazarī, Abī al-Khayr M. b. Muḥammad al-Dimashqī (d. 833/1430), *al-Nashr fī al-qirā'āt al-'ashr*, ed. 'Alī M. al-Ṣabbāgh and Zakariyyā 'Umayrān, 2 vols. (Bairut: Dār al-Kutub al-'Ilmiyya, 1998), 1/16. Note that these variant readings borne out by the *scriptio defectiva* are not necessarily the same as the variant readings that had prophetically been accommodated on account of *al-aḥruf al-sab'a*.

the variant readings borne out by the doctrine of *al-aḥruf al-sab'a* involved a variety of variances, the most conspicuous characteristic of them was that in innumerable instances they differed from the 'Uthmanic Ductus in the expression of an entirety of a given Qur'ānic word in grapheme. For example, *wa li kull(in) wijhat(un)*<sup>13</sup> is read in the reading attributed to Ibn Mas'ūd as *wa li kull(in) qiblat(un)*. Even though the meaning may remain the same, in this instance the entire grapheme of the Arabic expression changes.<sup>14</sup> But the variant readings borne out by *scriptio defectiva* represented mostly variations without making any changes with the grapheme of the words. The variances in reading, whether they be borne out by the script or the doctrine of *al-aḥruf al-sab'a*, continued to exist in an unspecified number even after the introduction of 'Uthmanic codex. The canonicity of a given reading was in a way up for grabs, no official attempt was recorded for a period of two or three centuries to determine the admissibility or inadmissibility of given transmitted reading, and it was rather the purview of Muslim scholars in various fields to assess the validity of this heritage of unspecified number of variant readings. Probably the first official attempt to mark some boundaries on the written form of the Qur'ān came during mid-Umayyad period. The *scriptio defectiva* was made into *scriptio plena*<sup>15</sup> probably by al-Ḥajjāj b. Yūsuf (d. 96/714), the governor of Irāq during the reign of the Umayyad caliph 'Abd al-Malik (r. 66-87/685-705), who introduced a number of systems represented in the diacritical marks and vowelization symbols, that served to distinguish between the identical graphemes of the Arabic alphabet and captured the case endings, short/long vowels, and so forth. But the variant readings that differed from the 'Uthmanic codex continued to be transmitted from various companions, especially from Ibn Mas'ūd, and survived until the 10<sup>th</sup> century Qur'ānic scholar Ibn Mujāhid's (d. 325/936) time who, with the help of Abbasid authorities, introduced certain criteria by which the canonicity of a given reading could be measured. Ibn Mujāhid also reduced the number of readings to be deemed canonical to seven, each is identified with an eponymous reader from the cities to which 'Uthmanic copies had been sent. Even though Ibn Mujāhid did not expressly state his criteria for determining the canonicity of a given Qur'ānic reading, the medieval and modern scholarship inferred them to boil down to three:

1. Compliance with the 'Uthmanic Ductus/*rasm*;
2. Authoritative transmission<sup>16</sup>;
3. Compliance with the rules of Arabic language.

Between the introduction of 'Uthmanic codex and Ibn Mujāhid's time, on the other hand, Muslim scholars did not feel bound by the criteria set by Ibn Mujāhid, nor did they display restriction against the 'Uthmanic Ductus and continued to treat the readings that differed from it equally as canonical as al-*Muṣḥaf al-'Uthmānī*. Though those early scholars did not stipulate the criteria they observed, F. Leemhuis deduced that they were also three<sup>17</sup>:

1. Compliance with "a codex/*Muṣḥaf*" (any codex);
2. Transmission through an authoritative chain;
3. Compliance with the rules of Arabic language.

<sup>13</sup> al-Baqara 2/148.

<sup>14</sup> In several other instances, even the meaning changes depending on the interpretation rendered by a given exegete.

<sup>15</sup> *Scriptio defectiva* and *scriptio plena* are two technical terms denoting the writing systems of a given text where the former designates a text that is written with only consonants and/or without vowels, and the latter designates a text that includes both the consonant and vowel characters.

<sup>16</sup> A rather loose term that may designate several technical meanings; more on this will soon be discussed further.

<sup>17</sup> Leemhuis, "Readings of the Qur'ān", 4/353-366.

## Fluidity of Reading the Qur'ān into Late Middle Ages Between the Readers and the 78 Exegetes: the Case of Abū al-Su'ūd/Ebussuud (d. 1574 CE). |

It seems that the difference between Ibn Mujāhid's criteria and the criteria of those who preceded and/or succeeded him boils down to the issue of compliance with a written text; Ibn Mujāhid identified the written text solely with the 'Uthmanic Ductus, while those who disagreed with him recognized the other codices, mainly that of Ibn Mas'ūd, as equally canonical.

Owing to the political backing Ibn Mujāhid was able to secure through the 'Abbasid authorities of his time<sup>18</sup>, his system was solely enforced in liturgy, and the variant readings that did not comply with the 'Uthmanic Ductus continued to survive within the literary output of scholarly circles, especially the corpus of exegetical material that survived through the Qur'ānic commentary of Tha'labī (d. 427/1035) and those whose works mainly drew on it. It is therefore not improbable that had Ibn Mujāhid not secured the support of political authorities of his time, the variant readings would have survived even in liturgy.

The fact that Ibn Mujāhid limited the acceptable canonical readings to seven is not without significance. Although Ibn Mujāhid did not clearly state it, the way that the medieval Muslim scholars treated the subject indicates that he intended to identify his selection of seven readings with the Seven Modes (*al-ahruf al-sab'a*) of reading that are prophetically and/or divinely sanctioned. Regardless of whether or not Ibn Mujāhid had such intentions, the majority of scholars have expressed their disagreement on such identification and viewed *al-ahruf al-sab'a* as something entirely different than the phenomenon of current variant readings of the Qur'ān.<sup>19</sup>

After Ibn Mujāhid, the variant readings that did not make into his list did not immediately die out and scholars continued to debate the criteria implicitly advanced by him. Eventually three more readings that are stipulated to have complied with his unstated criteria were added to make up the number of canonical readings to ten. The debate around the degree of authoritative transmission, one of Ibn Mujāhid's criteria, proved crucial. It seems that Ibn Mujāhid did not elaborate on the degree of authoritative transmission, and consequently some took it to mean *mutawātir* (multiply attested), and some others took it to include even the *mashhūr* transmissions.<sup>20</sup>

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<sup>18</sup> The two figures that are frequently mentioned in the sources and that have been subjected to official interrogation and forced to recant are Ibn Miqṣam (d. 354/965) and Ibn Shannabūdh (d. 328/939); See: Christopher Melchert, "Ibn Mujāhid and the Establishment of Seven Qur'anic Readings," *Studia Islamica* 91(2000), 5-22; and Muazzem Yener, "İbn Miksem: Hayatı, Kıraat İlmindeki Yeri ve Şâz Okuyuşları," *Jass Studies-The Journal of Academic Social Science Studies*, 15/89 (2022), 269-286; and Abdulmecit Okcu, "İbn Şenebûz: Hayatı, Kıraat İlmindeki Yeri ve Resmi Hatta Muhallif Okuyuşları," *Atatürk Üniversitesi İlahiyat Fakültesi Dergisi*, 42(2014), 1-30.

<sup>19</sup> Leemhuis, "Readings of the Qur'ān", 4/353-366.

<sup>20</sup> *Mutawātir*, *mashhūr*, and *āḥād* are technical terms that have been developed by Muslim scholars for the purpose of verifying oral transmissions. *Mutawātir* is a highly polemical category and was mostly adopted not by *ḥādīth* scholars, but by the *uṣūlīs*, those who were interested in the theoretical foundations of Islamic epistemology. In broad terms it designated an oral report that is transmitted by so big a number of transmitters whose collusion in fabricating such a report is precluded by sound and/or conventional reasoning. An oral report transmitted in *mutawātir* manner was held to have yielded epistemological certainty as to the source and provenance of it, namely it could with certainty be ascribed to the source from which it was said to have originated. The key factor in *mutawātir* is the number of transmitters. Different scholars have designated this number differently. *Mashhūr*, on the other hand, is an oral report that is transmitted by a number of transmitters fewer than those found in *mutawātir*. *Āḥād* reports are the transmissions that are transmitted by single persons or only by a very few number of individuals. Most of the traditions fall under the category of *āḥād*. Many eminent medieval scholars of *ḥādīth* rejected the category of *mutawātir* on account of its extreme rarity. Though the categories of *mashhūr* and *āḥād* are broadly termed as being sound (*ṣaḥīḥ*), Muslim scholars stated that they yield only probable knowledge, namely that they can with high probability be ascribed to its origin. For a somehow detailed analysis of *mutawātir* between the *uṣūlīs* and *ḥādīth* scholars, see Shady Hekmat Nasser, *The Transmission of the Variant Readings of the Qur'ān*, 66-76; and for the epistemological degree of each of

In addition to discussions about the nature and degree of authoritative transmissions, the scholars also disagreed over which of Ibn Mujāhid's criteria had precedence over another. The argument that the conformity with the 'Uthmanic Ductus constituted *ijmā'*, consensus of the community and/or scholars, allowed for the controversial acceptance of four more readings which continue to be viewed by some as *qirā'āt shādhda* (deviant/isolated readings).<sup>21</sup>

Of the seven readings established by Ibn Mujāhid, the reading of the Kūfan 'Āṣim (d. 127/745) as transmitted by Ḥafṣ (d. 180/796) was adopted by the Ottomans under whose suzerainty the greater part of the Middle East had lived until the early 20<sup>th</sup> century. In 1924, the Qur'ān was published in Cairo on the basis of the reading of 'Āṣim and this is the edition that commonly and widely circulates in the Muslim world today.

### 1.3. An Assessment of the Foregoing Narrative

The traditional account broadly outlined above resulted in several complications that the succeeding generations of scholars were invested with the task of resolving. We would now like to touch upon the efforts of some scholars to resolve the issues surrounding the variant readings in order to demonstrate that the issue remained rather unresolved, and that although these attempts were coupled at times with political interferences, the liberal approach to the acceptance of an unspecified number of variant readings continued to exist until late medieval ages.

First of all, there was an official written codex, and at the same time a few unofficial codices reported to belong to the likes of Ibn Mas'ūd, Ubayy b. Ka'b, and Abū Mūsā al-'Ash'arī, along with readings that differed from the official codex. Not only was there more than one Qur'ān, but the number of readings according to which these Qur'āns were being recited was unspecified. Two main theories have been advanced by scholars in an attempt to first accommodate the apparent discrepancy and second pave the way for the creation of a uniform text. One of these theories was the doctrine of abrogation. Those who have argued that the compliance with the official 'Uthmanic Codex is the most foundational criterion for the acceptability of a given reading tried to support their claim with the doctrine of abrogation on two fronts. On the one hand, they argued that the Prophet Muḥammad used to rehearse the Qur'ān with Gabriel every year, and the year he passed away he had rehearsed it twice. Based on this last rehearsal, Zayd b. Thābit, who was present during it, was charged with the task of collecting the Qur'ān into sheets first by Abū Bakr and then by 'Uthmān, and consequently Zayd must have known this last reading that was sanctioned by the archangel Gabriel. It was not mere coincidence that Zayd was the choice for both Abū Bakr and 'Uthmān to be tasked with the collection of Qur'ān. This explanation operates on the presumption that Muḥammad rehearsed only one mode of reading and Gabriel sanctioned it. Though our sources say nothing about whether or not Gabriel sanctioned only one mode of reading in the last rehearsal and the probability does not seem to be far-fetched, the opposite, namely that Gabriel might have sanctioned a number of other readings or Muḥammad might have rehearsed the last time in a number of modes of reading, is equally not unlikely. As a matter of fact there is circumstantial evidence indicating that Zayd's collection of 'Uthmanic Codex, much less the one he collected on the

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these categories see, Wael Hallaq, "The Authenticity of Prophetic Ḥadīth: A Pseudo-Problem" *Studia Islamica*, 89 (1999), 75-90.

<sup>21</sup> Nasser further divides *shādhda* (pl. *shawādhda*) readings into two distinct categories: anomalous and irregular; while the latter designates a reading which conforms to the consonantal outline of 'Uthmanic Ductus but suffers the support in transmission and the consensus of the community of readers, the former is that which disagrees with the 'Uthmanic *rasm*. He provides no further detail if the former category can find support in tradition and linguistic requirement. See: Nasser, *The Transmission of the Variant Readings of the Qur'ān*. 16, ft. 59.

## Fluidity of Reading the Qur'ān into Late Middle Ages Between the Readers and the 80 Exegetes: the Case of Abū al-Su'ūd/Ebussuud (d. 1574 CE). |

order of Abū Bakr the first time around, was not written in a single mode of reading. The traditional account tells us that the copies produced on the order of 'Uthmān were not identical and there was some degree of variance among them. Abī Shāma al-Maqdisī (d. 665/1266-67), a prominent medieval figure and a close examiner of the scholarly discussions in the field, related from Abū Tāhir 'Abd al-Wāḥid b. Abī Hishām, a student of both Ibn Mujāhid and Ṭabarī (d. 310/923), that the copy sent to Madina and Damascus read *wa awṣā bihā Ibrāhīm* whereas the copy sent to Kūfa, which reflects the current rendering, read *wa waṣṣā bihā Ibrāhīm*.<sup>22</sup> The author concluded that Zayd must have heard the Prophet recite the abovementioned verse in both modes.<sup>23</sup> To question whether Zayd heard him recite in two different modes during the last rehearsal or during different occasions is irrelevant here. This instance clearly indicates that variant readings still existed even during the second collection of the Qur'ān and therefore the claim of abrogation falls through the cracks. On a side note, we have to mention here a point borne out by the abovementioned sample of variance in the 'Uthmanic codex. The point mentioned in the traditional account that 'Uthmān ordered Zayd to record the collection in the Qurayshī dialect is also problematic. Al-Qurṭubī (d. 672/1273) related from al-Qāḍī Ibn al-Ṭayyib [Abū Bakr al-Bāqillānī] (d. 394/1003) that the tribe of Quraysh did not indicate the *hamza*, the glottal stop, in writing, whereas the copies sent to Madina and Damascus, as we saw above, record it. He also related from Ibn 'Abd al-Barr (d. 464/1071) that 'Uthmān's wording that the Qur'ān was revealed in the Qurayshī dialect, and therefore he ordered Zayd to collect it in that dialect, does not necessarily mean that the entire Qur'ān was revealed in it, but most of it, or the overwhelming part of it. This is obviously an attempt to reconcile the factual discrepancy between what 'Uthmān is reported to have ordered Zayd and the fact that some copies which Zayd collected and/or produced did not comply with the Qurayshī dialect.<sup>24</sup> Based on the abovementioned verse, we can clearly state that not only were Zayd's collected copies not identical, but also, in the abovementioned instance, some of the copies were not recorded in the Qurayshī dialect either. Furthermore, nor can we safely state that what Zayd had collected the first time on the order of Abū Bakr was based on a single mode of reading. In fact, the subsequent traditions tend to refute such a statement. When 'Uthmān charged Zayd for the second time along with three or four other Companions with the task of collecting the Qur'ān, he specifically instructed them that had they differed in the reading of a word and/or a verse they should record it with the dialect of Quraysh, the tribe to which Muḥammad belonged. If the first collection of Abū Bakr was already written in one mode of reading or in the dialect of Quraysh, 'Uthmān's specific instructions would have no point. Nor is there a reason for Zayd to collect it in a dialect other than the dialect of Quraysh if we were to assume that he recorded it in one specific mode of reading the first time around. Therefore, he must have written it either in the dialect of Quraysh or in a way that reflected several modes of reading. The possibility that some verses or some words were written in a dialect other than that of Quraysh is also highly probable on account of the fact that Zayd collected it from an unspecified number of people belonging to an unspecified number of different tribes. So, the probability that a word or an expression in a given verse was recorded according to a dialect reflecting the tribe of the person from whom Zayd collected it, and the probability that another word or an expression in another verse was

<sup>22</sup> al-Baqara 2/132.

<sup>23</sup> Abī Shāma al-Maqdisī, *al-Murshid al-wajīz*, 118.

<sup>24</sup> Abī 'Abd Allāh Muḥammad b. Aḥmad b. Abī Bakr al-Qurṭubī, *al-Jāmi' li aḥkām al-Qur'ān wa al-mubayyin li mā taḍammanah min al-Sunna wa āy al-Furqān/Tafsīr al-Qurṭubī*. ed. 'Abdullāh b. 'Abd al-Muḥsin al-Turkī, (Bairut: Mu'assasa al-Risāla, 2016) 1/75.



recorded in accordance with the dialect of the person of another tribe from whom Zayd collected it, cannot be dismissed.

On the other hand, if with the last rehearsal all the other permitted modes of reading were abrogated, why was Abū Bakr's codex not made official, or why did 'Uthmān not simply copy it to the letter the second time around. The theory that the last rehearsal constituted the final sanctioned version and all the other modes of reading were therefore abrogated with it does not really hold water.

Another theory propounded by the same camp, those who argued for the principality of compliance with the 'Uthmanic Ductus, was that it also involved the doctrine of abrogation, but from another front. They argued that 'Uthmān's collection and its widely accepted reception by the community constituted *ijmā'* (consensus) which, in turn, abrogated the previously permitted seven modes of reading.<sup>25</sup> The fact that the likes of Ibn Mas'ūd, Ubayy b. Ka'b, and Abū Mūsā al-'Ash'arī continued not conforming with the 'Uthmanic Codex allows us to seriously question if the claim of *ijmā'* can be established. Furthermore, the fact that *ijmā'* constituted the abrogation of a divinely ordered permission engendered problems of foundational proportions. It is beyond the scope of this study to discuss here the premises of legal theories, but we would like to only mention here that among the earliest scholars who discussed the doctrine of *ijmā'* on the variant readings was Makkī b. Abī Ṭālib (d. 437/1045-46), a prominent medieval figure on the subject of variant readings. Though Makkī admitted that the abrogation of the Qur'ān with *ijmā'* was a disputed matter, he nevertheless castigated and went on a tirade against those who contradicted and/or differed from the 'Uthmanic Ductus. One cannot help but detect the emotional pain that Makkī went through when he discussed this situation, as was relayed by Abī Shāma al-Maqdisī: "This (namely differing from the 'Uthmanic *rasm*) is neither good (*jayyid*) nor right (*sawāb*)". Abī Shāma al-Maqdisī took, as it were, Makkī b. Abī Ṭālib to task and stated that the close examiners (*al-muḥaqqiqūn*) of foundations of legal theory have verified that "nothing can be abrogated by *ijmā'* on account of the fact that there can be no abrogation after the revelation ended; all that *ijmā'* can do is to determine the abrogating (instance) that happened during the descension of revelation".<sup>26</sup>

We would like to mention as a side note here a significant ramification of the assertion that the permission of *al-aḥruf al-sab'a* was abrogated. To state that the certain reception of the Qur'ān or its certain feature was abrogated should amount to no less than the simple admission of the historicity of the Qur'ān or parts of its features.

There is no disagreement among the early or late Muslim scholars that, during the Prophet's lifetime, reading the Qur'ān was not limited to a single mode and what was meant by *al-aḥruf al-sab'a* is something other than what came to be traditionally and in practice known as the seven, ten or 14 modes of reading. Even those who propagate the permissibility of seven, ten and/or 14 readings admit that the doctrine of *al-aḥruf al-sab'a* was a historical fact but they limit its practice up to the time of 'Uthmanic recension. There have been innumerable attempts at explaining what was meant by *al-aḥruf al-sab'a*, but it defied any easy solution.<sup>27</sup> We are not going to venture a detailed study of these attempts here and, for the sake of brevity, simply express the prevailing view in the matter that *al-aḥruf al-sab'a* involved the variance in wording

<sup>25</sup> Note the difference between the two theories of abrogation: the first indicates that the abrogation was predicated on the last rehearsal by the Prophet; the second indicates that it was predicated on the consensus of the community of Muslims—*ijmā'*—, long after the Prophet had passed away; a phenomenon that begets complications of utmost significance: can there be abrogation after the Prophet's passing away!

<sup>26</sup> Abī Shāma al-Maqdisī, *al-Murshid al-wajīz*, 122.

<sup>27</sup> For a detailed modern study on *al-aḥruf al-sab'a*, see Nasser, *The Transmission of the Variant Readings of the Qur'ān*, 15-33.

## Fluidity of Reading the Qur'ān into Late Middle Ages Between the Readers and the 82 Exegetes: the Case of Abū al-Su'ūd/Ebussuud (d. 1574 CE). |

of a particular concept by various Arab tribes such as *halumma*, *ta'āla*, and *aqbil*, all of which correspond to the imperative form of the common expression “come” but each of which is used exclusively by different tribes.<sup>28</sup> This is also the view propounded by Abū Ṭāhir 'Abd al-Raḥmān b. Abī Hishām, a student of both Ibn Mujāhid and Ṭabarī who elsewhere are said to have stated the same view.<sup>29</sup> The strongest proof for the fact that the traditionally accepted readings are not the same as *al-aḥruf al-sab'a* is the historical fact that the former are not limited to seven any more, but to ten almost unanimously or 14 controversially. We need to note the caveat that what is indicated by the word “seven/*al-sab'a*” is to be taken to mean seven, as was mostly understood by a majority of scholars, and it is not merely a symbolic number to represent an unlimited number of readings, as was also understood by a number of scholars. What we would like to draw attention to here is the fact that the 'Uthmanic Ductus engendered newer problems. The *scriptio defectiva* of 'Uthmān's was liable to cause another number of possible variant readings. Were the variant readings that were engendered by the 'Uthmanic Ductus part of the doctrine of *al-aḥruf al-sab'a*? If we are to understand the number seven as a symbol for an unlimited number of variant readings, the probability cannot be dismissed. Otherwise, we are compelled to accept the fact that the *scriptio defectiva* was the cause of them. Notwithstanding the fact that the definite meaning of *al-aḥruf al-sab'a* defied a consensual proposition, the majority of scholars stated that they were entirely different from the variant readings that are borne out by the 'Uthmanic Ductus. The variant readings that existed prior to the 'Uthmanic recension were predicated on the doctrine of *al-aḥruf al-sab'a*. Notwithstanding the fact that medieval Muslim scholarship does not make a distinction between pre-'Uthmanic and post-'Uthmanic variant readings in terms of what they are predicated on, we fail to locate a distinct account on what justifies the current variant readings. The phenomenon of variant reading collectively is founded on the doctrine of *al-aḥruf al-sab'a*. But the fact that the current variant readings of the Qur'ān are predicated on and justified by the doctrine of *al-aḥruf al-sab'a* creates for us the modern scholars a predicament of utmost significance. If *al-aḥruf al-sab'a* are entirely different from the existing variant readings that are mainly borne out by the 'Uthmanic Ductus, how can the latter be predicated on the former? Though not entirely improbable, a perfunctory explanation that the doctrine of *al-aḥruf al-sab'a* allowed for an unfettered liberal approach to the number of modes of reading the Qur'ān engenders other problems of major proportions and betrays the orthodox attempts to present a uniform Qur'ān. The issue has very close bearing to the notion of informed reasoning/*ijtihād* by virtue of which innumerable non-canonical readings have to date survived, and it requires a more detailed and extensive study.

The literary compositions authored by various figures until Ibn Mujāhid's time, namely the early 10<sup>th</sup> century CE, attest to the fact that the subject of variant readings was hotly debated among them and the number of variant readings was never fixed. Probably the earliest collector of religiously acceptable readings was Abū 'Ubayd al-Qāsim b. Sallām (d. 224/838-39) who accounted for a total number of 25 readings which allegedly also included the seven modes (*al-aḥruf al-sab'a*). Ṭabarī, the editors of a recent study demonstrated, collected over 20 variant readings that were in compliance with the 'Uthmanic *rasm*.<sup>30</sup> Abī Shāma reported from Makkī b. Abī Ṭālib that before Ibn Mujāhid, some scholars composed books on five variant readings commensurate with the number of copies that 'Uthmān produced, and some others authored

<sup>28</sup> See for this and for a more detailed medieval study on *al-aḥruf al-sab'a*, Abī Shāma al-Maqdisī, *al-Murshid al-wajīz*, 77-111; and also Qurṭubī, *al-Jāmi'/Tafsīr al-Qurṭubī*, 1/71-83.

<sup>29</sup> Qurṭubī, *al-Jāmi'/Tafsīr al-Qurṭubī*, 1/71-83.

<sup>30</sup> Abū Ḥafṣ Sirāj al-Dīn 'Umar b. Zayn al-Dīn Qāsim b. Muḥammad b. 'Alī al-Anṣārī al-Nashshār, *al-Budūr al-zāhira fī al-qirā'āt al-'ashr al-mutawātira*, ed. 'Alī Muḥammad Mu'āwwaḍ, (Bairut: 'Ālam al-Kutub, 2000), 1/11-12.

compositions that collected eight readings; he added: “this is an immense topic (*hādhā bāb wāsi*)”.<sup>31</sup> Makkī further stated the names of some individuals whose “choice” of readings that differed from that of Ibn Mujāhid continued to exist after the death of the latter up to his own time, namely to the middle of 11<sup>th</sup> century.<sup>32</sup> The editors of *al-Budūr al-zāhira* provided a historically ordered list of compositions according to which some scholars even after Ibn Mujāhid, authored works that accounted for 50 variant readings.<sup>33</sup>

The preceding examples indicate almost beyond doubt that although ‘Uthmān introduced an official codex and ordered the remainder of all other codices to be burnt and destroyed, the Muslim community continued to recite the Qur’ān in modes of reading that differed from the ‘Uthmanic Codex not only in seven modes, but in an unspecified number of modes.<sup>34</sup> The traditional account itself confirms this phenomenon. And it seems that it was not Ibn Mujāhid who first attempted to limit the number of readings, but several other scholars had already undertaken such attempts, though the number that they wanted to limit the readings to varied. What distinguishes Ibn Mujāhid’s attempt from that of his predecessors are two significant factors: one is the fact that he secured political backing, second is the fact that he chose to limit the readings to seven. Instances of political enforcement of Ibn Mujāhid’s seven readings are already mentioned in historical sources.<sup>35</sup> As for Ibn Mujāhid’s limiting the acceptable/canonical readings to seven, some scholars stated that he only did so on account of the fact that ‘Uthmān, according to some varying accounts, had made seven copies to be sent to seven major geographic centers around which the majority of the Muslim community had settled. Ibn Mujāhid based his limitation on the number of copies ‘Uthmān produced and each of these copies bore differences which Ibn Mujāhid attempted in his choice of seven readings to reflect. But since no one had reported any reading from Yaman and Baḥrayn, the two other centers that ‘Uthmān is said to have sent copies to, Ibn Mujāhid chose instead two additional reciters from Kūfa.<sup>36</sup> Makkī must have felt compelled to come up with such an explanation because of the fact that he did not subscribe to the notion of identifying *al-aḥruf al-sab’a* with Ibn Mujāhid’s seven readings. Another rationale of accounting for Ibn Mujāhid’s choice was that the number seven was to be identified with the number seven in *al-aḥruf al-sab’a*. The significance of numerology in religious contexts can never be overstated. Though traditional sources tell us that Ibn Mujāhid never expressly stated that he personally meant to identify his choice of seven readings with *al-aḥruf al-sab’a*, circumstantial evidence indicates that it was received so. Makkī tried to explain it away by saying that the canonical seven readers chosen by Ibn Mujāhid were identified with *al-aḥruf al-sab’a* “figuratively”.<sup>37</sup> It seems certain that Ibn Mujāhid’s choice was identified with *al-aḥruf al-sab’a*, but someone needed to qualify this identification and such reception as being figurative. We cannot help questioning if they were really identified with *al-aḥruf al-sab’a* “figuratively” or this is how Makkī wished it were the case. At any rate, the fact that they were so received remains a historical truth.

<sup>31</sup> Abī Shāma al-Maqdisī, *al-Murshid al-wajīz*, 125.

<sup>32</sup> Abī Shāma al-Maqdisī, *al-Murshid al-Wajīz*, 124.

<sup>33</sup> Nashshār, *al-Budūr al-zāhira*, 1/13.

<sup>34</sup> I use the word “mode” to refer to both the technical term “*ḥarf*” as it was used in “*al-aḥruf al-sab’a*” and the mode of reading that differed in recitation but matched the ‘Uthmanic Codex.

<sup>35</sup> See for example, Ignaz Goldziher; with an introduction on Goldziher and ḥadīth from “Geschichte des Arabischen Schrifttums” by Fuat Sezgin, *Schools of Koranic Commentators*, ed. and translated by Wolfgang H. Behn, (Wiesbaden: In Kommission bei Harrassowitz Verlag, 2006), 30-31; and also, Leemhuis, “Readings of the Qur’ān”, 4/353-366; and cf. ft. 17 above.

<sup>36</sup> Abī Shāma al-Maqdisī, *al-Murshid al-Wajīz*, 125-127.

<sup>37</sup> Abī Shāma al-Maqdisī, *al-Murshid al-Wajīz*, 123.

## Fluidity of Reading the Qur'ān into Late Middle Ages Between the Readers and the 84 Exegetes: the Case of Abū al-Su'ūd/Ebussuud (d. 1574 CE). |

The three criteria mentioned earlier, which were inferred to have been established for the validity of canonical readings by Ibn Mujāhid, did not run the gamut of historical facts. Some of these canonical readings seem to fail to meet some of these criteria. Prior to the introduction of three additional readings to the list of seven canonical readings, authoritative transmission was understood by the majority of scholars to mean the transmission by way of *tawātur* (multiply attested and/or a transmission that is alleged to yield epistemological certainty).<sup>38</sup> But historically it did not reflect the reality; al-Zarkashī (d. 794/1392) problematized it and verified that the claim of *tawātur* can only be established up to the Imāms with whom these seven canonical readings were identified; but then back to the Prophet, the transmission link does not go beyond being individually attested (*aḥād*, a way of transmission that yields only probable knowledge)<sup>39</sup>. Realizing the fact that the condition of *tawātur* cannot be met by all the seven canonical readings, Abī Shāma al-Maqdisī sought to reconcile this discrepancy by stating that *tawātur*, *per se*, was not a prerequisite and the sound transmission which comprised the individually attested transmissions (*akhbār āḥād*) can also be deemed authoritative.<sup>40</sup> Ibn al-Jazarī (d. 833/1429), a very famous late medieval verifier in the field of Qur'ānic readings who, early in his scholarly career, viewed the criterion of transmission by way of *tawātur* as an indispensable characteristic of variant readings, also finally determined that the ten canonical readings were not actually transmitted by way of *tawātur*.<sup>41</sup> Furthermore, the category of transmission by way of *tawātur* was also a subject of foundational discourse among the various disciplines of Muslim scholarship. While the *uṣūlīs*/the legal theoreticians admitted this category as one of the criteria for assessing oral transmissions, the *muḥāddithūn/hadīth* scholars rejected it on account of its extreme rarity of occurrence.<sup>42</sup> Hallaq's recent study on the categories of *ḥadīths* yielded the fact that while early eminent scholars of *ḥadīth* could only ascertain one or two *mutawātir ḥadīths*, some late and post classical era scholars were able to add only a few more, bringing the total amount of verifiable *mutawātir* transmissions to no more than ten in number.<sup>43</sup>

The criterion of compliance with the 'Uthmanic *Muṣḥaf* also created other problems of its own. There are a number of well-known expressions in the 'Uthmanic Codex that are recorded in script in a particular way but read and/or recited differently. For example, the word *al-ṣalw(t)*, and *al-zakw(t)*, or *al-ḥayw(t)* for that matter, all are written with *wāw* but read with an elongated "ā". Ibn Abī Shāma attempted to explain that such instances were probably either the remnants of *al-aḥruf al-sab'a* or that what was meant by compliance with the 'Uthmanic *rasm* was limited to inadmissibility of a different word in its entirety, or the absence of a known word and/or expression, or the replacement of a word with another that is synonymous, the likes of which are abundantly found in the codices of Ibn Mas'ūd and Ubayy b. Ka'b. The discrepancies related to individual letters and their fashioning in a particular way, the author continued, did not matter much. However, being unconvinced, Abī Shāma al-Maqdisī felt compelled to discard

<sup>38</sup> Badr al-Dīn al-Zarkashī, *al-Burhān fī 'ulūm al-Qur'ān*, ed. Abī al-Faḍl al-Dimyāfī (Cairo: Dār al-Ḥadīth, 2006), 222.

<sup>39</sup> For a study of the characteristics of various ways of transmission, see Hallaq, "The Authenticity of Prophetic Ḥadīth", 75-90.

<sup>40</sup> Abī Shāma al-Maqdisī, *al-Murshid al-wajīz*, 133.

<sup>41</sup> See his *al-Nashr*, 1/18; He even therefore had to reject the criterion of transmission by way of *tawātur* for what may be deemed Qur'ān, a premise that had been established by the legal theoreticians (*uṣūlīs*) for the admissibility of a given Qur'ānic expression, variant or otherwise.

<sup>42</sup> For a comparative study of *tawātur* between the *uṣūlīs* and *muḥāddithūn*, see Nasser, *The Transmission of the Variant Readings of the Qur'ān*, 66-76.

<sup>43</sup> See: Hallaq, "The Authenticity of Prophetic Ḥadīth", 87-88.

the criterion of compliance with the ‘Uthmanic *rasm* and sufficed himself with the two criteria of sound transmission and compliance with Arabic language.<sup>44</sup>

Furthermore, the condition of agreement with the linguistic requirement of Arabic language is another loose end that Abī Shāma al-Maqdisī was unable to reconcile but surrender. He presented many instances of traditionally accepted/canonical readings that did not agree with the language of Arabs. It should suffice to mention only the verse where Ḥamza, one of the three Kūfan readers of the seven canonical readers, read “*famā ’sttā ’ū*”<sup>45</sup> with double “*f*”, an instance where two *sukūns* (non-vowelled two consonants) are cluttered in a single word.<sup>46</sup> Zajjāj (d. 310/922) dismissed this reading as being solecism (*lahn*) and reported that all the grammarians viewed it so.<sup>47</sup> Sībawayh (d. 180/796) deemed it impossible [to pronounce].<sup>48</sup> The traditionalists, however, attempted to encounter Zajjāj’s claims that the reading was transmitted in *tawātur* and, therefore, must be accepted.<sup>49</sup> Abī Shāma, typical of him, came up with his ubiquitous explanation that such a reading was probably a remnant of *al-aḥruf al-sab’a*,<sup>50</sup> a pretended solution that leads to a lot of other problems.

We have previously mentioned that Ibn Mujāhid did not personally state that the criterion of transmission by way of *tawātur* was a prerequisite for the acceptability of a given reading, and that he instead used a more broader term of “sound transmission” which in the end led Muslim scholars as well as modern western studies to infer that sound transmission was one of his criteria. However, Nasser’s study compels us to question this inference and revise the current scholarly opinion on this topic. Circumstantial evidence indicates that sound transmission was not as important a criterion as the the criterion of the consensus of the variant readers. Nasser demonstrated that while Ibn Mujāhid was aware of readers whose transmissions were just as equally sound as the established canonical readers, he dismissed them on account of a more solid criterion that reflected the consensus of a community of readers in a given setting. For example, Ibn Mujāhid chose Ibn Kathīr from the city of Makka as one of the seven not because his transmission was sound, but because of the reason that the community of readers in the city of Makka had agreed to adopt and adhere to Ibn Kathīr’s reading. The reading of Makkan Ibn Muḥaysin (d. 123/740), one of the four after ten, was rejected by Ibn Mujāhid not on account of reasoning that his transmission was not sound, but merely because his reading disagreed with the reading of the majority of readers of the city of Makka. The case of the city of Madina was no different than Makka. The reading of Abū Ja’far Yazīd b. al-Qa’qa’ (d. 130/747), one of the three after seven, was rejected by Ibn Mujāhid not because his reading was not transmitted in sound manner but on account of the fact that according Ibn Mujāhid the community of readers in Madina adopted the reading of Nāfi’ (d. 169/785) and not that of Abū Ja’far.<sup>51</sup> Nasser’s proposition allows us to make better sense of why Ibn Mujāhid chose three readers from the city of Kūfa alone whereas he limited his choice of readers from other cities to only one. The answer probably lies in the complex realities of the city of Kūfa during the eighth century. There was no single reader in the city of Kūfa whose reading was adopted and adhered to by the majority of the community of readers. He therefore chose three readers from

<sup>44</sup> Hallaq, “The Authenticity of Prophetic Ḥadīth”, 84.

<sup>45</sup> al-Kahf 18/97.

<sup>46</sup> Hallaq, “The Authenticity of Prophetic Ḥadīth”, 85.

<sup>47</sup> Ibn Ishāq al-Zajjāj, *Ma’ānī al-Qur’ān wa i’rābuh*, ed. ‘Abd al-Jalīl ‘Abdo Shalabī (Bairut: ‘Ālam al-Kutub, 1988), 3/312.

<sup>48</sup> ‘Abd al-Laṭīf al-Khaṭīb, *Mu’jam al-qirā’āt*, (Damascus: Dār Sa’d al-Dīn, 2000), 5/311.

<sup>49</sup> Khaṭīb, *Mu’jam al-qirā’āt*, 310.

<sup>50</sup> Abī Shāma al-Maqdisī, *al-Murshid al-wajīz*, 135.

<sup>51</sup> See: Nasser, *The Transmission of the Variant Readings of the Qur’ān*, 54-61.

## Fluidity of Reading the Qur'ān into Late Middle Ages Between the Readers and the 86 Exegetes: the Case of Abū al-Su'ūd/Ebussuud (d. 1574 CE). |

the city of Kūfa in order to make up for the absence of the criterion of consensus there. 'Āsim (d. 128/745), for example, one of the seven and one of the three Kūfan readers, was probably the least agreed upon reader among the other Kūfan readers some of whom would later make into the list of ten and/or fourteen canonical readers. Ḥamza (d. 773), one of the seven and another one of the three Kūfan readers, was disliked and his reading was dismissed by many eminent Muslim scholars of his time. And as for al-Kisā'ī (d. 189/804), one of the seven and the third of the Kūfan readers, though he was not widely received by the community of readers, his solid hold on Arabic grammar could not be surpassed. So, the criterion of consensus that Ibn Mujāhid adopted in his choice of readers from the cities other than Kūfa could not be enforced in Kūfa in a way that would not compromise on the other two criteria. It seems that Ibn Mujāhid chose these three Kūfan readers on account of the fact that their readings alone from among the other readers of Kūfa could be reconciled with the other two criteria of compliance with the 'Uthmanic Ductus and Arabic grammar.<sup>52</sup>

Scholarly opinions converge on the fact that the canonical readings identified with the seven individuals were the result of personal choices made by those seven individuals. Prior to Ibn Mujāhid's time there had been numerous variant readings, some of which were probably the continuation or the remnants of *al-aḥruf al-sab'a* and some others were borne out by the *scriptio defectiva*. Abī Shāma al-Maqdisī related from Makkī that the generation of scholars of the 4<sup>th</sup>/10<sup>th</sup> century wanted to stem the unmanageable effects of increasing disputes and conflicts resulting from the subject of variant readings, and for practical reasons and as exigency warranted, and chose from central settings a famous *imām* (a prominent/leading authority) who was pious, trustworthy, knowledgeable, well-received, and respected in public, and whose choice of reading complied with the 'Uthmanic *Muṣḥaf*. According to Makkī's account then, as well as those of several other scholars who are mentioned in various sources, a canonical reading that is identified with an *imām*/eponymous reader was the personal choice of that *imām*.<sup>53</sup> Others had also attempted to limit the number of canonical readings before Ibn Mujāhid or, more correctly, composed on variant readings according to their own personal choices. For example, Ṭabarī chose 22 readings, Ibn Jubayr (d. 259/871-72) went with five, and others preferred eight.<sup>54</sup> Several other scholars also noted that there were some readings that did not make into Ibn Mujāhid's list but still met the three criteria mentioned above. These other readings were the choice of other scholars in their compositions on variant readings.<sup>55</sup>

Ibn al-Jazarī, in whom the medieval scholarship on variant Qur'ānic readings seems to have culminated, related the following from Abu al-'Abbās Aḥmad b. 'Ammār al-Mahdawī (d. 430/1038-39), a famous scholar in Qur'ānic sciences and exegesis:

“The limitation to Nāfi', Ibn Kathīr, Abī 'Amr, Ibn 'Āmir, 'Āsim, Ḥamza, and al-Kisā'ī by the people of their respective cities was adopted by some late-comers for the purpose of condensing (*ikhtiṣār<sup>am</sup>*) and on account of choice (*ikhtiyār<sup>am</sup>*). Then the public took it to mean as obligatory (*al-fard al-maḥtūm*) so that if they heard anything differing from them, they faulted and apostatized its reader despite the fact that it was probably clearer and better-known. Then some of those who were deprived of soundness and examining skills limited the transmitters from those readers to only two transmitters and any other person other than those two transmitting from them was also faulted while and even if the latter transmission was probably better-known (*ashhar*). Truly, the *musabbi*'/the septutlist (Ibn Mujāhid who limited the number of canonical readings to seven) of those seven did something he ought not to

<sup>52</sup> Nasser, *The Transmission of the Variant Readings of the Qur'ān*, 58-60.

<sup>53</sup> See for a group of scholars that expressed the same view, Abī Shāma al-Maqdisī's *al-Murshid al-wajīz*, 123-128, and Ibn al-Jazarī's *al-Nashr*, 1/34-37.

<sup>54</sup> Abī Shāma al-Maqdisī, *al-Murshid al-wajīz*, 125-126, and Ibn al-Jazarī, *al-Nashr*, 35-37.

<sup>55</sup> Ibn al-Jazarī, *al-Nashr*, 33-38

have done and confounded the community to the degree that they grew negligent of what they ought not to have been negligent of, and those who were of little understanding fancied that those seven were the same as mentioned in the prophetic *ḥadīth*. They confounded the understanding of succeeding generations too. Only if he (Ibn Mujāhid) would have condensed the number he would have condensed either to a higher or a lower number than seven.”<sup>56</sup>

Not only does al-Mahdawī intimate that the seven readings established by Ibn Mujāhid were the result of personal choice by leading Qur’ānic readers, but he also takes him to task for excluding readings that in thorough examination were no less acceptable or even more deservedly so, and also for limiting the number of acceptable readings to seven. We also need to note that Ibn al-Jazarī, after four centuries, would not quote al-Mahdawī if he did not agree with him.

## 2. Abū al-Su’ūd’s Handling of Variant Readings in *Irshād*

We chose Abū al-Su’ūd for the assessment of the historical developments on various Qur’ānic readings mainly for the purpose of demonstrating that even after Ibn al-Jazarī the liberal attitude towards the fluidity of oral features of the Qur’ān continued unabatedly. Abū al-Su’ūd is important for another reason: He attempted to compose a Qur’ānic commentary to rival the Qur’ānic commentaries of al-Zamakhsharī and al-Bayḍāwī, the commentaries that were the textbooks for the *madrassa* curriculum in the discipline of *tafsīr*; thence, the significance of the reach that Abū al-Su’ūd’s *tafsīr* is expected to enjoy. We touch upon the theoretical background in Abū al-Su’ūd’s commentary for the purpose of not only demonstrating that there is not any, but also for the purpose of demonstrating that the current research is built on feebly constructed presumptions on the theoretical foundations of Qur’ānic readings and applied with a reconstructionist perspective.

Practical examples from Abū al-Su’ūd’s Qur’ānic commentary provide ample evidence that the traditionally set criteria for the oral characteristics of Qur’ānic text fail to meet the expectations of the Qur’ānic commentators and, also, curtail and obfuscate the fluid nature of Qur’ānic expression. Through Abū al-Su’ūd’s commentary, We would like to intimate, as it were, that the Qur’ānic commentators continuously strove to contest the Qur’ānic readers in ascertaining the oral characteristics of the Qur’ān.

### 2.1. Theoretical Context

Now we would like to investigate Abū al-Su’ūd’s handling of variant readings in his Qur’ānic commentary in light of the preceding historical development of the subject. A conspicuous feature of Abū al-Su’ūd’s Qur’ānic commentary is that it teems with instances of mentioning the variant readings of a given Qur’ānic word. Aydemir was able to determine some four thousand instances of mentioning variant readings in *Irshād*.<sup>57</sup> A number of studies have attempted to tease out a methodological feature that Abū al-Su’ūd might have observed, however to no avail. “His methodological approach seems to be so varying that it defies homogeneity” one researcher comments, and also states that he was not interested in variant readings as a separate discipline. The author was of the conviction that Abū al-Su’ūd either merely wanted to enrich his commentary with the sporadic and unsystematic mentioning of variant readings or he simply propounded them in order to bolster his commentarial views on a given Qur’ānic verse. The same study also ascertained that Abū al-Su’ūd tackled the variant readings in one of four ways:

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<sup>56</sup> Ibn al-Jazarī, *al-Nashr*, 1/35.

<sup>57</sup> Abdullah Aydemir, *Büyük Türk İslam Bilgini Şeyhulislām Ebussuud Efendi ve Tefsirdeki Metodu* (Ankara: Diyanet İşleri Başkanlığı Yayınları, 1968), 192.

## Fluidity of Reading the Qur'ān into Late Middle Ages Between the Readers and the 88 Exegetes: the Case of Abū al-Su'ūd/Ebussuud (d. 1574 CE). |

1. He would mention only a number of all known variant readings of a given word/expression and grammatically justify and examine each one of them;
2. He would examine and justify only some of the number of all known variant readings he mentions;
3. He would justify and predicate some instances of variant readings he mentions in comparison to other grammatical instances from various other parts of the Qur'ānic usage;
4. He would simply mention a variant reading without offering any foundation or justification.<sup>58</sup>

Our own survey of the secondary literature on the variant readings in *Irshād* led us to conclude that their assessments and results are informed by the modern orthodox mindset that now views the topic of variant readings as the established and unchanged premise from the time immemorial and disregards the fact that the criteria for the validity of a given reading was still a point of controversy at least up to the middle of 9<sup>th</sup>/15<sup>th</sup> century.

The very first instance that we encounter in *Irshād* about the variant readings is on the commentary of *Basmala*, the formulaic expression uttered at the beginning of sūras or verses, or considered to be the heading for each individual sūra.<sup>59</sup> After propounding several juridical opinions about whether or not the *Basmala* is a verse, independent or otherwise, Abū al-Su'ūd mentions the consensus that it is recorded in the codices (*maṣāḥif*) and whatever is in the codex (*bayn daffatayn*) is the word of God.<sup>60</sup> In this instance Abū al-Su'ūd considered the existence of a particular reading within the *Muṣḥaf* to be the evidence of its validity and/or Qur'ānicity, or for the veracity of the way it is supposed to be recorded. At the beginning of chapter two where he comments on the way some individual letters of the Arabic alphabet (*al-ḥurūf al-muqaṭṭa'āt*) are written, he states that the *rasm* of the codex cannot be rejected merely on account of the fact that it contradicts linguistic analogy. Even though conjoined in writing, these letters are read individually, whereas linguistic analogy would require that they be written separately and/or written by their names. But the unusual orthography is accepted by Abū al-Su'ūd on account of the fact that it is how it was recorded in the codex, which constituted the veracity and Qur'ānicity of such orthography.

In al-Fātiḥa 1/5, on the word “*al-ṣirāf*”<sup>61</sup>, the letter “*ṣ*” was also canonically read as “*s*”, considered to be the original form, and/or “*z*” which somehow drove the current recorded orthography closer to the original letter in sound. Abū al-Su'ūd viewed the first reading as the most eloquent and the one that is transcribed in the codex, and based it on the fact that it reflected the dialect of Quraysh. Though the author justified a particular variant reading in this instance on account of the fact that it was the one that conformed to the *rasm*, he also, in the same verse, mentions another variant reading “*arshidnā*” in the reading of Ibn Mas'ūd for the expression “*ihdinā*”. Not only is “*arshidnā*” non-canonical, but it contradicts the orthography of the 'Uthmanic codex. The author does not say anything further about this non-canonical reading nor does he elaborate on whether he confirms it or repudiates it on account of the fact that it

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<sup>58</sup> See: Khālīd Khujayl Aḥmad al-Duhaysāt, “al-Tawjīh al-naḥwī li al-qirā'āt al-qur'āniyya fī tafsīr Abī al-Su'ūd al-Imādī (*Irshād al-'aql al-salīm ilā mazāyā al-Kitāb al-Karīm*)”, (Unpublished PhD dissertation, The University of Mu'ta, 2011), 15, and for instances in *Irshād* of the abovementioned occurrences, see 16-38.

<sup>59</sup> There is an unending discussion on whether or not the *Basmala* is a verse and/or part of the sūra that it is headed with it, or a single and independent verse that is considered to be the heading of each sūra, or merely a non-Qur'anic formulaic expression that is intended for the purpose of seeking blessing; See for a brief discussion, Nasser, *The Transmission of the Variant Readings of the Qur'ān*, 88-96.

<sup>60</sup> Abū al-Su'ūd Muḥammad b. Muḥammad al-Imādī, *Irshād al-'aql al-salīm ilā mazāyā al-Kitāb al-Karīm* (Bairut: Dār Iḥyā' al-Turāth al-'Arabī, n.d.), 1/9.

<sup>61</sup> al-Fātiḥa 1/5.



does not comply with the *rasm*.<sup>62</sup> Based on the three preceding early examples, it is rather difficult to make sense of how Abū al-Su‘ūd tackled one of the criteria—compliance with the ‘Uthmanic *rasm*—traditionally accepted to be a yardstick for the admissibility or inadmissibility of a given variant reading; however, concrete examples should shed some light into the consideration that guided Abū al-Su‘ūd in tackling variant Qur’ānic readings.

## 2.2. Practical Approach

In Yūsuf 12/32, the phrase “*wa layakūn(an)*”<sup>63</sup>, with the light emphatic *nūn* (*nūn al-tawkīd al-khafīfa*), is rendered in the reading of a group of readers<sup>64</sup> “*wa layakūnann(a)*” with the heavy *nūn* of emphasis (*nūn al-tawkīd al-thaqīla*). Abū al-Su‘ūd, as well as Zajjāj and Zamakhsharī (d. 538/1143) before him, chose the first reading on account of the fact that the *nūn* of emphasis is always recorded in the form of light one throughout the *Muṣḥaf*. In this instance as well, the criterion of compliance with the *Muṣḥaf* seems to have constituted a guiding principle for the admissibility or inadmissibility, or the preference of one reading over another for that matter, of a given reading.

In al-Mā’ida 5/114, the expression “*takūn(u)*”<sup>65</sup> is read by al-A‘mash (d. 147/764), one of the four after ten, Ibn Mas‘ūd, and al-Muṭawwa‘ī as “*takun*” in the jussive case and was deemed deviant and/or isolated (*shādhdh*).<sup>66</sup> Since the orthography of this *shādhdh* variant reading did not contradict the written codex and it did not contradict the Arabic linguistics grammatically, the reason that it was deemed *shādhdh* must have been some sort of weakness in the way it was transmitted. This *shādhdh* reading was compared to another in the Qur’ān, Maryam 19/5, where the expression “*yarith(u)nī*”<sup>67</sup> in the nominative case was also read “*yarithnī*” in the jussive/vowelless case, where the same linguistic rules applied and the orthography did not change, and was received as canonical on account of the fact that it was transmitted by way of *tawātur*. Grammarians reasoned that in Maryam 19/5 the expression “*yarithnī*” in the jussive was in accordance with the rules of Arabic and syntactically analyzed it as the apodosis for the protasis of the conditional expression “*fa-hab lī*” at the beginning of the verse. The same reasoning can also be applied to the first verse, al-Mā’ida 5/114, where “*takun*” in the jussive can be rendered grammatically as the apodosis of the protasis “*anzil*” at the beginning of the verse and thus can be admitted linguistically just as canonical. Though Abū al-Su‘ūd labeled the variant reading in the first instance as *shādhdh*, he did not provide any further explanation as to what that term warrants. His wording that the variant reading in the second instance, Maryam 19/5, was transmitted by way of *tawātur* whereas the variant reading in the first instance, al-Mā’ida 5/114, was transmitted by way of *shādhdh* may somehow indicate that he viewed the criterion of sound transmission, by way of *tawātur* in this particular instance, as another valid criterion for the admissibility or inadmissibility of a given variant reading. Both Zamakhsharī and Bayḍawī pointed to the same variant reading in the first instance and drew the same analogy with the second instance without further elaborating on the admissibility or inadmissibility of the first variant reading, or without terming it *shādhdh* and/or the second one *mutawātir*. Zamakhsharī’s wording, however, that he viewed nothing wrong with the analogy between the two instances and Bayḍawī’s short linguistic justification for the first instance, and also the fact

<sup>62</sup> Abū al-Su‘ūd al-‘Imādī, *Irshād al-‘aql al-salīm*, 1/18.

<sup>63</sup> Yūsuf 12/32; Case markers are usually omitted in western scholarly conventions of transliterating Arabic words; however, since some variant readings involve permutations in case markers, we here indicate them in parentheses.

<sup>64</sup> We have been unable to identify the readers of this reading in the sources available during this study.

<sup>65</sup> al-Mā’ida 5/114.

<sup>66</sup> Khaṭīb, *Mu‘jam al-qirā’āt*, 2/372.

<sup>67</sup> Maryam 19/5.

## Fluidity of Reading the Qur'an into Late Middle Ages Between the Readers and the 90 Exegetes: the Case of Abū al-Su'ūd/Ebussuud (d. 1574 CE). |

that neither Zamakhsharī nor Bayḍāwī mentioned any technical label for either instances may be taken as indicative of them for the admissibility of the non-canonical reading in the first instance. We would like to note our reservation that Abū al-Su'ūd viewed the variant reading in the first instance inadmissible not merely because he deemed it *shādhdh*, for in several other instances he mentions variant readings that are deemed *shādhdh* by tradition because of weakness in their transmission, but mentions them without stating their inadmissibility or without explaining why they ought to be viewed *shādhdh*. In another instance, al-Nisā' 4/140, Abū al-Su'ūd drew a similar linguistic analogy with another instance, al-Dhāriyāt 51/23. While the variant reading in al-Nisā' 4/140 is deemed by tradition and by Abū al-Su'ūd *shādhdh*, the one in al-Dhāriyāt 51/23 made it into the list of canonical readings. In both instances Abū al-Su'ūd provides a linguistic justification for both variant readings, a phenomenon that may be taken as corroborative of our preservation about whether *shādhdh* was outright dismissed by the author or not. The variant *shādhdh* readings in al-Mā'ida 5/114 and in al-Nisā' 4/140 did not keep Abū al-Su'ūd from using them in interpreting the respective verses based on the *shādhdh* readings. However the fact that Abū al-Su'ūd termed the variant readings in both instances *shādhdh*, despite the fact that both instances can on the same linguistic grounds be justified, may indicate that sound transmission had more weight for Abū al-Su'ūd than did the criterion of linguistic compliance.

In al-A'rāf 7/10, the word “*ma'āyish*”<sup>68</sup> in the reading of the majority of canonical readers is rendered *ma'ā'ish*, “y” being replaced by *hamza*/the glottal stop, by Ibn 'Āmir, one of the seven, as well as in the readings of other non-canonical transmitters from Nāfi', also one of the seven.<sup>69</sup> Abū al-Su'ūd mentioned the reading of Ibn 'Āmir, which is deemed just as canonical as the first reading by tradition, but also stated that it is the reading of the majority, *ma'āyish*, that has a foundation linguistically—*al-wajh fī qirā'atih ikhlāṣ al-yā'*. Zajjāj dismissed the reading of Ibn 'Āmir on account of the fact that it had no linguistic foundation.<sup>70</sup> Zamakhsharī also stated that the sound reading (*al-wajh*) was the one that rendered *ma'āyish* with “y”, and al-Bayḍāwī, who attributed the variant reading to Nāfi' via a non-canonical transmission, also viewed the reading of the majority to be the correct one. However, the justification provided for the canonical reading of Ibn 'Āmir, or Nāfi' according to Bayḍāwī, Zamakhsharī, and Abū al-Su'ūd is telling: they thought that Ibn 'Āmir must have presumed a similarity between this word and others that are like it, such as *ṣahā'if* and *madā'in*.<sup>71</sup> Though they did not unequivocally state it, their wording clearly indicates that this reading was the result of Ibn 'Āmir's personal reasoning (*ijtihād*) and they indirectly accused him of committing a linguistic

<sup>68</sup> al-A'rāf 7/10.

<sup>69</sup> Khaṭīb, *Mu'jam al-qirā'āt*, 3/8-9; Though the eponymous canonical readers had several students who transmitted from them innumerable variant readings, some of which are now deemed non-canonical by the traditional orthodox view, only two of those students' transmissions were deemed canonical; thence the tradition of two canonical *rāwīs*/transmitters from the eponymous readers. For example, Nāfi', one of the seven canonical readers in Ibn Mujāhid's rendering, had 15 students who all transmitted from Nāfi' innumerable variant readings, canonical and non-canonical alike, but only the transmission of two of his students/transmitters, namely Warsh (d. 812) and Qālūn (d. 835), were received and deemed canonical. Therefore, it is commonly encountered within the literature of Qur'anic readings that are transmitted from the eponymous readers but are deemed non-canonical on account of the fact that they are not transmitted by the two canonical *rāwīs*.

<sup>70</sup> Zajjāj, *Ma'ānī al-Qur'ān wa i'rābuh*, 3/321-22.

<sup>71</sup> See: Jār Allah Abī al-Qāsim Maḥmūd b. 'Umar al-Zamakhsharī, *al-Kashshāf 'an ḥaqā'iq ghawāmiḍ al-Tanzīl wa 'uyūn al-aqāwīl fī wujūh al-ta'wīl*, ed. 'Ādil Aḥmad 'Abd al-Mawjūd, (Riyād, Maktabat al-'Ubaykān, 1998), 2/325; Nāṣir al-Dīn Abī al-Khayr 'Abd Allah b. 'Umar b. Muḥammad al-Bayḍāwī, *Anwār al-Tanzīl wa asrār al-ta'wīl*, ed. Muḥammad 'Abd al-Raḥmān al-Mar'ashlī, (Bairut: Dār Iḥyā' al-Turāth al-'Arabī, n.d.), 3/6.

mistake. Al-Wāhidī explained in length, seven pages in the print edition of his encyclopedic Qur'ānic commentary *al-Basīṭ*, how the reading of *ma'ā'ish* was linguistically incorrect, but in the end admitted the fact that the existence of linguistic mistakes by individuals of a given language was a factual phenomenon.<sup>72</sup> Though Abū al-Su'ūd did not label any of these readings as canonical or otherwise, or *shādhdh* or *mutawātir*, he deemed a traditionally admitted reading as incorrect on account of the fact that it did not meet the linguistic requirements. The way he seemed to have justified the linguistically incorrect variant reading implies that according to him some readings, a canonical one in this particular instance, may have been engendered by personal reasoning/*ijtihād*.

In Āl 'Imrān 3/30, the verb “*tawadd(u)*”<sup>73</sup>, in the present nominative tense, is rendered *waddat*, in the past nominative tense, in the non-canonical reading of Ibn Mas'ūd.<sup>74</sup> Abū al-Su'ūd did not reject Ibn Mas'ūd's reading but preferred the canonical one on account of the fact that it is more effective in meaning (*aqwā ma'nān*) which is more effectively rendered by the better-known reading (*al-qirā'a al-mashhūra*). Here the author did not reject a non-canonical reading that did not comply with the orthography of the codex, but preferred the canonical one because of the meaning it rendered. Abū al-Su'ūd neither mentioned that this non-canonical reading of Ibn Mas'ūd was deemed *shādhdh* nor did he explain that it did not comply with the 'Uthmanic Ductus. It seems that in this instance in particular, Abū al-Su'ūd was guided by the principle of meaning that a given reading entailed.

He uses a broad spectrum of terms when he makes preferences among the readings, canonical or non-canonical. Some of these terms that dot the pages of his commentary *Irshād* are *afṣaḥ* (more eloquent) (al-Fātiḥa 1/6; al-A'rāf 7/137; Hūd 11/81), *aqwā* (stronger) (al-Baqara 2/177; al-Rūm 30/54), *ablagh* (more eloquent) (al-Baqara 2/25, 132; Yā Sīn 36/19; al-Zumar 39/5; al-Naba' 78:37), *awjah* (sounder/better/more reasonable) (al-Anfāl 8/59; al-Tawba 9/1), *aṣaḥḥ* (sounder/more correct) (Hūd 11/88), *awfaq* (more convenient/more fitting/more deserving) (Āl 'Imrān 3/147; al-Ra'd 13/4), *aẓhar* (more apparent) (al-A'rāf 7/82; al-Fajr 89/27), *a'kad/ākad* (more completing/more confirming/more solid) (al-Nahl 16/126; al-Jāthiya 45/21), and several other similar terms in other instances. His preferences seem to have been based on linguistic measurements. He does not make a difference between canonicity or non-canonicity of a variant reading in his preference of a linguistically better reading, and sometimes prefers a canonical reading over a non-canonical one, while at other times he expresses his preference of a canonical reading over other equally canonical readings. Moreover, at other times, he considers a non-canonical reading to be better, more fitting, sounder, more eloquent, stronger, more solid and/or more deserving etc. We have seen in the previous example, Āl 'Imrān 3/30, how he preferred a canonical reading over a non-canonical one by rendering it *aqwā* in terms of the more effective meaning that resulted from it.

In Āl 'Imrān 3/54, as an example where he expressed his preference of a canonical reading over equally canonical other readings, the word “*ḍa'f*”<sup>75</sup> is also read as *ḍu'f*, a canonical reading which Abū al-Su'ūd deemed more solid and stronger (*aqwā*). He justified his preference on account of a tradition which states that the Prophet had read it *ḍu'f*. Collections on variant readings note that “*ḍa'f*” is the reading of Ḥamza, 'Āṣim (the two Kūfan readers of the seven), and Ibn Mas'ūd, and that *ḍu'f* is the reading of Ibn Kathīr, Nāfi', Abū 'Amr, Ibn 'Āmir, and al-Kisā'i, the remainder of the seven. The former is in the dialect of the tribe of Tamīm,

<sup>72</sup> Abī al-Ḥasan 'Alī b. Aḥmad al-Muḥammad al-Wāhidī, *al-Tafsīr al-Basīṭ*, ed. Muḥammad b. Šāliḥ b. 'Abdullah al-Fawzān, (Riyād: Jāmi'at al-Imām Muḥammad b. Su'ūd al-Islāmiyya, 2009), 9/30-37.

<sup>73</sup> Āl 'Imrān 3/30.

<sup>74</sup> See: Khaṭīb, *Mu'jam al-qirā'āt*, 1/474.

<sup>75</sup> Āl 'Imrān 3/54.

**Fluidity of Reading the Qur'an into Late Middle Ages Between the Readers and the 92  
Exegetes: the Case of Abū al-Su'ūd/Ebussuud (d. 1574 CE). |**

and the latter is in the dialect of Quraysh.<sup>76</sup> The fact that the former was also read by Ibn Mas'ūd whose reading accorded with the readings of the other two canonical readers of Kūfa should allow us to presume that the copy sent to Kūfa was, at least in this instance, written/read in non-Qurayshī dialect. Ibn Mas'ūd hailed from the tribe of Tamīm and it would only make sense that he read this specific word as “*ḍa f*”. Also the fact that the other two Kūfan readers read it the same way would only reinforce our assessment that their choice was based on a non-Qurayshī dialect.

There are also instances where Abū al-Su'ūd preferred a non-canonical reading over the canonical ones on account of the fact that he viewed the former to be *ablagħ*. In Ṣād 38/5, the word “*ujāb*”<sup>77</sup> in all the ten canonical readings was also read with doubled “j”, *ujjāb*, but was considered *shādhdh* by the tradition. This *shādhdh* reading was reported from 'Alī b. Abī Ṭālib and several other early scholars and non-canonical transmitters.<sup>78</sup> Abū al-Su'ūd, as well as Zamakhsharī and Bayḍāwī before him, viewed the *shādhdh* reading as more eloquent but said nothing further.

In al-Baqara 2/84, “*fa-yaghfir(u) li-man yashā'(u)*”<sup>79</sup> is rendered in a canonical reading by Ya'qūb [al-Ḥaḍramī], one of the three after seven, in a way that conjoined (*bi-al-idghām*) “r” at the end of “*yaghfir(u)*” into the “l” in the next word “*li*”, which resulted in the reading of *fa-yaghfil-li man yashā'(u)* in clear contradiction to the linguistic rules of Arabic, and Abū al-Su'ūd viewed it as solecism (*laħn*). Zamakhsharī expressed the same view about linguistic discrepancy on this reading which he attributed to Abī 'Amr, one of the seven, but in a non-canonical transmission, and went on a tirade against the transmitter that reported it from Abī 'Amr and accused him of being negligent in Arabic. The fact that he also viewed it as a detested dialect should actually indicate that he viewed it nevertheless as a dialect.<sup>80</sup> Abū Ḥayyān took him to task and related from Sībawayh that this sort of usage was encountered in Arabic.<sup>81</sup> We are not sure what Abū al-Su'ūd meant to convey when he considered a canonical reading to be *laħn*. He does not expressly state in instances like this that a *laħn* reading is admissible or not.

In another instance, al-Tawba 9/12, the word “*a'imma*”<sup>82</sup> is also canonically read *ayimma*. In this instance again Abū al-Su'ūd, like his predecessors of Zamakhsharī and Bayḍāwī, viewed it as *laħn*. As a matter of fact, Abū al-Su'ūd related it from al-Farrā' who viewed it as *laħn*; but he would not have mentioned it so unless he himself agreed with him. In al-Tawba 9/90, for another example, the expression “*al-mu'adhdhirūn*”<sup>83</sup> is rendered *al-mu'adhdhirūn* with doubled 'ayn by one Maslama in a non-canonical reading. Abū al-Su'ūd, like other earlier exegetes, also viewed it as *laħn*. He does not even use the technical term *shādhdh*, which may constitute clear evidence that it may be viewed as a reading accommodated by Arabic linguistics. May we suggest that when he says *laħn* he means that it is in violation of Arabic linguistic rules?

An interesting case is also found in al-Kahf 18/97 on the expression of “*famā- 'stā'ū*”<sup>84</sup>. Abū al-Su'ūd mentioned a canonical reading, by Ḥamza, one of the seven, with the doubling of

<sup>76</sup> Khaṭīb, *Mu'jam al-qirā'āt*, 7/175-76.

<sup>77</sup> Ṣād 38/5.

<sup>78</sup> Khaṭīb, *Mu'jam al-qirā'āt*, 8/80-81.

<sup>79</sup> al-Baqara 2/84.

<sup>80</sup> Khaṭīb, *Mu'jam al-qirā'āt*, 1/431; Zamakhsharī, *al-Kashshāf*, 1/518-19.

<sup>81</sup> Muḥammad b. Yūsuf Abū Ḥayyān al-Andulūsī, *Tafsīr al-Baħr al-muḥīṭ*, ed. 'Ādil Aḥmad 'Abd al-Mawjūd et. al. (Bairut: Dār al-Kutub al-'Ilmiyya, 1993), 1/557.

<sup>82</sup> al-Tawba 9/12.

<sup>83</sup> al-Tawba 9/90.

<sup>84</sup> al-Kahf 18/97.

“t”, *famā-’sittā’ū*, and noted that it warranted the unprecedented cluttering of two consonants with no vowels, which here is rendered against the requirements of Arabic language. It is difficult to infer any indication from his wording as to whether he dismissed it or not, nor did he use any technical term such as *shādhdh* or *lahn*. His predecessors had no qualms in dismissing such a reading as being *lahn*. Zajjāj rejected this canonical reading as being mere solecism and reported that all the grammarians viewed it so.<sup>85</sup> Sībawayh deemed it impossible [to pronounce/read]. The traditionalists however, attempted to counter Zajjāj’s claims that the reading was transmitted by way of *tawātur* and, therefore, must be accepted.<sup>86</sup> How Abū al-Su’ūd accepted such a reading, if he did at all, is not clear, though the probability that he viewed such readings, as did Abī Shāma long before him, as remnants of *al-ahruf al-sab’a* cannot be excluded.<sup>87</sup> Al-Wāhidī, on the other hand, explained at length again how the majority of Baṣran linguists mounted poignant attacks against Ḥamza in this canonical reading of his and how Ibn al-Anbārī somehow disqualified these attacks by providing similar examples from other parts of the Qur’ān which did not similarly cause the Baṣran linguists to raise doubts about them.<sup>88</sup>

In a canonical reading the phrase “*wa-makra al-sayyi’(i)*”<sup>89</sup> in Fāṭir 35/43 is rendered *wa-makra al-sayyi’* without the genitive inflection at the end of the second term of the construct phrase (*idāfa*). Zajjāj viewed it as *lahn*. Abū al-Su’ūd, and Zamakhsharī before him, were able to accommodate such a reading on account of their conviction that the transmitter must have committed a minor mistake: it was probably read with *ikhtilās* (whereby the reader would lower his voice at the end of the phrase in a way that the inflection or the vowel will not be clearly heard) or the end of this phrase was considered a full stop, whereby the reader is not supposed to vocalize the ending inflection and/or the vowel. In either probability the fact that the reader must have made a mistake remains a factual assessment.

“*Akun*”<sup>90</sup>, in imperfect jussive, in al-Munāfiqūn 63/10 is also rendered *akūn(a)*, in imperfect subjunctive, by al-Ḥasan, al-A’mash, and Ibn al-Muḥaysin (d. 123/741), three of the four after ten, and Abū ‘Amr (d. 154/771), one of the seven, and several other companions whose readings were deemed non-canonical. But *akūn(u)*, in imperfect indicative, is only read by ‘Ubayd b. ‘Umayr and was deemed *shādhdh* by the tradition. Abū al-Su’ūd mentioned all these readings without calling any one of them either *shādhdh* or otherwise, and without seeing a problem with any of them.<sup>91</sup> Similarly in al-Wāqī’a 56/22, “*wa-ḥūr(in) ’iyn(in)*”<sup>92</sup> in the genitive was rendered *wa-ḥūr(an) ’iyn(an)* in the reading of Ibn Mas’ūd and ‘Ubayy. Abū al-Su’ūd mentioned this reading and saw no problem with its validity. He founded it on a valid linguistic ground, and, since the meaning did not change, he treated it as equally valid as the recorded canonical reading. Zajjāj dismissed this variant reading on account of the fact that it differed from the *Muṣḥaf*.<sup>93</sup> Since the first copies of ‘Uthmanic *Muṣḥaf* did not have vocalization marks, Zajjāj must have drawn on the late and vocalized copy of the ‘Uthmanic *Muṣḥaf*.

A’mash, one of the four after ten, Ibn Mas’ūd, and ‘Ubayy read “*allā yasjudū*”<sup>94</sup> in al-Naml 27/25 as *halā/hallā yasjudūn/tasjudū/yasjudū*, all of which are considered *shādhdh*.<sup>95</sup>

<sup>85</sup> Zajjāj, *Ma’ānī al-Qur’ān*, 3/312.

<sup>86</sup> See: al-Khaṭīb, *Mu’jam al-qirā’āt*, 5/310-11.

<sup>87</sup> Abī Shāma al-Maqdisī, *al-Murshid al-wajīz*, 135.

<sup>88</sup> Wāhidī, *al-Tafsīr al-Basīṭ*, 14/151-158.

<sup>89</sup> Fāṭir 35/43.

<sup>90</sup> al-Munāfiqūn 63/10.

<sup>91</sup> See for the name of the readers for a number of variances, Khaṭīb, *Mu’jam al-qirā’āt*, 9/479-80.

<sup>92</sup> al-Wāqī’a 56/22.

<sup>93</sup> Zajjāj, *Ma’ānī al-Qur’ān*, 5/111.

<sup>94</sup> al-Naml 27/25.

<sup>95</sup> See: Khaṭīb, *Mu’jam al-qirā’āt*, 6/506-507.

## Fluidity of Reading the Qur’ān into Late Middle Ages Between the Readers and the 94 Exegetes: the Case of Abū al-Su’ūd/Ebussuud (d. 1574 CE). |

Since these traditionally considered *shādhdh* readings in this verse can be justified linguistically, as reported from other famous Companions, the meaning rendered by them can be accommodated religiously; since, as a general rule, the *hamza* in the *Muṣḥaf* can be rendered into “h” in recitation, these readings were considered to be in compliance with the *Muṣḥaf*, Abū al-Su’ūd neither dismissed them nor termed any of them as *shādhdh*.

In al-A’rāf 7/105, the phrase “*ḥaqīq(un) ‘alā an lā aqūl(a)*”<sup>96</sup> is rendered in *shādhdh* readings as *ḥaqīq(un) bi an lā ‘aqūl(a)*, and *ḥāqīq(un) an lā aqūl(a)*. While the first *shādhdh* reading is attributed to Ibn Mas’ūd, ‘Ubayy, and al-A’mash, the second is only attributed to the former two. Both *shādhdh* readings contradict the ‘Uthmanic *rasm*: the first replaces “*‘alā*” with *bi*, and the second discards “*‘alā*” without replacing it with anything else. Abū al-Su’ūd founded the first *shādhdh* reading on a well-known Arabic usage for the purpose of emphasis but provided no explanation for the second one. However, he did not deem either variant reading as being *shādhdh*, a fact that should indicate that he accepted them.

In another variant reading that did not comply with the ‘Uthmanic *rasm* but which Abū al-Su’ūd mentioned and did not reject, we find the article “*anna*” conjoined with the third person object pronoun, “*annahā*”<sup>97</sup>, rendered *la’allahā* in ‘Ubayy’s reading and was deemed *shādhdh* by tradition in al-An’ām 6/109. But Abū al-Su’ūd thought that this reading could be accommodated in this verse linguistically as well as in terms of the meaning it renders. Though it contradicted the *rasm* as well, he did not reject it nor did he term it *shādhdh*.

In al-A’rāf 7/3, “*lā tattabi’ū*”<sup>98</sup> is also read *lā tabtaghū* in a non-canonical reading. Abū al-Su’ūd mentioned this reading and grounded it on the meaning of another verse, namely Āl ‘Imrān 3/85. Here the justification for the admissibility of a non-canonical reading is not predicated on linguistics, but on mere meaning. Abū al-Su’ūd, and Zamakhsharī whom he follows in this verse, seems to have exercised *ijtihād* and focused solely on the meaning. According to this reasoning then, if the meaning can be supported by another verse, and/or a reading does not contradict the meaning of another verse, and is reported by way of sound transmission, it should be admitted at least for the purpose of elucidating the meaning of the verse. There are prophetic traditions that attest to the permissibility of a variant reading measured against the criterion of meaning. In a tradition reported in the collection of Abū Dāwūd, one of the ḥadīth collections that are deemed canonical by Sunni orthodoxy, the angel (probably Gabriel) allowed Muḥammad to read freely as long as he did not confuse a verse indicating mercy with a verse indicating punishment.<sup>99</sup> This report clearly indicates that reading variantly was allowed as long as the meaning did not change or as long as it could be corroborated in another part of the Qur’ān.

In al-Baqara 2/148, “*wa-li-kull(in) wijhat(un)*”<sup>100</sup> is rendered in ‘Ubayy’s reading *wali-kull(in) qiblat(un)*. Though this reading is considered *shādhdh* by tradition, probably because it contradicted the *rasm*, Abū al-Su’ūd neither mentioned ‘Ubayy nor that it was *shādhdh*. Other instances where the non-canonical readings that did not comply with the ‘Uthmanic *rasm* but were however mentioned by Abū al-Su’ūd and not clearly rejected by him can also be seen in al-Baqara 2/46, al-Zukhruf 43/61, and throughout other sūras in the Qur’ānic commentary of the author.

There are historical reports indicating that when the ‘Uthmanic codices were written, ‘Uthmān examined them and realized that they included instances of *lahn*, but felt assured that

<sup>96</sup> al-A’rāf 7/105.

<sup>97</sup> al-An’ām 6/109.

<sup>98</sup> al-A’rāf 7/3.

<sup>99</sup> See: Qurṭubī, *al-Jāmi’*, 1/74.

<sup>100</sup> al-Baqara 2/148.

the Arabs would rectify it in their reading. Some of these instances are also mentioned in these reports and they were taken to be mistakes committed by the scribes of the 'Uthmanic *Muṣḥaf*.<sup>101</sup> The phrase “*al-muqīmīn*”, in the genitive or accusative case, *al-“ṣalwt(a)”*<sup>102</sup> is one of those instances in al-Nisā' 4/162. The said reports mentioned by Ibn Abī Dāwūd (d. 316/929) indicated that this reading and the way it was recorded in the 'Uthmanic *Muṣḥaf* was a scribal mistake, and that it was *lahn*, and the correct form was supposed to be *al-muqīmūn* in the indicative case. We are not sure what *lahn* may have meant back then, but there are also reports in the same section of Ibn Abī Dāwūd's *Kitāb al-maṣāḥif* which indicate that the term simply meant dialect.<sup>103</sup> But this explanation engenders another problem: why then did 'Ā'isha for example, the Prophet's wife and one of the Companions from whom such reports had been transmitted, as well as several others, view such reading as problematic? No valid disagreement on the acceptability of different dialects has been reported. And if it was a dialect, why did the succeeding generations of Muslims go to great lengths trying to provide justificatory and conciliatory explanations for a reading that could otherwise simply be justified on account of its being a dialect? Zajjāj and Zamakhsharī, for example, painstakingly tried to explain in their commentaries on this verse that there can be no *lahn* in the *Muṣḥaf*. But they had no qualms about stating in several other instances in the Qur'ān that some readings, canonical or otherwise, were *lahn*. It is clear that neither Zajjāj nor Zamakhsharī took the word *lahn* to mean simply dialect. The fact that several exegetes attempted to justify this apparent linguistic discrepancy in this phrase should indicate that they all interpreted *lahn* to mean mere solecism. The verse in its entirety runs:

“But those who are firm in knowledge from among them and the believers believe in that which is revealed unto you, and that which was revealed before you, and *al-muqīmīn al-ṣalwt(a)* (the diligent in performing the prayer), and those who pay the poor due, and the believers in Allāh and in the Last Day; upon those we shall bestow immense reward.”<sup>104</sup>

Zajjāj, Tha'labī, Wāḥidī, Zamakhsharī all rendered the phrase in their first interpretation of a number of other potential interpretations as accusative, *al-muqīmīn*, on account of the fact that those that are indicated in this phrase are praised and/or distinguished. Tha'labī clearly stated that it was one of a number of expressions that 'Ā'isha considered to be the mistake of the scribes; however, he did not feel compelled to repudiate such a claim or such a report. Another explanation advanced by some grammarians was that it was conjoined (*ma'tūf*) to “from among them (*minhum*)”, in which case the verse would read: “and from among those who diligently perform the prayer”, was dismissed by Zajjāj on account of the fact that this type of conjoining was detested by the majority of grammarians. Another explanation mentioned by Tha'labī and Zamakhsharī was that *muqīmīn* was conjoined to “that which was revealed unto you” and the meaning would then be rendered: “and that which was revealed unto those who diligently perform the prayer”. The question that naturally arose was who are those that diligently performed the prayer and received the Revelation? And the ready answer was that they were the prophets. Wāḥidī alone among the abovementioned early exegetes did not mention anything about this phrase in this verse being viewed as *lahn* and said nothing to repudiate it. He must have been content with the first interpretation that it was the direct object of an elided

<sup>101</sup> See for such reports, Ibn Abī Dāwūd al-Sijistānī (d. 316/929), *Kitāb al-Maṣāḥif*, ed. Muḥibb al-Dīn 'Abd al-Subḥān Wā'iz (Bairut: Dār al-Bashā'ir al-Islāmiyya, 2002), 1/227-237.

<sup>102</sup> al-Nisā' 4/162.

<sup>103</sup> Ibn Abī Dāwūd al-Sijistānī, *Kitāb al-Maṣāḥif*, 1/227.

<sup>104</sup> al-Nisā' 4/162.

## Fluidity of Reading the Qur'ān into Late Middle Ages Between the Readers and the 96 Exegetes: the Case of Abū al-Su'ūd/Ebussuud (d. 1574 CE). |

praise verb, a phenomenon that, according to Wāḥidī, is widely encountered in Arabic.<sup>105</sup> Abū al-Su'ūd on the other hand mentioned all of the abovementioned explanations, except for the tradition which attested to the fact that 'Ā'isha viewed it as *lahn*. He also mentioned, as did Zamakhsharī and Bayḍāwī before him, that it was also read in nominative case, *al-muqīmūn al-ṣalwt(a)*, in the reading of Ibn Mas'ūd along with several other readers who were deemed non-canonical<sup>106</sup> but whose readings must have circulated widely nonetheless. This non-canonical reading of Ibn Mas'ūd would have complied with Arabic linguistics and would have engendered no discussion grammatically. We are unable to offer at this moment any explanation as to why Abū al-Su'ūd did not tackle the aspect of this phrase's being viewed as *lahn*. The fact that he had no qualms about using the term *lahn* in several other instances should outright exclude the probability that he strove to walk an orthodox line. May we suggest that he was not completely satisfied with any of the previous explanations and was thus unable to accommodate the current canonical reading, and therefore merely glossed over the topic entirely? Ibn Rufayda viewed *Irshād* as mere replication of the contents of previous *tafsīr* works, especially *al-Kashshāf* and *Anwār al-Tanzīl*, but this instance in particular tends to repudiate such a general claim.<sup>107</sup>

### Assessment and Conclusions

What we can make of the preceding instances in *Irshād* is now in order. The way Abū al-Su'ūd handled the variant readings in his commentary indicates that he did not consistently observe the traditionally set criteria for the admissibility or inadmissibility of them. Sometimes he justified a given reading on the ground that it complied with the *Muṣḥaf* but in other instances he freely utilized the ones that did not accord with the *rasm*. Some variant readings, canonical or non-canonical, were justified and/or dismissed by him on account of their compliance or discord with the linguistic requirements of the Arabic language. It is rather difficult to make sense of the criterion of sound transmission in *Irshād*, but it seems that if a variant reading could be established in an acceptable way of transmission, whether it be *mutāwātir*, or *mashhūr*, or *aḥād*, and it did not constitute further discrepancy with the *rasm* of the text, or, at times, with the meaning rendered by it, Abū al-Su'ūd did not outright reject it and was content with its utilization at least for exegetical purposes. Some researchers that studied the variant readings in *Irshād* concluded that Abū al-Su'ūd was rather inconsistent with his observation of the three criteria set by tradition, and they even disparaged him for being negligent in the topic.<sup>108</sup> Some other researchers attempted even to demonstrate, by “selectively” choosing a number of variant readings from *Irshād*, that Abū al-Su'ūd actually did abide by the traditionally set three criteria and observed them throughout his Qur'ānic commentary.<sup>109</sup>

We have previously mentioned that most of these studies invariably reflect a mindset that is informed by our modern day understanding which operates under the premise that the three traditionally set criteria had been set at least since the time of the collection of Qur'ān by

<sup>105</sup> See Zajjāj, *Ma'ānī al-Qur'ān*, 2/130-32; Abū Ishāq Aḥmad al-Tha'labī, *al-Kashf wa al-bayān 'an tafsīr al-Qur'ān*, ed. Aḥmad Muḥammad b. 'Ashūr (Bairut: Dār Iḥyā' al-Turāth al-'Arabī, 2002), 3/414; Wāḥidī, *al-Tafsīr al-Basīṭ*, 7/192; Zamakhsharī, *al-Kashshāf*, 2/178.

<sup>106</sup> Khaṭīb, *Mu'jam al-qirā'āt*, 2/198-99.

<sup>107</sup> Ibrāhīm 'Abd Allāh Rufayda, *al-Naḥw wa kutub al-tafsīr*, (Trablus/Tripoli: al-Mansha'a al-Āmma li al-Nashr wa al-Tawzī' wa al-I'lān, 1982), 2/986-993.

<sup>108</sup> See for example, al-'Arabī Shāwish, “Tafsīr Abī al-Su'ūd: ṭarīqatuh fi al-'amal bi al-riwāya wa manhajuh fi tawzīf al-qirā'āt” *Majallat Dār al-Ḥadīth al-Ḥasaniyya* 15 (Rabat: Dār al-Ḥadīth al-Ḥasaniyya, 1418-19/1997-98), 212-229; also see, Duhaysāt, “al-Tawjīh al-naḥwī”, 14-51.

<sup>109</sup> See Süleyman Molla İbrahimoglu and Kadir Taşpınar, “Ebussuud Efendi'nin Tefsirinde Kıraat Tasavvuru” *Recep Tayyip Erdoğan Üniversitesi İlahiyat Fakültesi Dergisi* 9 (2006), 117-152.



‘Uthmān, and proponents of this mindset fail to see, or turn a blind eye to, the historical and diachronic developments undergone by the phenomenon of variant readings. We have provided ample evidence above for how ‘Uthmān’s collection of the Qur’ān into *Muṣḥaf* did not keep other companions and their successors from entertaining readings that were in discord with it, how Ibn Mujāhid’s attempts failed to limit the canonical/acceptable readings to seven, and how a considerable number of scholars still kept debating after ‘Uthmān and after Ibn Mujāhid about the criteria against which the admissibility or inadmissibility of a given variant reading could be measured. These debates and discussions seemingly culminated towards the end of 14<sup>th</sup> or the beginning of 15<sup>th</sup> century in the literary work of inarguably one of the most famous figures in late medieval Islamic history in Qur’ānic readings, Ibn al-Jazarī. The close reading of Ibn al-Jazarī’s *al-Nashr fī al-qirā’āt al-‘ashr* leaves one with the undeniable impression that the topic was still being hotly debated among the scholars until at least the beginning of the 15<sup>th</sup> century and the fact that though Ibn al-Jazarī himself wanted to limit the variant readings to ten, he also accepted the idea that other readings beyond ten could equally be entertained as canonical was also observed.

When the famous ‘Irāqī scholar of Qur’ānic reading Abū Muḥammad b. ‘Abd Allāh b. ‘Abd al-Mu’min al-Wāsiṭī (d. 741/1341) came to Damascus and read in ten variant readings, some scholars who did not accept other than the seven took offense and attempted and sought political backing in order to drive him away from the city, but some other scholars accommodated him. Very interestingly, one of the scholarly figures who was accommodative of Wāsiṭī was none other than Ibn Taymiyya (d. 728/1328), the champion of traditionalism. Because of the significance of Ibn Taymiyya as the figurehead of traditionalism we here would like to give his response to the situation in its entirety:

“There is no disagreement among the acknowledged scholars that *al-aḥruf al-sab’a* in which the Prophet said the Qur’ān was revealed are not the well-known seven variant readings. But Ibn Mujāhid is the first one that collected the seven variant readings with the intention of matching the *ḥurūf*/modes in which the Qur’ān was revealed, and not out of conviction on his part or on the part of other scholars that those seven variant readings are the same as *al-aḥruf al-sab’a* or those identified seven readers are the ones whose readings should not be violated and/or no other reading should be allowed. For this reason, some of the leading scholars in Qur’ānic reading said: had Ibn Mujāhid not before me identified Ḥamza [one of the seven], I would have identified al-Ḥaḍramī [Ya’qūb, one of the three after seven] instead... and for this reason also no scholar of early Islam disagreed on the fact that it cannot be adjudicated on the inadmissibility of a reading in other than those [seven] readings in all the cities of Muslim community. On the contrary, whoever can determine the veracity of al-A’mash’s reading [one of the four after ten and at the same time Ḥamza’s teacher], or Ya’qūb al-Ḥaḍramī’s reading or someone else in their stature in the same way they determine Ḥamza’s and/or al-Kisā’ī’s (d. 189/805) [readings], they are allowed to adopt those readings without disagreement by the acknowledged scholars. Furthermore, most of the Imām Scholars like Sufyān b. ‘Uyayna (d. 198/815), Aḥmad b. Ḥanbal (d. 241/855), the eponymous founder of the Ḥanbalī school and the father of the modern day salafī school, and Bishr b. al-Ḥārith (d. 227/850) all knew about Ḥamza’s reading but chose to follow and adopt the reading of someone else such as Ja’far b. al-Qa’qa’ (d. 130/747) [one of the three after seven] and Shayba b. Naṣṣāh (d. 130/747) [a non-canonical reader but also a teacher of Nāfi’], both of whom are from Madina, or the readings of Baṣrans such as the teachers of Ya’qūb [al-Ḥaḍramī] and others over Ḥamza and al-Kisā’ī...for this reason the Imāms of the ‘Irāqī community determined the ten readings or “eleven readings” (the emphasis is mine) to be the same in canonicity as the seven readings. And on this foundation as well they continued collecting/composing books and

## Fluidity of Reading the Qur'ān into Late Middle Ages Between the Readers and the 98 Exegetes: the Case of Abū al-Su'ūd/Ebussuud (d. 1574 CE). |

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continued exercising these readings “during ritual prayers” (the emphasis is mine) as well as outside of them, a phenomenon that all scholars agreed and none repudiated them.”<sup>110</sup>

It is clear that at least during Ibn Taymiyya's time, 8<sup>th</sup>/14<sup>th</sup> century, scholars still continued debating, accommodating and/or repudiating readings that went beyond the confines of seven or even ten variant readings. It is this fact, in light of which the Qur'ānic commentaries that were seemingly imbued with a liberal approach vis-à-vis the variant readings at least up to and through middle of 8<sup>th</sup>/14<sup>th</sup> century should be viewed and assessed. That an exegete in the stature of Zamakhsharī may have never felt compelled to comply with an established tradition on the variant readings should allow us to seriously question the presumed veracity of the establishment of such tradition. It is our conviction, therefore, that the number of canonical variant readings and/or the identity of canonical readers were in a rather fluid form, and the criteria for the canonicity of a given reading continued to be the topic of debate and discussion among not only the scholars of Qur'ānic reading but the exegetes as well. Even though the discipline of variant readings is today considered a separate field of study that is solely appropriated by the scholars of Qur'ānic readings, the exegetes of classical and medieval period seem to have stood their ground and contested them in determining the Qur'ānicity of a given reading. Zamakhsharī primarily and Bayḍāwī and Abū al-Su'ūd after him engaged in their Qur'ānic commentaries with the topic of variant readings selectively only in order to point out to the discrepancies that the attempts of establishing a conclusive tradition involved. Though at instances they, primarily Zamakhsharī and Abū al-Su'ūd, measured some variant readings against the criteria of 'Uthmanic *Muṣḥaf*, or the requirement of Arabic linguistics, and/or the condition of the quality of transmission, they also allowed for the utilization of readings that in one way or another contradicted with one of these criteria.

We do not either believe that the liberal approach to variant readings was the purview of the Qur'ānic exegesis alone, and in liturgy only canonical readings were attested to have been in practice according to the prevalent Muslim narrative. Some literary evidence, especially the legal rulings of eminent jurists, entitles us to question the limitation of this liberal approach to exegetical endeavors alone. We should also seriously consider revising the current understanding that the exegetes liberally approached the variant readings and incorporated them, canonical and non-canonical ones alike, into their Qur'ānic commentaries for the sole purpose of enriching their hermeneutical explanations. The editors of Abū Ḥayyān's *al-Baḥr* covered the topic of permissibility of non-canonical readings during ritual prayers and it seems that some acknowledged scholars did not view anything wrong with it. Among some of the scholars that permitted recitation in non-canonical readings during ritual prayers are Mālik b. Enes (d. 179/795), the eponymous founder of the Mālikī school, and some well-known Ḥanafī scholars.<sup>111</sup> Ibn Taymiyya, in the abovementioned note, condoned the readings that went beyond even ten readings even in ritual. Nor do we encounter in the commentary of Abū al-Su'ūd anything resembling a distinction between exegetical and liturgical purposes, and we strongly believe that neither Abū al-Su'ūd nor Zamakhsharī, or other exegetes whose commentaries can be characterized similarly, established such a distinction between liturgical reading and exegetical reading either. It is rather our modern scholarship's understanding of how and why some exegetes more liberally covered the topic of variant readings in the Qur'ānic commentaries or how and why they based some of their commentaries on traditionally non-canonical readings.

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<sup>110</sup> See it in Ibn al-Jazarī, *al-Nashr*, 1/37.

<sup>111</sup> See Abū Ḥayyān al-Andulūsī, *al-Baḥr al-muḥīt*, 1/87-89.



**Fluidity of Reading the Qur'ān into Late Middle Ages Between the Readers and the 100  
Exegetes: the Case of Abū al-Su'ūd/Ebussuud (d. 1574 CE). |**

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**Fluidity of Reading the Qur'ān into Late Middle Ages Between the Readers and the 102  
Exegetes: the Case of Abū al-Su'ūd/Ebussuud (d. 1574 CE). |**

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**The Preferences That Reflect al-Zamakhsharī's Mu'tazilite Thought in al-Kashshāf: A Survey in the Context of the Theory of Luṭf**

*Zemahşeri'nin el-Keşşâf'ında Mu'tezilî Düşüncesini Yansıtan Tercihleri: Lütuf Teorisi Bağlamında Bir İnceleme*

**Muhammed BOŞNAK**

Research Assistant

Karamanoğlu Mehmetbey University

Faculty of Islamic Sciences

Department of Kalām

Karaman, Türkiye

[mbosnak@kmu.edu.tr](mailto:mbosnak@kmu.edu.tr)

orcid: 0000-0002-1857-4446

**Nagihan Ayşe BOŞNAK**

Ph. D. Student

Necmettin Erbakan University

Institute of Social Sciences

Basic Islamic Sciences, Tafsir

Konya, Türkiye

[n.ayse@outlook.com](mailto:n.ayse@outlook.com)

orcid: 0000-0001-7741-7689

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### Abstract

Luṭf, which means delicacy, elegance, and favor in dictionary, as a concept, refers to God's directing his servants to faith and preventing them from committing sins. In general, the theory of luṭf, which was founded on the principle of 'adl (justice) and moderation of the theory of aṣlah (the optimal), was understood by the Mu'tazilites of Basra as making certain actions obligatory for Allah, and from this aspect, it caused controversies. These discussions were also reflected in the interpretation of the Qur'ān, and the verses were interpreted by Mu'tazila to form a basis for the theory of luṭf. al-Zamakhsharī (d. 538/1144), who is a member of the Basra school of Mu'tazila, defends the theses of his denomination in a scattered manner in *al-Kashshāf*. This situation, which appears between the lines, is known as the general feature of his tafsīr. This knowledge we have about the work in general needs to be confirmed through various examples. This study, prepared for this purpose, reveals how much the Mu'tazilite aspect is reflected in his tafsīr, based on his ideas about luṭf in *al-Kashshāf*. As a matter of fact, while interpreting the verses about luṭf, he constantly emphasizes Mu'tazilite principles and objects to opposing ideas through Mu'tazilite arguments. In this respect, we can say that he acted like a Mu'tazilite theologian on the subject of luṭf. Our study aims to contribute to filling the gap in the literature by revealing this situation. In this regard, our research is limited to reading *al-Kashshāf* through the kalām literature within the framework of the theory of luṭf. Therefore, we will not go into the details of other theological issues, and our references to tafsīr works other than *al-Kashshāf* will be limited. Thus, theological background of *al-Kashshāf* will be scrutinized on one subject and this study will constitute a reference point for its denominational aspect.

**Key Words:** Tafsīr, Kalām, Mu'tazila, Luṭf, Aṣlah, al-Zamakhsharī, *al-Kashshāf*.

### Öz

Sözlükte incelik, zarafet, iyilik gibi anlamlara gelen lütf, kavram olarak Allah'ın kullarını imana yöneltmesi ve onları günahlardan alıkoymasını ifade etmektedir. Genel anlamda aslah teorisinin yumuşatılması ve adalet prensibi üzerine kurulan lütf teorisi Basra Mu'tezilesi tarafından Allah'a bazı fiilleri vacip kılınması şeklinde anlaşılmış ve bu yönüyle tartışmalara neden olmuştur. Bu tartışmalar Kur'an yorumuna da yansımış ve ayetler Mu'tezile tarafından lütf teorisine zemin teşkil edecek şekilde tefsir edilmiştir. İtikâdî olarak Mu'tezile'nin Basra akolüne mensup olan Zemahşerî el-Keşşâf'ta dağınık bir biçimde Mu'tezilî tezleri savunur. Satır aralarında karşımıza çıkan bu durum onun tefsirinin genel özelliği olarak bilinir. Eserin geneli hakkında sahip olduğumuz bu bilginin çeşitli örnekler üzerinden teyit edilmesi gerekmektedir. Bu amaçla hazırlanan bu çalışma Zemahşerî'nin *el-Keşşâf*'taki lütf dair fikirlerinden hareketle Mu'tezilî yönünün tefsirine ne kadar yansıdığını ortaya koymaktadır. Zira o lütfle ilgili ayetleri tefsir ederken sürekli Mu'tezilî fikirleri öne çıkarmakta ve karşıt fikirlere Mu'tezilî argümanlarla itiraz etmektedir. Bu yönüyle onun lütf konusunda bir Mu'tezile kelâmcısı gibi hareket ettiğini söyleyebiliriz. Çalışmamız bu durumu ortaya koyarak literatürdeki boşluğu doldurmayı amaçlamaktadır. Diğer taraftan araştırmamız *el-Keşşâf*'ı lütf teorisi çerçevesinde kelâm literatürü üzerinden okumakla sınırlıdır. Dolayısıyla diğer itikâdî meselelerin ayrıntısına girmeyeceğimiz gibi *el-Keşşâf* dışındaki tefsirlere atıflarımız da sınırlı düzeyde olacaktır. Böylece bu çalışma ile *el-Keşşâf*'ın itikâdî arkaplanı bir konu özelinde derli toplu şekilde incelenmiş ve onun mezhebi yönü ortaya konmuş olacaktır.

**Anahtar Kelimeler:** Tefsir, Kelâm, Mu'tezile, Lütf, Aslah, Zemahşerî, *el-Keşşâf*.



## Introduction

The science of tafsīr aims to understand and explain the Qur'ān. For this purpose, the exegete must have experience in some disciplines including linguistics and sīra (life of the prophet) since the Qur'ān is an Arabic text based on certain linguistic characteristics and has a dimension of historical narrative. In addition, the Qur'ān contains creedal, juridical, and moral rulings. Therefore, it is necessary for the exegete to have a certain perspective on kalām (theology), fiqh (jurisprudence) and zuhd (asceticism). These disciplines have become quite diversified since the Tābi'ūn (the successors) period, when the first commentary was written.<sup>1</sup> Because different sects were formed in fiqh and kalām, and the science of isnād emerged in ḥadīth. This situation necessitated mufassir to deal with the problem from a certain point of view. This point of view has generally been in line with the environment in which the exegete grew up and the orientations of the doctrine that dominates the environment. Thus, the exegetes from different denominations reflected the principles and sensitivities of their own denominations in their works. This situation has led to the emergence of the concept of denominational tafsīr in classical tafsīr historiography.

Denominational tafsīr means interpreting the verses considering the principles of a denomination. In this context, an exegete brings the general opinion of his denomination to the fore in his tafsīr work. He sometimes does this by presenting a statement in a way that supports the view of his denomination, and sometimes by finding evidence against the view of the opponent denominations. Another aspect of denominational affiliation in tafsīr is the distinction between the contents of muḥkam (clear) and mutashābih (ambiguous) verses or, truth and metaphor in the Qur'ān. Accordingly, while the exegete interprets the statements that will support his own sect as muḥkam and truth, he accepts the statements that support the opposing view as mutashābih or metaphorical. Thus, the interpreter has a general reading of the different expressions of the Qur'ān in a way that supports his sect.

The expression of “the denominational tafsīr” refers a pejorative meaning and this denotation has a reductionist character. Because this classification brings along a wrong point of view of generalizing the commentator's attitude of certain situations to the whole work. As a matter of fact, the exegete highlights his ideological interpretations in certain parts of his work, but it does not consist of only ideological interpretations. Therefore, only a part of the tafsīr shows denominational characteristics. However, the expression of “the denominational tafsīr” gives the feeling that the work is based on a group ideology from beginning to end.<sup>2</sup>

Another problem of “the denominational tafsir” as a concept is that the scientific interpretations in the work which are called “denominational” are sacrificed to generalization and devalued. Because mufassir may have mentioned many other remarkable meanings of a verse and just highlighted the one that is suitable for his denomination. In other words, his work does not have only the denominational reflections but also many other acceptable interpretations.

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<sup>1</sup> For the formation process of the science of kalām and its relation with other sciences, See: İlyas Çelebi - Hayrettin N. Güdekli, “Kelām İlminin Teşekkülü ve Diğer İslâmî İlimlerle İlişkisi”, *İslâmî İlimlerde Metodoloji: Usûl Mes'elesi, Temel İslâm İlimlerinin Ortaya Çıkışı ve Birbirleriyle İlişkileri Tartışmalı İlmî İhtisas Toplantısı* (Istanbul, 2014), 389-392. İbrahim Coşkun, “Kelâm İlminin Orjinallığı ve Teşekkülüne Yol Açan İlk Meseleler: Hicri I. Asırda Kelam”, *Hicri Birinci Asırda İslâmî İlimler -II- Hadis, İslâm Hukuku, Kelâm, Mezhepler Tarihi Arap Dili ve Sıyer* (Istanbul: Ensar, 2020), 2/398. For the science of ḥadīth to become a systematic science, See: Ahmet Yücel, “Hadis İlminin Ortaya Çıkışı ve Diğer İslâmî İlimlerle İlişkisi (Rivâyet Dönemi/İlk Üç Asır)”, *İslâmî İlimlerde Metodoloji: Usûl Mes'elesi, Temel İslâm İlimlerinin Ortaya Çıkışı ve Birbirleriyle İlişkileri Tartışmalı İlmî İhtisas Toplantısı* (Istanbul, 2014), 210.

<sup>2</sup> Mustafa Karagöz, *Tefsir Tarihi Yazımı ve Problemleri* (Ankara: Araştırma Yayınları, 2012), 128-131.

Therefore, we can say that the expression of “the denominational tafsīr” is very superficial and may mislead the reader about the real value of the work. In this context, while accepting that the use of the expression gives an idea about the exegete, it should not be forgotten that it might be an arbitrary statement from the point of the value of the work.

The most well-known among the denominational tafsīr works is likely al-Zamakhsharī's (d. 538/1144) book *al-Kashshāf an haqā'iq gavāmiḍ al-tanzīl wa 'uyūn al-aqāwīl fī wujūh al-ta'wīl*, which is considered in the category of Mu'tazilite tafsīr. The most important feature of this work is adaptation of Abd al-Qāhir al-Jurjānī's (d. 471/1078-79) theory of nazm (the discourse arrangement) into tafsīr with a great success and its being the pinnacle of tafsīr in terms of language and rhetoric.<sup>3</sup> On the other hand, the work reflects the Mu'tazilite views of its author in a scattered way. For this reason, the work has come to the fore with its Mu'tazilite identity. Nonetheless, *al-Kashshāf* was considered important not only in Mu'tazilite circles but also by almost all exegetes of the other schools. Many studies such as commentary, gloss, abridgement, and compilation have been made on the work, Mu'tazilite ideas have been discussed and criticized, and even many of his ideas have been purified from traces of al-Mu'tazila and used in Ahl al-Sunna exegeses. In this respect, *al-Kashshāf* has taken its place among the most important works in the history of tafsīr.<sup>4</sup>

Since it constitutes our subject, it would be appropriate to mention the basic features of Mu'tazilite tafsīr in which al-Zamakhsharī is included. Mu'tazilite tafsīr is basically a tafsīr activity based on the five basic principles of Mu'tazila consisting Tawḥīd (Oneness of Allah), 'Adl (His justice), al-Wa'd wa al-Wa'id (His promise and threat), al-Manzilah bayna al-Manzilatayn (a position between the two positions) and al-Amr bi al-Ma'rūf wa al-Nahy an al-Munkar (commanding what is right and forbidding what is wrong).<sup>5</sup> For example, based on the principle of 'adl, which also constitutes our subject, it is emphasized that Allah does not create evil and that the actions of the servant belong to the servant himself, and expressions such as luṭf, hidāya (guidance) and ināyah (the divine assistance) are explained in a way that does not cause jabr (coercion/compulsion).

The school of Mu'tazila used rational and narrative evidence in the interpretation of the verses. However, Mu'tazila, who adopted the principle that religious knowledge can be obtained primarily through reason, prioritized the rational approach in tafsīr.<sup>6</sup> Accordingly, the narrative evidence used in the interpretation of the verses is subject to rational evidence.<sup>7</sup> If there is an element contrary to the basic principles in a narration, it is interpreted with various arguments or another meaning of the expression is preferred. If the statement clearly contradicts

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<sup>3</sup> See: Taha Boyalık, *Dil, Söz ve Fesāhat-Abdülkāhir el-Cürçānī'nin Sözdizimi Nazariyesi* (Istanbul: Klasik Yayınları, 2016), 245.

<sup>4</sup> Mesut Kaya, *Tefsir Geleneğinde el-Keşşāf*, (Istanbul: MÜİF Yayınları, 2019), 27-28; Taha Boyalık, *el-Keşşāf Literatürü-Zemahşerī'nin Tefsir Klasiklerinin Etki Tarihi* (Istanbul: İsam Yayınları, 2019), 29-33.

<sup>5</sup> For example, in accordance with the principle of tawḥīd, while Allah is the only one kadīm (pre-eternal) in His essence and attributes, the things other than Him are accepted as hādīth (contingent). In this context, the Qur'ān has been considered in the category of creatures and the verses dealing with this subject have been interpreted within this framework. In addition, ru'yat Allāh (the vision of Allah) was rejected based on this principle (tawḥīd), and the verses about it were interpreted accordingly. Mustafa Bilgin, *Tefsirde Mu'tezile Ekolü* (Bursa: Uludağ University, Institute of Social Sciences, Ph.D. Dissertation, 1971), 15-26.

<sup>6</sup> Mustafa Bilgin, *Tefsirde Mu'tezile Ekolü*, 5; Abū al-Hasan Abd al-Jabbār ibn Ahmad al-Qādī Abd al-Jabbār, *Sharh al-uşūl al-khamsa* (Egypt: Maktabat al-Wahba, 1996), 89.

<sup>7</sup> Mustafa Öztürk, “Mu'tezile ve Tefsir”, *Marife*, III/3 (2003), 106.

Mu'tazilite principles, a different meaning is assigned by various rational arguments. This point will be better understood when we examine al-Zamakhsharī's interpretations on hidāya and luṭf.

The "five basic principles" of Mu'tazila have been the most important criterion in the distinction between muḥkam and mutashābih verses. The verses whose conformity with these principles are clearly revealed are accepted as muḥkam and the others which has no conformity with the principles are called mutashābih. When a muḥkam and a mutashābih verse meet, muḥkam meaning is preferred and mutashābih is interpreted in accordance with the "muḥkam" one.<sup>8</sup> As a result, a mutashābih verse that contradicts any of the five basic principles has been interpreted with the principles derived from the muḥkam verses. For instance, Mu'tazilite exegetes, based on the principle of tawḥīd, considered the verses containing al-sifāt al-khabariyyah (the revealed attributes) as mutashābih and interpreted them metaphorically<sup>9</sup>. Although there is a distinction between muḥkam and mutashābih, the fact that this distinction is based on the five principles has confirmed the result that the final meaning is determined according to the five principles. In this context, the five principles were effective in Mu'tazilite tafsīr as well as in Mu'tazilite kalām. In sum, Mu'tazilite tafsīr has entered the literature as the general name of tafsīr that solves general tafsīr problems based on the five principles.

### 1. al-Zamakhsharī and the Conceptual Framework of Luṭf

Before moving on to the theory of luṭf in *al-Kashshāf*, it would be appropriate to speak of luṭf which is a Mu'tazilite theory and al-Zamakhsharī's ideas about luṭf in general. Luṭf refers to the actions that Mu'tazila of Basra used to base hidāya, tawfīq (divine success), sharī'a (religious law) and nubuwwa (prophethood) and which they considered obligatory to Allah. In this context, luṭf has been defined as "anything that one chooses with which is wājib/obligatory and avoids evil, or that brings one closer to what is obligatory or away from evil".<sup>10</sup> Accordingly, if Allah knows what will require His servants to choose the obligatory or to stay away from evil, He must create it. If he does not do this, he would not act wisely. On the other hand, luṭf is given only to those who will believe. It is not obligatory on Allah to give luṭf to someone who is known to be unbelieving. God's obligation to them is only to create an opportunity for faith. By doing this, he would do His share and remove their excuses of Hereafter. Therefore, Allah does not have to give luṭf to those who will not believe. He bestows guidance only on those whom he knows will believe.<sup>11</sup>

al-Zamakhsharī is a scholar in the line of al-Bahshamiyya who follows Abū Hāshim al-Jubbā'ī (d. 321/933) and of al-Husainiyya, which expresses those who follow Abū al-Husayn al-Basrī (d. 436/1044), both from the Mu'tazila of Basra.<sup>12</sup> As to the line he stands on the subject

<sup>8</sup> Mustafa Öztürk, "Mu'tezile ve Tefsir", 103-105; Zülfikar Durmuş, "Zemahşerî'nin Muhkem ve Müteşâbih'e Dair Görüşlerinin Analitik İncelemesi", *Marife*, III/3 (2003), 263.

<sup>9</sup> Mustafa Öztürk, "Mu'tezile ve Tefsir", 97.

<sup>10</sup> al-Qādī Abd al-Jabbār, *Sharh al-uşūl al-khamsa*, 519.

<sup>11</sup> Ebū'l-Hasan el-Eş'arī, *Makâlâtü'l-İslâmiyyîn: İlk Dönem İslâm Mezhepleri*, trans. Ömer Aydın – Mehmet Dalkılıç (Istanbul: Yazma Eserler Kurumu, 2019), 362; Abū al-Hasan Abd al-Jabbār ibn Ahmad al-Qādī Abd al-Jabbār, *al-Mughnī fī abwāb al-tawḥīd wa al-'adl: el-aşlah -istiḥqāq al-dhamm- al-tawba* (Cairo: al-Dār al-Misriyya, 1963), 14/53-54.

<sup>12</sup> This issue has been discussed by various researchers. However, when it comes to luṭf, it will be easily seen in the quotations we will make in the coming pages that al-Zamakhsharī is on the line of al-Bahshamiyya.

of luṭf, he is on the Bahshamiyya line.<sup>13</sup> One of the most famous names among the representatives of this school is al-Qādī Abd al-Jabbār al-Hamadānī (d. 415/1025), who compiled the ideas of the school and completed the systematization. He conveyed the accumulation of Mu‘tazilite thought up to his time in detail in his famous corpus called *al-Mughnī fī abwāb al-tawḥīd wa al-‘adl*. In addition, the literature produced by his contemporaries and students who followed him allows for a comprehensive analysis of the Mu‘tazila of Basra. This will also open a few doors for us to understand al-Zamakhsharī. Because *al-Kashshāf* presents a disorganized appearance to compile the theological ideas included. By presenting these scattered ideas in a systematic way, the Mu‘tazilite literature provides a suitable ground for understanding both al-Zamakhsharī and *al-Kashshāf*. Thus, Kalām literature of Basra will facilitate our work in illuminating the ideas of the school, on the one hand, and will also help us to understand the theological views of al-Zamakhsharī on the other hand.

Although al-Zamakhsharī understands luṭf in *al-Kashshāf* like the Mu‘tazila of Basra, he does not explain the issue in a methodical way. Instead, he talks about the details of luṭf in relevant verses. Thus, by nature of the classical mawzi‘ī tafsīr method, he deals with the issue where the words such as hidāya, tawfīq and ‘iṣma (the immunity from sin) are mentioned. This naturally results in discussing the topic in a disorganized way. This scattered view will be combined within the framework of the problematic of the theory of luṭf.

al-Zamakhsharī does not notice the semantic differences between the near-synonymous words for luṭf such as tawfīq, ‘iṣma, hidāya and maṣlaḥa in his tafsīr although there are notional differences between them. He was even criticized by later scholars because of this attitude.<sup>14</sup> This situation will determine the limits of our expectation from *al-Kashshāf* regarding luṭf. Because we will not look for the differences between the concepts such as hidāya, luṭf and ‘iṣma.

## 2. The Word of Luṭf and its Meanings in the Qur’ān

The word luṭf does not take place in the Qur’ān, but in one place the verbal form فالتلطف “fa-l-yatalaṭṭaf” from the same root and the word لطيف “laṭīf” in seven places. One of them is mentioned in the context of human relations, and the other six are mentioned as a name of Allah. In the verse associated with certain people, it is used to mean “to keep an act secretly, to

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<sup>13</sup> The difference between al-Bahshamiyya and al-Ḥusainiyya regarding luṭf is whether luṭf is valid in worldly matters. As a matter of fact, while al-Bahshamiyya thinks that luṭf is valid only in religious matters, al-Ḥusainiyya claims that it is valid in all His actions. For the controversy on this issue, See: Orhan Şener Koloğlu, “Mu‘tezile’nin Hüseyiniyye Ekolünün Dünyevî Aslah Konusuna Yaklaşımı”, *İslām Araştırmaları Dergisi*, 39 (2018), 10.

<sup>14</sup> Abū al-Kāsim Mahmūd al-Zamakhsharī, *al-Kashshāf an haqā’iq al-tanzīl* (Beirut: Dār al-Kitāb al-‘Arabī, 1987), 2/539. The commentator of *al-Kashshāf*, al-Ṭībī (d. 743/1343) cites that Ibn al-Munayyir (d. 683/1284) criticized al-Zamakhsharī for falsifying the concept of hidāyah since he turned hidāyah into luṭf. Şaraf al-Dīn al-Husayin al-Ṭībī, *Futūḥ al-ghayb*, (Dubai: Jā’izat al-Dubai al-Dawliyya, 2013), 6/388. In addition, al-Ṭībī quotes a sentence from Najm al-Dīn al-Zāhidī al-Khawārizmī (d. 658/1260) about the difference between these concepts. Accordingly, if luṭf takes place in something that is obligatory, it will be tawfīq. If it is related to abandoning the evil, it will be ‘iṣma. If it brings closer to wājib or abandoning the evil, luṭf becomes al-luṭf al-mukarrab. al-Ṭībī, *Futūḥ al-gahayb*, 2/140.

be careful".<sup>15</sup> In other verses<sup>16</sup>, it states that Allah is Laṭīf; He is All-Kind, "He knows everything with its subtleties".<sup>17</sup> In the interpretation of these verses, al-Zamakhsharī usually emphasizes that Allah knows the subtleties of everything implicit-explicit, visible-invisible.<sup>18</sup> Five of the verses mentioned as the name of Allah came with the name al-Khabīr (the All-Aware). The name al-Laṭīf means knowing all the subtleties and being aware them, especially where it comes with the name al-Khabīr. However, al-Zamakhsharī, subject to the theory of luṭf, brought to the fore Allah's knowledge of the conditions and possibilities, that is, luṭf, for his servant's benefits and for him to continue his religious life correctly. For example, in the interpretation of the 34<sup>th</sup> verse of Sūrat al-Ahzāb, al-Zamakhsharī explained the expressions al-Khabīr and al-Laṭīf together by saying "He knows the things that are beneficial for you and will improve your religious life, and He bestows them to you". "Things that will be beneficial to man and his religious life", which forms the basis of the theory of luṭf, are highlighted here in the names of Allah, al-Laṭīf and al-Khabīr. Again, in the explanation of the 63<sup>rd</sup> verse of Sūrat al-Hajj<sup>19</sup>, he emphasized that Allah's knowledge or grace reaches all the subtleties and that He is aware of the things that will be for the benefit and interest of people. In the two verses, Allah's being gracious and compassionate are mentioned together, and it is emphasized that he does everything in truth and wisdom. In the 103<sup>rd</sup> verse of Sūrat al-An'ām<sup>20</sup>, explaining the name al-Laṭīf says, "He sees the subtle beings, penetrates the subtleties and is subtle. He is too subtle for the eyes to perceive Him."<sup>21</sup> And He is al-Khabīr, that is, aware of all subtleties. Here again the two names are mentioned together.

al-Zamakhsharī's constant emphasis on Allah's knowledge and awareness in the places related to the word luṭf stems from his Mu'tazilite sensitivities. Because, in the Mu'tazilite understanding, there is a very close relationship between luṭf and knowledge of Allah.<sup>22</sup> al-Zamakhsharī also makes an explanation that Allah knows the result, emphasizing this relationship in matters such as luṭf and hidāya in the relevant parts of his tafsīr.<sup>23</sup> However, al-Za-

<sup>15</sup> "...So send one of you with these silver coins of yours to the city, and let him find which food is the purest, and then bring you provisions from it. Let him be [exceptionally] cautious, and do not let him give you away." (The Clear Quran, Accessed June 10, 2023, al-Kahf 18/19).

<sup>16</sup> al-An'ām 6/103, Yūsuf 12/100, al-Hajj 22/63, al-Shūrā 42/19, Luqmān 31/16, al-Ahzāb 33/34, al-Mulk 67/13-14.

<sup>17</sup> Luqmān 31/16, al-Mulk 67/13-14. al-Zamakhsharī, *al-Kashshāf*, 3/538.

<sup>18</sup> In the external meaning of the aforementioned verses, we do not find the meaning that Mu'tazila and al-Zamakhsharī attributed to the conceptualized word "luṭf" at first sight. In fact, in studies on the theory of luṭf, we see that the concept of luṭf used by al-Mu'tazila is criticized by stating that it is not related to the expressions in the Qur'ān. See: Mahsum Aytepe, *İlahi Yardım ve Özgürlük Diyalektiği* (Istanbul: Endülüs Yayınları, 2018), 112. We can say that al-Zamakhsharī remained faithful to the theory in the verses where the word Laṭīf is mentioned. In other words, it would not be correct to say that al-Mu'tazila acted completely independent of the verses while putting forward the theory. However, we cannot say that they formed it a concept completely independent of the meaning in the Qur'ān. Within the framework of their own interpretation of the Qur'ān, the meaning in the Qur'ān and the meaning in the theory are very compatible.

<sup>19</sup> "Do you not see that Allah sends down rain from the sky, then the earth becomes green? Surely Allah is Laṭīf and Khabīr." (al-Hajj 22/63).

<sup>20</sup> "No vision can encompass Him, but He encompasses all vision. For He is." (al-An'ām 6/103).

<sup>21</sup> al-Zamakhsharī, *al-Kashshāf*, 2/54.

<sup>22</sup> al-Qādī Abd al-Jabbār, *Sharh al-uşūl al-khamsa*, 302.

<sup>23</sup> The theory of luṭf occupies a big place in al-Kashshāf as we can see his emphasis on the relevant issues interlines. His definition of hidāyah is the most basic reason of this situation since he takes these two (hidāyah and luṭf) in the same meaning. Therefore, it could be possible to touch the theory of luṭf in many places of his tafsīr

makhsharī does much more than comment on the theory of luṭf in *al-Kashshāf*. While he explains and defends the theory in some places, he raises objections to opponents of different ideas in others. Sometimes, it protects the ground of the theory with various interpretations. Therefore, we can say that the theory of luṭf occupies a big place in *al-Kashshāf*. As we examine the details and their meanings in the following sections, it will be better understood how much space the theory of luṭf occupies in *al-Kashshāf*.

### 3. The Concept of Luṭf in *al-Kashshāf*

#### 3.1. Luṭf is Obligatory Upon Allah/Wājib alā Allah

Wājib alā Allah is a concept in Mu‘tazila that expresses the responsibility of Allah towards His servants and lays the groundwork for theories such as aṣḥāb and luṭf. Here, the necessity of Allah always creating what is best for His servants or directing them to faith is expressed by wājib alā Allah.<sup>24</sup> In this context, although it is not welcomed in Ahl al-Sunna circles<sup>25</sup>, this concept is frequently used in Mu‘tazilite theses about the actions of Allah.

al-Zamakhsharī thinks that it is obligatory for Allah to give luṭf those whom He knows will believe in Him. He supports this idea with the interpretation of various expressions of the Qur’ān. As a matter of fact, he interpreted the expression *إِنَّ عَلَيْنَا لَلْهُدَىٰ* in the 12<sup>th</sup> verse of Sūrat al-Layl as “what is obligatory for us is to provide evidence and guide the truth by revealing the shari‘a”. Therefore, he interpreted the expression “alaynā” as obligation. Interpreting the 38<sup>th</sup> verse of Sūrat al-Naḥl in the same way, he says that Allah has declared it obligatory for Himself to remain true to his promise here, based on the expression *وَعْدًا عَلَيْهِ حَقًّا* “*It is a true promise binding on Him.*” Again, he interprets the “waqa‘a” in the expression *فَقَدْ وَقَعَ أَجْرُهُ عَلَى اللَّهِ* “*Their reward has already been secured with Allah*” in the 100<sup>th</sup> verse of Sūrat al-Nisā’<sup>26</sup>, as “wajaba” (being obligatory). According to him, the creation here is obligatory in accordance with Allah’s promise and it is unthinkable Him not to do this. With these preferences, al-Zamakhsharī would like to show that the idea of “wājib alā Allah” and the necessity of luṭf in this context can be based on the Qur’ān.

al-Zamakhsharī also elaborates on what actions are obligatory for Allah and why they are obligatory. As a matter of fact, when he interprets the expression *وَهُوَ أَهْوَنُ عَلَيْهِ* “*This (first creation) is even easier for Him*” in the 27<sup>th</sup> verse of Sūrat al-Rūm, he also makes a theological explanation of the subject. He states that it is not obligatory for Allah to create for the first time; but the second creation is obligatory. He systematically explains the distinction between what is obligatory and what is not. He says:

“Another interpretation is this: To create for the first time is in the form of tafaddul/iḥsān in which the agent is free between doing and not doing. Recreating is in the form of obligatory, which is necessary since re-creation is to recompense of the deeds. Verbs [i] are either muhāl—which means impossible, out of capacity, never possible to do—[ii] or actions that have a quality that prevents the hakīm (wise) from doing it; -This feature is that the verb is bad. These actions are substitutes for muhāl, and fall into the same category; because, just as being muhāl prevents

-despite being scattered because of the nature of the traditional tafsīr method- as the concept of hidāyah is one of the basic emphases of the Qur’ān itself.

<sup>24</sup> al-Qādī Abd al-Jabbār, *al-Mughnī*, 14/53.

<sup>25</sup> In Ahl al-Sunna, hidāyah is from Allah and it is by His will. And He makes it special to certain people. al-Ṭībī, *Futūḥ al-ghayb*, 3/537.

<sup>26</sup> *وَمَنْ يَهَاجِرْ فِي سَبِيلِ اللَّهِ يَجِدْ فِي الْأَرْضِ مُرَاعِمًا كَثِيرًا وَسَعَةً وَمَنْ يَخْرُجْ مِنْ بَيْتِهِ مُهَاجِرًا إِلَى اللَّهِ وَرَسُولِهِ ثُمَّ يُدْرِكْهُ الْمَوْتُ فَقَدْ وَقَعَ أَجْرُهُ عَلَى اللَّهِ وَكَانَ اللَّهُ غَفُورًا رَحِيمًا* “*Those who leave their homes and die while emigrating to Allah and His Messenger—their reward has already been secured with Allah. And Allah is All-Forgiving, Most Merciful.*” (al-Nisā’ 4/100).

that action from being done, the preventive quality of these actions also prevents it from occurrence- [iii] or they are actions done to be a blessing or a benevolence; -This is a normal situation; the person who will do them has the authority to do or not to do them.- [vi] or they are obligatory actions that must be done and there is no way to abandon them. Now, the actions that are obligatory to do are the actions that are farthest from muhāl and closest to occur. Since it is obligatory to resurrect people (to recompense their deeds), this has been the most distant deed from muhāl; when it was the most distant action from muhāl, it was included in the scope of ta'annī (deliberateness) and convenience in the best way and thus it was counted as one of the easiest actions; When it is one of the easiest actions, it was seen as easier than creating it for the first time.”<sup>27</sup>

Here, with the expression “ahwanu alayhi”, al-Zamakhsharī says that re-creation is the worthiest deed to be done because it is obligatory, and therefore it is described easy. In other words, easiness stems from obligation. The classification of obligatory-possible-impossible, which he has mentioned here, is based entirely on the Mu'tazilite ground.<sup>28</sup> In addition, the idea that the first creation is not obligatory but subsequent creations are obligatory is the most common example used by the Mu'tazila of Basra within the scope of the theories of aṣḥāḥ and luṭf.<sup>29</sup> Therefore, al-Zamakhsharī does not only stand on a Mu'tazilite line in his interpretation; He also expresses this within the framework of Mu'tazilite terminology.

### 3.2. Luṭf is a Consequence of Allah's Wisdom and Mercy

al-Zamakhsharī shows that he stands on a Mu'tazilite ground with his explanations about being the actions of Allah obligatory. In addition, he faces the consequences of his theological choice in his work. In this context, he has to explain to Allah that some actions are obligatory. Because those who oppose the necessity of luṭf generally refer to the limitlessness of Allah's power and that nothing will oblige Him.<sup>30</sup> Therefore, the nature of something being obligatory for Allah is a problem that needs to be explained. In this context, al-Nazzām (d. 231/845), one of the early theologians, argues that Allah always created aṣḥāḥ and that there is no better or worse than the one He created within His power. The theologians of Basra oppose this idea and prefer to explain the necessity with Allah's justice, wisdom, and mercy.<sup>31</sup> al-Zamakhsharī supports this idea and states that the necessity attributed to Allah is the consequence of wisdom and mercy and that some verses in the Qur'ān indicate this. While interpreting the statement *أَمْ عِنْدَهُمْ خَزَائِنُ رَحْمَةِ رَبِّكَ الْعَزِيزِ الْوَهَّابِ* “Or [is it because] they possess the treasuries of the mercy of your Lord—the Almighty, al-Wahhāb (the Giver of all bounties)” in the 9<sup>th</sup> verse of Sūrat Ṣād, he said that these expressions indicate that Allah distributes His treasury in accordance with His wisdom and justice. As for the 40<sup>th</sup> verse of Sūrat al-Nisā', he reveals his approach to the subject more clearly. It is not because of the inadequacy of the power of Allah's oppression, based on the statement that “Indeed, Allah does not oppress anyone by the tiniest amount”; He says it's because of his wisdom:

<sup>27</sup> al-Zamakhsharī, *al-Kashshāf*, 3/477. The related verse: *وَهُوَ الَّذِي يَبْدَأُ الْخَلْقَ ثُمَّ يُعِيدُهُ وَهُوَ أَهْوَنُ عَلَيْهِ وَلَهُ الْمَثَلُ الْأَعْلَىٰ فِي السَّمَاوَاتِ وَالْأَرْضِ وَهُوَ الْعَزِيزُ الْحَكِيمُ* “And He is the One Who originates the creation then will resurrect it—which is even easier for Him. To Him belong the finest attributes in the heavens and the earth. And He is the Almighty, All-Wise.” (al-Rūm 30/27).

<sup>28</sup> For the classification of Allah's acts as obligatory-possible-impossible in the Mu'tazila of Basra, See: al-Qādī Abd al-Jabbār, *al-Mughnī*, 14/53.

<sup>29</sup> al-Qādī Abd al-Jabbār, *al-Mughnī*, 14/53.

<sup>30</sup> al-Qādī Abd al-Jabbār, *al-Mughnī*, 13/201.

<sup>31</sup> el-Eṣ'arī, *Makālātü'l-İslâmiyyîn*, 746.

“In this verse, there is evidence that if Allah reduces the reward or punishes too much, it will be cruelty. And it is not because he has no power; There is evidence that he did not do it because of his wisdom.”<sup>32</sup>

al-Zamakhsharī, by emphasizing justice and wisdom, and by expressing clearly, states that the matters that are obligatory for Allah are not related to power; asserts that it is a moral imperative. Thus, he claims that although Allah is able to do so, He shows people the right path and act in this way out of His wisdom and mercy.

### 3.3. The Scope of Luṭf

What is obligatory for Allah is one of the problems between the theologians of Basra and Baghdād. In fact, there is a debate between them as to whether all the actions of Allah are obligatory. The theologians of Basra said that Allah is only responsible for doing aṣlah (the best) in matters related to taklīf (imposition of obligation), in other matters, they argue that he may not create what is aṣlah.<sup>33</sup> However, the theologians of Baghdād think that it is obligatory for Allah to create aṣlah in all matters. Because, as we mentioned above, the theologians of Baghdād consider all the actions of Allah within the scope of wājib. Thus, according to them, Allah creates the best for His servants in all their religious and worldly situations. Because the rule that applies to some of his actions must also apply to others. However, the theologians of Basra claim that Allah will only create aṣlah in religious matters. They defend this idea through a critique of the general aṣlah theory.<sup>34</sup> In fact, according to this idea, aṣlah and luṭf mean the same thing. al-Zamakhsharī continues the line of the Bahshamite school of Basra in this matter as well and argues that Allah will create aṣlah only in religious matters. The first of the meanings he chose for the expressions إِنَّ اللَّهَ كَانَ لَطِيفًا خَبِيرًا “Allah is Laṭīf and Khabīr” in the 34<sup>th</sup> verse of Sūrat al-Ahzāb is that “He knows your religious interests and benefits and will send it down for you”. The second meaning is that Allah chose what was beneficial for the Messenger of Allah and his family.

al-Zamakhsharī says that it may have been meant in two senses.<sup>35</sup> While the first meaning here supports the idea of aṣlah of the theologians of Basra, the second meaning does not adapt it. There is no expression in external meaning of the verse that will evoke the first meaning above. However, al-Zamakhsharī is very willing to interpret the name of Allah al-Laṭīf with maṣlaḥa (benefit) in religious matters by first mentioning the (aforementioned) first meaning and then saying that both meanings are valid. On the other hand, al-Zamakhsharī also limits the expression with religious issues. In fact, there is no need for such a thing according to Mu‘tazilite principles. For, Allah's creation of what is beneficial is sufficient for the theories of aṣlah and luṭf. However, he particularly prefers to limit it to religious matters. Thus, he interprets that statement in line with the preferences of the Mu‘tazila of Basra.

### 3.4. Luṭf is Given to Those Who Deserve It

Another discussion regarding the scope of luṭf is whether Allah grant luṭf on those who will not believe. The theologians of Baghdād thought that Allah created luṭf for everyone, just as they claimed that He would create aṣlah in all matters.<sup>36</sup> However, the theologians of Basra argued that luṭf will only be given to those who are known to believe and that luṭf will not be

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<sup>32</sup> al-Zamakhsharī, *al-Kashshāf*, 1/511.

<sup>33</sup> Rukn al-Dīn ibn al-Malāḥimī al-Khawārizmī, *Kitāb al-fā‘iq fī usūl al-dīn* (Tehran: Mu‘assasa-yi Hikmat wa Falsafa-yi Iran, 1966), 291-292.

<sup>34</sup> al-Qādī Abd al-Jabbār, *al-Mughnī*, 14/56, 62 etc.

<sup>35</sup> al-Zamakhsharī, *al-Kashshāf*, 3/58.

<sup>36</sup> el-Eṣ‘arī, *Makālātü'l-İslâmiyyîn*, 786.



given to anyone who will not believe.<sup>37</sup> For, it is useless to do favors to a person who is known not to believe. Therefore, Allah does not grant luṭf on anyone who will not believe.

al-Zamakhsharī defends this view of the school of Basra in various places. To do this, he interprets the verses that state that hidāya will be given to believers or that unbelievers deserve the situation they are in. As a matter of fact, while he is interpreting the 5<sup>th</sup> verse of Sūrat al-Baqara, he says that hidāya is given only to those who are known to believe. He says that with the expression هُدًى لِّلْمُتَّقِينَ “*It is a guide for those mindful of Allah*” in the 2<sup>nd</sup> verse of Sūrat al-Baqara, the Qur’ān is declared to be a guidance only for those who believe.<sup>38</sup> He states that the expressions in the 6<sup>th</sup> verse of Sūrat al-Baqara, “*Whether you warn the unbelievers or not, they will not believe*” point out that luṭf will not be given to those who are known to not believe.<sup>39</sup> Thus, in the interpretation of the verses stating that believers deserve guidance and unbelievers deserve misguidance, he defends the view that luṭf will be given only to believing servants who deserve it. By doing this, he continues the Bahshamite line of Mu’tazila of Basra.

There are verses in the Qur’ān which state that guidance is only for believers, and there are also verses suitable to be interpreted through the divine will of Allah. Because some verses point out more clearly that guidance and misguidance are from Allah. al-Zamakhsharī interprets these verses appropriately in their own context. Thus, in the tafsīr of the 272<sup>nd</sup> verse of Sūrat al-Baqara “*You are not responsible for people’s guidance [O Prophet]—it is Allah Who guides whoever He wills*”, he says:

“‘It is not your duty to guide them.’ It is not your duty to guide them by making them avoid what they are forbidden to do, such as begging, torture, and spending unclean things for help. Your only duty is to convey the prohibitions. ‘Allah guides whom He wills’ Allah gives luṭf those who will benefit from it and stay away from his prohibitions.”<sup>40</sup>

al-Zamakhsharī here explains hidāya as directing the right action rather than making him believe. Accordingly, it is only Allah who will show the right path. On the other hand, showing the right way does not take place without a reason. Allah will give guidance to anyone who will benefit by following his orders. Afterall, he interprets it as “Allah gives luṭf to those who will benefit from it and stay away from his prohibitions” and says that Allah does this with the knowledge that they will choose the right way. Thus, al-Zamakhsharī attributed the guidance to the knowledge that the servant will be guided because of luṭf, instead of directly attributing it to the will of Allah. Therefore, luṭf is not given to everyone, as the people of Baghdād think, but only to those who deserve it. al-Zamakhsharī opposes Ahl al-Sunna as well as the people of Baghdād on this issue. As a matter of fact, Ahl al-Sunna scholars have understood the same verses more literally by explaining the guidance with the will of Allah and attributes hidāya to Allah in a real sense.<sup>41</sup> Nevertheless al-Zamakhsharī attributes the act of hidāya metaphorically to Allah and literally to people. In this respect, al-Zamakhsharī clearly stands in the position of the Basra Mu’tazila and opposes the rest.

<sup>37</sup> Abū al-Hasan Abd al-Jabbār ibn Ahmad al-Qādī Abd al-Jabbār, *al-Mughnī fī abwāb al-tawhīd wa al-‘adl: al-tanabbu’āt wa al-mu’jizāt*, 15/254; al-Khawārizmī, *Kitāb al-fā’iq*, 291.

<sup>38</sup> al-Zamakhsharī, *al-Kashshāf*, 1/43.

<sup>39</sup> al-Zamakhsharī, *al-Kashshāf*, 1/46.

<sup>40</sup> al-Zamakhsharī, *al-Kashshāf*, 1/317.

<sup>41</sup> al-Ṭībī says: “According to us, Allah creates hidāyah in whomever He wishes. There is no obstacle for him to give guidance. Because the creatures are subject to the will and the decision of Allah. All his actions are wise and true. Even though the reason of his actions is hidden from us.” al-Ṭībī, *Futūḥ al-ghayb*, 7/67.

### 3.5. Luṭf is Not Jabr (Coercion)

Giving luṭf only to believers brings with it the question of whether it compels the servant to believe. Because, according to the theory, luṭf will lead the person to faith. Allah gives luṭf based on this knowledge. If a person does not believe, Allah will not grant luṭf on him.<sup>42</sup> This situation has led to questioning whether luṭf is a coercive effect.

According to the Mu‘tazilite principles, Allah has left the servant free in his choice and an effect that would eliminate it would contradict the principle of justice. In this context, luṭf does not force the servant to guidance; it only brings him closer or directs him towards it. As a result, the servant believes with his own will. If there is an effect that compels the servant of luṭf to believe, it means that Allah's mercy is reserved for some of the people. Therefore, luṭf should not be a coercion. al-Zamakhsharī also discusses this issue in his tafsīr and argues that luṭf is not an effect of compulsion. As a matter of fact, he interpreted the expression “*Had your Lord so willed, He would have certainly made humanity one single community*” in his tafsīr of the 118<sup>th</sup> verse of Sūrat Hūd as a rejection of jabr. He says:

“‘Had your Lord so willed, He would have certainly made humanity one single community’, that is, he did not force them to become one ummah which is the nation of Islam. As in the phrase ‘Indeed, this nation of yours is one nation.’<sup>43</sup> These words eliminate compelling (izdirār). Because He did not compel people to unite in the true religion. However, he cautioned them as to be the basis of taklīf. Thus, some of them chose the right and some chose the wrong. This is how they differed. That’s why [Allah] said, ‘They still differ.’ By “except those shown mercy by your Lord”<sup>44</sup> is meant the people to whom Allah gives luṭf and guides. As a matter of fact, they were united in the true religion without any disagreement. The word ذَلِكْ in the expression وَإِلَٰذِكَ خَلَقَهُمْ ‘And so He created them’ refers to the meaning that the first statement indicates and covers. In other words, He created them for the tamkīn and ikhtiyār, with whom they chose different paths. Thus, he will reward those who choose the right for their good choice and punish those who choose the wrong for their bad choice.”<sup>45</sup>

While al-Zamakhsharī deduces that Allah did not force people to the right path (hidāya) since He did not make a single ummah, he says that those who are exempted from disagreement and mentioned with Allah’s mercy in the other part of the verse are those who are given hidāya and luṭf and fulfill the requirements of this. In other words, those who are given luṭf are those who will prefer to fulfill its requirements. Then, by emphasizing tamkīn and ikhtiyār, he again emphasizes the preference of the servant. In this context, luṭf is not what makes a person believe; but expresses the action that brings him closer to it. Therefore, the servant believes with his own will. If Allah, by His luṭf, would lead His servants to faith instead of bringing them closer to faith, this would be jabr and the reasoning of the unbelievers, “If God had willed, He would have guided us to the right path” would be valid. For this not to happen, luṭf must only be a means to faith. al-Zamakhsharī refers to this situation in the 22<sup>nd</sup> verse of Sūrat Ibrāhīm. He says:

<sup>42</sup> el-Eş‘arī, *Makālātü’l-İslāmiyyin*, 786. Those who have the strict idea of aṣḥāb do not oppose this view. Because they say that Allah will create the best anyway.

<sup>43</sup> al-Anbiyā 21/92.

<sup>44</sup> Hūd 11/119.

<sup>45</sup> al-Zamakhsharī, *al-Kashshāf*, 2/438. The related verse: وَلَوْ شَاءَ رَبُّكَ لَجَعَلَ النَّاسَ أُمَّةً وَاحِدَةً وَلَا يَزَالُونَ مُخْتَلِفِينَ إِلَّا مَن رَّجِمَ رَبُّكَ وَإِلَٰذِكَ خَلَقَهُمْ وَتَمَّتْ كَلِمَةُ رَبِّكَ لِأَمْلَأَنَّ جَهَنَّمَ مِنَ الْجِنَّةِ وَالنَّاسِ أَجْمَعِينَ “Had your Lord so willed, He would have certainly made humanity one single community [of believers], but they will always [choose to] differ except those shown mercy by your Lord—and so He created them [to choose freely]. And so the Word of your Lord will be fulfilled: “I will surely fill up Hell with jinn and humans all together.” (Hūd 11/118-119).

“‘You have come to me when I have called you and led you astray, and for not responding to your Lord ‘So do not blame me; blame yourselves.’ This is evidence that the happiness or misfortune that befalls him is chosen by the person himself. For, from Allah comes tamkīn and from the devil comes tazyīn (embroidering). If it were as al-Mujbira said, [the devil] would have said: Do not blame me or yourselves. Because Allah has prescribed disbelief to you and compelled you to do so.’”<sup>46</sup>

al-Zamakhsharī says that these expressions point to the truth even though they are said in the language of the devil. Therefore, even if luṭf comes from Allah, it is not an effect of force, but a means that shows the way of hidāya. His divine will also does not refer to coercion because the will in al-Zamakhsharī refers to Allah’s acting in accordance wisdom.<sup>47</sup> If there is an effect of force, the will of the servant will disappear and Allah does not act in accordance with wisdom, which is an unacceptable result according to the basic Mu’tazilite principles.

### 3.6. Hidhlān/Deprivation of Luṭf

Hidhlān is the opposite of luṭf and expresses Allah's misguidance of His servants. However, the nature of this misguidance differs among the schools. In this context, the Mu’tazila does not understand misdirection of Allah as forcibly leading astray or misdirecting. According to them, misguidance of Allah is lack of luṭf; that is, He does not create what will lead to faith. Here, the problems in the context of deprivation of luṭf are discussed under the title of hidhlān.

al-Zamakhsharī maintains his Mu’tazilite attitude about both misguidance (ḍalāla) of Allah and His guidance (hidāya). According to him, misguidance is not a distraction from the right path, but rather withholding of luṭf from the person and abandoning him. As a matter of fact, when interpreting the expression *إِنَّ اللَّهَ لَا يَهْدِي مَنْ هُوَ كَاذِبٌ كَفَّارٌ* “Allah certainly does not guide whoever persists in lying and disbelief” in the 3<sup>rd</sup> verse of Sūrat al-Zumar, he says that preventing guidance is deprivation of luṭf.<sup>48</sup> Again, in the tafsīr of the 4<sup>th</sup> verse of Sūrat Ibrāhīm, he states that the meaning of misguidance in the expression “Allah leads astray whomever He wills” is to deprive him of hidāya and luṭf.<sup>49</sup> Accordingly, Allah guides some people to guidance, but does not lead others to misguidance. He only deprives them of luṭf. If he led them to misguidance, the reasoning of the unbelievers that Allah led them astray would be valid.<sup>50</sup> For this reason, Allah should not abolish the choice of the servant in His ḍalāla as well as in His luṭf.

According to al-Zamakhsharī, the reason why Allah does not grant luṭf to unbelievers is that they will not believe even if they gain luṭf. Since Allah knows this, He does not grant luṭf on them. He says in tafsīr of the 36<sup>th</sup> verse of Sūrat al-Naḥl:

“‘But some of them were guided by Allah, while others were destined to stray.’ Namely, their abandonment (hidhlān) and their deprivation of luṭf became fixed. Because [Allah] knows that they are determined to disbelieve and that no good will come from them.’”<sup>51</sup>

For al-Zamakhsharī, it is a necessity rather than an opportunity for Allah to leave his servants in ḍalāla, whom he knows will not believe. Because, despite this knowledge, if He grants luṭf on them, he will be doing a futile deed. He says in his tafsīr of the 50<sup>th</sup> verse of Sūrat al-Qaṣaṣ:

<sup>46</sup> al-Zamakhsharī, *al-Kashshāf*, 2/550.

<sup>47</sup> “His will is subject to His wisdom.” al-Zamakhsharī, *al-Kashshāf*, 2/341.

<sup>48</sup> al-Zamakhsharī, *al-Kashshāf*, 4/111.

<sup>49</sup> al-Zamakhsharī, *al-Kashshāf*, 2/539.

<sup>50</sup> al-Zamakhsharī, *al-Kashshāf*, 2/550.

<sup>51</sup> al-Zamakhsharī, *al-Kashshāf*, 2/605.

“In his religion, ‘without any guidance from Allah’, that is, deprived of divine blessings/altāf, with his heart sealed, is there anyone who is more astray than the one who only follows his ‘aql’ (reason)!? Allah does not grant luṭf and beneficence to a community whose zulm (wrongdoing) is constant and permanent, in which a person who gives them luṭf and beneficence would be deemed to have engaged in futile! The expression بِعَيْرِ هَدَى is ḥāl (the circumstantial adverb) and means ‘being abandoned, not interfering between him and his ‘aql (reason) with [luṭf]’.”<sup>52</sup>

According to al-Zamakhsharī, another reason why Allah does not grant luṭf on a person who will not believe is that the punishment of that person would not increase. Because the severity of ingratitude is measured by the size of a blessing which is denied. If Allah gave luṭf to a person who would not believe, it would not have been just absurd; it would also be bad for that person with increase of his unbelief. Therefore, one of the reasons why Allah does not grant luṭf on them is that luṭf will increase unbelief. al-Zamakhsharī mentions this in his commentary on the 13<sup>th</sup> verse of Sūrat al-Mā’ida:

“But the denial after this support is much more obvious and sinful. Because denial gains severity in proportion to the size of the blessing being ungrateful, and as much as the blessing increases, the badness of ungratefulness/denial increases and deepens.”<sup>53</sup>

Since al-Zamakhsharī understands hidhlān as the deprivation of luṭf, all his comments on the subject are shaped within the framework of the possibility and necessity of luṭf. He, at this point, agrees with the whole Mu‘tazila, not just of Basra. However, the pioneers of Ahl al-Sunna, whom al-Ash‘arī (d. 324/935-6) called “Ahl al-Ithbāt”, defined hidhlān as (I) the potential (istita‘ah) to disbelieve or (II) the creation of unbelief directly in the person.<sup>54</sup> The first view is the view of al-Ash‘arī; It is said that the second opinion is the opinion of al-Mujbira.<sup>55</sup> Therefore, they do not understand hidhlān as the deprivation of luṭf. However, al-Zamakhsharī considers luṭf as a result of the actions of the servant rather than a coercion to the believer within the framework of principles of al-Mu‘tazila.

### 3.7. Nubuwwa in the Context of Luṭf and Hidhlān

Although it is obligatory for Allah to grant luṭf on His servants who will believe, which action is obligatory and why is a matter that needs to be discussed separately. Because while an act is a luṭf for one person, it can be a hidhlān for another. What al-Zamakhsharī mentions about nubuwwa in his tafsīr is a good example of the Mu‘tazilite way of thinking on this issue.

Although nubuwwa is an obligatory luṭf to Allah, it is not the basic condition of belief. Because the basic thing required for the servant to believe is the reason/intellect, and Allah has already given it to people. Even if a prophet is not sent, people have to find the truth with their reasons. In this case, the institution of prophethood may not be necessary. Therefore, it would be meaningless for this institution to be obligatory upon Allah. al-Zamakhsharī deals with this problem in tafsīr of the 15<sup>th</sup> verse of Sūrat al-Isrā’. After mentioning this problem, he says that prophethood is necessary in that it leads to reasoning and rational evidence.

“No soul burdened with sin will bear the burden of another. And We would never punish until We have sent a Messenger.”

“So, every soul is a carrier of burden. But he carries his own burden, not someone else's. ‘We would never punish.’ It is possible for us to destroy people only after we send a prophet to them

<sup>52</sup> al-Zamakhsharī, *al-Kashshāf*, 3/420.

<sup>53</sup> al-Zamakhsharī, *al-Kashshāf*, 1/615.

<sup>54</sup> el-Eş‘arī, *Makālâtü'l-İslâmiyyîn*, 386.

<sup>55</sup> İlyas Çelebi, "Hızlān", TDV İslâm Ansiklopedisi, <https://islamansiklopedisi.org.tr/hizlan> (Accessed June 26, 2023).

and refuting its excuses and evidence against us, in a wise way. If you say, 'The evidence is necessary before a prophet came to them. Because they have reason, thanks to which they know Allah. They neglected reasoning (nazar) even though they had the opportunity, and the reason why they deserve the punishment is because they neglected reasoning and denied it. Otherwise, it is not only because they neglect the sharī'a obtained with tawfīq. Besides, it is possible to act according to the sharī'a after faith.' [As against] I say: Sending a prophet is a type of drawing attention to reasoning and awakening the heedless from their sleep. So that they should not say: 'We were unaware (heedless), but a messenger could have been sent to guide us to reasoning and the proofs of reason'."<sup>56</sup>

While al-Zamakhsharī here states that the prophethood is maṣlaḥa (beneficial) in terms of removing the excuses of the disbelievers, he expands the topic in accordance with Mu'tazila and he says in his tafsīr of the 165<sup>th</sup> verse of Sūrat al-Nisā'. He says:

“While the prophets conveyed the duty entrusted to them by clearly explaining the matters related to religious subjects, explaining the states of obligation, and teaching the divine rules, as you can see in the scholars of Ahl al-'Adl wa al-Tawḥīd they awaken people from heedlessness and lead them to contemplation based on observation. In this respect, sending prophets is intended to eliminate excuses and to ensure that the evidence binds people. That is, people should not say, 'If you had sent us a messenger, if he had woken us from the sleep of heedlessness, he had drawn attention to the issues that we needed to pay attention to!'”<sup>57</sup>

From the explanations of al-Zamakhsharī, it appears that prophethood is necessary in two ways. The first is that it is beneficial for people, and the second is that its absence causes evil. al-Zamakhsharī expresses these in *al-Minhāj* as maṣlaḥa in two ways. The first of these is the maṣlaḥa that arises from the fulfillment of the responsibilities and the second is to be away from the wrongdoings.<sup>58</sup> Therefore, prophethood is obligatory not only for being beneficial but also its absence causes evil.

His explanations of the obligatory prophethood indicate how well al-Zamakhsharī was aware of the details of Mu'tazilite accumulation. He not only knows and conveys Mu'tazilite ideas, but also handles them with a great skill in particular problems. In this respect, he seems to leave his identity as a mufassir at some points and act as a theologian. In another word, he handles the verses related to the matters of faith in accordance with the theological purposes and motivations.

### Conclusion

In his work, al-Zamakhsharī defends the Mu'tazilite understanding of luṭf in a scattered manner. He handles Mu'tazilite ideas not only on a creedal ground but also at a theological level. In other words, he not only penetrates the creed of the denomination, but also grounds that creed in the context of theological problems and principles. As a matter of fact, the reason why luṭf is obligatory for Allah is a Mu'tazilite -theological- problem and an exegete is not expected to discuss it. However, al-Zamakhsharī mentions the theological problem and tells of its solution in his tafsīr. Again, he solves the problem within the framework of Mu'tazilite/theological principles. Because associating wājib with sharī'a and taklīf is a common method in Mu'tazila. Similarly, his explanation of “wājib” as “being a necessity based on mercy and wisdom” points to the Mu'tazilite background and creedal concern of him. Because wājib alā Allah

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<sup>56</sup> al-Zamakhsharī, *al-Kashshāf*, 2/653.

<sup>57</sup> al-Zamakhsharī, *al-Kashshāf*, 1/591.

<sup>58</sup> al-Zamakhsharī, *Kitāb al-Minhāj fī usūl al-dīn*, ed. Sabine Schmidtke (Beirut: Dār al-Arabiyyat al-Ulūm, 2007), 41; Hasan Türkmen, “Nübüvvetin İspatı Bağlamında Zemahşerî'nin Mucizeye Bakışı”, *Dilbilimleri Akademik Araştırma Dergisi*, 18/2 (2018), 170.

is an issue on which there is intense criticism against Mu‘tazila. By responding these criticisms, al-Zamakhsharī establishes the Mu‘tazilite ground on wājib. Therefore, al-Zamakhsharī makes his theological interpretations in *al-Kashshāf* by considering Mu‘tazilite principles and problems. In this respect, he reveals his extensive knowledge of Mu‘tazila in *al-Kashshāf*. Although he has not created new theories or doctrinal systems within the sect, he discussed the issues and reflect them in a unique way in his tafsīr.

al-Zamakhsharī bases the theory of luṭf in *al-Kashshāf* on a Mu‘tazilite ground. While doing this, he also tries to stay within the borders of the Mu‘tazila of Basra. In this context, while saying that luṭf is obligatory for Allah, he tries to explain why it is obligatory to non-Mu‘tazilite groups. He follows the same line regarding the scope of luṭf and argues against other Mu‘tazilite groups that luṭf is valid in religious matters. Thus, in his interpretation, he not only stands on the Mu‘tazilite line, but also stands in a more special place which is the line of Bahshamiyya school of the Mu‘tazila of Basra in terms of luṭf.

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**Etik Beyan / Ethical Statement:**

Bu çalışmanın hazırlanma sürecinde bilimsel ve etik ilkelere uyulduğu ve yararlanılan tüm çalışmaların kaynakçada belirtildiği beyan olunur / It is declared that scientific and ethical principles have been followed while carrying out and writing this study and that all the sources used have been properly cited.

**Yazar(lar) / Author(s):**

Muhammed BOŞNAK-Nagihan Ayşe BOŞNAK

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**Influence of the Ottoman Tafsir Tradition in West Africa: An Analysis of the Role of Mollā al-Gūrānī's Ghāyat al-Amānī in Abdullah b. Fodio's Ɖiyā' al-Ta'wīl**  
*Batı Afrika'da Osmanlı Tefsir Geleneginin Etkisi: Abdullah b. Fūdī'nin Ziyā'ü't-Te'vīl adlı Eserinde Molla Gürānī'nin Gāyetü'l-Emānī'nin Rolünün Analizi*

**Ifeoluwa Siddiq OYELAMI**

Doktora Öğrencisi, Erciyes Üniversitesi, Sosyal Bilimleri Enstitüsü  
Temel İslam Bilimleri, Tefsir Anabilim Dalı

Doctoral Candidate, Erciyes University, Institute of Social Sciences  
Basic Islamic Sciences, Department of Tafsir

Kayseri, Türkiye

siddiqoye@gmail.com

<https://orcid.org/0000-0003-2440-7473>

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**Abstract**

The intellectual influence of the Ottoman Empire in West Africa has often been overlooked despite its vastness and significant contributions to Islamic studies. This study aims to shed light on this intersection by examining the relationship between Abdullah b. Fodio's (d. 1245/1829) *Ḍiyā' al-ta'wīl fī ma'ānī al-tanzīl* and Mollā al-Gūrānī's (d. 893/1488) *Ghāyat al-amānī fī tafsīr al-Kalām al-Rabbānī*. Abdullah b. Fodio, a scholar of the renowned 19th-century Sokoto Caliphate, and Molla al-Gūrānī, a prominent 15th-century Ottoman Shaykh al-Islam, were both influential Qur'anic exegetes who held significant political roles during their respective periods. Despite recent studies on their individual works, the intersection between their writings demands further attention. Through content analysis, thematic analysis, and comparative analysis, this study explored the role al-Gūrānī's work played in the formation of Ibn Fodio's work's content and methodology. By delving into various themes of their works, we reveal that Ibn Fodio greatly benefited from al-Gūrānī's commentaries, considering them on par with those of renowned scholars such as Ibn al-'Arabī (d. 543/1148), al-Bayḏāwī (d. 685/1286), and al-Tha'ālibī (d. 875/1471). Ibn Fodio's tafsir adeptly incorporated al-Gūrānī's perspectives across various subjects and accorded significant value to his assessments of hadith authenticity. Nevertheless, Ibn Fodio, due to his distinct approach and priorities, selectively employed al-Gūrānī's work in matters relating to fiqh, despite citing his *istinbāḥ* of *uṣūl al-fiqh*. While Ibn Fodio benefited from al-Gūrānī's judgments on *qirā'āt*, he did not uniformly adopt his approach. Both scholars adhered to the Ash'arī theological tradition, resulting in doctrinal similarities, with Ibn Fodio occasionally directly quoting from al-Gūrānī's work. On *ishārī* exegesis, while neither of them subscribed to its excessive form, Ibn Fodio included some interpretations omitted by al-Gūrānī. We speculated that Ibn Fodio sought al-Gūrānī's work as a valuable source due to its richness, utilising it as a corrective tool for his other major sources, such as al-Bayḏāwī. By uncovering this link between Ibn Fodio and al-Gūrānī, this study contributes to the field of tafsir history, providing new insights into the intersection between the Ottoman tafsir tradition and the Sokoto tafsir tradition.

**Keywords:** Tafsir, al-Gūrānī, Abdullah b. Fodio, Ghāyat al-amānī, Ḍiyā' al-ta'wīl.

**Öz**

Osmanlı İmparatorluğu'nun İslami ilimlere sağladığı önemli katkılara rağmen, onun Batı Afrika'daki ilmî etkisi genellikle göz ardı edilmiştir. Bu araştırma, 19. yüzyıl Sokoto Devleti alimi Abdullah b. Fûdî'nin (ö. 1245/1829) *Ziyâ'ü't-te'vîl* adlı eseri ile 15. yüzyılın önde gelen Osmanlı Şeyhülislamlarından Molla Gürânî'nin (ö. 893/1488) *Gāyetü'l-emânî* adlı eseri arasındaki ilişkiyi ortaya koymayı amaçlamıştır. Kendi dönemlerinde siyasi roller üstlenen bu iki alimin kaleme aldıkları eserler üzerine birçok çalışma yapılmış olmasına rağmen, eserlerinin kesişme noktalarına daha fazla dikkat edilmesi gerekmektedir. Bu çalışmada içerik analizi, tematik analiz ve karşılaştırmalı analizler kullanılarak, Molla Gürânî'nin eserinin İbn Fûdî'nin eserinin içeriği ve metodolojisinin oluşumundaki rolü araştırılmıştır. Eserlerin çeşitli temalar çerçevesinde incelenmesi sonucunda, İbn Fûdî'nin Molla Gürânî'nin tefsirlerinden büyük ölçüde yararlandığı ve onu İbnü'l-Arabî (ö. 543/1148), Beyzâvî (ö. 685/1286) ve es-Se'âlibî (ö. 875/1471) gibi önemli müfessirler arasında zikrettiği ortaya çıkmıştır. İbn Fûdî, Molla Gürânî'nin çeşitli konulardaki düşüncelerini eserine alması ile birlikte onun rivayetlere yaptığı değerlendirmelere de büyük önem vermiştir. İbn Fûdî, kendi özgün yaklaşımı ve öncelikleri nedeniyle fikhî konularda Molla Gürânî'nin ahkâm ile ilgili görüşlerine sıklıkla yer vermezken fıkıh usulü ile ilgili istinbatlarını alıntılamıştır. Kırâat konusunda ise İbn Fûdî, Molla Gürânî'nin değerlendirmelerinden faydalanmış olmakla birlikte onun bilgiyi sunma şeklini benimsememiştir. Kalam konusuna gelince her iki âlimin de Eş'arî teolojik geleneğe bağlı kalması, tefsirlerinde doktrinel benzerliklere yol açmıştır. Bu bağlamda İbn Fûdî, bazen Molla Gürânî'nin eserinden doğrudan alıntılar yapmıştır. Son olarak, İşarî tefsir konusunda ise her ikisi de aşırı yoruma karşı tavır göstermiş olmakla birlikte İbn Fûdî, eserine, Molla Gürânî'nin yer vermediği bazı yorumları dâhil etmiştir. Ayrıca İbn Fûdî'nin Molla Gürânî'nin eserini zenginliği nedeniyle değerli bir kaynak olarak gördüğü ve onu Beyzâvî gibi diğer önemli kaynaklardaki bilgileri düzeltmek için kullandığı tahmin edilmektedir. İbn Fûdî ve Molla Gürânî arasındaki bu bağlantıyı ortaya koyan bu çalışma, Osmanlı tefsir geleneği ile Sokoto tefsir geleneği arasındaki kesişimi yeni bir perspektifle ele alarak tefsir tarihi alanına yeni bilgiler sunmaktadır.

**Anahtar kelimeler:** Tefsir, Molla Gürânî, Abdullah b. Fûdî, *Gāyetü'l-emânî*, *Ziyâ'ü't-te'vîl*.

## Introduction

Tafsir, as a discipline, is largely characterised by its eclectic nature. Authors of tafsir works have predominantly relied on the accumulated body of knowledge within the field to produce their own interpretations, addressing the contemporary issues and contexts of their time and location. Consequently, it is often observed that many tafsir works are not inherently original, as authors have primarily gathered insights from their predecessors. In fact, it is common to find introductory notes from mufasssirrūn expressing their intention to build upon the interpretations of others.<sup>1</sup> However, it is essential to examine the identity of these “others,” as selecting specific areas to build upon and choosing references in these eclectic works represent the most distinctive aspects of their originality.

Understanding the significance of a particular mufasssirrūn within the context of tafsir history requires an exploration of the sources they employed and how they utilised the information within those sources. While certain tafsir works enjoy widespread popularity as prominent sources among subsequent scholars, others are overlooked despite the expertise of their authors. The utilisation of these lesser-known works as sources raises questions about the specific aspects that attracted the attention of later scholars. This is evident in Ibn Fodio’s reliance on al-Gūrānī’s Ghāyat al-amānī as a primary source, which piques curiosity not only due to the relative obscurity of al-Gūrānī’s work but also because of the geographical distance between Ibn Fodio and al-Gūrānī, implying limited exposure to the latter’s works.

This study addresses the limited recognition of al-Gūrānī’s influence beyond the Middle East and Anatolia,<sup>2</sup> contrasting it with Ibn Fodio’s acknowledgement of al-Gūrānī’s work as a major source. The research aims to investigate why Ibn Fodio was drawn to this less popular work and challenges the notion of the Ottoman tafsir tradition’s lack of external influence. It examines the incorporation of al-Gūrānī’s work in Ibn Fodio’s methodology, contributing to understanding both scholars’ significance and shedding light on nuances in Ibn Fodio’s tafsir approach. The study will analyse their lives, their respective works, and the impact of al-Gūrānī’s work on Ibn Fodio’s methodology.

## 1. Overview of the lives and works of two authors.

### 1.1. Mollā al-Gūrānī

Shihāb al-Dīn Aḥmad b. Ismā‘īl, commonly known as Mollā al-Gūrānī,<sup>3</sup> was a prominent scholar and intellectual in the Ottoman Empire. Born in 813/1410,<sup>4</sup> there is some debate regarding his birthplace; however, it is widely agreed that he was born within the borders of

<sup>1</sup> Relevant to this are some of the factors Koçyiğit mentioned as reasons why mufasssirrūn write tafsir works especially finding the existing ones insufficient and trying to gather the information in the old and new ones. For more details, see Hikmet Koçyiğit, ‘Müfessirleri Tefsir Yazmaya Sevk Eden Amiller’, *Sosyal Bilimler Enstitüsü Dergisi* 10 (2012), 122-124.

<sup>2</sup> For more details on his influence, see Sakıp Yıldız, Fatih’in Hocası Molla Gürani ve Tefsiri (Sahhaflar Kitap Sarayı, 1988), 313-330; Ziya Demir, *Osmanlı Müfessirleri (XII-XVI. yy. Arası)* (İstanbul: Ensar Neşriyat, 2007), 128-129.

<sup>3</sup> His name has also been given as Sharaf al-Dīn and Shams al-Dīn. His cognomen, written as " الكوراني " in Arabic letters, has also been transcribed as Mollā Kurānī. For more details, see John R. Walsh, ‘Gūrānī’, *Encyclopaedia of Islam*, Second Edition (Brill, 24 April 2012); Yıldız, Fatih’in Hocası Molla Gürani ve Tefsiri, 19; M. Kâmil Yaşaroğlu, ‘Molla Gürānī’, *TDV İslâm Ansiklopedisi* (Ankara: Türkiye Diyanet Vakfı, 2020), 248-249.

<sup>4</sup> Jalāl al-Dīn ‘Abd al-Raḥmān al-Suyūṭī, *Naẓm al-‘iqyān ft a ‘yān al-a ‘yān*, critical ed. Philip Hitti (Beirut: al-Maktaba al-‘Ilmiyya, 1927), 38; Ibrāhīm Ḥasan al-Baqā‘ī, *Unwān al-zamān bi-tarājim al-shuyūkh wa-l-aqrān*, critical ed. Ḥasan Ḥabashī (Cairo: Maṭba‘at Dār al-Kutub wa-al-Wathā‘iq al-Qawmiyya, 2009), 60; Yıldız, Fatih’in Hocası Molla Gürani ve Tefsiri, 25.

present-day Diyarbakır province in Turkey to a clan called Kūrān/Gūrān.<sup>5</sup> During his educational journey, Molla al-Gūrānī pursued studies in renowned centres of learning such as Baghdad, Damascus, and Cairo. He had the opportunity to benefit from the knowledge circles of distinguished scholars such as Ibn Hajar al-‘Asqalānī (d. 852/1448).<sup>6</sup> As a respected figure of his time, Molla al-Gūrānī became part of the inner circle of Sultan al-Malik al-Zāhir Jaqmāq (r. 1438-1453) and participated in scholarly gatherings held in the presence of the sultan.<sup>7</sup> At the age of thirty, and initially a member of the Shāfi‘ī school, he was appointed to teach fiqh at the Barqūq Madrasa in Cairo.<sup>8</sup>

In 844 (1440), a sectarian dispute led him to be imprisoned or banished.<sup>9</sup> However, subsequent to these ordeals, he met Mollā Yegān (d. 878/1473), a prominent scholar of the era, in Cairo or Aleppo. Mollā Yegān was on a mission to gather scholars around for the Ottoman under the leadership of Murād II (r. 1421-1451).<sup>10</sup> Mollā al-Gūrānī accompanied Mollā Yegān to gain an audience with Murād II and earned his favour and patronage. Consequently, he became the teacher of Prince Mehmed, who would later become the conqueror of Constantinople, in the province of Manisa.<sup>11</sup> When Mehmed ascended to the throne as Sultan Mehmed II (al-Fātiḥ) (r. 1451-1481), Mollā al-Gūrānī was offered a position as a vizier, which he declined.<sup>12</sup> Instead, in 855(1451), he was appointed as the military judge (qāḍī-‘asker). He played an advisory role in the consultative council during the siege of Constantinople.<sup>13</sup> Following the conquest of Constantinople, Molla al-Gūrānī’s tenure as qāḍī-‘asker ended. He was later appointed as the Qāḍī of Bursa but was subsequently dismissed.<sup>14</sup> He then travelled to Cairo and Jerusalem, where he began writing his work, *Ghāyat al-amānī*, a book that would later be presented to Mehmed II.<sup>15</sup>

Upon regaining the confidence of Mehmed II, Molla al-Gūrānī returned to Anatolia in 862 (1458) and was reinstated as the Qāḍī of Bursa.<sup>16</sup> In 867 (1463), he assumed the esteemed position of the Grand Muftī of Istanbul, and by 885 (1480), he ascended to become the fourth Ottoman Shaykh al-Islām, thereby attaining the highest religious authority within the empire.<sup>17</sup> Mollā al-Gūrānī outlived his student-turned-patron, Mehmed II, and assisted in the ascension of his first son, Bayezid II (r. 1481-1512), to the throne.<sup>18</sup> Mollā al-Gūrānī died in (d. 893/1488).<sup>19</sup>

<sup>5</sup> There are differing opinions regarding his place of birth. For a more comprehensive examination of the arguments supporting Diyarbakır in present-day Turkey, please refer to Yıldız, Fatih’in Hocası Molla Gürani ve Tefsiri, 20-23. See also Yaşaroğlu, ‘Molla Gürânî’, 249; al-Baqā’ī, ‘Unwān al-zamān’, 60.

<sup>6</sup> Demir, *Osmanlı Müfessirleri*, 128-129; Yıldız, *Fatih’in Hocası Molla Gürani ve Tefsiri*, 31.

<sup>7</sup> Yıldız, *Fatih’in Hocası Molla Gürani ve Tefsiri*, 32.

<sup>8</sup> Yıldız, *Fatih’in Hocası Molla Gürani ve Tefsiri*, 33; Demir, *Osmanlı Müfessirleri*, 129.

<sup>9</sup> For various accounts of the incident, see al-Baqā’ī, ‘Unwān al-zamān’, 61-62; Yıldız, *Fatih’in Hocası Molla Gürani ve Tefsiri*, 33-35.

<sup>10</sup> Yaşaroğlu, ‘Molla Gürânî’, 249; Yıldız, *Fatih’in Hocası Molla Gürani ve Tefsiri*, 48-52.

<sup>11</sup> Yıldız, *Fatih’in Hocası Molla Gürani ve Tefsiri*, 52-55.

<sup>12</sup> Yıldız, *Fatih’in Hocası Molla Gürani ve Tefsiri*, 60-61.

<sup>13</sup> Yıldız, *Fatih’in Hocası Molla Gürani ve Tefsiri*, 56-59.

<sup>14</sup> Yıldız, *Fatih’in Hocası Molla Gürani ve Tefsiri*, 64.

<sup>15</sup> Yıldız, *Fatih’in Hocası Molla Gürani ve Tefsiri*, 65.

<sup>16</sup> Yıldız, *Fatih’in Hocası Molla Gürani ve Tefsiri*, 66-67; al-Baqā’ī, ‘Unwān al-zamān’, 63; Yaşaroğlu, ‘Molla Gürânî’, 250.

<sup>17</sup> Yıldız, *Fatih’in Hocası Molla Gürani ve Tefsiri*, 68; Yaşaroğlu, ‘Molla Gürânî’, 250.

<sup>18</sup> Yıldız, *Fatih’in Hocası Molla Gürani ve Tefsiri*, 72-74.

<sup>19</sup> Yıldız, *Fatih’in Hocası Molla Gürani ve Tefsiri*, 88. al-Suyūṭī stated that he died in 894, see al-Suyūṭī, *Naẓm al-‘iqyān*, 39.

Molla al-Gūrānī authored up to ten notable works in various Islamic sciences.<sup>20</sup> In the areas of Quranic sciences and tafsir, he is recognised for his books *Ghāyat al-amānī* and *Kashf al-asrār ‘an qirā’at al-a’immat al-akhyār*. While the former is a book of tafsir, on which our study is based, the latter focuses on qirā’at.<sup>21</sup>

### 1.1.1. His work: *Ghāyat al-amānī fī tafsīr al-Kalām al-Rabbānī*

After the conquest of Constantinople and his subsequent withdrawal from governmental duties, al-Gūrānī embarked on a journey to the Levant, Cairo and eventually arrived in Jerusalem. It was during this period, in the year 860(1456), that he began writing *Ghāyat al-amānī fī tafsīr al-Kalām al-Rabbānī*.<sup>22</sup> While the author does not explicitly state other specific intentions for undertaking this work, he mentions a desire to rectify misinformation and misguided interpretations that had been introduced by certain “transgressors” concerning the Word of Allah.<sup>23</sup> In composing this tafsir, al-Gūrānī drew upon the works of al-Ṭabarī, al-Zamakhsharī, al-Kushayrī (d. 465/1072), al-Bayḍāwī, al-Nasafī (d. 710/1310), and other scholars as his sources.<sup>24</sup>

Gūrānī employed a unique system in which he provided annotations throughout the pages of the passages he had written.<sup>25</sup> Notably, his work frequently critiques the works of al-Zamakhsharī (d. 538/1144) and al-Bayḍāwī, making it perhaps the only comprehensive tafsir that criticises both scholars in all aspects.<sup>26</sup>

Upon completing the work in 867/1463, al-Gūrānī presented it to his former student, now Sultan Mehmed II, who subsequently distributed the manuscript to various regions, including the Maghrib.<sup>27</sup> Despite al-Gūrānī’s position within the Ottoman elite and the potential significance of his work as one of the first comprehensive tafsir by an Ottoman scholar,<sup>28</sup> it remained relatively less-known for a considerable period.<sup>29</sup> The tafsir was eventually published in 1438/2018 in Saudi Arabia by a team of critical editors.<sup>30</sup> Subsequently, another edition, edited by Bahattin Dartma, was published in 2019 by the Ibn Haldun University Press in Turkey.<sup>31</sup>

<sup>20</sup> For a list of his works, see Yıldız, *Fatih’in Hocası Molla Gürani ve Tefsiri*, 90-91; Yaşaroğlu, ‘Molla Gürānī’, 250; Demir, *Osmanlı Müfessirleri*, 131; Ömer Nasuhi Bilmen, *Büyük Tefsir Tarihi* (Semerkand Yayıncılık, 2014), 2/216.

<sup>21</sup> A third work on tafsir, known as Ḥāshiya ‘alā-tafsīr al-qāḍī, has been attributed to him. See: Bilmen, *Büyük Tefsir Tarihi*, 2/216. However, it is important to note that Yıldız argued against the attribution of this work in his own study. For more details, see Yıldız, *Fatih’in Hocası Molla Gürani ve Tefsiri*, 92.

<sup>22</sup> Yıldız, *Fatih’in Hocası Molla Gürani ve Tefsiri*, 65.

<sup>23</sup> Shihāb al-Dīn Aḥmad b. Ismā‘īl Mollā al-Gūrānī, *Ghāyat al-amānī fī tafsīr al-kalām al-rabbānī*, critical ed. Bahattin Dartma (Istanbul: Ibn Haldun University, 2019), 1/26.

<sup>24</sup> Yıldız, *Fatih’in Hocası Molla Gürani ve Tefsiri*, 149-151.

<sup>25</sup> Yıldız, *Fatih’in Hocası Molla Gürani ve Tefsiri*, 148.

<sup>26</sup> Bahattin Dartma, ‘Khaṣā’is al-kitāb’, *Ghāyat al-amānī fī tafsīr al-kalām al-rabbānī*, 1/14.

<sup>27</sup> Yıldız, *Fatih’in Hocası Molla Gürani ve Tefsiri*, 319.

<sup>28</sup> Yıldız’s claim of it being the first full Qur’an tafsir is erroneous (Yıldız, *Fatih’in Hocası Molla Gürani ve Tefsiri*, 11). Demir, on the other hand, compiled a comprehensive list of Qur’an tafsir by Ottoman mufasssırūn, where Shihāb al-Dīn al-Sīwāsī (ö. 860/1456 [?]) is ranked as the first and al-Gūrānī (ö. 893/1488) as the fifth. See: Demir, *Osmanlı Müfessirleri*, 109-164.

<sup>29</sup> For detailed analysis over the unpopularity of the work, see Yıldız, *Fatih’in Hocası Molla Gürani ve Tefsiri*, 318-319.

<sup>30</sup> Shihāb al-Dīn Aḥmad b. Ismā‘īl al-Kūrānī, *Ghāyat al-amānī fī tafsīr al-kalām al-rabbānī*, critical ed. Aḥmad b. Ya‘qūb al-Fāriḥ et al. (Riyad: Dār al-Ḥadārah, 2018).

<sup>31</sup> Shihāb al-Dīn Aḥmad b. Ismā‘īl Mollā al-Gūrānī, *Ghāyat al-amānī fī tafsīr al-kalām al-rabbānī*, critical ed. Bahattin Dartma (Istanbul: Ibn Haldun University, 2019).

## 1.2. Abdullah b. Fodio

Abdullah b. Fodio, also known as Abdullah Bayero, was the son of a Muslim cleric, Muhammad b. ‘Uthmān, whose nickname Fuduye<sup>32</sup> has become an appellation for his sons who grew prominence.<sup>33</sup> Abdullah b. Fodio was a young brother to the renowned reformer ‘Uthmān b. Fodio (Usman Dan Fodio) (d. 1232/1817), who created the 19<sup>th</sup> century Sokoto Caliphate (1804-1903) that occupied a large part of Northern Nigeria, southern Niger and some parts of Cameroon today. Born between 1180 (1766) to a scholarly family, like his elder brother, he grew to be a prominent figure in West Africa during the 19<sup>th</sup> century. He showed a keen interest in knowledge from a young age. He received Quranic education from his father, and when he was 12 years old, his education was entrusted to his older brother ‘Uthmān.<sup>34</sup> Abdullah continued his studies with his uncles and various scholars in the region, showing a particular inclination towards Islamic sciences.<sup>35</sup>

Abdullah b. Fodio is well-known for his involvement in political activities, although his political endeavours only spanned through his middle age, beginning in 1804 when he pledged allegiance to his older brother ‘Uthmān to establish a state, through unseating the Hausa leaders who were not committed to theocracy and social justice.<sup>36</sup> This led to ‘Uthmān to create an army that would wage a “jihad” to establish what will be known as one of the most significant Islamic states in West Africa.<sup>37</sup> During the Jihad, Abdullah led the first division of the army and achieved notable victories.<sup>38</sup> At a point, he grew disillusioned with the motives of some of his comrades and felt that the war had deviated from its original purpose of serving Allah. Consequently, he decided to embark on a pilgrimage and settle down in the Holy Land. However, he was persuaded by the people of Kano to stay and teach the people. He started authorship on governance as well as the teaching of tafsir.<sup>39</sup>

After the consolidation of the state, Abdullah Fodio assumed a prominent position in the state. Being the most knowledgeable and one of the oldest lieutenants of ‘Uthmān, he was considered the vizier and actively participated in governing the state, particularly in Gwandu, the eastern province.<sup>40</sup>

Abdullah b. Fodio’s intellectual and scholarly personality was highly esteemed. He is considered a gem of his time, and like his contemporaries, he ventured into various branches of Islamic sciences. He, however, stood out in the area of tafsir and Qur’anic sciences, producing three books on tafsir and three books on Qur’anic sciences. The number of these works written

<sup>32</sup> The name of the Fulani language “fwdy” is written in different ways such as Fodio, Fūdīye, Fuduye, Fūdī. In this study, we preferred Fodio, which is used in Nigerian and English literature.

<sup>33</sup> Abdullah Ibn Fodio, *The Depository of Texts*, trans. Muhammad Shareef (Sankore’ Institute of Islamic-African Studies International, no date), 8.

<sup>34</sup> Ibn Fodio, *The Depository of Texts*, 11-13.

<sup>35</sup> For details about his teachers and their family ties, see Ibn Fodio, *The Depository of Texts*, 14-22.

<sup>36</sup> Abdullah Hakim Quick, *Aspects of Islamic Social Intellectual History in Hausaland: ‘Uthman Ibn Fudi, 1774-1804 C.E* (University of Toronto, Doctorate Dissertations, 1995), 42-73; Shehu Usman M Bugaje, ‘Foreward’, *A Revolution in History: The Jihad of Usman Dan Fodio* (London-New York: Mansell, 1986), i-v.

<sup>37</sup> For different perspectives on the Fodio’s movement and establishment of the state, see Umar Labdo, *Usman Danfodio The Great Reformer of West Africa* (Zaria: Ahmadu Bello University Press, 2021), 45-56. Also see: Aliyu Abubakar, *al-Thaqāfa al-‘arabiyya fī nijrīya* (Kano: Darul Ummah Publishing Agency, 2014), 121-151.

<sup>38</sup> Ibn Fodio, *Tazyīn al-warakāt bi-jam’ ba’ d mā-lī min-l-abyāt*, critical ed. mar Muhammad Bawyi (Kano: Darul Ummah Publishing Agency, 2008), 93-95.

<sup>39</sup> Ibn Fodio, *Tazyīn al-warakāt*, 105-106.

<sup>40</sup> For information about the division of state responsibilities, see Murray Last, *The Sokoto Caliphate* (Longmans, 1967), 40-42.

in Arabic, Hausa, Fulfude and Nupe languages is more than two hundred.<sup>41</sup> His three tafsir works are *Dīyā al-tawīl fī ma'ānī al-tanzīl*, *Kifāyat al-du'afā' al-Sūdān fī bayān al-tafsīr al-Qur'ān*, *Nayl al-sūl min tafāsīr al-Rasūl*; his works on Ulūm al-Qur'ān are *Miftāḥ al-tafsīr*, *Ṣulālat al-miftāḥ wa al-Farā'id al-jalīlah* and *Wasa'it al-fawā'id al-jamīlah*.

Abdullah b. Fodio died in 1245(1829) in Gwandu province of the Sokoto caliphate.<sup>42</sup>

### 1.2.1. His work: *Ḍiyā' al-ta'wīl fī ma'ānī al-tanzīl*

*Ḍiyā' al-ta'wīl fī ma'ānī al-tanzīl* is Abdullah b. Fodio's masterpiece completed on Sha'bān 12, 1231 (July 8, 1816), a decade after the consolidation of the Sokoto caliphate.<sup>43</sup> According to the author, he wrote this tafsir book in response to the demand for a comprehensive yet concise work that would cater to the needs of the people.<sup>44</sup> Consequently, the book focuses on the socio-cultural milieu of the Sokoto caliphate and Bilād al-Sūdān during that period. The author has included various canonical recitations in the book, giving priority to the Warsh (d. 197/812) riwāya from the qirā'a of Nāfi' (d. 169/785–6), as it was the prevalent recitation in the region. When discussing fiqh issues, the author also gives precedence to the popular opinions of the Mālikī school while acknowledging other schools' perspectives. This approach allows the author to reflect the socio-cultural context of the time. After completing the initial work, Ibn Fodio simplified it and produced another book called *Kifāyat al-du'afā' al-sūdān fī bayān-tafsīr al-Qur'ān*, which is based on the Warsh riwāya and the Mālikī madhab.<sup>45</sup>

Ibn Fodio's *Ḍiyā' al-ta'wīl* was initially published in 1961 in Cairo under the patronage of Nigeria's Prime Minister, Ahmadu Bello (d.1966), who coincidentally happened to be a great-grandson of Abdullah b. Fodio's nephew. As of the time of writing this paper, we are not aware of any fully comprehensive tahqīq (critical edition) of the work.

## 2. The place of al-Gūrānī's *Ghāyat al-amānī* in Ibn Fodio's *Ḍiyā' al-ta'wīl*

In Ibn Fodio's *Ḍiyā' al-ta'wīl*, Mollā al-Gūrānī's *Ghāyat al-amānī* holds a significant place among the sources used. Studies have shown that Ibn Fodio utilised over 45 sources for his work, including at least 13 tafsir works.<sup>46</sup> Out of these 13 works, four were particularly important and frequently cited: al-Tha'ālibī's *al-Jawāhir al-ḥisān fī tafāsīr al-Qur'ān*, al-Bayḍāwī's *Anwār al-tanzīl*, Ibn al-'Arabī's (d. 543/1148) *Aḥkām al-Qur'ān*, and Mollā al-Gūrānī's *Ghāyat al-amānī*. While al-Tha'ālibī's work was used in a more general manner, Ibn al-'Arabī's work was primarily referenced for jurisprudential matters, and both al-Bayḍāwī and Mollā al-Gūrānī were utilised in the areas like rhetoric, grammar, and recitation.<sup>47</sup> These

<sup>41</sup> For a list of his Arabic works, see Abdullahi Bukhari, 'Abdullahi Ibn Fodiyo and His Scholarly Works' (Accessed 13 June 2023). For perspective on the number of works he authored, see. Ifeoluwa Siddiq Oyelami, *Abdullah b. Fūdī ve Ziyā'ü't-te'vīl fī meānī't-tanzīl adlı tefsiri* (Kayseri: Erciyes University, Masters Thesis, 2020), 28-32.

<sup>42</sup> Oyelami, *Abdullah b. Fūdī ve Ziyā'ü't-te'vīl*, 19.

<sup>43</sup> Abdullah Ibn Fodio, *Ḍiyā' al-ta'wīl fī ma'ānī al-tanzīl*, critical ed. Aḥmad Abū al-Su'ūd - 'Uthmān al-Ṭayyib (Cairo: Matba' al-Istiqāma, 1961), 4/302.

<sup>44</sup> Ibn Fodio, *Ḍiyā' al-ta'wīl*, 1/7.

<sup>45</sup> For more information, see Ifeoluwa Siddiq Oyelami, 'Abdullah b. Fūdī ve Kifāyetü du'afā' i's-sūdān fī beyānī tefsiri'l-kur'ān adlı Tefsir Eseri', *Tefsir Araştırmaları Dergisi* 6/1 (30 April 2022), 271–291.

<sup>46</sup> Bello, *Abdullah b. Fūdī wa mu'allafātihi*, 77-80.

<sup>47</sup> Oyelami, *Abdullah b. Fūdī ve Ziyā'ü't-te'vīl*, 38-42. For details on the major source of Ibn Fodio, see Bello, *Abdullah b. Fūdī wa mu'allafātihi*, 77-78; Andrea Brigaglia, 'Batı Afrika'da Tefsir Çalışmaları ve İslami İlimler Tarihi', trans. İsmail Albayrak, *Tefsire Akademik Yaklaşımlar*, ed. Mehmet Akif Koç - İsmail Albayrak, 1 Volume (Otto, 2015), 2/316.



sources were utilised throughout the tafsir work, with instances where they were used consistently but not explicitly cited.

To illustrate this, let us examine the case of Sūrat al-Kahf. In Ibn Fodio's tafsir of this chapter, he cited ten works by their names or authors, including six tafsir works: al-Tha'ālibī (8), Ibn 'Atiyya (5), Ibn al-'Arabī (5), al-Gūrānī (4), al-Bayḍāwī (4), and al-Suyūfī (1). While Ibn 'Atiyya's work, not counted among his primary sources, was quoted more frequently than three out of the four primary sources,<sup>48</sup> it can be observed that there are numerous parallels between the statements used by Ibn Fodio and his primary sources within the same surah. Specifically, he sometimes utilised their words verbatim without explicitly mentioning their names. For example, he uses Ibn al-'Arabī's words to demonstrate that the verse “فَابْعَثُوا أَحَدَكُمْ بِوَرِقِكُمْ هَذِهِ”<sup>49</sup> is evidence of the permissibility of wakāla (appointing someone as an agent).<sup>50</sup> Similarly, he employs al-Gūrānī's words “(their words) was based on guess and this is not considered a lie” in the context of the verse “قَالُوا لَبِثْنَا يَوْمًا أَوْ بَعْضَ يَوْمٍ”<sup>51</sup> where the ashāb al-kahf (the people of the cave) were deliberating whether they had slept for a day or lesser.<sup>52</sup>

To gain a deeper understanding of the impact of Mollā al-Gūrānī's writings on Ibn Fodio's works and to examine the underlying factors that influenced Ibn Fodio's selection of al-Gūrānī's work in different aspects of Quranic exegesis, the subsequent section will be dedicated to exploring how Ibn Fodio employed al-Gūrānī's work as a source in his own compositions. This section will be divided into distinct themes to facilitate a comprehensive analysis.

## 2.1. Riwāya

The incorporation of narrations from the Prophet, his companions, and the tābi'ūn in tafsir books is an indispensable component. These narrations provide invaluable insights into the contextual interpretation of the Qur'an. Given that the Prophet received the revelation, the ṣaḥāba witnessed the events surrounding it, and they transmitted their knowledge to their own students, who, like the previous generation, possessed a profound understanding of the language and cultural nuances. However, despite these advantages, these reports, which constitute the corpus of riwāya tafsir, can present challenges. They may have been fabricated or inaccurately attributed to a particular context.<sup>53</sup> Hence, when a mufassir retrieves such information from older sources, subjecting them to rigorous scrutiny is imperative. al-Gūrānī's meticulous examination of sources, including al-Bayḍāwī and al-Zamakhsharī, is highly regarded. Ibn Fodio utilised al-Gūrānī's critical analysis on authenticity and accurate application of narrations, citing him specifically, as illustrated in the examples that follow.

The historical context of the Quran holds immense significance and plays a pivotal role in comprehending the intent behind its verses. Therefore, ensuring the authenticity and accurate

<sup>48</sup> Ibn Fodio might have been quoting Ibn 'Atiyya through al-Tha'ālibī's al-Jawāhir, considering that the latter is regarded as an abridged version of the former. Cf. Brigaglia, 'Batı Afrika'da Tefsir Çalışmaları, 317. For more detailed information on al-Tha'ālibī's al-Jawāhir, see M. Suat Mertoğlu, 'SE'ĀLĪBĪ, Ebū Zeyd', *TDV İslâm Ansiklopedisi* (Istanbul: TDV Yayınları, 2009), 239-240.

<sup>49</sup> al-Kahf 18/19.

<sup>50</sup> Ibn Fodio, *Ḍiyā' al-ta'wīl*, 3/7. Cf. Abū Bakr Ibn al-'Arabī, *Aḥkām al-Qur'ān*, critical ed. Muḥammad 'Abd al-Qādir 'Aṭā (Beirut: Dār al-Kutub al-'Ilmiyya, 2003), 3/221.

<sup>51</sup> al-Kahf 18:19.

<sup>52</sup> Ibn Fodio, *Ḍiyā' al-ta'wīl*, 3/6. Cf. Mollā al-Gūrānī, *Ghāyat al-amānī*, 3/192.

<sup>53</sup> For details on the problem of transmitted tafsir, see Muḥammad Ḥusayn al-Dhahabī, *al-Tafsīr wa-al-mufasssīrūn* (Cairo: al-Maṭba'a al-Wahbiyya, 1967), 1/112-120.

utilisation of historical reports is of utmost importance. al-Gūrānī displayed a critical approach toward al-Bayḍāwī and al-Zamakhsharī in terms of establishing and appropriately employing these reports in Quranic commentary.<sup>54</sup> It is possible that Ibn Fodio recognised this aspect of al-Gūrānī’s work and incorporated it into his own methodology. For instance, in the context of Isra 17:76, which states, “And verily they were about to frighten you so much as to drive you out from the land. But in that case, they would not have stayed (therein) after you, except for a little while,” Ibn Fodio quoted from al-Bayḍāwī, albeit with the phrase “qīla,” alluding to its weakness that the verse refers to the Jews who envied the Prophet and were displeased with his presence in Madina. Thus, they told him, “The Levant is the land of the Prophets; if you are truly a Prophet, then go there, and we will believe in you.”<sup>55</sup> However, after presenting this report, Ibn Fodio cited al-Gūrānī, who stated, “There is no basis for this story, and no one has reported it.”<sup>56</sup>

Ibn Fodio’s citation of al-Gūrānī’s opinion regarding the Gharānīq event demonstrates his ability to blend the opinions of his sources, including al-Gūrānī while maintaining a balanced approach. The Gharānīq event is a controversial incident related to the revelation of Sūrat al-Najm 53:19-20: “أَفَرَأَيْتُمُ اللَّاتَ وَالْعُزَّىٰ وَمَنَاةَ الثَّالِثَةَ الْأُخْرَىٰ” (So have you considered al-Lāt and al-‘Uzzā and the third one, Manāt, as well?). According to various sources, it is claimed that when the Prophet recited these verses to the polytheists of Makkah, Shaytan caused him to add an additional passage that praises the idols as beautiful and lofty birds, with the possibility of intercession from them.<sup>57</sup> Mufasssīrūn have discussed this incident as the sabab al-nuzūl for Sūrat al-Hajj 22:52, which states, “And We sent not before you any messenger or prophet except that when he spoke [or recited], Satan threw into it [some misunderstanding].” While these assertions have serious implications for the concept of prophethood, some mufasssīrūn like al-Zamakhsharī have commented on the verse, suggesting that the Prophet may have inadvertently praised the Makkan idols due to oversight or error, with Jibrīl later correcting him.<sup>58</sup> However, al-Bayḍāwī rejects this claim as unsupported by the muḥaqqiqūn (scholars of deep insight).<sup>59</sup>

When addressing the Gharānīq event, Ibn Fodio began by quoting the event with the phrase “qīla” to indicate its faultiness. He then states that “most” mufasssīrūn believe that Shaytan indeed cast the statement in the Prophet’s tongue, but the words were not the Prophet’s own.<sup>60</sup> Ibn Fodio proceeded to criticise the report, starting with al-Bayḍāwī’s rejection of it by the muḥaqqiqūn. He further quotes al-Qāḍī ‘Iyāḍ (ö. 544/1149) from his book, *al-Shifā*, who asserted the unauthenticity of the story based on the absence of any authentic hadith collection reporting it and the belief in the Prophet’s protection from such errors.<sup>61</sup> Ibn Fodio added the

<sup>54</sup> Yıldız, *Fatih’in Hocası Molla Gürani ve Tefsiri*, 213-216.

<sup>55</sup> Nāṣir al-Dīn al-Bayḍāwī, *Anwār al-tanzīl wa-asrār al-ta’wīl*, critical ed. Muḥammad ‘Abd al-Raḥmān al-Mar‘ashlī (Beirut: Dār Iḥya’ Turāth al-‘Arabī, 1998), 3/263.

<sup>56</sup> Ibn Fodio, *Diyā’ al-ta’wīl*, 2/260. Cf. Mollā al-Gūrānī, *Ghāyat al-amānī*, 3/164.

<sup>57</sup> “تِلْكَ الْغُرَانِيقُ الْعَالِيَةُ، وَإِنَّ شِفَاعَتَهُنَّ لَتُرْتَجَى” (These are beautiful and lofty birds and there is hope of intercession from them).

<sup>58</sup> Jār Allāh Abū l-Qāsim Maḥmūd b. ‘Umar al-Zamakhsharī, *al-Kashshāf ‘an-ḥaqā’iq ghawāmiḍal-tanzīl wa-‘uyūnal-aqāwīl fī wujūh al-ta’wīl*, critical ed. Alī Muḥammad Mu‘awwad, ‘Ādil Aḥmad ‘Abd al-Mawjūd (Riyadh: Maktabat al-‘Ubaykan, 1998), 4/203-206.

<sup>59</sup> al-Bayḍāwī, *Anwār al-tanzīl wa-asrār al-ta’wīl*, 4/75.

<sup>60</sup> Ibn Fodio, *Diyā’ al-ta’wīl*, 3/95.

<sup>61</sup> For a comprehensive analysis of the subject by al-Qāḍī ‘Iyāḍ, see ‘Iyāḍ Ibn Mūsā al-Yaḥṣubī al-Qāḍī ‘Iyāḍ, *al-Shifā’ bi ta’rīf ḥuqūq al-muṣṭafā*, critical ed. Aḥmad b. Muḥammad al-Shumunnī (Beirut: Muzīl al-khafā’ ‘an alfāz al-Shifā’, 1988), 2/124-135.

criticisms of Ibn ‘Atiyya and Ibn al-‘Arabī, who also challenged the report’s authenticity and raised theological implications.<sup>62</sup>

Next, Ibn Fodio cited al-Gūrānī, who directed his criticism toward the mufassirūn, possibly referring to al-Zamakhsharī, who suggested that the Prophet made those statements due to oversight and error, with Jibrīl coming to correct him. al-Gūrānī, as quoted by Ibn Fodio, dismissed this as superstition and cast doubt on the authenticity of the report, arguing that if the Prophet indeed pronounced those words, it would have been a form of praise for the angels based on the context of the verse that discusses those who deny the Hereafter associating femininity with angels (إِنَّ الَّذِينَ لَا يُؤْمِنُونَ بِالْآخِرَةِ لَيَسْمُؤْنَ الْمَلَائِكَةَ تَسْمِيَةً الْأَنْثَى)<sup>63</sup>.<sup>64</sup> While this statement of al-Gūrānī stands out among the various sources cited by Ibn Fodio in relation to this verse, Ibn Fodio concluded his commentary on the verse with the words of al-Qaṣṭalānī (d. 923/1517), who suggested that either the report is not authentic or those words were uttered by Shaytan himself, interpolating the Prophet’s recitation when he was silent.<sup>65</sup>

Be that as it may, this analysis reveals Ibn Fodio’s recognition of al-Gūrānī’s expertise in hadith and tafsir, as he cited him alongside more prominent classical sources among the mufassirūn and muhadithūn. In certain instances, Ibn Fodio even relied on al-Gūrānī’s evaluations of hadiths. For instance, after quoting Ibn al-‘Arabī’s refutation of the notion that the Qur’an was initially revealed on the 15th night of Shaban, along with other virtues associated with that night, Ibn Fodio mentions that al-Gūrānī regarded the best available narration concerning this matter to be mursal in nature.<sup>66</sup>

Based on our observation, it appears that Ibn Fodio has also largely benefited from al-Gūrānī’s approach in excluding fabricated narrations regarding the virtues of certain surahs and verses of the Quran. While Ibn Fodio’s other main sources, al-Bayḍāwī and al-Tha‘ālibī, included such fabricated narrations, al-Gūrānī purified his work from such reports.<sup>67</sup> Thus, Ibn Fodio followed al-Gūrānī’s legacy by only reporting surah virtues that are authentically reported. For example, at the end of Sūrat al-Mu‘mimūn, Ibn Fodio narrated a hadith that al-Gūrānī also mentioned:

“al-Tirmidhī has related on the authority of ‘Umar b. al-Khaṭṭāb (May Allah be pleased with him) saying: We heard a sound like the buzzing of bees. Then we waited a while. Then the messenger of Allah turned to face the qibla, raised his hands, and said: ‘O Allah, give us more (blessing) and do not give us less; honour us, and do not humiliate us. Give to us and do not deprive us, give precedence to us and do not give others precedence over us; be pleased with us and make us pleased.’ Then he said: ‘Ten verses have been revealed to me; whoever adheres to them will enter Paradise.’ Then he recited: ‘فَقَدْ أَقْلَحَ الْمُؤْمِنُونَ...’ (Successful indeed are the believers...).”<sup>68</sup>

The report could also be found in Ibn Fodio’s most cited source, al-Tha‘ālibī’s *al-Jawāhir al-ḥisān* as well as Ibn al-‘Arabī’s *Aḥkām*.<sup>69</sup> However, Ibn Fodio used the exact words

<sup>62</sup> Ibn Fodio, *Ḍiyā’ al-ta’wīl*, 3/96.

<sup>63</sup> al-Najm 53/27.

<sup>64</sup> Cf. Mollā al-Gūrānī, *Ghāyat al-amānī*, 3/386.

<sup>65</sup> For al-Qaṣṭalānī’s critiques, see Muḥammad b. Abī Bakr b. ‘Abd al-Malik al-Qaṣṭalānī, *Irshād al-sārī li sharḥ ṣaḥīḥ al-bukhārī* (Egypt: Al-Maṭba‘a al-Kubrā al-Amīriyya, 1323), 7/242-243, 362-363.

<sup>66</sup> Ibn Fodio, *Ḍiyā’ al-ta’wīl*, 4/93. Cf. Ibn al-‘Arabī, *Aḥkām al-Qur’ān*, 4/117; Mollā al-Gūrānī, *Ghāyat al-amānī*, 4/467.

<sup>67</sup> For details about Mollā al-Gūrānī’s scrutiny of faḍā’il al-suwar reports, see Yıldız, Fatih’in Hocası Molla Gūrānī ve Tefsiri, 193-196.

<sup>68</sup> Ibn Fodio, *Ḍiyā’ al-ta’wīl*, 3/117. Cf. Mollā al-Gūrānī, *Ghāyat al-amānī*, 3/430.

<sup>69</sup> Ibn al-‘Arabī, *Aḥkām Al-Qur’ān*, 3/311; ‘Abd al-Raḥmān al-Tha‘ālibī, *al-Jawāhir al-ḥisān fī tafsīr al-Qur’ān*, critical ed. ‘Alī Mu‘awwad, ‘Ādil ‘Abd al-Mawjūd (Beirut: Dār Iḥyā’ al-Turāth al-‘Arabī, 1997), 4/131.

of al-Gūrānī and added the citation of al-Tirmidhī, which was included in Ibn al-‘Arabī’s work but not in al-Gūrānī’s. The fact that Ibn Fodio excluded two narrations on the virtues of Sūrat al-Mu’immūn, which were mentioned by al-Bayḍāwī<sup>70</sup> but not included by al-Gūrānī, further highlights the influence of al-Gūrānī’s approach on Ibn Fodio’s careful selection of narrations. This demonstrates Ibn Fodio’s preference for relying on authentic and reliable narrations while excluding those that may be questionable or fabricated. Therefore, it is reasonable to conclude that al-Gūrānī’s influence played a role in shaping Ibn Fodio’s cautious approach to choosing narrations related to the virtues of surahs.

However, it is worth noting that Ibn Fodio included a statement on the virtues of Sūrat al-Fīl that is not present in al-Gūrānī’s *Ghāyat al-amānī*. Ibn Fodio quoted al-Tha‘ālibī, who cited al-Ghazālī (d. 505/1111), mentioning that a pious person said, “Whoever recites Sūrat al-Fātiha and Sūrat al-Inshirah in the first rak‘ah of the rakaṭayn al-fajr, and Sūrat al-Fātiha and Sūrat al-Fīl in the second rak‘ah, all enemies will fail against him, and Allah will not make a way for them against him.”<sup>71</sup> In conclusion, it can be observed that Ibn Fodio’s careful selection of narrations regarding the virtues of surahs was influenced by al-Gūrānī’s approach. However, he also incorporated additional statements from other sources, such as al-Tha‘ālibī.

## 2.2. Qirā’āt

The examination and elucidation of different canonical recitations of the Qur’an hold significant importance in both al-Gūrānī’s *Ghāyat al-amānī* and Ibn Fodio’s *Ḍiyā’ al-ta’wīl*. It is noteworthy that both scholars have identified the exposition of qirā’āt as one of the principal objectives of their works. In his introductory note, al-Gūrānī states, “...in order to fully comprehend the meanings, I will mention the seven mutawātir qirā’āt...”<sup>72</sup> Similarly, Abdullah b. Fodio mentions in his own introduction, “...that I should write a tafsir (...) and it will highlight the popular qirā’āt, starting with the qirā’a of Nāfi’ with the riwāya of Warsh, as it is the qirā’a of our region...”<sup>73</sup>

The apparent similarity in style between the two scholars may lead one to surmise that Ibn Fodio simply copied the qirā’āt section of his work from al-Gūrānī, possibly with some alterations. However, a closer examination of their methodologies reveals that while there might have been some influence, particularly in uncovering the complementary meanings embedded in the various recitations, it is not necessarily pronounced in all aspects of Ibn Fodio’s qirā’āt analyses.

To start with the style, the styles employed by the two mufassir in relating the canonical recitations are very similar. They mention the names of the qirā’āt imams one after the other and state how they recite and, if necessary, the linguistic implications of the differences. They frequently state the difference that may be applicable among rāwīs (transmitters) too. As it is understood from Ibn Fodio’s introduction, Nāfi’’s recitation takes precedence in his listing because that is the qirā’a of the Bilād al-Sūdān. To a large extent, Nāfi’’s precedence is also a phenomenon in al-Gūrānī’s work, but it seems this is only based on the common order in qirā’āt studies.

While there are instances where Ibn Fodio’s grammatical analyses bear a resemblance to those of al-Gūrānī, it would be incorrect to assume that they were directly copied. Take, for

<sup>70</sup> See: al-Bayḍāwī, *Anwār al-tanzīl wa-asrār al-ta’wīl*, 4/97.

<sup>71</sup> Ibn Fodio, *Ḍiyā’ al-ta’wīl*, 4/296. Cf. al-Tha‘ālibī, *al-Jawāhir al-ḥisān*, 5/628.

<sup>72</sup> Mollā al-Gūrānī, *Ghāyat al-amānī*, 1/26.

<sup>73</sup> Ibn Fodio, *Ḍiyā’ al-ta’wīl*, 1/7.

example, the second verse of Sūrat Ibrāhīm, where Ibn Fodio states that “(الله) is recited with *raf*’ by Nāfi’ and Ibn Amr, indicating that it is the mubtada’ (subject) with its khabar (predicate) being what is adjoined after it (i.e., Allah is to whom belongs what is in the heavens and the earth).” He further explained that the rest of the qirā’āt imams recite (الله) with *jar*, indicating that it functions as an apposition, and what follows it is attributions (i.e., ...by the Will of their Lord, to the Path of the Almighty, the Praiseworthy, Allah, the one to whom belongs what is in the heavens and the earth).<sup>74</sup>

In the commentary on this verse, al-Gūrānī introduces another possible grammatical interpretation of “الله” when recited with *raf*’, suggesting that it could also be a predicate with an implied subject (mubtada’ mahzūf), and what comes after it is attributed to it (≈He is Allah to whom belongs what is in the heavens and the earth).<sup>75</sup> However, Ibn Fodio did not include this explanation, nor did he mention the emphasis that the first verse should be recited with al-waqf al-tām (complete stop) because, unlike al-Gūrānī,<sup>76</sup> Ibn Fodio did not make al-waqf wa al-ibtidā’ a specific topic within his qirā’āt analyses.

A significant aspect of al-Gūrānī’s exegeses related to qirā’āt, which one would expect to find transferred into Ibn Fodio’s work, is criticisms directed towards al-Zamakhsharī and al-Bayḍāwī. However, it appears that Ibn Fodio intentionally avoided engaging in polemics and instead opted to incorporate the fundamental explanations that are evidently derived from al-Gūrānī’s work. For instance, Sakip Yıldız pointed out that al-Gūrānī’s qirā’āt commentary of the phrase “وَمَا أَنْتُمْ بِمُصْرَخِي”<sup>77</sup> serves as a critique of al-Zamakhsharī’s commentary who considered the recitation of “مُصْرَخِي” with a kasra on the *yā* as ḍa’if (weak), and he referred to the poem verse used to support it as unknown.<sup>78</sup> In contrast, al-Gūrānī offered the following explanation:

“Hamza recited it by placing a kasra on the silent *yā* (ي) based on the analogy that the addition (iḍāfa) of a vowel to a silent *yā* is similar to the *ya* of “غلامي” (ي in the word ghulāmī). Therefore, when the nūn (ن) was omitted due to the iḍāfa and two silent letters combined, the second one received a vowel (ḥaraka) due to the impossibility of having a vowel on the first letter because of i’rāb. Additionally, idghām (merging of sounds) is possible when two silent letters meet. Thus, when a silent letter is given a vowel, it is typically assigned a kasra per the regular rule. This explanation has been reported by Arab linguists such as Quṭrub, al-Farrā’, and Abū ‘Amr b. al-‘Alā’.”<sup>79</sup>

When Ibn Fodio was to explain this same word, he said:

“The majority recited *ya* with fatha while Hamza recited it with a kasra. based on the analogy that the iḍāfa of a vowel to a silent *ya* is similar to the *ya* of “ghulāmī.” Therefore, when the nūn (ن) was omitted due to the iḍāfa, and two silent letters combined and the second one received a vowel idghām is possible.”<sup>80</sup>

In this example, we can observe that Ibn Fodio relayed al-Gūrānī’s correction regarding al-Zamakhsharī’s statement, but he did not delve into it in detail. It is worth noting that there are other instances where al-Gūrānī remained silent about the mistakes made by al-Bayḍāwī and

<sup>74</sup> Ibn Fodio, *Diyā’ al-ta’wīl*, 2/195.

<sup>75</sup> Mollā al-Gūrānī, *Ghāyat al-amānī*, 3/7.

<sup>76</sup> For relevant examples, see Bilici, *Ġāyetü’l-Emānī adlı tefsirinde Molla Gürānī’nin kiraatlere yaklaşımı*, 60-64.

<sup>77</sup> Ibrāhīm 14/22.

<sup>78</sup> Yıldız, Fatih’in Hocası Molla Gürānī ve Tefsiri, 285-286. Cf. al-Zamakhsharī, *al-Kashshāf*, 3/375-376.

<sup>79</sup> Mollā al-Gūrānī, *Ghāyat al-amānī*, 3/18.

<sup>80</sup> Ibn Fodio, *Diyā’ al-ta’wīl*, 2/200.

al-Zamakhsharī. In such cases, Ibn Fodio took it upon himself to rectify these errors. For instance, when discussing the recitation of the word “أئمة” in the context of the verse “فَقَاتِلُوا أئِمَّةً”،<sup>81</sup> Nāfi‘, Ibn Kathīr and Abū ‘Amr recite it as “أئمة” with ibdāl (replacing the letter “ى” with “ي”).<sup>82</sup> However, both al-Zamakhsharī and al-Bayḍāwī consider this a lahn (mispronunciation).<sup>83</sup> While al-Gūrānī remained silent on this matter, Ibn Fodio pointed out that it is not a lahn but a recitation known among some of the reciters, such as Hishām, as well as some grammarians.<sup>84</sup> He supported his argument by citing al-Shāṭibī’s (ö. 590/1194) poem:

وَأئِمَّةٌ بِالْخُلْفِ قَدْ مُدَّ وَحَدُهُ      وَسَوَّلَ سَمًا وَصَفَا وَ فِي التَّحْوِ أُبْدِلَا<sup>85</sup>

Another aspect of qirā’āt in which Ibn Fodio may have benefited from al-Gūrānī as a source, although infrequently, is the issue of preference. al-Gūrānī often expressed his preferences among various recitations, and this is considered a prominent characteristic of his work in terms of qirā’āt.<sup>86</sup> While Ibn Fodio has omitted most of al-Gūrānī’s preferences, in particular instances like Sūrat al-Mā’ida 5:13 “فِيمَا نَقَضِهِمْ مِدَائِقَهُمْ لَعَنَهُمْ وَجَعَلْنَا قُلُوبَهُمْ قَاسِيَةً”، following al-Gūrānī’s lead, he mentioned that “قَاسِيَةً” is more eloquent (ablag).<sup>87</sup> “Ablag” is one of the terms used by al-Gūrānī to indicate his preferences.<sup>88</sup>

Conclusively, in the case of qirā’āt, it can be said that Ibn Fodio’s work shares some stylistic resemblance with al-Gūrānī’s. However, Ibn Fodio did not employ the same methods of criticism and preferences as al-Gūrānī did. It is evident that he was aware of al-Gūrānī’s commentaries of this nature since he drew from them. However, he did not consider it necessary to incorporate all of al-Gūrānī’s approaches into his own work. Moreover, when al-Gūrānī remained silent on mistakes made by al-Bayḍāwī and al-Zamakhsharī, Ibn Fodio deemed it appropriate to address them using other sources, which may have been his main source of qirā’āt analysis.

### 2.3. Kalām

Mollā al-Gūrānī and Abdullah b. Fodio were both Sunni scholars inclined towards the Ash‘arī school of theology. Ibn Fodio even wrote a poetic book on theology based on the teachings of the Ash‘arī scholar Muḥammad b. Yūsuf al-Sanūsī (d. 895/1490). The two exegete’s tafsir works do share similarities, particularly in terms of providing brief information, defining theological concepts, and deducing theological rulings. However, al-Gūrānī’s tafsir is also characterised by criticising al-Zamakhsharī’s doctrines,<sup>89</sup> whereas Ibn Fodio tends to refer to other books, including his own, for further discussions.<sup>90</sup>

<sup>81</sup> al-Tawba 9/12.

<sup>82</sup> Ibn Fodio, *Ḍiyā’ al-ta’wīl*, 2/68.

<sup>83</sup> al-Zamakhsharī, *al-Kashshāf*, 3/18; al-Bayḍāwī, *Anwār al-tanzīl wa-asrār al-ta’wīl*, 3/73.

<sup>84</sup> Ibn Fodio, *Ḍiyā’ al-ta’wīl*, 2/68.

<sup>85</sup> Cf. al-Qāsim b. Firrūh b. Khalaf al-Shāṭibī, *Ḥirz al-amānī wa-wajh al-tahānī fī qirā’āt al-sab’* (Damascus: Dār al-Ghawthānī, 2010), 16.

<sup>86</sup> Yıldız, Fatih’in Hocası Molla Gürani ve Tefsiri, 280; Dartma, ‘Khaṣā’is al-kitāb’, 1/14.

<sup>87</sup> Ibn Fodio, *Ḍiyā’ al-ta’wīl*, 2/230.

<sup>88</sup> Yıldız, Fatih’in Hocası Molla Gürani ve Tefsiri, 280.

<sup>89</sup> Yıldız, Fatih’in Hocası Molla Gürani ve Tefsiri, 289, 298-302. For more information, see Kutbettin Ekinci, ‘Kādī Beyzāvī ve Zemahşerī’nin Fātiha ve Bakara Sûrelerindeki Yorumlarına Molla Gürānī’nin Tenkitleri’, *Cumhuriyet İlahiyat Dergisi* 22/1 (15 June 2018), 317-346; Mahmut Ay, ‘Fātiha ve Bakara Sureleri Örneğinde Molla Gürani’nin Beydavi Eleştirisi’, *Osmanlı Toplumunda Kur’an Kültürü ve Tefsir Çalışmaları*, ed. Bilal Gökçir et al., Kur’an ve Tefsir Akademisi Araştırmaları: 03 (Istanbul: İlim Yayma Vakfı Kur’an ve Tefsir Akademisi, 2011), 397-415.

<sup>90</sup> Oyelami, *Abdullah b. Fûdî ve Ziyâ’ü’t-te’wīl*, 97-98.

In the context of discussing the “Arsh” (throne) of Allah in relation to the verse “إِنَّ رَبَّكُمْ” إِنَّ رَبَّكُمْ”<sup>91</sup> both Ibn Fodio and al-Gūrānī interpret the istawā of Allah as the execution of His rulings on His creatures after creation.<sup>92</sup> However, Ibn Fodio added a note from al-Gūrānī’s work, *Ghāyat al-amānī*, stating that the belief that “the throne of Allah is a body encompassing all other bodies” has no basis in Sharia. Instead, “what is established is that the throne of Al-Rahmān is a body of light over the heavens.”<sup>93</sup> Similarly, in the context of Sūrat al-Nisā 4:165, Ibn Fodio cited al-Gūrānī who had cited Abū Abū al-Ḥasan al-Ash‘arī (d. 324/935-6), stating that there is no “taklīf” (obligation or responsibility) before the sending of a messenger.<sup>94</sup>

There are also instances where Ibn Fodio demonstrated a synthesis of al-Gūrānī and al-Bayḍāwī’s commentaries on kalām matters. In his commentary on Sūrat al-Nisā 4:137, he addressed the issue of repeated alternation between belief and disbelief. While al-Bayḍāwī emphasised that sincere establishment of faith would be acceptable and forgivable,<sup>95</sup> al-Gūrānī highlighted that this is a mockery of religion and the Messenger, stating that Allah would not guide them to forgiveness.<sup>96</sup> Ibn Fodio echoed their views but also cited the fact that repentance before death is accepted and that the cessation of disbelief leads to forgiveness of past sins.<sup>97</sup>

Conclusively, on the issues of kalām, while Ibn Fodio did not extensively quote al-Gūrānī’s content directly, there are instances where he incorporated al-Gūrānī’s words or referenced him to support or clarify certain theological points in his own commentary. Moreover, both being adherents of the same school of theology, it is not unnatural to find so many parallels between their words even though Ibn Fodio did not quote him directly.

## 2.4. Fiqh

The interpretation of verses related to jurisprudential issues is another area where the works of Ibn Fodio and al-Gūrānī intersect. It is worth noting that they may not have much in common in this particular area. al-Gūrānī was initially an adherent of the al-Shāfi‘ī school but later became a Hanafī.<sup>98</sup> On the other hand, Ibn Fodio followed the Mālikī school of thought. al-Gūrānī often cited the opinions of the Hanafī and Shāfi‘ī schools, while Ibn Fodio, influenced by Ibn al-‘Arabī,<sup>99</sup> cited the opinions of all four major schools of thought, occasionally even including the Dhāhirī school. However, he prioritised the Mālikī opinions.<sup>100</sup> Ibn Fodio’s other major source, *al-Jawāhir al-ḥisān*, is also inclined towards the Mālikī school. Nevertheless, this does not prevent him from utilising al-Gūrānī’s words in this area of exegesis.

Ibn Fodio has cited al-Gūrānī to establish some principles of uṣūl al-fiqh through istinbāt (derivation of laws). For example, al-Gūrānī commented on the verse “يَأْتِيهَا الَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوا إِنْ جَاءَكُمْ” يَأْتِيهَا الَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوا إِنْ جَاءَكُمْ”<sup>101</sup> stating that while the report of a fasiq

<sup>91</sup> al-A‘rāf 7/54.

<sup>92</sup> Ibn Fodio, *Ḍiyā’ al-ta’wīl*, 2/12. Cf. Mollā al-Gūrānī, *Ghāyat al-amānī*, 2/117.

<sup>93</sup> Ibn Fodio, *Ḍiyā’ al-ta’wīl*, 2/12-13. Cf. Mollā al-Gūrānī, *Ghāyat al-amānī*, 2/117.

<sup>94</sup> Ibn Fodio, *Ḍiyā’ al-ta’wīl*, 1/220. Cf. Mollā al-Gūrānī, *Ghāyat al-amānī*, 1/496.

<sup>95</sup> al-Bayḍāwī, *Anwār al-tanzīl wa-asrār al-ta’wīl*, 2/103.

<sup>96</sup> Mollā al-Gūrānī, *Ghāyat al-amānī*, 1/483.

<sup>97</sup> Ibn Fodio, *Ḍiyā’ al-ta’wīl*, 1/214.

<sup>98</sup> Yaşaroğlu, ‘Molla Gūrānī’, 249. The claim that this was done at the request of Murad II (or that it ever happened) has been challenged by Aḥmad b. Ya‘qūb al-Fāriḥ, see al-Fāriḥ, ‘Al-Muqaddima’, 1/22.

<sup>99</sup> Oyelami, *Abdullah b. Fūdī ve Ziyā’ü’t-Te’vīl*, 127-128.

<sup>100</sup> He mentioned this objective in his introductory note, see Ibn Fodio, *Ḍiyā’ al-ta’wīl*, 1/7. For examples of how he applied it, see Oyelami, *Abdullah b. Fūdī ve Ziyā’ü’t-te’vīl*, 102-108.

<sup>101</sup> al-Ḥujurat 49/6.

individual cannot be relied upon, the report of a single just individual (khabar al-‘adl al-wāhid) can be trusted. Ibn Fodio quoted al-Gūrānī verbatim, saying, “The verse constitutes evidence for the rejection of the news of a fasiq person and the acceptance of the news from the single just person.”<sup>102</sup> Undoubtedly, this legal maxim derived by al-Gūrānī from the verse is important in the discourse of khabar al-wāhid, which is widely discussed across different schools of thought. Similarly, when talking about the severity of flogging punishments in the context of the Sūrat al-Nūr 24/4, Ibn Fodio quoted Mollā al-Gūrānī’s commentary.<sup>103</sup>

Meanwhile, Ibn Fodio did not heavily rely on al-Gūrānī’s work for verses of aḥkam (legal rulings). In cases where al-Gūrānī criticised his own sources, Ibn Fodio appeared to disregard or bypass these criticisms. An example of this can be seen in the context of Sūrat al-Mu’minūn 23/6, which prohibits extra-marital sexual relationships except with “righthand possess” (female slaves). Ibn Fodio quoted al-Gūrānī verbatim, where al-Gūrānī stated, “In this, there is an indication that it (legal sexual intercourse) is mubāḥ (permissible) and there is no reward or blame/punishment because of the hadith...”.<sup>104</sup> al-Gūrānī then went on to discuss the prohibition of mut‘a marriage, seemingly criticising al-Zamakhsharī’s interpretation that the verse is not evidence against mut‘a marriage because a woman married through mut‘a marriage, if valid, is considered one’s wife.<sup>105</sup> al-Gūrānī, without mentioning al-Zamakhsharī explicitly, stated, “and mut‘a marriage is not correct by consensus. There is no ground for counting the woman married through mut‘a marriage as a spouse.”<sup>106</sup> It is worth noting that Ibn Fodio did not include this part of al-Gūrānī’s commentary, but instead, he proceeded to discuss the rulings regarding sexual relationships with female slaves.<sup>107</sup>

This demonstrates that while Ibn Fodio made use of al-Gūrānī’s work in matters of fiqh, he selectively incorporated certain aspects and disregarded or omitted others, particularly when it came to al-Gūrānī’s criticisms of his own sources. Moreover, Ibn Fodio’s having distinct approach and priorities in addressing legal issues made him not necessarily adopt much of al-Gūrānī’s commentaries in this aspect of his work.

## 2.5. Ishārī (allegorical) tafsir

Another aspect worth comparing between the works of the two exegetes is the use of ishārī (allegorical) exegesis. Allegorical commentaries on the Qur’an date back to the time of the ṣaḥāba.<sup>108</sup> Despite its reflective and moral teaching nature, there are instances where it is taken to extremes and the mufassir engaging in it interprets verses of the Qur’an accordingly. Hence, it is not uncommon to find a mufassir who, despite including some ishārī commentaries in their own work, criticises others that they consider extreme. This is the case with al-Gūrānī’s work against his major source, al-Bayḍāwī’s *Anwār al-tanzīl*.<sup>109</sup>

Ibn Fodio’s reference to al-Gūrānī’s work regarding ishārī commentaries is significant because he adopted a more liberal approach in citing him. Sometimes, he quoted him, and at other times he did not. Sometimes, he cited al-Gūrānī’s criticisms, and sometimes he ignored

<sup>102</sup> Ibn Fodio, *Ḍiyā’ al-ta’wīl*, 4/129. Cf. Mollā al-Gūrānī, *Ghāyat al-amānī*, 5/31.

<sup>103</sup> Ibn Fodio, *Ḍiyā’ al-ta’wīl*, 3/119.

<sup>104</sup> Ibn Fodio, *Ḍiyā’ al-ta’wīl*, 3/103. Cf. Mollā al-Gūrānī, *Ghāyat al-amānī*, 3/398.

<sup>105</sup> al-Zamakhsharī, *al-Kashshāf*, 4/20.

<sup>106</sup> Mollā al-Gūrānī, *Ghāyat al-amānī*, 3/398.

<sup>107</sup> Ibn Fodio, *Ḍiyā’ al-ta’wīl*, 3/103.

<sup>108</sup> al-Dhahabī, *al-Tafsīr wa-al-Mufasssīrūn*, 261-264.

<sup>109</sup> See: Ay, ‘Fatıha ve Bakara Sureleri Örneğinde Molla Gürani’nin Beydavi Eleştirisi’, 411-415; ‘Envârü’t-Tenzil’in Kaynakları ve Tefsir Yöntemi’, *İslam İlim Ve Düşünce Geleneğinde Kadi Beyzavi*, ed. Mustakim Arıcı (Ankara: İsam / İslam Araştırmaları Merkezi, 2017), 369-370.



them while presenting exactly what had been criticised. An example of where he quoted al-Gūrānī's ishārī interpretation can be observed in the commentary of the last verse of Sūrat āl 'Imrān.<sup>110</sup> Ibn Fodio stated:

“He (Gūrānī) said in *Ghāyat al-amānī*: And in mentioning the three, there is a reference to the three ranks expressed by the Sharī'a, the Ṭarīqa, and the Ḥaqīqa as if He (Allah) said: Be patient with the hardships of obedience and strive against the soul in breaking habitual actions, and stand in guard of secret in the pursuit of holiness, so that you may attain divine inspiration.”<sup>111</sup>

On the other hand, Ibn Fodio has also cited al-Gūrānī's criticism in Sūrat al-Kahf 18:60,<sup>112</sup> which al-Bayḍāwī interpreted the “two seas” allegorically as representing Mūsā and Khidr. Using the “qīla” form to cite the interpretation, al-Bayḍāwī stated that Mūsā represents the river of exoteric knowledge (al-'ilm al-zāhir), while Khidr represents the river of esoteric knowledge (al-'ilm al-bāṭin).<sup>113</sup> In response to this, al-Gūrānī declared that “the interpretation of the two rivers as Mūsā and Khidr is false.”<sup>114</sup> Ibn Fodio quoted this criticism verbatim and noted that al-Gūrānī made this statement in *Ghāyat al-amānī*.<sup>115</sup>

In the case of the clause “فَأَقْتُلُوا أَنْفُسَكُمْ” that appears in Sūrat al-Baqara 2/54, which means “execute yourselves” in reference to those who worshipped the calf among the followers of Prophet Mūsā, some mufassirūn like al-Bayḍāwī have proposed an ishārī interpretation of it as the “killing (suppression) of one's desires.” This interpretation is reinforced by the saying, “He who does not torture his soul will not enjoy it, and he who does not kill it will not give it life.”<sup>116</sup> However, al-Gūrānī condemned this interpretation as incorrect. Nevertheless, Ibn Fodio did not quote al-Gūrānī's criticism of this interpretation, although he quoted (albeit with qīla) the ishārī commentary in the same manner as al-Bayḍāwī.<sup>117</sup>

It is important to note that both al-Gūrānī and Ibn Fodio have an inclination towards tasawwuf, although al-Gūrānī's tasawwuf is not as pronounced as Ibn Fodio's, who is a member of the Qadiriyya ṭarīqa.<sup>118</sup> However, it appears that both scholars are critical of the excesses of Sufism, and this is reflected in Ibn Fodio's citation of al-Gūrānī to condemn the extremism of some mutasawwifūn in the context of his exegesis on the verse “O messengers! Eat from what is good and lawful, and act righteously. Indeed, I fully know what you do.”<sup>119</sup> Ibn Fodio stated, “He (Gūrānī) said in this [verse] is a negation of monasticism which was invented by the Christians and some of the ignorant mutasawwifūn of our time.”<sup>120</sup>

### 3. Discussion

<sup>110</sup> يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوا اصْبِرُوا وَصَابِرُوا وَرَابِطُوا وَاتَّقُوا اللَّهَ لَعَلَّكُمْ تُفْلِحُونَ

(O believers! Patiently endure, persevere, stand on guard, and be mindful of Allah, so you may be successful)

<sup>111</sup> Ibn Fodio, *Ḍiyā' al-ta'wīl*, 1/161. Cf. Mollā al-Gūrānī, *Ghāyat al-amānī*, 1/390.

<sup>112</sup> وَإِذْ قَالَ مُوسَى لِفَتْنِهِ لَا آْبِرْخُ حَتَّىٰ أَبْلُغَ مَجْمَعَ الْبَحْرَيْنِ أَوْ أَمْضِيَ حُقُبًا

(And when Moses said to his young assistant, “I will never give up until I reach the junction of the two seas, even if I travel for ages.”)

<sup>113</sup> al-Bayḍāwī, *Anwār al-tanzīl wa-asrār al-ta'wīl*, 3/286.

<sup>114</sup> Mollā al-Gūrānī, *Ghāyat al-amānī*, 3/215-6.

<sup>115</sup> Ibn Fodio, *Ḍiyā' al-ta'wīl*, 3/17.

<sup>116</sup> al-Bayḍāwī, *Anwār al-tanzīl wa-asrār al-ta'wīl*, 1/81.

<sup>117</sup> Ibn Fodio, *Ḍiyā' al-ta'wīl*, 1/31.

<sup>118</sup> Abdullah b. Fodio translated a poem, authored by his brother 'Uthmān b. Fodio, as a tribute to the esteemed Qādiriyya Ṣūfī ṭarīqa founder 'Abd al-Qādir al-Jīlānī, from the Fulani language into Arabic. See: Ibn Fodio, *Tazyīn al-warakāt*, 77-80.

<sup>119</sup> al-Muminūn 23: 51; “يَا أَيُّهَا الرُّسُلُ كُلُوا مِنَ الطَّيِّبَاتِ وَاعْمَلُوا صَالِحًا إِنِّي بِمَا تَعْمَلُونَ عَلِيمٌ”.

<sup>120</sup> Cf. Mollā al-Gūrānī, *Ghāyat al-amānī*, 1/413.

We have examined the lives and tafsir works of al-Gūrānī and Ibn Fodio, both of whom were renowned scholars and influential figures of their respective eras and territories. One notable aspect is that Ibn Fodio chose al-Gūrānī as one of his main sources, which is remarkable considering that al-Gūrānī's work is believed to have limited popularity beyond a certain region. Interestingly, none of the researchers studying al-Gūrānī's work has documented Ibn Fodio as one of the mufasssīrūn influenced by al-Gūrānī.<sup>121</sup> However, based on our analysis thus far, it becomes evident that there is a significant intersection between these two scholars.

Bruce Hall and Charles Stewart, who extensively researched manuscripts from West Africa (where the Sokoto Caliphate existed), could not locate a single copy of al-Gūrānī's work, even when they had noted that it was studied by Abdullah b. Fodio.<sup>122</sup> The intriguing aspect regarding Ibn Fodio's selection of al-Gūrānī's work as a source lies in the shared experiences of both individuals, who served as esteemed advisors and military officers under prominent conquerors of their respective periods. However, the absence of any laudatory remarks for al-Gūrānī within Ibn Fodio's work indicates that this shared characteristic does not hold substantial weight in his decision. Consequently, one can speculate that Ibn Fodio believed al-Gūrānī's work to provide more accurate information compared to the work of al-Bayḍāwī, which he also utilised.

In conclusion, Ibn Fodio's selection of al-Gūrānī's work as a valuable source can be attributed to its extensive content and scholarly significance. Ibn Fodio regarded al-Gūrānī's work on par with renowned scholars such as Ibn al-ʿArabī, al-Bayḍāwī, and al-Thaʿālibī, quoting them with equal importance and even expressing a preference for al-Gūrānī's opinions in certain instances. Throughout his tafsir, Ibn Fodio extensively relied on al-Gūrānī's work, incorporating it alongside the works of other scholars while also offering his own interpretations. Notably, al-Gūrānī's assessments of hadiths proved valuable to Ibn Fodio, as he rarely disagreed with al-Gūrānī regarding the authenticity of narrations. However, in terms of interpretation, Ibn Fodio sometimes challenged al-Gūrānī's views, particularly when they conflicted with the historical context of the surah.<sup>123</sup> Despite similarities in their approach to citing canonical recitations, al-Gūrānī and Ibn Fodio diverged in their priorities and emphases. al-Gūrānī is characterised by correcting the mistakes of other scholars, while Ibn Fodio primarily aimed to elucidate the meaning of the Warsh/Nāfi' recitations. The citation of al-Gūrānī in matters of jurisprudence, particularly in *usul al-fiqh* and *fiqh*, further illustrates Ibn Fodio's utilisation of his work. However, it should be noted that this study did not observe a consistent preference for al-Gūrānī's opinions in cases of differences of opinion. Ultimately, it can be inferred that Ibn Fodio derived significant benefit from al-Gūrānī's work, possibly using it to rectify mistakes in his other sources, particularly al-Bayḍāwī. Meanwhile, contrary to claims that Ibn Fodio might have accessed al-Bayḍāwī's works through al-Gūrānī's.<sup>124</sup> Some of the examples used in this study confirm that he had access to both since there is the inclusion of unique content from each author.

Regarding the transmission of al-Gūrānī's work to Sudan, it is possible that the book found its way there through the Maghrib region, where it was sent during the time of Mehmed II. The heritage connection between the Maghrib and Sūdān regions is well known. Also, it might have arrived via Egyptian routes or during the Hajj pilgrimage. However, it should be

<sup>121</sup> Ibn Fodio, *Ḍiyā' al-ta'wīl*, 3/109.

<sup>122</sup> Bruce S. Hall - Charles C. Stewart, 'The Historic "Core Curriculum" And The Book Market In Islamic West Africa', *The Trans-Saharan Book Trade*, ed. Graziano Krätli, Ghislaine Lydon (Brill, 2010), 117.

<sup>123</sup> See for instance Ibn Fodio, *Ḍiyā' al-ta'wīl*, 3/112.

<sup>124</sup> Brigaglia, 'Batı Afrika'da Tefsir Çalışmaları ve İslami İlimler Tarihi', 317.

noted that Ibn Fodio himself never performed Hajj, and the closest person to him who did was his teacher, Jibrīl b. ‘Umar.<sup>125</sup>

### Conclusion

After studying the works of Abdullah b. Fodio and the potential connection with al-Gūrānī, it can be affirmed that al-Gūrānī is indeed a significant source of tafsir, exerting influential effects across centuries. The relationship between the two exegetes should not be seen as a one-way influence but rather as an intersection between the Ottoman tafsir tradition and the Sokoto tafsir tradition. Abdullah b. Fodio not only established the tafsir tradition in Sokoto but also produced what can be considered the first independent tafsir work in present-day Nigeria.

The importance of al-Gūrānī’s *Ghāyat al-amānī* in offering corrections to the mistakes of previous exegetes holds a central position in Ibn Fodio’s *Ḍiyā’ al-ta’wīl*, and it is plausible that this could have been a motivating factor in his choice of al-Gūrānī’s work as a source. Regardless of the reasons, it is evident that Ibn Fodio held a great respect for al-Gūrānī not only as a mufassir but also as a muḥaddith, even though he did not directly quote from al-Gūrānī’s hadith work, which might not have been accessible to him.

Thus, while this study aimed to establish the significance of al-Gūrānī in the history of West African tafsir, it also raises further questions for future research in the fields of tafsir history and the history of Islamic literature. The exploration of these topics can shed more light on the interconnections and influences within the realm of Islamic scholarship.

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<sup>125</sup> Isma’il A.B. Balogun, ‘The Life and Work of the Mujaddid of West Africa, ‘Uḥmān B. Fūdī Popularly Known as Usumanu Ḍan Fodio’, *Islamic Studies* 12/4 (1973), 287.

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**A Study on the Claim that the Amounts of al-Madd al-Far'ı (Secondary Madd) Affect the Meanings of the Verses of the Qur'an**  
*Fer'ı Med Miktarlarının Âyetlerin Anlamlarına Etki Ettiđi İddiası Üzerine Bir İnceleme*

**Muhammed PİLGİR**  
Dr. Bađımsız Arařtırmacı  
Dr. Independent Researcher  
Erzurum, Türkiye  
muhammedpilgir@istanbul.edu.tr  
<https://orcid.org/0000000306441942>

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## Abstract

The issue of madd is one of the most fundamental issues in the science of qirā'āt and is discussed extensively in the literature. In addition, in some of the recent studies conducted in Türkiye, it has been observed that the issue of secondary madd (al-madd al-far'ī) has been dealt with from the aspect of meaning in a different way from the discussions in the literature. In these studies, the amount of madds has been mentioned within the framework of the madd-meaning relationship and a claim has been made that the secondary madds based on lexical reasons deepen the meaning of the verses. In this paper, an attempt has been made to trace this argument in the qirā'āt literature, and the views of contemporary scholars on the subject have been included. Additionally, in order to point out the existence of the madd-meaning relationship other than the al-madd al-far'ī, the practice of exceptional al-madd al-şila, which is related to the meaning, was also touched upon. From this point of view, the main purpose of this study is to reveal the claim that “the far'ī madds affect the meaning of the verses” and to reveal the literature's counterpart of the exceptional al-madd al-şila practice of relationship with the meaning. As a result of the research, it has been seen that this claim about the secondary madds does not correspond to the information in the qirā'āt literature. In the case of the exceptional madd of hâ al-kināya, which is within the scope of the al-madd al-aşlī/al-madd al-ṭabī (natural madd), its effect on the meaning has been identified in the works of qirā'āt, tajwīd, and some tafsīr; however, it has been concluded that the phonological justifications for this exceptional example contain inconsistencies within themselves. Likewise, it has been determined that an eclectic method has been used effectively in the justifications for the view in regard-ing the secondary madds.

**Keywords:** Qirā'āt, Tajwīd, Phonology, Philology, al-Madd al-Far'ī (Secondary Madd).

## Öz

Med bahsi, kıraat ilminin en temel konuları arasında yer almakta ve literatürde yoğun bir şekilde tartışılmaktadır. Ayrıca son dönemde Türkiye’de yapılan araştırmaların bazısında ziyade med konusunun literatürdeki tartışmalardan farklı bir şekilde mana cihetinden ele alındığı görülmüştür. Bu çalışmalarda med miktarlarına med-anlam ilişkisi çerçevesinde değinilmiş ve lafzî sebeplere mebni fer'î medlerin âyetlere anlam bakımından derinlik kattığı yönünde bir iddia serdedilmiştir. Çalışmamızda söz konusu savın kıraat literatüründeki izi sürülmeye çalışılmış, konuya dair modern dönem araştırmacılarının görüşlerine yer verilmiştir. Ayrıca med-mana ilişkisinin fer'î med dışındaki varlığına işaret etmek için manaya taalluk eden istisnai sıla uygulamasına da temas edilmiştir. Bura-dan hareketle araştırmanın temel amacı, “fer'î medlerin âyetlerin anlamını etkilediği” iddiasıyla; istisnai sıla uygulamasının manayla ilgisinin literatürdeki karşılığını ortaya koymaktır. Araştırmanın neticesinde fer'î medlere dair söz konusu iddianın kıraat telifatındaki verilerle uyuşmadığı görülmüştür. Aslı med kapsamında olan hâu'l-kināyenin istisnai olarak med edildiği durumda onun manaya etkisi ise kıraat, tecvid ve bazı tefsir eserlerinde tespit edilmiş; fakat bu istisnai örnek için yapılan ses bilimsel gerekçelendirmelerin kendi içinde tutarsızlıklar ihtiva ettiği sonucuna varılmıştır. Ayrıca fer'î medler ile alakalı söz konusu görüş için yapılan temellendirmelerde eklektik bir yöntemin etkili olarak kullanıldığı saptanmıştır.

**Anahtar Kelimeler:** Kıraat, Tecvid, Ses Bilim, Dil Bilim, Fer'î Med.

## Introduction

The subject of madd (المد) is one of the most important topics in the science of qirā'āt (علم القراءات). So much so that the many controversial, obscure, and problematic issues in the subheadings of madd have prompted the authors and those engaged in the science of qirā'āt to deal with this subject intensively. Moreover, the fact that the qirā'āt contain a large number of ṭuruq (الطرق/transmission lines), and that the qirā'āt narrators differ in the amounts of the rules of madd al-muttaşil (المد المتصل) and al-madd al-munfaşil (المد المنفصل), and that some of the ṭuruq have specific types of madd, make this subject remarkable in the literature. For this reason, there are separate works in which the subject of madd is examined separately<sup>1</sup>, as well as works

<sup>1</sup> See: Abū 'Amr 'Uthmān b. Sa'īd b. 'Uthmān al-Andalusī al-Dānī, *Jāmi' al-beyān fī al-qirā'āt al-sab'*, critical ed. 'Abd al-Muḥaymin 'Abd al-Salām al-Ṭaḥḥān et al. (Sharjah: United Arab Emirates, Jāmi'a al-Shāriqa, 1428/2007), 2/479-506; Abū al-Khayr Shams al-Dīn Muḥammad b. Muḥammad b. Muḥammad b. 'Alī b. Yūsuf



in which the subject of madd is dealt with as a chapter<sup>2</sup>. The works in which madd is dealt exclusively include the levels of madd<sup>3</sup>, the types of madd<sup>4</sup>, or various issues pertaining to madd<sup>5</sup>. In today's studies, however, the subject has been carried a little further, and these studies have also included the studies that have recently been addressed within the framework of the relationship between madd and meaning in Türkiye.<sup>6</sup>

The controversial issues regarding the madd are generally based on linguistic and phonological grounds. At this point, the issue of “whether or not to rely on ‘āriḍ (العارض) “ is the most intensely used of these grounds.<sup>7</sup> Nevertheless, there are also examples that may be considered as exceptions regarding the relationship between madd and meaning. The examples of madd al-tabriā (مد التبرئة) and madd al-ta'zīm (مد التعظيم),<sup>8</sup> and the exceptional application of the al-madd al-ṣila (مد الصلة),<sup>9</sup> which is outside the scope of madd, are examples that can be given in relation to the effect of madd on meaning.<sup>10</sup>

Among the causes of lexical madd, hamza (ء) and sukūn are considered to be the causes of al-madd al-far'ī (المد الفرعي) due to philological and phonological reasons. The fact that hamza is seen as a factor that paves the way for making more madd than the amount of al-madd al-aṣli/al-madd al-ṭabā (المد الأصلي) is a result of comparing hamza and madd letters in terms of their origins (makhārij al-ḥurūf). In this respect, the features of the hamza are important in terms

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Ibn al-Jazarī, *Nashr al-qirā'āt al-ashr*, critical ed. Ayman Rushdī Suwayd (Istanbul: Dār al-Ghawthānī li al-Dirāsāt al-Qur'āniyya, Lebanon: Dār al-Ghawthānī li al-Dirāsāt al-Qur'āniyya, 1439/2018), 2/996-1153; Abū al-'Abbās Shihāb al-Dīn Aḥmad b. Muḥammad b. Abī Bakr al-Qaṣṭallānī, *Latā'if al-ishārāt li-funūn al-qirā'āt*, critical ed. Markaz al-Dirāsāt al-Qur'āniyya (Madinah: Mujamma' al-Malik Fahd li-Tibā'a al-Muṣḥaf al-Sharīf, a.h. 1434), 3/986-1036; Abū al-'Abbās Shihāb al-Dīn Aḥmad b. Muḥammad b. Abī Bakr al-Qaṣṭallānī, *al-Mustaṭāb fi al-tajwīd: Hidāya al-qurrā'*, critical ed. al-Sayyid Yūsuf Aḥmad (Beirut: Dār al-Kutub al-'Ilmiyya, 1429/2008), 180-198.

<sup>2</sup> See: Abū Bakr Aḥmad b. al-Ḥusayn Ibn Mihrān al-Aṣbahānī al-Nisābūrī, *Risāla al-Maddāt*, critical ed. Ayman Rushdī Suwayd (Istanbul: Dār al-Ghawthānī li al-Dirāsāt al-Qur'āniyya, Lebanon: Dār al-Ghawthānī li al-Dirāsāt al-Qur'āniyya, 1439/2018); Abū al-Ḥasan 'Alī b. Ja'far b. Muḥammad al-Rāzī al-Sa'īdī, *Kitābun fihī maqādīr al-maddāt: Bi al-ikhtilāf al-qirā'āt wa ḥudūdi al-nuṭqi bihā*, critical ed. Khalaf Ḥusayn Ṣaliḥ al-Jabbūrī (Istanbul: Dār al-Ghawthānī li al-Dirāsāt al-Qur'āniyya, Lebanon: Dār al-Ghawthānī li al-Dirāsāt al-Qur'āniyya, 1439/2018); 'Abdullāh b. Muḥammad b. Yūsuf b. 'Abdillāh Yūsuf Efendizāde, *Risāla al-Maddāt*, critical ed. Ibrāhīm Muḥammad al-Jermī (Amman: Dār 'Ammār, 1420/2000).

<sup>3</sup> Yūsuf Efendizāde, *Risāla al-Maddāt*, 40-69.

<sup>4</sup> Ibn Mihrān, *Risāla al-Maddāt*, 24-37.

<sup>5</sup> Sa'īdī, *Kitābun fihī maqādīr al-maddāt*, 17-46.

<sup>6</sup> Refer to Necati Tetik, for example, Necati Tetik, “Ses ve Anlam İlişkisi Bakımından Kur'an ve Kırâat”, *Kur'an ve Dil, -Dilbilim ve Hermenötik- Sempozyumu (Yüzüncü Yıl Üniversitesi İlahiyat Fakültesi, 2001)*, 297-312; Necati Tetik, “Kur'an Tilâvetinde Bedelli Medlerin Hikmet Kavramıyla İlintisi -“Âteyna ve Ūtiye” Örneği-”, *Ekev Akademi Dergisi* 11/30 (June 2007), 103-116.

<sup>7</sup> Ibn al-Jazarī, *Nashr*, 2/1080-1153.

<sup>8</sup> For examples showing that the madd, which occurs due to the incorporeal madd, strengthens the meaning refer to Ibn al-Jazarī, *Nashr*, 2/1107.

<sup>9</sup>

The connection (الوصل) of hā al-kināya (هاء الكناية) to the next word with the letter madd is called ṣila. See: 'Alī b. Muḥammad al-Ḍabbā', *al-Idā'a fi bayān uṣūl al-qirā'a*, ed. Muḥammad 'Alī Khalaf al-Ḥusaynī (Cairo: 'Abd al-Ḥamīd Aḥmad Ḥanafī, n.d.), 17; Ibrāhīm b. Sa'īd al-Dūserī, *Mukhtaṣar al-'ibārāt li-mu'jami* <sup>10</sup> For examples showing that the madd, which occurs due to the incorporeal madd, strengthens the meaning refer to Elmalılı Muhammed Hamdi Yazır, *Hak Dini Kuran Dili*, General Coordinator: Mehmet Emin Özafşar (Ankara: Diyanet İşleri Başkanlığı Yayınları, 2015), 7/307.

of phonology.<sup>11</sup> On the other hand, the hamza, which is one of the causes of the secondary madd, can be found after the letters of madd as well as before the letters of madd.<sup>12</sup> The reason why the silence is shown as a reason for adding on the al-madd al-aşlī amount is due to the presence of two silences one after the other. This is because in Arabic, the coming together of two sākin letters is seen as verbiage, and the ugliness in question is eliminated by the additional madd made on the al-madd al-aşlī.<sup>13</sup>

As with other procedural issues in the science of qirā'āt, the subject of madd has a static structure. In other words, the subject of secondary madd does not usually have a dimension related to the meaning, and al-madd al-far'ī is realized within certain conditions. However, there are two exceptions: Madd al-tabria and madd al-ta'zīm. These two types of madd are discussed under the title of “incorporeal reason among the reasons for madd” in the qirā'āt literature, and incorporeal reason means “exaggeration in the preposition of negativity/nafy”.<sup>14</sup> Based on this data, it can be easily said that secondary madd is performed because “it strengthens the meaning” in these two types of madd. Nevertheless, apart from these, it does not seem to be possible to say that the al-madd al-far'ī affects the meaning of the Qur'ān. In these two types of madd for incorporeal reasons, the secondary madd is performed for emphasis; in other words, to strengthen the meaning. But, Ibn al-Jazarī does not find this practice, which has been transmitted until today, to be correct and states that it is more appropriate to madd something about which there is a rule. Nonetheless, the content of *Ṭayyiba al-Nashr fī al-qirā'āt al-'ashr*, which is one of the works followed in today's qirā'āt teaching, includes both of these types of madd.<sup>15</sup>

As far as can be determined, the relationship between madd and meaning has been analyzed by a few scholars in Türkiye. Necati Tetik's studies titled “Ses ve Anlam İlişkisi Bakımından Kur'ân ve Kırâat”<sup>16</sup> and “Kur'ân Tilâvetinde Bedelli Medlerin Hikmet Kavramıyla İlintisi -”Âteyna ve Ūtiye” Örneği-”,<sup>17</sup> and Necdet Çağıl's works titled *Kur'ân'ın Belâgat ve Fonetik Yapısı* and Mustafa Kaya's *Arap Dili Fonetigi: Ses-Anlam İlgisi* are the works that deal with the aforementioned subject. It can be said that the views of the researchers on the subject mostly contain subjectivity or are shaped by a selective method. In fact, it is known that there are different opinions in the qirā'āt literature about the types of madd exemplified in the studies and other types of madd related to lexical reasons and these madd variations are usually performed for phonetic reasons.<sup>18</sup> Moreover, it is seen that Abū al-Ḥasan Ibn Ghalbūn (d.

<sup>11</sup> Abū Muḥammad Ḥammūsh b. Muḥammad al-Qaysī Makkī b. Abī Ṭālib, *al-Kashf 'an wujūh al-qirā'āt al-sab' wa 'ilelihā wa ḥucecihā*, critical ed. 'Abd al-Raḥīm al-Ṭarḥūnī (Cairo: Dār al-Hadīth, 1428/2007), 1/130. For a detailed explanation by 'Abd al-Waḥḥāb al-Qurtubī, see: 'Abd al-Waḥḥāb b. Muḥammad al-Qurtubī, *al-Mūḍīh fī al-tajwīd*, critical ed. Ghānim Qaddūrī al-Ḥamed (Amman: Dār 'Ammār, 1421/2000), 128-129; see also: Ghānim Qaddūrī al-Ḥamed, *al-Dirāsāt al-sawtiyya 'inda 'ulamā' al-tajwīd* (Amman: Dār 'Ammār, 1428/2007), 444-445.

<sup>12</sup> Abū 'Abdillāh Muḥammad b. Shurayḥ al-Ruaynī al-Andalusī al-Ishbīlī, *al-Qāfi fī al-qirā'āt al-sab'*, critical ed. Aḥmad Maḥmūd 'Abd al-Samī' al-Shāfi'ī (Beirut: Dār al-Kutub al-'Ilmiyya, 1421/2000), 40.

<sup>13</sup> Abū al-Fath 'Uthmān b. Jinnī al-Mawṣilī al-Baghdādī, *al-Khaṣā'is*, critical ed. Muḥammad 'Alī al-Najjār (Beirut: Dār al-Kitāb al-'Arabī, n.d.), 3/126.

<sup>14</sup> Ibn Mihrān, *Risāla al-Maddāt*, 35; Ibn al-Jazarī, *Nashr*, 2/1107; see also: Necdet Çağıl, *Kur'ân'ın Belâgat ve Fonetik Yapısı* (Ankara: İlahiyât, 2005), 352.

<sup>15</sup> Ibn al-Jazarī, *Nashr*, 2/1107.

<sup>16</sup> See: Tetik, “Ses ve Anlam İlişkisi Bakımından Kur'ân ve Kırâat”, 297-312.

<sup>17</sup> See: Tetik, “Kur'ân Tilâvetinde Bedelli Medlerin Hikmet Kavramıyla İlintisi -”Âteyna ve Ūtiye” Örneği-”, 103-116.

<sup>18</sup> For the opinions about the hamza being the cause of secondary madd, refer to Makkī b. Abī Ṭālib, *al-Kashf*, 1/130; Qurtubī, *al-Mūḍīh*, 128-129; Abū al-'Alā' Ḥasan b. Aḥmad b. Ḥasan al-'Atṭār al-Hemedhānī, *al-Tamhīd fī ma'rife al-tajwīd*, critical ed. Ghānim Qaddūrī al-Ḥamed (Amman: Dār 'Ammār, 1420/2000), 286; 'Alam

399/1009) and Ibn Bellīma (d. 514/1120) mentioned the unfavorable effects of reading al-madd al-badal as secondary madd on the meaning. Because the practice of al-madd al-badal with al-madd al-far'ī in the declarative words would turn the related words and thus the related sentences into an declarative structure, these authors reject the use of secondary madd in al-madd al-badal.<sup>19</sup> Another argument of those who criticize the use of al-madd al-far'ī in al-madd al-badal is the claim that the use of secondary madd in al-madd al-badal is not in accordance with the fluent (faṣīh) Arabic. And also the recitation of al-madd al-badal with al-madd al-far'ī is attributed to the qirā'a of Nāfi', Abū al-Ḥasan Ibn Ghalbūn states that he does not consider any level other than the level of qaṣr (مرتبة القصر) to be appropriate for al-madd al-badal. All this shows that Ibn Ghalbūn's opinion on madd of al-madd al-badal has emerged as a result of the perspective a completely meaning-centred.<sup>20</sup>

While the situation is as described above in the case of the secondary madds, it is also possible to state some exceptional practices in which the meaning is observed apart from the secondary madds. Although the pronoun is read without performing the al-madd al-ṣila when the letter before the pronoun is sākin, in the narration of Ḥafṣ (d. 180/796) of the qirā'a of 'Āṣim (d. 127/745) and the narration of Hishām (d. 245/859 [?]) of the qirā'a of Ibn 'Amr (d. 118/736), there are certain exceptions to this. Namely, the pronoun in verse 69 of Sūrat al-Furqān in the narration of Ḥafṣ and the pronoun in verse 111 of Sūrat al-A'rāf in the narration of Hishām are read with practicing al-madd al-ṣila.<sup>21</sup> It is important to reveal the reason for the exceptional use of the madd in the relevant pronouns in these two verses, while there is no madd in their peers, in terms of the meaningfulness of the madd in these examples.

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al-Dīn Abū al-Ḥasan 'Alī b. Muḥammad b. 'Abd al-Ṣamed al-Sakhāwī, *Jamāl al-qurrā' wa kamāl al-igrā'*, critical ed. 'Abd al-Karīm al-Zubaydī (Beirut: Dār al-Belāgha, 1413/1993), 2/328; Abū Mūsā Ja'far b. Makkī al-Mawṣilī, *Mufradatu qirā'ati Ibn Kathīr al-Makkī*, critical ed. Khālīd Aḥmad al-Mashhadānī (Damascus: Dār Sa'd al-Dīn, 1427/2007), 44; Maḥmūd Khalīl al-Ḥuṣary, *Aḥkām qirā'āt al-Qur'ān al-Karīm*, ed. Muḥammad Ṭalḥa Bilāl Minyār (Mecca: al-Maktaba al-Makkiyya, 1416/1995), 215; 'Abd al-Fattāh al-Sayyid Ajmī al-Marṣafī, *Hidāya al-qārī ilā tajwīdi kalāmi al-Bārī* (Madinah: Dār al-Fajr al-Islāmiyya, 2001), 1/282; for similar statements see: Mustafa Şen, "Keyfiyet, Ölçü ve Problem Açısından Tecvid İlminde Medde Yeni Bir Bakış Denemesi", *Ekev Akademi Dergisi* 19/63 (August 2015), 218. For opinions on the reason why sukūn is a cause of madd, see: Abū Bishr 'Amr b. 'Uthmān b. Kanbar Sībawayhi, *al-Kitāb: Kitābu Sībawayhi*, critical ed. 'Abd al-Salām Muḥammad Hārūn (Cairo: Maktaba al-Khanjī, n.d.), 4/437; Ibn Jinnī, *al-Khaṣāiṣ*, 3/126; Ibn Mihrān, *Risālah al-maddaat*, 25-26; Qurṭubī, *al-Muḍīh*, 129; Sakhāwī, *Jamāl al-qurrā'*, 2/328; Ibn al-Jazarī, *Nashr*, 2/1003.

<sup>19</sup> Abū al-Ḥasan Ṭāhir b. 'Abd al-Mun'im b. 'Ubaydillāh b. Ghalbūn al-Ḥalabī al-Miṣrī, *al-Tadhkira fī al-qirā'āt al-thamān*, critical ed. Ayman Rushdī Suwayd (Jeddah: Dār al-Gharb al-'Arabī, 1412/1991), 1/108-109; Abū 'Alī al-Ḥasan b. Khalaf b. 'Abdillāh Ibn Bellīma, *Talkhīṣ al-'ibārāt bi-laṭīf al-ishārāt fī al-qirā'āt al-sab'*, critical ed. Subay' Ḥamza Ḥākimī (Jeddah: Dār al-Kibla li al-Thaqāfa al-Islāmiyya, Beirut: Muassasa al-'Ulūm al-Qur'ān, 1409/1988), 26.

<sup>20</sup> Ibn Ghalbūn, *al-Tadhkira*, 1/108. For the authors who include Ibn Ghalbūn's position on this subject, see: Abū Muḥammad al-Qāsim b. Fīrruh b. Khalaf al-Shāṭibī al-Ru'aynī, *Matn al-Shāṭibiyya*, proofreader: Muḥammad Tamīm al-Zu'bī (Damascus: Dār al-Ghawthānī li al-Dirāsāt al-Qur'āniyya, 1431/2010), 14-15 (verses 172 and 175); 'Alam al-Dīn Abū al-Ḥasan 'Alī b. Muḥammad b. 'Abd al-Ṣamed al-Sakhāwī, *Fath al-vaṣīd fī sharḥ al-Qaṣīd*, critical ed. Mawlāy Muḥammad al-Idrīsī al-Ṭāhirī (Riyadh: Maktaba al-Rushd, 1423/2002), 2/274, 278; Abū al-Qāsim Shihāb al-Dīn 'Abd al-Raḥmān b. Ismā'īl b. Ibrāhīm Abū Shāme al-Maqdisī, *Ibrāz al-me'ānī min Hirz al-amānī fī al-qirā'āt al-sab'*, critical ed. Ibrāhīm 'Aṭwa 'Awad (Cairo: Muṣṭafā al-Bābī al-Ḥalabī, 1982), 116, 118.

<sup>21</sup> Ebū 'Abdillāh Muḥammad b. Aḥmad b. Muḥammad b. Aḥmad b. Muḥammad b. al-Ḥusayn al-Mawṣilī, *Sharḥu Shu'la alā al-Shāṭibiyya* (Cairo: al-Maktaba al-Azhariyya li al-Turāth, 1418/1997), 97.

It is an undeniable fact that the amounts of secondary madds is a matter of narration. Therefore, it is an exciting claim to seek any wisdom in the amount of secondary madds and to talk about some depths of meaning in them. Therefore, as can be understood from what has been mentioned so far, there are some ambiguities regarding the positive relationship of the amount of secondary madds with the meaning. That is why it would be appropriate to discuss and determine whether the amount of the al-madd al-far'ī affects the meaning by taking the qirā'āt sources into consideration. In this context, the main question of the research can be described as follows: Is there a wisdom for the al-madd al-far'ī and what is the level of the effect of the al-madd al-far'ī on the meaning? Within the framework of this question, the problem of the study is as follows: To determine whether there is an effect of secondary madd on the meaning in the exceptional hā al-kināya (هاء الكناية) and in the types of madd other than the al-madd al-far'ī that occur for lexical reasons. In other words, it is one of the aims of this study is to demonstrate whether the aforementioned secondary madd are a meaning-based practice or not. Furthermore, among the main objectives of the research are to examine the views on the effect of the madd on the meaning, to investigate their acceptability and whether they have a scientific basis, and to discuss the validity of the information given with reference to the literature. In this article, the claim that “the amounts of al-madd al-far'ī affect the meaning”, which is mentioned in academic studies in Türkiye, is analyzed. In doing so, our study is restricted to the types of far'ī madd that occur due to lexical reasons and the exceptional al-madd al-ṣila practice in verse 69 of Sūrat al-Furqān.

### 1. Reasons for Lexical Secondary Madds

In the qirā'āt literature, two reasons, lexical<sup>22</sup> and incorporeal<sup>23</sup>, are suggested for the concept of al-madd al-far'ī. Terms such as al-madd al-araḍī (المد العرضي)<sup>24</sup> and al-madd al-muktallaf (المد المتكلف)<sup>25</sup> are used synonymously with secondary madd. The hamza and the sukūn, which are after the letters of madd and are the cause of madd, are the factors that necessitate a more amount of madd in addition to the amount of the al-madd al-aṣlī. In the types of madds that do not have a reason for the secondary madd, there is the amount of al-madd al-aṣlī/al-madd al-ṭabī, whereas in cases where there are lexical madd reasons (reason for the secondary madd) in addition to the madd letters, the duration of the madd is prolonged.<sup>26</sup> However, hamza, which is one of the reasons for the al-madd al-far'ī, can be found after the letters of madd as well as before the letters of madd. But, this is a practice only to the ṭarīq of al-Azraq (طريق)

<sup>22</sup> See for hamza and sukūn, which are accepted as a cause for practicing secondary madd after original madd, Abū al-Aṣḡagh (Abū Ḥumeyd) 'Abd al-'Azīz b. 'Alī b. Muḡammad al-Sumātī al-Ishbīlī Ibn al-Taḡḡān, *Sharḡu Kitāb al-Inbā' fī tajwīd al-Qur'ān*, critical ed. Farghalī Sayyid 'Arabāwī (Cairo: Maktabat al-Awḡād al-Shaykh li al-Turāth, 2009), 82-83; Ibn al-Jazarī, *Nashr*, 2/996; Nihat Temel, *Kirāat ve Tecvīd Istılahları* (Istanbul: Marmara University İlahiyat Fakültesi Vakfı Yayınları, 2009), 95.

<sup>23</sup> The reason for the incorporeal madd is the exaggeration of the madd in the preposition of nafy. See: Ibn al-Jazarī, *Nashr*, 2/996.

<sup>24</sup> Qāḡī Aḡmad b. 'Umar b. Muḡammad b. Abī al-Riḡā al-Ḥamawī, *al-Qawā'id wa al-ishārāt fī uṣūl al-qirā'āt*, critical ed. 'Abd al-Karīm al-Bakkār (Egypt: Dār al-Salām, 1435/2014), 47; Abū al-Khayr Shams al-Dīn Muḡammad b. Muḡammad b. Muḡammad b. 'Alī b. Yūsuf Ibn al-Jazarī, *al-Tamhīd fī ilm al-tajwīd*, critical ed. Farghalī Sayyid 'Arabāwī. (Beirut: Dār al-Kutub al-'Ilmiyya, 2016), 215; Ibn al-Jazarī, *Nashr*, 2/1009, 1029.

<sup>25</sup> Abū 'Amr 'Uthmān b. Sa'īd b. 'Uthmān al-Andalusī al-Dānī, *al-Taḡdīd fī al-itqān wa al-tajwīd*, critical ed. Ghānim Qaddūrī al-Ḥamed (Amman: Dār 'Ammār, 1421/2000), 98; Sakhāwī, *Jamāl al-qurrā'*, 2/346.

<sup>26</sup> Abū al-Fath 'Uthmān b. Jinnī al-Mawṣilī al-Baghdādī, *Sırru ṣinā'a al-i'rāb*, critical ed. Ḥasan Hindāwī (Damascus: Dār al-Qalam, 1405/1985), 1/17-18; see also: Ḥamed, *al-Dirāsāt al-ṣawtiyya*, 442.

الأزرق) in the narration/riwāya of Warsh.<sup>27</sup> Only the al-madd al-aṣlī is performed according to the other narrations.<sup>28</sup>

The fact that the hamza is shown as an element that paves the way for the practicing of secondary madd over the amount of the al-madd al-aṣlī is a result of the comparison of the origin of the hamza with the origin of the letters of the madd in terms of strength. In this respect, the features of the hamza are important in terms of phonology.<sup>29</sup> What 'Abd al-Wahhāb al-Qurṭubī says on the subject in two different places clearly demonstrates the nature of the hamza as a cause of madd:

“The letters of madd are as light and concealed [obscure] as possible, and hamza is as heavy and obvious as possible, in contrast to the letters of madd. This is precisely where the reason for madd appears. In fact, the function of madd here is to bring the hamza closer to the letters of madd and to eliminate the obscurity of the letters of madd. In this case, a relationship that strengthens, reinforces and preserves the hamza emerges. Without such a practice, the hiddenness and weakness of madd would not be sure to dominate the hamza, and the hamza would weaken, disappear, and vanish.” ... “In sum, these letters [the letters of madd] are lengthened so that the tongue does not suddenly switch from the light to the heavy [from the letters of madd to the hamza], otherwise the hamza could not be pronounced from its origin. Therefore, the letters of madd are strengthened with al-madd al-far'ī in order to reveal the hamza, to realize its origin, and to pronounce it properly. That is why it is considered good that the sukūn before the hamza [the letters of madd] is clearly and adequately read by practicing izhār (الإظهار).”<sup>30</sup>

The reason for the addition of the sukūn on the amount of the al-madd al-aṣlī is due to the presence of two sukūns one after the other. This is because in Arabic, the coming together of two sākin letters is regarded as a contradiction to pronunciation, and the word is purified from this situation with the additional madd made on the al-madd al-aṣlī.<sup>31</sup> Thus, two sākin letters, which cannot be together, are kept together by means of madd, and the al-madd al-far'ī is regarded as a curtain/barrier (حاجز) between the two sākin letters. As a matter of fact, this is a consequence of the acceptance of the madd as equivalent to the vowel.<sup>32</sup> Hence, it is understood that the reason for sukūn to be the cause of madd is based on the existence of a curtain/obstacle (حاجز) between two sākin letters.

In short, just as madd before the hamza is to the hamza clearly,<sup>33</sup> madd before the sukūn is a practice to separate the two sākin letters.<sup>34</sup> This causal link is of importance in order to have a clearer idea about the subject of the study.

## 2. Opinions on the Reason for the Exceptional al-Madd al-Şila Practice in the Narration of Ḥafş of the Qir'ā'a of 'Āşim

In the related verse of Sūrat al-Furqān, the hā al-kināya in the word فيه, is exceptionally pronounced with al-madd al-şila in the narration of Ḥafş.<sup>35</sup> Ibn Jarīr al-Ṭabarī (d. 310/923) explains the part of the verse where the hā al-kināya occurs as “He will remain there forever in

<sup>27</sup> Ibn Shurayḥ, *al-Qāfi*, 40.

<sup>28</sup> Ḥuşary, *Ahkām*, 214.

<sup>29</sup> Makkī b. Abī Ṭālib, *al-Kashf*, 1/130.

<sup>30</sup> Qurṭubī, *al-Mūḍiḥ*, 128-129; see also: Ḥamed, *al-Dirāsāt al-şawtiyya*, 444-445.

<sup>31</sup> Ibn Jinnī, *al-Khaşāiṣ*, 3/126; Sakhāwī, *Jamāl al-qurrā'*, 2/328.

<sup>32</sup> Ibn Mihrān, *Risāla al-Maddāt*, 25-26; Ibn al-Jazarī, *Nashr*, 2/1003.

<sup>33</sup> Sakhāwī, *Jamāl al-qurrā'*, 2/328; Ibn al-Jazarī, *Nashr*, 2/1015.

<sup>34</sup> Ibn Jinnī, *al-Khaşāiṣ*, 3/126; Ḥamed, *al-Dirāsāt al-şawtiyya*, 444-445.

<sup>35</sup> Ibn al-Jazarī, *Nashr*, 2/971-995; Mawşilī, *Sharḥu Shu'la*, 97.

humiliation.”<sup>36</sup> However, according to another view, the aforementioned hā al-kināya refers to torment, and it is narrated that the torment that is reported to be double at the beginning of the verse is the torment of the world and the hereafter (ākhirā).<sup>37</sup> Due to the fact that the hā al-kināya in this verse is read with the al-madd al-şila in the narration of Ḥafş of the qirā’a of ‘Āşim, contrary to the established rules, the scholars have pondered about the wisdom of this situation, and this issue, which is of interest especially for those whose field of occupation is the science of qirā’āt, has been interpreted in three different ways by the scholars.<sup>38</sup> These will be tried to be stated one by one below.

### 2.1. The Opinion that the Meaning of the Word Preceding the Word Before Hā al-Kināya is Confirmed and the Situation of the Sinners is Pointed Out by the Practice of the al-Şila

Although there are different interpretations in the exegetical works on the effect of madd on the meaning of madd in the hā al-kināya in the 69th verse of Sūrat al-Furqān, they mostly focus on the word مُهَانًا, which means “despised and disgraced, humiliated” in the relevant part of the verse. Therefore, the fact that the exceptional reading of hā al-kināya in the verse with a madd is not sufficiently mentioned in the tafsīr books gives the impression that the interpreters did not attach a particular meaning to the practice of al-madd al-şila in the relevant verse. Unlike the other interpreters, Elmalılı Muhammed Hamdi Yazır, on the other hand, approaches the issue from the point of view of meaning, and contrary to the established rule in the narration of Ḥafş, he associates the aforementioned hā al-kināya with applying al-madd al-şila with the prolongation of eternity and immortality.<sup>39</sup>

While the practice of exceptional al-madd al-şila is not adequately covered in tafsīr works, there are comments in the literatures of qirā’āt and tajwīd that the practice of al-madd al-şila in the relevant verse is a meaning-oriented practice. As a matter of fact, one of the motives of the application of al-madd al-şila in the opinions related to the issue in the literature on the discipline in question stands out as “the strengthening of the meaning”. It is also pointed out that the wisdom of reciting the hā al-kināya in verse 69 of Sūrat al-Furqān with practicing al-madd al-şila in the narration of Ḥafş is to reproach the sinners who disobey Allah's command and to serve as a warning to others.<sup>40</sup> al-Nuwayrī (d. 857/1453), on the other hand, argues that the prolongation of the sound (madd) in the foregoing hā al-kināya is to make the sinner's condition heard, and that it is to make the sinner's condition heard in verse 36 of Sūrat al-Shu‘arā’.<sup>41</sup> As in the works of qirā’āt, some tajwīd works also discuss the related application of the al-madd al-şila. In one of them, the view that the application of the al-madd al-şila in

<sup>36</sup> Abū Ja‘far Ibn Jarīr Muḥammad b. Jarīr b. Yazīd al-Ṭabarī, *Tafsīr al-Ṭabarī: Jāmi‘ al-bayān ‘an ta’wīl āy al-Qur‘ān*, critical ed. ‘Abdullah b. Abdilmuhsin al-Turkī ‘Abdullāh b. ‘Abd al-Muhsin al-Turkī et al. (Riyadh: Dār ‘Ālem al-Kutub, 1424/2003), 17/516.

<sup>37</sup> Abū Muḥammad ‘Abdurrahman b. Abī Ḥātim al-Rāzī, *Tafsīr al-Qur‘ān al-‘Aẓīm: Musned ‘an al-Rasūl (pbuh) wa al-şahābe wa al-tābiīn*, critical ed. Ḥikmat b. Bashīr b. Yasīn (Demmam [Saudi Arabia]: Dār Ibn al-Jawzī, a.h. 1439), 10/522.

<sup>38</sup> Abdullah Benli, *Hafş Rivâyetiyle Āşim Kıraatinin Tecvîd Kuralları* (s.n., n.d.), 113.

<sup>39</sup> Yazır, *Hak Dini Kuran Dili*, 7/307; see also: Sıtkı Güllü, *Açıklamalı Örnekleriyle Tecvîd İlmi* (İstanbul: Huzur Yayın Dağıtım, 2005), 427 (5. fn.).

<sup>40</sup> Shihāb al-Dīn Abū Bakr Aḥmad b. Muḥammad b. Muḥammad b. al-Jazarī Ibn al-Nāzım, *Sharḥu Ṭayyiba al-Nashr fī al-qirā’āt al-‘ashr*, critical ed. Jamāl al-Dīn Muḥammad Sharaf (Tanta: Dār al-Şahāba li al-Turāth, 1426/2005), 77. For similar statements, see: Abū Shāme al-Maqdisī, *Ibrāz al-me‘ānī*, 106.

<sup>41</sup> Abū al-Qāsim Muḥammad b. Muḥammad b. Muḥammad b. ‘Alī al-Nuwayrī, *Sharḥu Ṭayyiba al-Nashr fī al-qirā’āt al-‘ashr*, critical ed. Majdī Muḥammad Surūr Sa‘d Baslūm (Beirut: Dār al-Kutub al-‘Ilmiyya, 1424/2003), 1/360-361; for similar expressions, see: Abū Shāme al-Maqdisī, *Ibrāz al-me‘ānī*, 106.

question strengthens the meaning of the previous word is quoted, and it is reported that this view belongs to the interpreters. Yet, there is no information about the interpreters and their works referred to in the work in question.<sup>42</sup> İsmail Karaçam, on the other hand, uses similar expressions to those of Elmalılı Muhammed Hamdi Yazır on the subject and explains the wisdom of the related al-madd al-şıla practice as “It is to draw attention to the understanding of the meaning...”<sup>43</sup> In one of the tajwīd works of the modern period, an interpretation is made as “This [al-madd al-şıla] is to censure the sinner, to rebuke him.”<sup>44</sup>

There are certain studies that talk about the effects of the types of madd on the meaning, and one of them explains the effects of the al-madd al-aşlī on the meaning under the title of “the relationship between sound and meaning in the rules of tajwīd”. Under the above mentioned heading, an example is given of the exceptional application of the al-madd al-şıla in the hā al-kināya in the 69th verse of Sūrat al-Furqān. In the example given in the related research, it is emphasized that the punishment of those who commit the sins stated in the previous verses such as “associating shirk, killing the life forbidden by Allah, and committing adultery” will continue to increase. Besides, the study also refers to the view expressed by Elmalılı about the exceptional practice of al-madd al-şıla in this verse that “the pronoun is prolonged to indicate the perpetuation of the torment”.<sup>45</sup>

In all of these interpretations that arise in the context of the exceptional practice of al-madd al-şıla, it can be said that the reason for al-madd al-şıla is “to make people feel the message more strongly”.

## 2.2. The Opinion that Ease of Pronunciation is Provided by the al-Madd al-Şıla Application

It is evaluated in some tajwīd works that the al-madd al-şıla performed in the relevant verse of Sūrat al-Furqān “is intended to prevent the difficulty in pronunciation”. It is said that the al-madd al-şıla in the mentioned verse is performed due to the difficulty and burden of moving quickly from the kasra (ـِ) of the pronoun to the ḍamma (ـُ) sound of the first letter of the next word.<sup>46</sup> The statements that can be called the source of the thought expressed on this subject are found in the work of Shaykhizāda Muḥammad Es'ad al-Ḥusaynī (1789-1848) in his work *al-Wird al-mufīd fī sharḥ al-tajwīd*. Shaykhizāda notes the following on the subject:

“Zirā ḥarf-i ḥalq'ın kesrasından, suratle mīm-i shafaviyyenin ḍammasine intiqāle 'usrat ve kulfet ūlmāghla fil-cumle suhūlet taḥşilçün hā'ya (to the letter ء) lafiẓda yā-i waşliyye-i sākin-i meddiye ilḥāq ūlünüb kesrasını ishbā' ile madd eylediler. Her ne qadar mā qabli sākin īse de...” (“For it is hard and burdensome to move quickly from the kasra of the letter emerge from the throat to the ḍamma of the al-mīm (الميم) al-shafawiyya, they added a prolonged yā al-waşliyye al-sākin al-madd to the hā (to the letter ء) and prolonged it, making its kasra obvious. Although the previous letter is sākin...”)

In the above statements, which have been transcribed and translated, Shaykhizāda summarizes the following: There is hardship and difficulty in moving from the kasra of the

<sup>42</sup> Ali Celāleddin Karakılıç, *Tecvid İlmî: Kur'ân-ı Kerîm Okuma Kâideleri* (Ankara: Kalkan Matbaa San. ve Tic. Ltd. Şti, 2011), 110 (253. fn.).

<sup>43</sup> İsmail Karaçam, *Kur'ân-ı Kerîm'in Faziletleri ve Okunma Kâideleri: Mufasssal Tecvid* (İstanbul: Marmara Üniversitesi İlahiyat Fakültesi Vakfı, 2002), 316.

<sup>44</sup> Aḫḫya Qābil Naşr, *Ghāya al-murīd fī 'ilm al-tajwīd* (Riyadh: Maktaba al-Ḥaramayn, a.h. 1409), 211.

<sup>45</sup> Tetik, “Ses ve Anlam İlişkisi Bakımından Kur'ân ve Kırâat”, 300-305.

<sup>46</sup> Karakılıç, *Tecvid İlmî*, 110; for similar statements, see: Karaçam, *Kur'ân-ı Kerîm'in Faziletleri*, 316.

letter hā (هـ) to the ḍamma of the letter mīm (ميم). For this reason, the letter yā (ياء), which is the letter of madd in pronunciation, is added to the letter hā (هـ) for convenience. Therefore, contrary to the established rules, this letter (هـ), which is a pronoun, is prolonged.<sup>47</sup>

The above-mentioned view on the reasoning of the matter cannot be said to be a logical view. This is because there are other examples in the Qur'ān, such as the aforementioned example, where a letter with a ḍamma follows a hā al-kināya with a kasra vowel. Namely, in the verse “إنا أنزلنا التوراة فيها هدى ونور ... من كتاب الله وكانوا عليه شهداء”<sup>48</sup> no al-madd al-ṣila is made in the underlined pronoun in the qirā'āt other than the qirā'a of Ibn Kathīr. Despite the fact that the reason mentioned for the example in Sūrat al-Furqān is also present in this example, however, in the example of hā al-kināya, al-madd al-ṣila is not applied for any other qirā'a except for qirā'a of Ibn Kathīr. Therefore, this argument for the exceptional application in Sūrat al-Furqān does not seem to be consistent in itself. In conclusion, if the claim that the reason for the application of the al-madd al-ṣila in the aforementioned example in Sūrat al-Furqān is “ease of pronunciation” were to be accepted as true, it would be expected to be applied to similar examples.

### 2.3. The Opinion that the al-Madd al-Ṣila Application Prevents the Addition of Letters

In the narration of Ḥafṣ, it is stated that in the verse of Sūrat al-Furqān, the addition of letters is prevented by reading hā al-kināya with qaṣr, and that this is a practice to prevent the letters from being mixed together in the relevant verse. According to this view, in the composition فيه مهنًا, if hā al-kināya is read with qaṣr, it is suggested that an error may be caused by the addition of a sākin letter like mīm, which is the first letter of the second word, to the end of hā al-kināya.<sup>49</sup>

In the verse “إنا أنزلنا التوراة فيها هدى ونور ... من كتاب الله وكانوا عليه شهداء”<sup>50</sup> of Sūrat al-Mā'ida, the hā al-kināya in the underlined phrase, is not performed with al-madd al-ṣila in the narration of Ḥafṣ. From the current perspective, the verse given as an example is a clear example of the alleged negative situation in terms of pronunciation. As a matter of fact, with the acceptance of “possible letter annexation” as a reason for the application of al-madd al-ṣila in this matter, the following question may come to mind: “Why is al-madd al-ṣila not practiced in other similar versions of the said hā al-kināya in the narration of Ḥafṣ?” Undoubtedly, the cause determined for something must extend to its analogues, otherwise it cannot be said that the rational evidence has been properly utilized.

### 3. The Claim that the Secondary Madds Affect the Meaning

In the academic studies conducted in Türkiye, there are those who have examined the relationship between the amounts of the madds in the recitation of the Qur'ān and the meaning and mentioned their effect on the meaning.<sup>51</sup> Under this heading, the consistency and reasonability of the thesis that the al-madd al-far'ī that occurs for lexical reasons affects the

<sup>47</sup> Shaykhizāda Muḥammad Es'ad al-Ḥusaynī, *al-Wird al-muḥīd fī sharḥ al-tajwīd* (Istanbul: Şirket-i Şahâfiye-i 'Uthmāniyye, n.d.), 32; for similar statements, see: Benli, *Hafṣ Rivâyetiyle Âsım Kıraatinin Tecvîd Kuralları*, 113.

<sup>48</sup> al-Mā'ida 5/44.

<sup>49</sup> Benli, *Hafṣ Rivâyetiyle Âsım Kıraatinin Tecvîd Kuralları*, 114.

<sup>50</sup> al-Mā'ida 5/44.

<sup>51</sup> For examples see: Tetik, “Ses ve Anlam İlişkisi Bakımından Kur'ân ve Kırâat”, 297-312.



meaning shall be discussed by referring to the literatures of qirā'āt and tajwīd within the framework of the sound-meaning relationship.

In one of the academic studies mentioned above, as a result of the evaluation of verse 84 of Sūrat Yūsuf in terms of the rhythm of the madds, the effect of the madds in the words تَوَلَّى and أَسْفَى and the address word يَا on meaning is mentioned.

وَتَوَلَّى عَنْهُمْ وَقَالَ يَا أَسْفَى عَلَى يُوسُفَ وَإِنِّي صَدِّتُ عَيْنَاهُ مِنَ الْحُزْنِ فَهُوَ كَظِيمٌ

“(Jacob) turned away from them and said, “Oh, my sorrow over Yūsuf,” and his eyes became white from grief, for he was [of that] a suppressor.”<sup>52</sup>

In the example given above, the word تَوَلَّى is expressed to be slowed down due to the al-madd al-aşlī in the word تَوَلَّى, in other words, it is expressed that the word is stopped on and lingered on for a while. It is argued that the principle of the al-madd al-aşlī reflects the depth of the sadness stated in the verse and the fact that this situation continued to exist for a very long time. In the same study, it is stated that madd al-munfaşil rule, especially in the related letter of addressing, emphasizes the psychological state of the Prophet Jacob with a long emphasis, and that these madds indicate that the word is spoken slowly and with a sad tone of voice. The relevant study also states the following:

“The low rate of transition between the parts of the sentence reflects the intended meaning and emotional atmosphere. It is seen that words suitable for this emotional dimension have been chosen with a low rate of transition. There are also examples in the Qur'an with fast transitions, suggesting that the event will be over quickly.”<sup>53</sup>

Considering that the al-madd al-aşlī is the most common of the tajwīd rules in the Qur'an, it is clear that it is not correct to limit the rule of the al-madd al-aşlī to such a special situation. Even though the al-madd al-aşlī is not directly limited to sadness in the aforementioned study, the verse is explained on the basis of the sound-emotion relationship. This does not seem to be a reasonable justification for the persistence of sadness for a long time. Likewise, although it is stated in the aforementioned study that the word قَالَ has the al-madd al-munfaşil rule, as is the case with يَا أَسْفَى, this judgment must have been inadvertent on the part of the author. Except for the al-madd al-aşlī, madd rules are mostly within the scope of phonology.<sup>54</sup> Consequently, it can be said that, although there are exceptions, the types of madd other than the al-madd al-aşlī are overwhelmingly not a meaning-oriented tajwīd rule. al-Madd al-munfaşil, which is one of the types of madd other than the al-madd al-aşlī, is a tajwīd rule that takes place when the letter of the hamza from the causes of madd is placed at the beginning of the other word immediately after the letter of madd.<sup>55</sup> If the above-mentioned conditions are met, madd al-munfaşil is performed regardless of a fast or slow event, mood of verbs, sadness, joy or any other emotion. Therefore, the claim that the madds are functional on the meanings of the words pointed out in the relevant verse of Sūrat Yūsuf does not yield the impression of a coherent interpretation; on the contrary, it looks like a forced interpretation. For it is the sounds used by the reader that will give a sad tone of voice here. There is also another issue where this point of view can be criticized, and that is the amount of madd. Because this interpretation is based on the assumption that al-madd al-munfaşil is used a lot. Yet, the existence of Qur'anic

<sup>52</sup> Yūsuf 12/84.

<sup>53</sup> Mustafa Kaya, *Arap Dili Fonetigi: Ses-Anlam İlgisi* (Erzurum: Eser Matbaası, 2011), 88.

<sup>54</sup> Makkī b. Abī Tālib, *al-Kashf*, 1/130; Qurtubī, *al-Mūdiḥ*, 128-129; Sakhāwī, *Jamāl al-qurrā'*, 2/328; Ibn al-Jazarī, *Nashr*, 2/1015; Hamed, *al-Dirāsāt al-şawtiyya*, 442-445.

<sup>55</sup> Abū Bakr Aḥmad b. Muḥammad b. Muḥammad b. al-Jazarī Ibn al-Nāzim, *al-Hawāşhī al-muḥfima: Sharḥ al-Muqaddima*, ed. Abū 'Āşim Ḥasan b. 'Abbās b. Qutb (Cairo: Muassasatu Qurtuba, 1427/2006), 118.

scholars who recite al-madd al-munfaşil with qaşr (shortening) is another issue that should be taken into consideration. Therefore, it is understood that the researcher has followed a selective method in this example.

Apart from the above example, there are other studies that evaluate the function of madd on the meanings of the words of the Qur'ān by establishing a relationship between sound and meaning. In one of these studies, the word الصَّاعَةُ in the verse “فَإِذَا جَاءَتِ الصَّاعَةُ” “When that deafening sound (doomsday) comes!...” in Sūrat ‘Abasa is analyzed in three points in terms of the relationship between sound and meaning. The word الصَّاعَةُ is analyzed in terms of madd in one of these three points. al-Madd al-lāzim al-ḥarfī al-muthaqqal (heavy letter based necessary prolongation) is performed in words with idghām (الإدغام) or shadda (ّ), such as الصَّاعَةُ, which contains meanings such as deafening scream<sup>56</sup> and apocalypse<sup>57</sup>. With this rule, it is claimed that the weight of the apocalyptic scene is transferred to the pronunciation. The same study makes a similar interpretation to the previous example in the word الطَّائِمَةُ in the phrase الطَّائِمَةُ الكُبْرَى in the 34th verse of Sūrat al-Nāzi‘āt.<sup>58</sup>

Although the interpretation made about the examples examined above may seem logical and consistent, it is in this form due to the pattern of the word (muḍa‘af verb), and the patterns of words in Arabic vary according to the features such as verb, infinitive, objects/passive participles, etc. Since the last two of the root letters of the word in question have vowels and are the same letter, they are joined by practicing idghām and have taken the form of صَحَّ. Besides, as a general rule in the subject of sulāthī mujarrad (three letter root words), the subjects/present participles are formed by bringing the letter alif (الألف) after the first letter. The word here is formed in exactly the same way. This being the case, the question “Is this the case for all subjects in terms of meaning-sound relation?” may occupy the minds. Because while the subject or any pattern is being created, they are not produced by considering things like strong or weak meaning. There are certain patterns that are used to reveal these words, and the relevant words are inserted into the appropriate ones. In fact, the difference between this example and the other examples is that the structure of the word is used as an argument, not the amount of the madd. Therefore, it is not correct to seek wisdom related to meaning in this matter.

In a study on the sound-meaning relationship, depths of meaning are mentioned for the words world and hereafter in the 38th verse of Sūrat al-Tawba. The arguments used to explain this situation with the sound-meaning relationship are quite remarkable. In fact, it is stated that the word “world” in the aforementioned verse can be lengthened from one alif count to five alifs count, while the word “hereafter” can be lengthened from one alif count to five alifs amount. It is stated that the reading of الدُّنْيَا with qaşr indicates that the world is a short period of time compared to the hereafter, and in the word الأخرى, the reading of al-madd al-badal with a form other than qaşr is an indication of the eternity of the hereafter. In fact, in the verse, the author uses the comparison of the life of the world and the benefits it provides with that of the life of the hereafter as a proof for this view.<sup>59</sup> It is notable that the comparison of the amount of madd in the words of the world and the hereafter and the interpretation that the al-madd al-badal performed in the word hereafter indicates the eternity of the hereafter, especially that one

<sup>56</sup> Abū al-Ḥusayn Aḥmad b. Zakariyyā Ibn Fāris, *Mu‘jamu maqāyīs al-luġha*, critical ed. ‘Abd al-Salām Muḥammad Hārūn (Amman: Dār al-Fikr, 1399/1979), 3/281; for similar statements see: Abū al-Faḍl Jamāl al-Dīn Muḥammad b. Mukarram Ibn Manzūr, *Lisān al-‘Arab* (Beirut: Dār Ṣādir, n.d.), 3/33.

<sup>57</sup> Ibn Manzūr, *Lisān al-‘Arab*, 3/33.

<sup>58</sup> Tetik, “Ses ve Anlam İlişkisi Bakımından Kur’ân ve Kırâat”, 300.

<sup>59</sup> Tetik, “Ses ve Anlam İlişkisi Bakımından Kur’ân ve Kırâat”, 303.

of the arguments used for this interpretation is the word “قليل” (little) in the verse. For al-madd al-badal is done depending on certain conditions.<sup>60</sup> If there were any changes in the duration of al-madd al-badal according to the meanings of the words, etc., then one could talk about the effect of al-madd al-badal on the relevant words. Furthermore, such an interpretation would lead to the result that the application of al-madd al-badal would differ from word to word, i.e. some words would be prolonged more and some would not, even though they are suitable for the rule of al-madd al-badal. However, it is known that the rules of tajwīd are applied on phonetic and philological grounds. For this reason, we believe that such an evaluation for the relevant example should be taken with a pinch of salt. Moreover, the ṭarīq of al-Azraq (d. 240/854) is the only one in the narration of Warsh to read al-madd al-badal with secondary madd.<sup>61</sup> More than this, what kind of reason/cause should be sought for al-madd al-badal in words such as مُسْتَهْزِءُونَ and مُنْكَتُونَ? Similarly, there is not only the level of ṭūl (مرتبة الطول) for al-madd al-badal in the qirā'āt literature; on the contrary, there are different opinions regarding the three levels, including ṭūl.<sup>62</sup> In contrast, according to the aforementioned claim, any of the levels of qaṣr, tawassuṭ (التوسط) and ṭūl should be used according to the depth of meaning of the words in the Qur'an. Because it can be concluded from the aforementioned research that there is an agreement on the levels mentioned in the qirā'āt literature for al-madd al-badal, that is, all authors consider these three levels appropriate for al-madd al-badal. In other words, the mentioned study uses the information on the subject in this way. In that case, the meanings of the words should be considered and a level of madd should be preferred accordingly. Whereas, the different levels of the al-madd al-badal accepted by Warsh are not accepted by all scholars. In fact, as mentioned earlier, there are some scholars who argue that a level other than qaṣr is not appropriate for al-madd al-badal. Therefore, the serious criticisms<sup>63</sup> of the conventional qirā'āt literature about the performance of al-madd al-badal with al-madd al-far'ī should not be overlooked within the subject matter. As a result, it does not seem reasonable to attribute a meaning to the rather madd in words where the rule of al-madd al-badal is present, taking into account the levels other than level of qaṣr, given that there are evidences that can be used as a counter-argument against the reading of al-madd al-badal with rather madd.

In another study, in which al-madd al-badal is the subject of research, the reason for its prolongation with secondary madd is emphasized. In this study, while explaining the words أَيْنَا and أَوْتِي, one of the levels mentioned for al-madd al-badal in the qirā'āt literature, the maximum level of madd, is prioritized, and the maximum of madd amounts suggested for the maximum level of madd is preferred.<sup>64</sup> It is known that an amount of five alifs for the maximum level of madd is three counts by its nature. As a matter of fact, in the qirā'āt literature, the amount of

<sup>60</sup> Ibn al-Jazarī, *Nashr*, 2/1090; Marṣafī, *Hidāya al-qārī*, 1/333-335; Ḥuṣary, *Ahkām*, 213.

<sup>61</sup> Makkī b. Abī Ṭālib, *al-Kashf*, 1/131-132; Abū al-Abbās Aḥmad b. 'Ammār al-Mahdawī, *Sharḥ al-Hidāya*, critical ed. Ḥāzīm Sa'īd Ḥaydar (Riyadh: Maktaba al-Rushd , 1416/1995), 1/30-31, 38; Abū al-Abbās Aḥmad b. 'Ammār al-Mahdawī, *al-Taḥṣīl li-fawā'id Kitābi al-Tafsīl al-jāmi' li-'ulūm al-tanzīl*, critical ed. Muḥammad Ziyād Muḥammad Ṭāhir Sha'bān - Faraḥ Naṣrī (Qatar: Vizāra al-Awqāf wa al-Shu'ni al-Islāmiyya, 1435/2014), 7/299-300; Sakhāwī, *Fath al-vaṣīd*, 2/273-278; Abū Shāme al-Maqdisī, *Ibrāz al-me'ānī*, 115-119.

<sup>62</sup> Ibn Ghalbūn, *al-Tadhkira*, 1/108; Sakhāwī, *Fath al-vaṣīd*, 2/273-278; Abū Shāme al-Maqdisī, *Ibrāz al-me'ānī*, 115-119; Abū al-Qāsim Muḥammad b. Aḥmad b. Muḥammad b. Juzayy al-Kalbī al-Ghīrānī, *al-Mukhtaṣar al-bāri 'fi qirā'ati Nāfi'*, critical ed. Fathī al-'Ubaydī (Aleppo: Dār al-Rifā'ī - Dār al-Qalam al-'Arabī, 1425/2004), 41; Ibn al-Jazarī, *Nashr*, 2/1090-1106.

<sup>63</sup> Ibn Ghalbūn, *al-Tadhkira*, 108-109.

<sup>64</sup> Tetik, “Kur'an Tilâvetinde Bedelli Medlerin Hikmet Kavramıyla İlintisi -“Âteyna ve Ütiye” Örneği-”, 109.

three counts is also used for the maximum level of madd.<sup>65</sup> These amounts differ only in terms of quantity, but in terms of quality, both amounts are identical and correspond to three counts.<sup>66</sup> Indeed, this information may have been overlooked in the study in question, or a selective method may have been preferred. Actually, the second possibility is more likely, owing to the fact that there is more than one opinion for al-madd al-badal, i.e., more than one level of madd, the selection of the maximum level of madd from among them confirms that the second possibility is stronger. In addition, there are authors who prefer the level of qaṣr for the said type of madd, and they insist on the necessity of preferring the level of qaṣr in order not to prejudice the meaning.<sup>67</sup> It is also noteworthy that the characteristics of tafkhīm (التفخيم) and tarqīq (الترقيق), which are different practices in the letter rā (الراء), are used as a basis in this regard. When we look at the status of these practices in the literature, it is seen that they have specific conditions just like the other rules.<sup>68</sup> That is to say, there is no meaning-oriented exception in the qirā'āt literature, neither in the characteristics of the letter rā (الراء) nor in al-madd al-badal. Instead, as it is seen, the negative effect of madd on the meaning, in the especially of al-madd al-badal, is talked about. For this reason, it is possible to say that an eclectic approach is followed in the aforementioned research.

The reason for the madd applied in al-madd al-mubālagha (مد المبالغة) is incorporeal. Although the incorporeal reason is weaker than the lexical reason before the qurrā' (القراء), the fact/case in Arabic is the opposite.<sup>69</sup> It is stated that the Arabs use madd for “praying, asking for help, and exaggerating any unfavorable thing”.<sup>70</sup> Therefore, the above states, which are pointed out to exist in the language despite the absence of a lexical reason, are mentioned to show al-madd al-mubālagha in Arabic.<sup>71</sup> In this context, in one of the studies on science of qirā'āt, the issue of madd is given a significant place within the scope of the sound-meaning relationship. The comments made within the framework of the sound-meaning relationship for the prayer verses discussed in the study's madd section arouse considerable attention. In the referenced study, it is stated that the above mentioned states are also found in the Qur'ān and the reflections of the examples of these states on the sound-meaning relationship are discussed. Indeed, the madd in the words *أتنا* and *الأخرة* in the 201st verse of Sūrat al-Baqara, which is one of them, are explained with the amount of madd applied as per tarīq of al-Azraq and it is stated that the total amount of madd to be made in the three words in the relevant verse is fifteen counts. It is interpreted that the amount of fifteen alifs of madd mentioned in the verse indicates that “the believers who make the prayer in this verse ask Allah to shower the blessings of both the world and the hereafter on them continuously like rain”. It is also pointed out in the book

<sup>65</sup> Abū Ishaq Ibrāhīm b. 'Umar b. Ibrāhīm b. Khalīl b. Abī al-'Abbās al-Ja'barī, *Kanz al-ma'ānī fī sharḥi Hirz al-amānī fī al-qirā'āt al-sab'*, critical ed. Yūsuf Muḥammad Shaḥī 'Abd al-Rahīm (Madinah: *al-Jāmi'a al-Islamiyya*, Master's Thesis, a.h. 1420), 2/524; Ibn al-Nāzim, *al-Ḥawāshī al-muḥhima*, 113-114; 'Isām al-Dīn Abū al-Khayr Aḥmad b. Muṣṭafā b. Khalīl Tāshkoprižāde, *Sharḥ al-Muqaddima al-Jazariyya*, critical ed. Muḥammad Sīdī Muḥammad Muḥammad al-Amīn (Madinah: Mujamma' al-Malik Fahd li-Ṭibā'a al-Muṣḥaf al-Sharīf, 1421/2001), 218; Abū al-Ḥasan Nūr al-Dīn 'Alī b. Sulṭān Muḥammad al-Herawī al-Qārī, *al-Minaḥ al-fikriyya fī sharḥ al-Muqaddima al-Jazariyya*, critical ed. Usāma 'Atāyā, ed. Aḥmad Shukrī (Damascus: Dār al-Ghawthānī li al-Dirāsāt al-Qur'āniyya, 1433/2012), 225.

<sup>66</sup> Hudhālī's explanation on the amount of counts makes this nuance clear. See: Abū al-Qāsim Yūsuf b. 'Alī b. Jubāra al-Hudhālī, *al-Kāmil fī al-qirā'āt*, critical ed. Abū Ibrāhīm 'Amr b. 'Abdillāh (Cairo: Dār Semā li al-Kitāb, 1435/2014), 2/858.

<sup>67</sup> Ibn Ghalbūn, *al-Tadhkira*, 108-109.

<sup>68</sup> Shāṭibī, *Matn al-Shāṭibiyya*, 28-29.

<sup>69</sup> Ibn al-Jazarī, *Nashr*, 2/1107.

<sup>70</sup> Ibn al-Jazarī, *Nashr*, 2/1107; Çağıl, *Kur'ân'ın Belâgat ve Fonetik yapısı*, 352.

<sup>71</sup> Ibn al-Jazarī, *Nashr*, 2/1107.

that the quite a lot of madd quantity in the related verse gives the impression that the believers are constantly demanding, as if they are saying, “Our Rabb, give us, give us, give us, give us...”. Likewise, the comments on madd in the word دعاء at the end of the 40th verse of Sūrat Ibrāhīm are resemble the comments made in the above example. It is exceptional that the interpretations of these two examples and others are shaped by the amount of madd in the ṭarīq of al-Azraq of the narration of Warsh.<sup>72</sup>

In both of the above-mentioned studies, these interpretations are made by taking into account especially the level of ṭūl of al-madd al-badal of ṭarīq al-Azraq. However, the levels of qaṣr and tawassuṭ of this madd in the ṭarīq of al-Azraq are also in question. Yet, as it has been noted before, it is a fact that the use of the madd amount for al-madd al-badal after the madd amount of the al-madd al-aṣlī has been criticized in the qirā'āt literature.<sup>73</sup> It is curious why the level of ṭūl is taken into consideration in this matter while there is such data in the literature and levels other than ṭūl can be applied for al-madd al-badal. Additionally, the interpretation of the relevant verses by taking into account ṭarīq of al-Azraq, which accepts the maximum amount of madd for the types of madd, including al-madd al-badal, is a choice that may raise questions in minds. It is observed that this is a selective attitude that emerges due to the use of arguments that support the relevant theses. Therefore, it can be said that while there is a level of qaṣr for al-madd al-badal in the qirā'āt literature, it can be said that the attribution of a meaning to al-madd al-badal by taking into account the longer levels causes the limits of interpretation (ta'wīl) to be exceeded. Despite the existence of different schools of madd, the use of the amount of madd belonging to those who consider the maximum level of madd as five counts can also be misleading. This is because five alifs used in the five-alifs school for the maximum madd level is not equal to ten ḥarakas in effect/fact, and it is identical in its nature to the three alifs used in the three-alifs maximum level of madd in the three alifs school for the maximum madd level. Further, the reason for mubālagha is neither mentioned in the qirā'āt literature for al-madd al-badal nor for al-madd al-munfaṣil, but rather for the letter lām alif (ل), which nullifies its kind. Therefore, the statement that the Arabs use madd to pray, to ask for help, and to exaggerate anything unfavorable, even if the cause of the al-madd al-mubālagha is weak, is important to show its counterpart in the Arabic language. It is however unreasonable to use it as a basis for tajwīd rules such as al-madd al-munfaṣil or al-madd al-badal.

Given the data on the subject, it can be said that any claim that the amount of madd of any madd that occurs for lexical reasons reflects the meanings in a random verse is a forced interpretation. It is seen that the claim that certain rules of tajwīd, which emerged within the framework of certain rules, deepen the meaning of the words of the Qur'ān stems from personal comments. The reason for this opinion is the absence of any evidence and indication with reference to the literature used in the verses given as examples within the framework of the sound-meaning relationship. Nonetheless, it is possible for skilled Qur'ān al-Karīm readers to make the listeners feel the depths of meaning with the subtleties such as the emphasis they will make with representational/descriptive reading, the music they will use, etc. On the other hand, the effect of the exceptional practice of al-madd al-ṣila on the meaning in the narration of Ḥafṣ and the fact that it is a meaning-based practice may be excluded from this determination.

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<sup>72</sup> Çağıl, *Kur'ân'ın Belâgat ve Fonetik Yapısı*, 352-353. See for similar reviews: Tetik, “Ses ve Anlam İlişkisi Bakımından Kur'ân ve Kırâat”, 303.

<sup>73</sup> Ibn Ghalbūn, *al-Tadhkira*, 1/108; Ibn Bellīma, *Talhīş al-'ibārāt*, 26.

### Conclusion

In this paper, the claim that “secondary madds based on lexical reasons affect the meaning of the Holy Qur’ān” in academic studies in Türkiye has been analyzed on the basis of philology, phonology, interpretation and qirā’āt literature, and the traces of this claim have been traced. As a matter of fact, it has been observed that the al-madd al-far’ī that occur as a result of lexical causes of madd are performed for phonological and philological reasons. Therefore, it has been determined that the principle of causality (‘illiyya) is operated for procedural practices. In some academic studies conducted in Türkiye, it has been observed that the researchers rather establish a secondary madd-meaning relationship and that these are hypothetical claims, that is, they are in the hypothesis stage. Since it is not possible to confirm the alleged views with the literature, it is concluded that these are mostly personal opinions.

It may be considered normal to follow the method of causality in exceptional cases related to the methodology of qirā’āt. Yet, the rules of tajwīd that emerge under certain conditions need to be elaborated and elucidated on the basis of phonological-philological grounds. As far as seen, in the studies conducted on the subject in Türkiye, the thesis that “secondary madds affect the meaning” has been tried to be justified without taking phonology and philology into consideration, and the qirā’āt literature has been selectively employed. In these studies, the association of the amount of al-madd al-far’ī with the meaning means that “meaning” is accepted as a kind of cause for al-madd al-far’ī. Nevertheless, it has been understood that the commentaries made in these studies on the significance of al-madd al-far’ī amounts do not meet the possible cause or causes of secondary madds, in other words, there is no data that confirms the theses put forward on the subject with recourses to literatures of qirā’āt and tajwīd.

The types of madd that are realized for lexical reasons have a static structure and they are realized within the framework of certain rules. In this sense, we see the use of different narrations or ʔuruq, the amounts belonging to different schools of madd, and the maximum levels of madd as arguments to support the relevant theses as an eclectic attitude. Besides, it has been determined that the application of exceptional al-madd al-şila, which is discussed in terms of its effect on the meaning, is used for the sake of strenghtening of the meaning, even though it is not a al-madd al-far’ī. However, it is understood that the causalities established phonetically for the exceptional al-madd al-şila practice have inconsistent aspects within themselves.

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**A Turkish Qur'an Translation According to the Tartib al-Nuzul: A Feminist Perspective**

*Nuzul Sıralamasını Esas Alan Türkçe Kur'an Tercümesi: Feminist Bir Yaklaşım*

**Feyza Çelik**

Arş. Gör., Kilis 7 Aralık Üniversitesi, İlahiyat Fakültesi  
Temel İslam Bilimleri, Tefsir Anabilim Dalı  
Res. Asst., Kilis 7 Aralık University, Faculty of Theology, Basic Islamic Sciences,  
Department of Tafsir  
Kilis, Türkiye

[feyza.celik@kilis.edu.tr](mailto:feyza.celik@kilis.edu.tr)

<https://orcid.org/0000-0002-3398-9199>

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### Abstract

The subject of this article is Ayşā Zeynep Abdullah and her translation of the Holy Qur'ān, which is translated according to tartīb al-nuzūl. Three questions were traced in the article. First, Did Ayşā Zaynap Abdullah as a women use feminist translation techniques? Second, if she used, then how did she reflect feminist translation techniques as a woman in her translation? The other one pertains to the sources that informed the arrangement of sūrahs in the translation, specifically within the context of tartīb al-nuzūl. The present study endeavours to address these inquiries through five distinct sections. In the first part, information about Abdullah's life is given by using data collection and analysis methods. In the second part, the translation's preface was examined using the text analysis method. In the third part, the formal features and methodology of translation are discussed with content/text analysis and comparison methods. The fourth chapter provides illustrative instances wherein the translator's rendition of select verses concerning women is expounded. The final phase culminates in a comparative assessment of the translator's employed translation technique vis-à-vis the strategies inherent to feminist translation paradigms. Conclusively, the findings of this investigation elucidate that the translator, through active intervention in the source text, employs a translation approach aligned with feminist principles, herein referred to as "womanhandling." Ayşā Zeynep Abdullah's translation is largely a literal translation. She does not provide any sources for the translation in any explanations or interventions made in the main text. Through research, it has been determined that the tartīb al-nuzūl followed in the translation corresponds to the order attributed to Caliph Uthman. Nevertheless, it is concluded that Ayşā Zeynep Abdullah does not inform the reader about the source of this tartīb al-nuzūl.

**Keywords:** Tafsīr, Translation of the Qur'ān, Woman, Feminism, Womanhandling.

### Öz

Bu makalenin konusunu Ayşā Zeynep Abdullah ve nüzul sırasına göre tercüme ettiği Kur'ān tercümesi oluşturmaktadır. Makalede temel olarak üç sorunun izi sürülmektedir; birincisi Ayşā Zeynep Abdullah bir kadın olarak feminist tercüme tekniklerini kullanmış mıdır? İkincisi eğer kullandıysa tercümesine nasıl yansıtmıştır? Diğeri ise özellikle tertibi'n nüzüle göre yapılan bu tercümedeki sure tertibinin kaynaklarıyla ilgilidir. Bu çalışma, söz konusu soruları beş ayrı bölümde ele almaya çalışmaktadır. Birinci bölümde veri toplama ve analizi yöntemleri kullanılarak Ayşā Zeynep Abdullah'ın hayatı hakkında bilgi verilmektedir. İkinci bölümde, metin analizi yöntemiyle tercümenin önsözü incelenmektedir. Üçüncü bölümde tercümenin biçimsel özellikleri ve yöntemi, içerik/metin analizi ve mukayese yöntemleriyle ele alınmaktadır. Dördüncü bölümde ise mütercim'in özellikle kadınları konu alan bazı ayetleri nasıl tercüme ettiğine dair örneklerle yer verilmektedir. Son aşama ise mütercim'in kullandığı çeviri tekniği feminist tercüme paradigmlarına özgü stratejilerle karşılaştırmalı bir değerlendirmesiyle sonuçlanmaktadır. Bu araştırmalar sonucunda mütercim'in kaynak metne aktif müdahalede bulunarak metne kadın elinin değmesi (womanhandling) olarak isimlendirilen feminist tercüme stratejilerini kullandığı tespit edilmiştir. Ayşā Zeynep Abdullah'ın tercümesi büyük oranda literal çeviridir. Herhangi bir açıklama ya da ana metne yaptığı müdahalelerde tercümenin hiçbir yerinde kaynak belirtmemektedir. Yapılan araştırmada aynı zamanda tercümede takip edilen nüzul tertibinin Hz. Osman'a isnad edilen sıralama olduğu tespit edilmiştir. Fakat Ayşā Zeynep Abdullah'ın bu nüzul tertibinin kaynağı hususunda okuyucuyu bilgilendirmediği görülmektedir.

**Anahtar Kelimeler:** Tefsir, Kur'an Tercümesi, Kadın, Feminizm, Kadın Eli Değmesi.

### Introduction

The main subject of this article is the Qur'ān translation of Ayşā Zeynep Abdullah, titled "İndirilme Sırasına Göre Yüce Kur-an'ı Kerim ve Meali".<sup>1</sup> The motivation for her translation is to "clarify a truth that has been covered up for centuries". It is claimed that Ayşā Zeynep Abdullah defines her translation as a challenge to gender inequality and presents her choice to change the order of the sūrahs (chapters of the Qur'ān) as an example of a *feminine perspective*

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<sup>1</sup> Eng. The Holy Qur'ān and its Translation According to the Order of Revelation.

that influenced her reading of the sacred text.<sup>2</sup> In this specific milieu, the ensuing deliberation seeks to unravel a series of inquiries. Chief among them is the appraisal of the employment of feminist translation techniques within the confines of the translation. Furthermore, a critical dissection is undertaken to discern the dominant translation technique, assessing whether it aligns with the literal or exegetical. Moreover, within the framework of her translation structured upon tartīb al-nuzūl (the chronological order of revelation), an investigation is requisite into the underpinning sources that informed her determination of the sūrah order. In this context, the questions sought to be answered in the article are as follows: How have feminist translation techniques been reflected in the translation? Is the translation method used in this Qur'ān translation literal or exegetical? In her translation by tartīb al-nuzūl (the chronological order of revelation), based on which sources did she determine the order of the sūrahs? The contemplation of these inquiries, within the context of this article, constitutes an endeavour to elucidate and analyze the nuanced dimensions intrinsic to Abdullah's translation enterprise, thereby fostering a deeper comprehension of the intricate interplay between gender, perspective, and translation strategy in the Qur'ānic text.

The article mainly aims to determine the characteristics of Ayşa Zeynep Abdullah's translation, which is considered an example of a feminist perspective in Qur'ān translation, and to delineate the specific facets through which its feminist essence manifests. The primary objective of this article is to discern and delineate the distinct attributes of the translation work of Ayşa Zeynep Abdullah, acknowledged as an example of a feminist perspective applied to Qur'ānic translation. This study endeavours to explicate the multifaceted dimensions through which Abdullah's translation encapsulates feminist traits. In pursuit of these objectives, this article is designed to fulfil a two-fold purpose. Firstly, it aims to provide general information about the identity of A. Zeynep Abdullah as well as the features of her translation endeavour. Secondly, the article endeavours to undertake meticulous scrutiny of Abdullah's translation methodology with specific emphasis on her discernment and subsequent rendering of verses that pertain to women. This is driven by the hypothesis that the translation process employed by Abdullah in these contexts is indicative of her adherence to feminist paradigms.

The article consists of five parts. The initial part is dedicated to biographical details concerning Abdullah. This part of the article is underpinned by the employment of rigorous data collection and analytical methodologies. The preface of the Qur'ān translation is within the scope of the study since it sheds light on the motivation of the translation. The subsequent section, constituting the second part, undertakes a comprehensive textual analysis of the preface featured in the Qur'ān translation. This seeks to unravel the underlying motivations and thematic underpinnings shaping the translator's approach. In the next chapter, the formal features and the method of translation are facilitated through a synthesis of content and textual analysis and comparative methodologies. In the fourth part of the article, examples of how she translated some verses will be given to determine whether the translator's paradigm is reflected or not. Concluding the article, the final section embarks on a comparative assessment between the deployed translation technique and feminist translation strategies. This evaluative juxtaposition not only contributes to a nuanced comprehension of the translator's approach but also advances a broader scholarly discourse concerning feminist translation praxes. In sum, the

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<sup>2</sup> Sema Üstün Külünk, "The uncharted experience of women translators of the Qur'an in Turkey", *Parallèles* 34/1 (2022), 146.

article endeavours to illuminate the multifaceted dimensions characterizing Abdullah's translation endeavour and its alignment with feminist translation paradigms.

### 1. Biography of Ayşa Zeynep Abdullah

The available information about the biography of Abdullah remains constrained. There is only one interview with Ayşa Zeynep Abdullah which was published on Medyascope on October 11, 2019.<sup>3</sup> According to the information on this website, Ayşa Zeynep Abdullah is 45 years old and a mother of two children. Her initial education was imparted by her father, who is a theologian. The name she uses “Ayşa Zeynep Abdullah” is not her real name but rather a pseudonym. The interview does not encompass details regarding the rationale underlying her adoption of a pseudonymous identity. However, we are informed that a woman writing a translation of the Qur’ān has been a controversial issue in the Islamic world for a long time.<sup>4</sup> The inclusion of such information implies that Abdullah preferred to use a pseudonym *only because* she was under pressure due to being a “woman”.

The interview mentions the opposition of Abdullah’s family concerning her efforts in translating and publishing the Qur’ān. About the process of writing the Qur’ān’s translation, Abdullah said that the new generation, like herself, has been asking many questions about religion, and even more questions. With the intention of teaching people her acquired knowledge, she decided to translate the Qur’ān as a woman.<sup>5</sup> Abdullah’s translation is presented as the first translation of the Qur’ān by a woman in Türkiye<sup>6</sup>, however, this assertion is factually incorrect. Paratextual elements such as book covers, titles, prefaces, introductions, and marginal notes play an important role in the packaging, marketing, and publishing process.<sup>7</sup> Just as paratextual elements play an important role in marketing, Abdullah’s Qur’ān translation was introduced as the first translation of the Qur’ān by a woman in Türkiye. Moreover, Abdullah proudly participated in the promotion of her portrait as the first female translator of the Qur’ān into Turkish. This is not to say that the two female translators before Ayşa Zeynep Abdullah (Medine Balcı and Necla Yadsıman) were not recognized in Türkiye. The lack of recognition or rejection of the previous translations is probably due to publicity concerns. In other words, the focus on the “first female Qur’ān translator” is motivated by marketing strategies and financial gains.<sup>8</sup>

A. Zeynep Abdullah asserts, regarding the position of women in Islam, that everything goes better with women in it, but that men even determine the place of women themselves. She claims that due to the predominantly male-authored nature of translations and religious texts women and their rights remained obscured.<sup>9</sup> It may be understood from these claims that the

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<sup>3</sup> Büşra Cebeci, “Türkiye’de Kur’an Meali Hazırlayan İlk Kadın, Ayşa Zeynep Abdullah Anlatıyor”, *Medyascope* (Accessed March 23, 2023).

<sup>4</sup> Cebeci, “Türkiye’de Kur’an Meali Hazırlayan İlk Kadın, Ayşa Zeynep Abdullah Anlatıyor” (Accessed March 23, 2023).

<sup>5</sup> Cebeci, “Türkiye’de Kur’an Meali Hazırlayan İlk Kadın, Ayşa Zeynep Abdullah Anlatıyor” (Accessed March 23, 2023).

<sup>6</sup> Cebeci, “Türkiye’de Kur’an Meali Hazırlayan İlk Kadın, Ayşa Zeynep Abdullah Anlatıyor” (Accessed March 23, 2023).

<sup>7</sup> Adriana Şerban - Rim Hassen, “Introduction: Women Translators of Religious Texts”, *Parallèles* 34/1 (2022), 6.

<sup>8</sup> Üstün Külünk, “The uncharted experience of women translators of the Qur’an in Turkey”, 145-146.

<sup>9</sup> Cebeci, “Türkiye’de Kur’an Meali Hazırlayan İlk Kadın, Ayşa Zeynep Abdullah Anlatıyor” (Accessed March 23, 2023).

translations have neglected the matters pertaining to women, given that the translators of the Qur'ān preceding her were exclusively male. So, it is necessary to examine how she translates the verses related to women's rights or women in general in the Qur'ān. Therefore, the question of how Ayşā Zeynep Abdullah translated the verses with a feminist paradigm is among the questions that this article seeks to answer.

The following statements on the website where the interview took place are significant in terms of the history of the Qur'ān:

“The fact that the verses in the Qur'ān have not been canonized according to the order in which they were transmitted by the Prophet Muhammad has long been a subject of debate in the Islamic community. After the death of the Prophet Muhammad, Caliph Abū Bakr (d. 13/643), and Caliph Umar (d. 23/644) adhered to the order of the verses transmitted by the Prophet Muhammad, while Caliph Uthman (d. 35/656) changed this order and copied the Qur'ān. Author Abdullah believes that this change of order has had a negative impact on the integrity of the Qur'ān's meaning.”<sup>10</sup>

These statements given above carry the claim that the order of verses in the Qur'ān was changed by Caliph Uthman. However, it is fixed by ijma that the order of the verses is tawqīfī (designated by the divine authority). In the preface of her translation, Ayşā Zeynep Abdullah states that it is not the order of the verses but the order of the suras that were changed by Caliph Uthman.<sup>11</sup>

## 2. Preface of the Translation

In the preface of the translation, the translator gives information about her motive and the method she followed in the translation. The preface consists of about two and a half pages and elucidates details concerning the history of the Qur'ān. She discusses that the Qur'ān was gathered together and turned into a codified textual unity after the death of Prophet Muhammad by Abu Bakr (between 632-634 H.) to enhance readability, ensure preservation and maintain this textual composition in its current state in the era of Uthman. She explicitly asserts that the order of the Qur'ān was according to the order of the revelation until the period of Uthman. But in his caliphate, this original order was disrupted for various reasons, and rearranged, rewritten, and copied in an order that he called *the order of reading*.<sup>12</sup> The following expression of her is remarkable:

“... the Qur'āns (in different ways) that existed according to the order in which the Prophet Muhammad (pbuh) recited them and the order in which they were revealed were collected and destroyed.”<sup>13</sup>

Several pivotal points within this assertion are important in terms of the history of the Qur'ān. Although there is a consensus among scholars that the order of verses is tawqīfī, it is

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<sup>10</sup> Cebeci, “Türkiye’de Kur’an Meali Hazırlayan İlk Kadın, Ayşā Zeynep Abdullah Anlatıyor” (Accessed March 23, 2023).

<sup>11</sup> Ayşā Zeynep Abdullah, *İndirilme Sırasına Göre Yüce Kur-an’ı Kerim ve Meali* (Istanbul: Hermes Yayınları, 2019), 11.

<sup>12</sup> Abdullah, *İndirilme Sırasına Göre Yüce Kur-an’ı Kerim ve Meali*, 11.

<sup>13</sup> Abdullah, *İndirilme Sırasına Göre Yüce Kur-an’ı Kerim ve Meali*, 11.



not possible to say the same thing about the order of the sūrahs. In this regard, there are those who say that the order of sūrahs is ijtīmāī, as well as those who say that it is tawqīfī.<sup>14</sup> Another important issue is the expression “Qur’āns”. This expression used by A. Zeynep Abdullah in the plural form of “Qur’ān” actually corresponds to the expression “Mushafs” in Islamic terminology.

Another noteworthy statement within the preface is the translator’s declaration that this work was carried out to facilitate the reading of the Qur’ān in its true form in its integrity of meaning according to tartīb al-nuzūl and the reinstatement of each element to its original form. By including expressions such as “*everything returns to its authentic form*” in the preface, the reader is poised to anticipate a text-centered translation that takes into account the contextual parameters of the nuzūl (descent) environment. This arises from the fact that the chronological sequence, or more precisely, the order of the sūrahs in accordance with tartīb al-nuzūl serves to center the life of the Prophet Muhammad (sīrah) in perspective. Consequently, the discernible sources of Islamic history, sīrah and hadith literature, Ulūm al-Qur’ān, and the narrations of the occasion of the verse, collectively assume a paramount role in shaping the chronological arrangement of the sūrahs, warranting thorough consultation of these sources. On what basis did A. Zeynep Abdullah establish this chronological order in her translation? Did she take the chronological order in the sources or did she present a new chronology in line with her own research? These inquiries constitute among the interrogations necessitating elucidation.

### 3. Formal Characteristics and Methodology of Translation

The translation consists of a single volume. In addition, each page of the book contains the Arabic text and the Turkish translation next to it. At first glance, this situation shows that the translation is closer to literal translation rather than exegetical. As a matter of fact, it is evident that the translation is literal, but occasionally she makes additions in brackets next to the words, usually reflecting her own thoughts or making it easier to understand.

Another feature of the translation is its adherence to the tartīb al-nuzūl, as opposed to the Mushaf order. As the translator states in the preface, this is the original form of the Qur’ān according to her; the Qur’ān we have now is the Qur’ān imposed by the Umayyads.<sup>15</sup> Therefore, we have a translation of the Qur’ān that has “*returned to its authentic form*”. The translator gives any information in any part of the book about the sources on the basis of the order of suras which she made. Likewise, there is no footnote or information in the main text. Therefore, although the translation contains a few additions, it is generally a literal translation.

Another striking feature of the translation is that the verse numbers in the Arabic text are not written in Arabic. The reader can not find any information on whether the Arabic text in the book was approved by the Mushafıları İnceleme ve Kıraat Kurulu Başkanlığı<sup>16</sup> in Türkiye

<sup>14</sup> For more information please see also. Jalāl al-dīn al-Suyūfī, *al-Itqān fī ulūm al-Qur’ān*, ed. Muḥammad Abu al-Faḍl Ibrāhīm (Al-Hay’at al-Misriyya, 1974), 1/211-220.; Muhsin Demirci, *Kur’ān Tarihi* (İstanbul: İFAV, 2015), 185-190.

<sup>15</sup> Abdullah, *İndirilme Sırasına Göre Yüce Kur-an’ı Kerim ve Meali*, 12.

<sup>16</sup> This foundation is responsible for ensuring the excellence of calligraphy in domestically published Muşhafs, sections (juz’ or ajza), Muşhafs with translation, and Qur’ānic exegeses, as well as overseeing the compliance of Qur’ānic publications, either in print or digital format, with the "Rasm Uthmānī" or " ‘Alī al-Qārī " calligraphic styles, and authorizing the examination, printing, and distribution of all kinds of audio, tape, audio-visual Qur’ānic materials is authorized and accountable in this regard.

or not. The beginnings of the suras in the translation are given in the order of sura's tartīb al-nuzūl -name- number of verses- Mushaf order, e.g. 10<sup>th</sup> *Sūrah al-Fajr* (30 verses) (89<sup>th</sup> place). Under the sūrah titles, information about the sūrah, such as the period of its revelation, the occasion of the sūrah if there is one, and the subjects covered in the sūrah are not given.

The order of the revelation in the book is as in the table below:

Chronological Order of the Sūrah	Name of the Sūrah	Order of Mushaf
1.	al- 'Alaq	96
2.	al-Qalam	68
3.	al-Muzzammil	73
4.	al-Muddaththir	74
5.	al-Fātiḥa	1
6.	al-Tabbat	111
7.	al-Takwīr	81
8.	al-A 'lā	87
9.	al-Layl	92
10.	al-Fajr	89
11.	al-Ḍuḥā	93
12.	al-Inshirāḥ	94
13.	al- 'Aṣr	103
14.	al- 'Ādiyāt	100
15.	al-Kawthar	108
16.	al-Takāthur	102
17.	al-Mā 'ūn	107
18.	al-Kāfirūn	109
19.	al-Fil	105
20.	al-Falaq	113
21.	al-Nās	114
22.	al-Ikhlāṣ	112
23.	al-Najm	53
24.	'Abasa	80
25.	al-Qadr	97
26.	al-Shams	91
27.	al-Burūj	85
28.	al-Tīn	95
29.	al-Quraysh	106
30.	al-Qāri 'ah	101
31.	al-Qiyāmah	75
32.	al-Humazah	104
33.	al-Mursalāt	77
34.	Qāf	50
35.	al-Balad	90
36.	al-Ṭāriq	86

37.	al-Qamar	54
38.	Şād	38
39.	al-A' rāf	7
40.	al-Jinn	72
41.	Yāsīn	36
42.	al-Furqān	25
43.	al-Fātir	35
44.	Maryam	19
45.	Tāhā	20
46.	al-Wāqi' ah	56
47.	al-Shu' arā'	26
48.	al-Naml	27
49.	al-Qaşaş	28
50.	al-Isrā'	17
51.	Yūnus	10
52.	Hūd	11
53.	Yūsuf	12
54.	Hijr	15
55.	al-An' am	6
56.	al-Şaffāt	37
57.	Luqmān	31
58.	Saba'	34
59.	al-Zumar	39
60.	al-Mu' min	40
61.	al-Fuṣṣilat	41
62.	al-Shūrā	42
63.	al-Zukhruf	43
64.	al-Dukhān	44
65.	al-Jāthiyah	45
66.	al-Ahqāf	46
67.	al-Dhāriyāt	51
68.	al-Ghāshiyah	88
69.	al-Kahf	18
70.	al-Nahl	16
71.	Nūh	71
72.	Ibrāhīm	14
73.	al-Anbiyā'	21
74.	al-Mu' minūn	23
75.	al-Sajdah	32
76.	al-Ṭūr	52
77.	al-Mulk	67
78.	al-Hāqqah	69
79.	al-Ma' arij	70
80.	al-Naba'	78
81.	al-Nāzi' at	79
82.	al-Infitār	82

83.	al-Inshiqāq	84
84.	al-Rūm	30
85.	al-ʿAnkabūt	29
86.	al-Muṭaffifin	83
87.	al-Baqarah	2
88.	al-Anfāl	8
89.	Ālu ʿImrān	3
90.	al-Aḥzāb	33
91.	al-Mumtaḥinah	60
92.	al-Nisāʾ	4
93.	al-Zilzāl	99
94.	al-Ḥadīd	57
95.	Muḥammad	47
96.	al-Raʿd	13
97.	al-Raḥmān	55
98.	al-Insān (Dahr)	76
99.	al-Ṭalāq	65
100.	al-Bayyinah	98
101.	al-Ḥashr	59
102.	al-Nūr	24
103.	al-Hajj	22
104.	al-Munāfiqūn	63
105.	al-Mujādalah	58
106.	al-Ḥujurāt	49
107.	al-Taḥrīm	66
108.	al-Taghābun	64
109.	al-Şaff	61
110.	al-Jumuʿah	62
111.	al-Faṭḥ	48
112.	al-Māidah	5
113.	al-Tawbah	9
114.	al-Naşr	110

There is no information in the book about the list according to which the above tartīb al-nuzūl was made. It does not seem possible to determine whether the translator made this list as a result of her own research or the sources she consulted. She did not give a source as a reference. This passage appears to engage in discourse concerning the chronological order of revelation pertaining to specific verses within the Qur'ān and its connection with Caliph Uthman. It is posited that this order of the Qur'ānic sūrahs (chapters) bears a remarkable resemblance to the sequence attributed to Uthman. Notably, this sequence has been methodically presented in tabular format within the work authored by Cerrahoğlu (d. 2022).<sup>17</sup> Furthermore, it warrants mention that the specific assignment of a particular Qur'ānic manuscript to Uthman, aligned with the chronological order of revelation, is initially

<sup>17</sup> İsmail Cerrahoğlu, *Tefsir Usulü* (Ankara: Ankara Üniversitesi İlahiyat Fakültesi Yayınları, 1971), 83-84.

documented by Abd al-Mutāal al-Saīdī (d.1971) in his book “al-Nazm al-Fannī fī al-Qur’ān.” Furthermore, it is suggested that Cerrahoğlu might have been influenced by the aforementioned list.<sup>18</sup>

#### 4. Translation of Verses Related to Women

Feminist translation strategies have been applied in all types of texts, including the sacred text i.e. the Bible and the Qur’ān.<sup>19</sup> In recent years, feminist writers and translators’ concerns with patriarchal language have drawn attention to sex discrimination in and through language, making language a key battleground for regaining gender equality. Their analysis has contributed to challenging the politics and effects of grammatical and linguistic conventions utilized in numerous text categories, including sacred and religious texts.<sup>20</sup> Through the deconstruction of patriarchal language, feminist translators have worked to restore gender equality. Consequently, they have employed feminist translation techniques as a means to navigate the difficulty of conveying patriarchal linguistic features. Ayşa Zeynep Abdullah does not identify herself as a “feminist”. But she declares that since the translations and almost all religious texts are written by men, women, and their rights are obscured.<sup>21</sup> Therefore, it is understood from these statements of Ayşa Zeynep Abdullah that she is sensitive to issues and verses related to women and women’s rights. This attitude resembles the feminist paradigm and approach. Hence, in this article, the examples of the verses are chosen mostly controversial ones related to feminist translations. These verses mention the issue of testimony (eyewitness) of women (al-Baqarah, 2/282), women and men’s creation (i.e., being created from the same entity, al-Nisā’, 4/1), maybe the most controversial verse mostly known as wife beating al-Nisā’, 4/34, men’s right to polygamy (al-Nisā’, 4/3). How Ayşa Zeynep Abdullah translated these verses and which techniques she used is important to see her paradigm.

It is stated in al-Baqarah, verse 228:

وَالْمُطَلَّاتُ يَتَرَبَّصْنَ بِأَنْفُسِهِنَّ ثَلَاثَةَ قُرُوءٍ وَلَا يَحِلُّ لَهُنَّ أَنْ يَكْتُمْنَ مَا خَلَقَ اللَّهُ فِي أَرْحَامِهِنَّ إِنْ كُنَّ يُؤْمِنَنَّ بِاللَّهِ وَالْيَوْمِ الْآخِرِ  
وَيُعَوَّلُنَّهُنَّ أَحَقُّ بِرَدِّهِنَّ فِي ذَلِكَ إِنْ أَرَادُوا إِصْلَاحًا وَلَهُنَّ مِثْلُ الَّذِي عَلَيْهِنَّ بِالْمَعْرُوفِ وَلِلرِّجَالِ عَلَيْهِنَّ دَرَجَةٌ وَاللَّهُ عَزِيزٌ حَكِيمٌ

Abdullah’s translation:

*“Boşanmış kadınlar kendi kendilerine üç âdet süresi beklerler şayet Allah'a ve sonsuz ebedi hayata iman ediyorsa Allah'ın rahimlerinde yarattığını saklamaları onlara helal olmaz bu süreç içinde kocaları barışmayı isterse onları almak hakkında önceliğe sahiptirler. Meşru olmak şartıyla erkeklerin kadınlar üzerinde nasıl hakları varsa kadınların da erkekler üzerinde*

<sup>18</sup> Muhammed Şerif Kahraman, “Hz. Osman’a (35/656) Nüzûl Sırasına Göre Mushaf Nispet Edilmesi Üzerine Bir İnceleme”, *Siirt Üniversitesi İlahiyat Fakültesi Dergisi* 4/1 (2017), 179-180.

<sup>19</sup> Najlaa R. Aldeeb, “Feminist Strategies in Qur’ān Translations: A Comparative Study of the Sublime Quran and Saheeh International”, *International Journal of Linguistics, Literature and Translation* 6/1 (January 2023), 10.

<sup>20</sup> Rim Hassen, “English Translation of the Quran by Women: The Challenges of ‘Gender Balance’ in and through Language”, *Monografías de Traducción e Interpretación* 3 (2011), 213.

<sup>21</sup> Cebeci, “Türkiye’de Kur’an Meali Hazırlayan İlk Kadın, Ayşa Zeynep Abdullah Anlatıyor” (Accessed March 23, 2023).

*benzer hakları vardır fakat erkeklerin o kadınlar (boşandıkları kadınlar) üzerinde öncelik hakkı vardır. Allah üstün ve yüce hüküm ve hikmet sahibidir.*"<sup>22</sup>

Regarding the part of the verse that says, "*wa lil-rijāli 'alayhinna darajatun*" various narrations have been mentioned regarding the in which aspects of degree. From the exegetical analyses, it becomes apparent that the concept of degree alluded to in the verse "*Men are one degree above women*" encompasses a multifaceted understanding. This notion of degree has been exegeted to encompass intellectual prowess, financial obligations such as blood money, entitlements to inheritance, roles involving leadership and adjudication, the right to divorce, distribution of war booty, and engagement in acts of jihad. Additionally, it has been correlated with the financial maintenance of the household, as well as the associated duties and responsibilities directed toward women. Furthermore, this superiority has been linked to considerations of creation, ethical conduct, compliance with divine commands, and infaq. Lastly, it has been associated with the resilience of the familial unit and the fulfilment of familial requisites. Also this part of the verse is associated with Sūrah al-Nisā', verse 34, "*al-rijālu qawwāmūna 'alā al-nisā' bimā faḍḍala Allāhu ba ḍahum 'alā ba ḍ wa bimā anfaqu min amwālihim.*"<sup>23</sup>

Ṭabarī (d.310/ 923) mentions five different narrations regarding the intended meaning of the superiority of men over women in this context. After presenting these various narrations, Ṭabarī selects the narration that aligns most closely with the context of the verse. He favours the view of Abd Allah ibn Abbas (d. 68/687-88), which suggests that the degree of superiority signifies men being lenient and forgiving in their exercise of certain rights over their wives. Abd Allah ibn Abbas suggests that the superiority of men mentioned here is related to a husband relinquishing some of his rights over his wife and the wife voluntarily giving up all her rights in favour of her husband. He is quoted as saying, "I do not wish to claim all my rights over my wife because Allah has said, 'Men are one degree above women'". It implies a willingness to forgo some of these rights. Ṭabarī emphasizes that while this part of the verse may take the form of khabar, it carries a moral and ethical message, urging men to exercise their perceived superiority with kindness and fairness.<sup>24</sup>

Upon a careful examination of the exegeses, it becomes apparent that the term "daraja" (degree) is consistently exegeted as "superiority". Within the scholarly discourse, various narrations have surfaced concerning the specific facets of this superiority. However, a notable

<sup>22</sup> Abdullah, *İndirilme Sırasına Göre Yüce Kur'an'ı Kerim ve Meali*, 380. The original language of the book is Turkish. Hence the translations of the verses have been represented in their original form rather than their translated versions. But the English translation of Abdullah's translation of the verse could be as: "*The divorced women shall wait period three-monthly courses. If they believe in Allah and in eternal life, it is not permissible for them to hide what Allah has created in their wombs, and if their husbands wish to reconcile with them during this period, they have priority to take them. Women have the same rights over men as men have over women, provided that it is legitimate, but men have priority over those women (the women they divorced). Allah is the Superior, the Exalted in judgement and wisdom.*"

<sup>23</sup> Abū Jāfar Muḥammad Ibn Jarīr al-Ṭabarī, *Jāmi al-bayān 'an ta'wīli āyi al-Qur'an* (Cairo: Dār al-Hijr, 2001), v. 4/121-122; Abū Abd al-Allāh Muḥammad b. Umar b. al-Ḥasan al-Ḥusayn al-Taymī al-Rāzī, *Mafātiḥ al-ghayb* (Beirut: Dār Iḥyā' al-Turāth al-'Arabī, 1420), v. 6/441; Abū al-Barakāt Abd al-Allāh b. Aḥmad b. Maḥmud Ḥāfiẓ al-Dīn al-Nasafī, *Madārik al-tanzīl wa ḥaqāiq al-ta'wīl*, ed. Yūsuf 'Alī Badīwī (Beirut: Dār al-Kalimi al-Ṭayyib, 1998), v. 1/190; Abū al-Fidā' Ismā'īl b. Umar al-Qurashī al-Baṣrī Ibn Kathīr, *Tafsīr al-Qur'an al-aẓīm*, ed. Muḥammad Husayn Shams al-dīn (Beirut: Dār al-Kutub al-Ilmiyya, 1998), v. 1/459; Muḥammad al-Ṭāhir Ibn 'Ashūr, *al-Tahrīr wa al-tanwīr* (Beirut: Muassatu al-Tārīkh, ts.), v. 2/401-402.

<sup>24</sup> al-Ṭabarī, *Jāmi al-bayān*, v. 4/121-123.

point of this part arises in Ayşa Zeynep Abdullah's translation, where the term "öncelik" (priority) is employed instead of superiority. It is crucial to underscore that this deviation from the classical terminology is not substantiated with a corresponding scholarly citation or elucidation within the translation. Ayşa Zeynep Abdullah does not provide any explanatory footnotes or contextual background to elucidate the rationale behind this linguistic choice. This linguistic nuance holds significance in the interpretation and understanding of the verse. That part is translated without using any words to express a degree of men over women. In addition, the superiority is attributed to Allah and translated as it is.

In al-Baqarah, 2/282, it is discussed mostly in terms of women's testimony. In this verse, it is stated that:

يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا إِذَا تَدَايَنْتُمْ بِدَيْنٍ إِلَىٰ أَجَلٍ مُّسَمًّى فَاكْتُبُوهُ وَلْيَكْتُب بَيْنَكُمْ كَاتِبٌ بِالْعَدْلِ وَلَا يَأْبَ كَاتِبٌ أَنْ يَكْتُبَ كَمَا عَلَّمَهُ اللَّهُ فَلْيَكْتُبْ وَلْيُمْلِلِ الَّذِي عَلَيْهِ الْحَقُّ وَلْيَتَّقِ اللَّهَ رَبَّهُ وَلَا يَحْسَ مِنْهُ شَيْئًا فَإِنْ كَانَ الَّذِي عَلَيْهِ الْحَقُّ سَفِيهًا أَوْ ضَعِيفًا أَوْ لَا يَسْتَطِيعُ أَنْ يُمْلَأَ هُوَ فَلْيَمْلِكْ وَلِيَّهُ بِالْعَدْلِ وَاسْتَشْهِدُوا شَهِيدَيْنِ مِنْ رَجَالِكُمْ فَإِنْ لَمْ يَكُونَا رَجُلَيْنِ فَرَجُلٌ وَامْرَأَتَانِ مِمَّن تَرْضَوْنَ مِنَ الشَّهَدَاءِ أَنْ تَضِلَّ إِحْدَاهُمَا فَتُذَكَّرَ إِحْدَاهُمَا الْأُخْرَىٰ وَلَا يَأْبَ الشَّهَدَاءُ إِذَا مَا دُعُوا وَلَا تَسْأَمُوا أَنْ تَكْتُبُوهُ صَغِيرًا أَوْ كَبِيرًا إِلَىٰ أَجَلِهِ ذَلِكُمْ أَقْسَطُ عِنْدَ اللَّهِ وَأَقْوَمُ لِلشَّهَادَةِ وَأَدْنَىٰ أَلَّا تَرْتَابُوا إِلَّا أَنْ تَكُونَ تِجَارَةً حَاضِرَةً تُدِيرُونَهَا بَيْنَكُمْ فَلَيْسَ عَلَيْكُمْ جُنَاحٌ أَلَّا تَكْتُبُوهَا وَأَشْهِدُوا إِذَا تَبَايَعْتُمْ وَلَا يُضَارَ كَاتِبٌ وَلَا شَهِيدٌ وَإِنْ تَفَلَّحُوا فَإِنَّهُ فُسُوقٌ بِكُمْ وَاتَّقُوا اللَّهَ وَاعْلَمُوا أَنَّ اللَّهَ وَاعْلَمَكُمْ اللَّهُ وَاللَّهُ بِكُلِّ شَيْءٍ عَلِيمٌ

Abdullah's translation:

“Ey iman edenler! Birbirinizden belirli bir sürede borç aldığınızda onu yazın ve bunu aranızdan adil bir kâtip yazsın ve kâtip Allah'ın kendisine öğrettiği şekilde yazsın ve borçlu olan kimse de onu kayıt altına alsın ve Rabbi olan Allah'tan sakınsın da ondan (borçtan) hiçbir şeyi eksik etmesin. Eğer borç altına giren düşük akıllı zayıf (çocuk) ya da yazmaya güç getiremeyen biri ise velisi adalet ve hak üzerine yazdırsın. Erkeklerden de iki şahit getirin! Şayet iki erkek bulamazsanız o takdirde bir erkek iki kadın şahitler getirin. Bu kadınlar biri unutursa ya da söylemeye çekinir ise cesaret verip konuşsun diyedir. Şahitler davet edildiklerinde kaçınmasınlar. Az olsun çok olsun onu süresince yazmaktan çekinmeyin bu Allah katında en adil, şahitlik konusunda en sağlam şüphelenmemeniz için de en uygun olandır. Fakat aranızda kendisini döndürüp durduğunuz peşin olarak yaptığınız ticaret müstesna. Alım satım yaptığınızda da şahit tutun. Yazana da şahitlik edene de zarar verilmesin, eğer böyle davranırsanız kendinize zarar vermiş olursunuz. Allah'tan sakının Allah size öğretiyor ve Allah her şeyi hakkıyla bilendir.”<sup>25</sup>

It is seen that she translated the verb *ḍalla* in the verse by a mitigating rendition as “forgets” or “if she abstains from saying it”. The verb *ḍalla* means deviations from the right

<sup>25</sup> Abdullah, *İndirilme Sırasına Göre Yüce Kur-an'ı Kerim ve Meali*, 390. Translation of Abdullah could be translated into English as “ O you who believe, when you borrow from one another for a fixed term, write it down, and let a just scribe from among you write it down, and let the scribe write it down as Allah has thought him, and let him who is indebted record it, and let him beware of Allah, his Lord, and let him not omit anything from it. And if the debtor is a weak child of low intelligence or one who is unable to write, let his guardian write it down in justice and truth. And bring two witnesses from men! If you cannot find two men, then bring one male and two female witnesses. These women are to give encouragement if someone forgets or abstains from speaking. Witnesses should not avoid when they are invited. And do not hesitate to write it down, whether it be a little or a great deal, for it is the fairest in the sight of Allah, and the best for the testimony, so that you may not be suspicious. Except what you trade between you in cash, which you have been turning over and over. And when you buy and sell, take witnesses. Do not harm either the writer or the witness, for if you do so, you harm yourselves. Beware of Allah, Allah teaches you, and Allah is All-Knowing.”

way. Any deviation from the right path, whether intentional or unintentional, whether more or less, is called *ḍalāl*. This concept can also be used for a person who commits any error. In this verse, it means, that if one of the women falls into *ḍalāla*, that is, if she forgets.<sup>26</sup> In many tafsīrs (exegeses) this part of the verse is interpreted as *nisyān* (forgetting).<sup>27</sup> It is possible to say that there is nothing related to abstaining from speaking. This means that Abdullah adheres faithfully to the source text in her translation of the word *ḍalla* and also she adds “*söylemeye çekinir ise (if she abstains from saying it)*” to the translation of the verse without any reference.

al-Nisā', 4/1 is important in terms of creation. It refers to the shared genesis of the human creation.<sup>28</sup>

يَأْتِيهَا النَّاسُ أَنْفُوا رَبَّكُمْ الَّذِي خَلَقَكُمْ مِنْ نَفْسٍ وَاحِدَةٍ وَخَلَقَ مِنْهَا زَوْجَهَا وَبَثَّ مِنْهُمَا رِجَالًا كَثِيرًا وَنِسَاءً وَأَنْفُوا اللَّهَ الَّذِي تَسَاءَلُونَ بِهِ وَالْأَرْحَامَ إِنَّ اللَّهَ كَانَ عَلَيْكُمْ رَقِيبًا

Abdullah's translation:

“Ey insanlar! Sizi tek bir nefis'ten kadından oluşturan ve ondan da eşini (erkeğini) oluşturan ve ikisinden de birçok erkekler ve kadınlar türetilen yayan Rabb'inizden sakının ve kendisiyle birbirinizden dilekler dilediğiniz Allah'tan ve merhamet adına saygısızlıktan da sakının. O Allah ki şüphesiz sizin üzerinizde sürekli bir gözetleyicidir.”<sup>29</sup>

The concept of *nafs* is generally exegeted as *Ādam*.<sup>30</sup> Rāzī (d. 606/1210) discusses that Muslims agree that by "the single soul/nafs" here, it refers to *Ādam*.<sup>31</sup> Rashīd Rıdā (d.1935) mentions Rāzī's narrations. According to this three different views regarding the intended meaning of "nafs" in this context. The first view suggests that Allah symbolically expressed this event. In other words, it is intended to convey that each of you was created from a single soul, and the same kind of soul, He created its mate, someone equal to it in human essence. The

<sup>26</sup> Rāghib al-Iṣfahānī, *al-Mufradāt fī gharīb al-Qur'an*, ed. Safwān 'Adnān al-Dāwūdī (Damascus: Dār al-Qalam, 2009), 510.

<sup>27</sup> Abū al-Ḥasan b. Bashīr al-Azdī al-Balkhī Muqātil b. Sulaymān, *Tafsīru Muqātil b. Sulaymān*, ed. Abd Allah Mahmud Shahhāta (Beirut: Dār al- Ihyā al-Turāth, 2002), v. 1/229; Abū al-Qāsim Maḥmūd b. Umar Muḥammad al-Khārizmī al-Zamakhsharī, *al-Kashshāf 'an ḥaqāiq al-tanzīl wa 'uyūn al-ta'wīl wujūh al-ta'wīl* (Cairo: Dār al-Kitāb al-Arabī, 1986), v. 1/326; Abū Abd Allāh Muḥammad b. Umar b. al-Ḥasan al-Ḥusayn al-Taymī al-Rāzī, *Mafātiḥ al-ghayb* (Beirut: Dār Ihyā' al-Turāth al-Arabī, 1420), v. 7/95; Abū al-Fidā' Ismā'īl b. Umar al-Qurashī al-Baṣrī Ibn Kathīr, *Tafsīr al-Qur'an al-azīm*, ed. Muhammad Husayn Shams al-dīn (Beirut: Dār al-Kutub al-Ilmiyya, 1998), v. 1/561.

<sup>28</sup> Hatice Arpağuş, “The Position of Woman in the Creation: A Qur'anic Perspective”, *Muslima Theology: The Voices of Muslim Women Theologians*, ed. Ednan Aslan etc. (Peter Lang, 2013), 117.

<sup>29</sup> Abdullah, *İndirilme Sırasına Göre Yüce Kur'an'ı Kerim ve Meali*, 435. Translation of Abdullah could be translated into English as “O mankind! Beware of your Lord, Who formed you from a single soul from a woman, and from her, He formed her mate (man), and from them both He created and propagated many men and women, and beware of Allah, with Whom you make supplications for one another, and beware of disrespect in the name of mercy. Surely Allah is a constant watcher over you.”

<sup>30</sup> Abū al-Ḥasan b. Bashīr al-Azdī al-Balkhī Muqātil b. Sulaymān, *Tafsīru Muqātil b. Sulaymān*, ed. Abdullah Mahmud Şehhate (Beirut: Dār al- Ihyā al-Turāth, 2002), v. 1/355; Abū Muḥammad al-Ḥusayn b. Maṣūd b. Muḥammad al-Farrā al-Shafī' al-Baghawī, *Mā'ālīm al-tanzīl fī tafsīr al-Qur'an*, ed. Al-Mahdī Abd al-Razzāq (Beirut: Dār al-Ihyā' al-Turāth al-Arabī, 1420), v. 1/561; Abū Sā'id Naṣir al-Dīn Abd-Allāh b. Umar b. Muḥammad al-Bayḍāwī, *Anwār al-tanzīl wa asrār al-ta'wīl*, ed. Muḥammad 'Abd al-Raḥmān al-Marāshalī (Beirut: Dār al-Ihyā' al-Turāth al-Arabī, 1418), v. 2/58.

<sup>31</sup> al-Rāzī, *Mafātiḥ al-ghayb*, v. 9/477.



second view posits that this verse addresses the Quraysh of the time of the Prophet Muḥammad, who were descendants of Quşayy. In this context, "nafs" signifies Quşayy. The third view asserts that the intended "nafs" is Ādam.<sup>32</sup> Rāzī also mentions two different narrations regarding the other part of the verse. The first view, widely accepted by scholars, suggests that when Allah created Prophet Ādam, He put him to sleep for a while and then created Eve from one of his ribs. The second view, attributed to Abū Muslim al-İşfahānī, suggests that the verse implies that Allah also created Ādam's mate from the same kind of soul as him.<sup>33</sup>

The nafs is semantically feminine, but it involves masculinity and femininity in its usage. Lexically, it means “same of something” and “thing itself”. In religious terminology, it implies soul, spirit, and essence.<sup>34</sup> There is no statement in the verse as to what the nafs is.<sup>35</sup> In tafsīr literature which is analyzed in this article, there is no narration suggesting that the term “nafs” is intended to refer to a woman. On the contrary, Ibn Kathir mentions a narration from Ibn Abbas, which says that woman was created from man.<sup>36</sup> Abdullah has included this information in her translation, but she has not provided any source for it. Considering her traditional Islamic education, it seems highly unlikely that she would be unaware of such narrations in tafsīr literature. Therefore, it is possible to assert that translating “nafs” as “woman” is a deliberate choice contrary to the narratives found in exegesis, indicating a conscious preference. Abdullah has made an addition to the source text and translated it to show that the nafs indicates a woman.

Perhaps the most striking example in Abdullah’s translation is the translation of Sūrah al-Nisā’, verse 3, which refers to men’s right to polygamy.

وَأِنْ خِفْتُمْ أَلَّا تُقْسِطُوا فِي الْيَتَامَىٰ فَانكِحُوا مَا طَابَ لَكُمْ مِنَ النِّسَاءِ مَثْنَىٰ وَثُلَاثَ وَرُبَاعَ فَإِنْ خِفْتُمْ أَلَّا تَعْدِلُوا فَوَاحِدَةً أَوْ مَا مَلَكَتْ أَيْمَانُكُمْ ذَٰلِكَ أَدْنَىٰ أَلَّا تَعُولُوا

Abdullah’s translation:

“Şayet yetimler (kız) hususunda haklarını gözetemeyeceğinizden endişe duyarsanız bir tek (kadınla) veya sahip olduğunuz (cariyeler) ile yetinin. Bu adalet üzere olmanıza daha uygun olur.”<sup>37</sup>

The underlined part of the verse in the Arabic text has not been translated. This part of the verse, which means “marry two or three or four of the women you like”, has not been translated. The omission of the part that is actually in the text seems to be problematic in terms of faithfulness to the original text in terms of translation. The translator’s fidelity to the source text appears compromised, as evident through her deliberate intervention. She did not include

<sup>32</sup> Muḥammad Rashid Riḍā, *Tafsīr al-Manār* (al-Hay’at al-Miṣriyya al-Āmma li’l Kitāb, 1990), v. 4/266.

<sup>33</sup> al-Rāzī, *Mafātiḥ al-ghayb*, v. 9/477-478.

<sup>34</sup> Arpağuş, “The Position of Woman in the Creation: A Qur’anic Perspective”, 117.

<sup>35</sup> For a detailed discussion of how this issue is dealt with in the exegeses, see Arpağuş, “The Position of Woman in the Creation: A Qur’anic Perspective”, *Muslima Theology: The Voices of Muslim Women Theologians*, ed. Ednan Aslan etc. (Peter Lang, 2013).

<sup>36</sup> Ibn Kathīr, *Tafsīr al-Qur’ān al-āzīm*, v. 2/181.

<sup>37</sup> Abdullah, *İndirilme Sırasına Göre Yüce Kur-an’ı Kerim ve Meali*, 435. The translation of Abdullah could be translated into English as “And if you fear that you will not be able to do justice to orphans (girl), then be content with one (woman) or with you have (concubines). This is more in accordance with justice.”

this part about polygamy in the target text. One might assert that this particular portion of the verse does not align with her paradigm, thus she intervened in the source text.

Due to its implications for women and gender roles in Islam, Sūrah al-Nisā', verse 34, sometimes known as the wife-beating verse, is widely acknowledged as one of the most contentious and discussed verses in the Qur'an.<sup>38</sup>

الرِّجَالُ قَوَّامُونَ عَلَى النِّسَاءِ بِمَا فَضَّلَ اللَّهُ بَعْضَهُمْ عَلَى بَعْضٍ وَبِمَا أَنْفَقُوا مِنْ أَمْوَالِهِمْ فَالصَّالِحَاتُ قَانِتَاتٌ حَافِظَاتٌ لِّلْغَيْبِ  
بِمَا حَفِظَ اللَّهُ وَالتِّي تَخَافُونَ نُشُوزَهُنَّ فَعِظُوهُنَّ وَاهْجُرُوهُنَّ فِي الْمَضَاجِعِ وَاصْرَبُوهُنَّ فَإِنِ اطَّعْتُمْ فَلَا تَبْغُوا عَلَيْهِنَّ سَبِيلًا إِنَّ  
اللَّهَ كَانَ عَلِيًّا كَبِيرًا

Abdullah's translation:

*“Erkekler kadınların gözetleyicisi ve koruyucusudurlar. Zira (Allah) erkeklerle kadınları farklı özelliklerde yaratmıştır. Ve kendi (erkekler) mallarından harcama yapmaktadırlar. Saliha kadınlar hem (Allah'a) itaat edenler hem de Allah'ın kendilerini (iffetlerini) muhafaza etmesi gibi görünmeyi (iffetlerini) koruyanlardır. Sadakatsizliğinden endişe duyduğunuz kadınlara ikazda bulunun öğüt verin sonra yataklarında yalnız bırakın bu da yeterli olmazsa (belli bir süre) ayırın! Bundan sonra saygılı olurlarsa aşırıya kaçarak onlar aleyhine başka bir yol aramayın! Şüphesiz Allah yüce ve büyüktür.”*<sup>39</sup>

The passage has two main themes: Gender norms and the bestowed authority of men to exercise disciplinary measures over their wives. According to traditional scholars, the first part of the verse addresses the concept of male superiority over women in relation to the first theme. The word “qawwāmūn” is interpreted by them as a divine proclamation of men's superiority over women. Traditional exegetes contend that, concerning the second theme of the verse, women should be submissive to their husbands. They interpret the word *nushūz* as a wife's malice and a purposeful, persistent violation of her marital obligations, whereas the word *qānitāt* is considered as obedience to husbands. *Nushūz*, or a wife's disobedience, is also a punishable offence. In light of this context, classical scholars exegete the word *daraba* to connote physical chastisement, thereby asserting husbands' authorization to engage in disciplinary actions involving physical punishment towards their wives.<sup>40</sup>

Amina Wadud, a notable Islamic feminist scholar, conducts semantic analyses of these terms, presenting arguments in support of her interpretation. *Qawwāmuna alā* means “to take care of”. The Qur'an points out that men should be gentle and caring towards their women. *Nushūz* is used in other verses of the Qur'an both women and men. So for Wadud, this word

<sup>38</sup> Rim Hassen, “Feminist strategies in women's translations of the Qur'an”, *The Routledge Handbook of Translation, Feminism and Gender*, ed. L. von Flotow - H. Kamal, Routledge handbooks in translation and interpreting studies (Routledge, 2020), 503.

<sup>39</sup> Abdullah, *İndirilme Sırasına Göre Yüce Kur'an'ı Kerim ve Meali*, 440. Translation of Abdullah could be translated into English as “Men are the protectors of women. For (Allah) has created men and women with different characteristics. And they (men) spend out of their wealth. The righteous women are those who obey (Allah) and protect the unseen (their chastity) as Allah protects them (their chastity). If you are worried about women whose unfaithfulness you fear, warn them, admonish them, then leave them alone in their beds, and it that is not enough, separate them (for a certain period of time). If they are respectful after that, do not seek another way against them in excess! Verily, Allah is Great and Exalted.”

<sup>40</sup> Hassen, “Feminist strategies in women's translations of the Qur'an”, 503-504.

means “family discord”, something including both partners. And *daraba* does not point out physical punishment. Because in the Qur’ān the verb is used in the sense of “setting an example”(i.e. al-Nūr, 24/35). In this verse according to her, the meaning would be an invitation to take care of women, and offering them good models of behaviour.<sup>41</sup>

Ayşa Zeynep Abdullah opted for a softened translation approach when rendering the parts related to women. She translated men’s *qawwām* towards women as *being protectors*. Also, *faḍḍala alayh* could mean literally superiority in this verse.<sup>42</sup> It is translated as *Zira (Allah) erkeklerle kadınları farklı özelliklerde yaratmıştır (for (Allah) has created men and women with different characteristics)*. There is no indication related to superiority in Abdullah’s translation. Also, *qānitāt* is exegeted as obedience to husbands. But in Abdullah’s translation, it is rendered as obedience to Allah. The translation of *nushūz* as *unfaithfulness* is in harmony with the source text. The verb *daraba* in the rest of the verse in Abdullah’s book is translated as *to separate the beds for a certain period*. Abdullah’s translation of the verse predominantly reflects the influence of feminist paradigm. While Amina Wadud uses hermeneutics of equality, Abdullah catches attention towards different characteristics and refrains from translating *daraba*, which literally means “beating”. She doesn’t translate what the source text literally includes. She reinterprets the words, makes some additions to the source text and translates with this paradigm.

### 5. Feminist Translation Techniques in Ayşa Zeynep Abdullah

This part of the article examines the techniques employed by Abdullah, which were briefly discussed by given examples in the previous section. Abdullah’s emphasis on translation and her intervention in the source text align with the translation techniques used by other feminist translators. Indeed, it is discussed that feminist translators consider translation not as conveying the same meaning but as creating more space for creativity and intervention. They also redefined the terms "fidelity," "transparency," and "faithfulness to the source text" at the same time. Meanwhile they adopted a liberal approach. Their approach inherently poses a conspicuous challenge, entailing the manipulation, intervention and feminization of both the content and language of the source text.<sup>43</sup> While the feminist translator derives satisfaction from reinterpreting and rewriting the text shows signs of her manipulation of the text, at the same time, the womanhandling of the text enables the translator to take an active role in the construction of meaning.<sup>44</sup>

According to Sherry Simon<sup>45</sup> and Luise von Flotow<sup>46</sup>, feminist translation developed in the late 1970s and early 1980s in Quebec, where women’s experiences remained obscured,

<sup>41</sup> Massimo Campanini, *The Qur’an Modern Muslim Interpretations*, trans. Caroline Higgitt (Routledge, 2011), 119-120.

<sup>42</sup> al-Iṣfahānī, *al-Mufradāt*, 639.

<sup>43</sup> Rim Hassen, “From a Slave to a Translator: Conflicts and Mediation in Fatma-Zāidas Translation of the Quran”, *Literary Translation and Cultural Mediators in “Peripheral” Cultures Customs Officers or Smugglers?*, ed. Diana Roig-Sanz - Reine Meylaerts (Cham: Springer International Publishing, 2018), 224-225.

<sup>44</sup> Hassen, “From a Slave to a Translator: Conflicts and Mediation in Fatma-Zāidas Translation of the Quran”, 225.

<sup>45</sup> Sherry Simon, “Gender in Translation : Cultural Identity and the Politics of Transmission”, (1996).

<sup>46</sup> Luise von Flotow, “Feminist Translation: Contexts, Practices and Theories”, *TTR : Traduction, Terminologie, Rédaction* 4/2 (1991), 69-84.

largely owing to the distinct emphasis on coercive patriarchal language and traditional translation methodologies. Feminist translators engaged in the redefinition of translation, conceptualizing it as “interpretation-production” rather than a mere “repetition”, Concurrently, they reexamined the core ideas of fidelity, transparency, and faithfulness to the source text.<sup>47</sup> This liberal approach, as advocated by feminist translators such as Barbara Godard, offers feminist translators the opportunity to challenge feminist translators to assert their own identities against the “real” and openly manipulate, intervene in, and feminize the content and language of the source text, at the expense of breaking down all the walls of “authorship”.<sup>48</sup> Godard states that the feminist translator shows signs of manipulating the text by recognising her own significant difference and her taste for endless reinterpretation and rewriting. Womanhandling the text in translation means changing the modest, self-effacing translator. The translator becomes an active participant in the construction of meaning.<sup>49</sup> Godard states that:

“Womanhandling the text in the translation would involve the replacement of the modest, self-effacing translator. Taking her place would be an active participant in the creation of meaning, who advances a conditional analysis. Hers is a continuing provisionality, aware of the process, giving self-reflexive attention to practices. The feminist translator immodestly flaunts her signature in italics, in footnotes-even in a preface.”<sup>50</sup>

Generally, feminist translation theories support female subjectivity and highlight female agency while articulating critiques of masculinist paradigms. The unique partnership between feminism and translation appears in their shared dedication to the critical examination and rejection of universal standards of truth and value, their shared opposition to traditional gender constructions and hierarchical gender roles, and their focus on remaking language and discourse as historically shaped by oppressive systems of (hetero)sexism, racism, and colonialism. Feminist discourse is seen as always already double and translative, in both its recuperative thrust to reclaim women's experiences that have been misrepresented or erased in the dominant discourse and its deconstructive thrust to expose patriarchal stereotypes and images of women's lives.<sup>51</sup>

The translation of religious texts is frequently justified on grounds of accuracy, equivalence, and integrity to the original text. For instance, Katherine Barnwell identifies three fundamental characteristics of the translation of religious texts: accuracy, clarity, and naturalness. She argues that a good translation should be:

1. “Accurate: The translator should reproduce the meaning of the original message as exactly as possible in the language she/he is translating.

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<sup>47</sup> Rosemary. Arrojo, “Fidelity and the Gendered Translation.”, *Traduction, Terminologie, Rédaction : Études Sur Le Texte et Ses Transformations* (Canada) 07/02 (1994), 147-163.

<sup>48</sup> Hassen, “From a Slave to a Translator: Conflicts and Mediation in Fatma-Zāidas Translation of the Quran”, 225; Melissa Wallace, “Writing the Wrongs of Literature: The Figure of the Feminist and Post-Colonialist Translator”, *The Journal of the Midwest Modern Language Association* 35/2 (2002), 69.

<sup>49</sup> Hassen, “From a Slave to a Translator: Conflicts and Mediation in Fatma-Zāidas Translation of the Quran”, 225.

<sup>50</sup> Barbara Godard and others., *Translation, Semiotics, and Feminism : Selected Writings of Barbara Godard* (Abingdon, Oxon: Routledge, Taylor & Francis Group Abingdon, Oxon, 2022), 26.

<sup>51</sup> Godard and others., *Translation, Semiotics, and Feminism : Selected Writings of Barbara Godard*, 2.

2. Clear: The translation should be clear and understandable. The translator aims to convey the message in a way that people can easily understand and
3. Natural: A translation should not sound “foreign”, it should never feel like a translation but like someone speaking in a natural, everyday way.”<sup>52</sup>

Barnwell’s three characteristics seem to be closely related to each other. In order for the target text to be understood and valued by the intended audience, accuracy- defined here as the restatement of the exact meaning of the original- requires that it be plain and natural. Interestingly, Barnwell does not address the style or form of the original text in her definitions of accuracy, clarity and naturalness; this shows that in her understanding of translation, accurately conveying the meaning of the original is more important than reflecting the formal features of the source text. A similar idea was supported by Eugene Nida, one of the most influential theorists in the translation of religious texts who concentrated on the idea of “equivalence,” who stated that translation should “provide in the target language the closest natural equivalent of the source language’s message, first in meaning and second in style.”<sup>53</sup>

However, Hussein Abdurrauf in his book *Qur’ān Translation: Discourse, Texture and Exegesis* (2001)<sup>54</sup> argued that “equivalence” is impossible in Qur’ānic translation. He states that “a translator who wants to achieve lexical and/or textual equivalence is chasing a mirage: total equivalence at any level of language is impossible, relative equivalence at any level is possible”<sup>55</sup> Considering the nature of the Qur’ānic text and the difficulty of separating content from form, Abdurrauf advises Qur’ānic translators to “define the nature of their final work before embarking on this delicate task”. Not according to the degree of equivalence, but according to their intended reader.<sup>56</sup>

This tendency is evident in Ayşa Zeynep Abdullah’s translation, particularly considering the religious nature of the text. Her adherence to these principles is observable through her facilitation of comprehension of the original message within the framework of clarity, accuracy and naturalness. She notably opts for a straightforward vernacular and employs an accessible language, thus exemplifying her commitment to maintaining the tenets of simplicity and understandability. However, the original message is shaped within her paradigm, so it should be questioned to what extent she adheres to the principle of accuracy. Particularly within the realm of feminist strategies, a distinct shift is discernible in her redefinition of translation as “interpretation-production” rather than mere “repetition (of the same)” and that she does not fully realise the concepts of fidelity, transparency and faithfulness to the source text. Especially in the verse 3 of *al-Nisā*, she interfered with and manipulated the content and language of the source text by literally not translating it as “*hoşunuza giden kadınlardan ikişer üçer dörder nikahlayın*”<sup>57</sup>. She deliberately neglected to translate this portion of the verse. The

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<sup>52</sup> Hassen, “From a Slave to a Translator: Conflicts and Mediation in Fatma-Zāidas Translation of the Quran”, 220; Katharine G. L. Barnwell, *Bible Translation : An Introductory Course in Translation Principles* (Dallas, Tex.: Summer Institute of Linguistics, 1986), 23.

<sup>53</sup> Hassen, “From a Slave to a Translator: Conflicts and Mediation in Fatma-Zāidas Translation of the Quran”, 220.

<sup>54</sup> Hussein. Abdul-Raof, *Qur’an Translation : Discourse, Texture and Exegesis* (Richmond, Surrey: Curzon, 2001).

<sup>55</sup> H. Abdul-Raof, *Qur’an Translation: Discourse, Texture and Exegesis* (Curzon, 2001), 7.

<sup>56</sup> Hassen, “From a Slave to a Translator: Conflicts and Mediation in Fatma-Zāidas Translation of the Quran”, 220-221.

<sup>57</sup> It could be translated into English as “marry two, three and four of the women you like”.

emphasis on women from the *nafs* in verse 1 of al-Nisā', the translation of the verb *daraba* as "to separate" in verse 34 of the same sūrah, and the translation of the verb *ḍalla* by adding "to abstain" in al-Baqarah, 2/282 could be seen as indicators of womanhandling in feminist translation techniques. Godard's statement for feminist translators' approach in terms of taking an active role in translation could be seen also in A. Zeynep Abdullah's Qur'ān translation.

### Conclusion

The main subject of this article is Ayşa Zeynep Abdullah's translation of the Qur'ān titled "İndirilme Sırasına Göre Yüce Kur-an'ı Kerim ve Meali". In the interviews with the translator, the translator claimed that she wrote a translation against the male-dominated view and the answer to the question of whether it reflects the feminist paradigm was sought throughout the study. In the research, it was determined that Abdullah reflected the feminist paradigm in her translation both by interfering with the source text by not translating the parts of the verse into Turkish and by reinterpreting the words in the source text while transferring them to the target text. Another question that was investigated in the research was how Abdullah determined tartīb al-nuzūl that she followed in her translation. However, when the translation is analysed, it could be concluded that a source was not used since no footnote or explanation was not given. However, this is not the case. Abdullah followed tartīb al-nuzūl of Caliph Uthman and did not mention it anywhere. Also, it is important to point out that it is not right for an academic attitude to speak at random about the Qur'ān and the History of the Qur'ān, to make claims without reference to the sources, interfere with the text. It is easily seen that in this translation, the original message of the Qur'ān shaped within Abdullah's paradigm and Godard's statement for feminist translators' approach in terms of taking an active role in translation could also be seen in A. Zeynep Abdullah's Qur'ān translation. It is possible to say that Ayşa Zeynep Abdullah manipulates the meaning of the verses to reflect the feminist paradigm even if she asserts that it is the original form of the Qur'ān and the translation of the Qur'ān in which women's rights are covered up by men.

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**Abdulkarim AUWAL**

Doktora Öğrencisi, İbn Haldun Üniversitesi, İslami İlimler Fakültesi  
Temel İslam Bilimleri, Tefsir Anabilim Dalı  
Ibn Haldun University, Faculty of Islamic Sciences  
Ph. D. Candidate, Basic Islamic Sciences, Department of Tafsir  
Istanbul, Türkiye

[abdulkarim.auwal@stu.ihu.edu.tr](mailto:abdulkarim.auwal@stu.ihu.edu.tr) / [akarim711@gmail.com](mailto:akarim711@gmail.com)

<https://orcid.org/0000-0002-4026-0320>

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### Abstract

Mesut Kaya identifies the sources that Ṭabarī used in his tafsir and provided a thorough analysis of those sources in his book *Taberî Tefsirinin Kaynakları*. The author also provides the reader with a significant amount of information about the early exegetical tradition. Ṭabarī's narrations from the first-period commentaries is rigorously evaluated. By doing this, the author offers us with the necessary information to critically identify, analyze and assess the original and early tafsir sources and works. Through referencing significant classical works and names, the book brought to light groundbreaking ways to reread the past and shape the future academic endeavors in fields such as hadith and tafsir. Because of its strategy, in-depth information, and outcomes, this book significantly contributes to the literature. Kaya, has done a comprehensive and a thorough work in narrowing down and manifesting various works and authors consulted by Ṭabarī. Not sufficing with mentioning the said classical works and authors, Kaya, indulged in an intense assessment of every related issue he dealt with in the book. Given the book's significance, this work, attempts to evaluate the approach and content of *Taberî Tefsiri'nin Kaynakları*, as well as the author's comments and findings. The author's reference to Fuat Sezgin and his methodology in analyzing isnad, is also referred to and dealt with systematically.

**Keywords:** Tafsir, Ṭabarī, Mesut Kaya, Jāmi' al-bayān.

### Öz

Mesut Kaya, Taberî'nin tefsirinde kullandığı kaynakları tespit etmiş ve bu kaynakların ayrıntılı bir incelemesini *Taberî Tefsirinin Kaynakları* adlı kitabında vermiştir. Yazar, ayrıca okuyucuya erken dönem tefsir geleneği hakkında zengin bir birikim sunmaktadır. Taberî'nin ilk dönem tefsirlerindeki rivayetleri titizlikle değerlendiren yazar, orijinal ve erken dönem tefsir kaynaklarını eleştirel bir şekilde analiz etmiş ve değerlendirmiştir. Kitap, önemli klasik eserlere ve müelliflere atıfta bulunarak, hadis ve tefsir gibi alanlarının geleceğini şekillendirmenin yollarını gün ışığına çıkarmıştır. Stratejisi, derinlemesine bilgisi ve sonuçları nedeniyle bu kitap literatüre önemli ölçüde katkıda bulunmaktadır. Kaya, Taberî'nin kullandığı çeşitli eser ve müelliflerin tasnifinde kapsamlı ve titiz bir çalışma yapmıştır. Söz konusu klasik eserleri ve müelliflerini zikretmekle yetinmeyen Kaya, kitapta ele aldığı her konu hakkında yoğun bir değerlendirmede bulunmuştur. Kitabın önemi göz önünde bulundurularak bu çalışma, *Taberî Tefsiri'nin Kaynakları'nın* yaklaşım ve muhtevası ile yazarın yorum ve tespitlerini analiz etmektedir. Buna paralel olarak müellifin isnad tahlilinde Fuat Sezgin'e ve metodolojisine aşırı gönderme yapması da değerlendirmede dikkate alınmıştır.

**Anahtar kelimeler:** Tefsir, Taberî, Mesut Kaya, Cāmiu'l-beyān.

The book under review here titled *Taberî Tefsirinin Kaynakları* (Sources of Ṭabarī's Tafsir) is written by Mesut Kaya whose main research areas are Qur'anic exegeses, contemporary trends in Qur'anic studies, history of Tafsir, methodology of Tafsir and contemporary Islamic thought. Apart from the foreword, index, and bibliography, the book contains an introduction, five chapters, and a conclusion. Prior to focusing on the content in technical terms, the salient features of the first stage of the work can be listed as follows: Written in immersive Turkish, the book is highly systematic and structurally complementary, harmonious in its usage of classical sources and modern studies on different disciplines regarding the subject and strict on the conceptual and critical analysis of exegetical narrators and distinct early period exegeses.

While outlining his motivations for writing the book, Kaya, frequently refers to the intellectual impact Ṭabarī's *Jami'*, Zamakhsharī's *al-Kashshāf* and Fuat Sezgin's works on isnād (chain of narration) had on his understanding of exegetical narrations. In that regard, the author notes that, Fuat Sezgin, in both of his works (*al-Bukhārī 's Sources* and *Tarīkh al-Turās al-Arabī*) in question, made serious remarks about Ṭabarī's sources and pointed out that these sources should be studied. For this reason, "I took a lot of notes from what I read and created a file" as one of his motivations for delving and preoccupying his mind with Ṭabarī (p. 14). The

book under review, came as a result of Kaya’s preoccupation with Ṭabarī. By problematizing the issue, in the first chapter, the author focused on the historiography and the periodization of tafsir. Having written an article<sup>1</sup> on the subject previously, he reviewed and updated his take on the issue, thanks to Ibrahim Abdullah Rufayda’s stance on the subject matter.<sup>2</sup> To understand the change made by the author on the subject, the general picture of tafsir historiography should be presented firstly. Generally speaking, the accustomed perception of the tafsir periodization, is three facets. Namely, periodic, methodological and contemporary. Periodic classification includes four main periods, starting with the prophet, his companions, successors and post-successors’ tafsir activities. Using the methodological approach, tafsir activities are divided into linguistic, sectarian, philosophical, mystic and jurisprudential tafsir. Finally, the contemporary category deals with the modern view of Qur’anic understanding like sociological and scientific tafsir.

In the previously mentioned article written by the author, he roughly divided the history of tafsir into four as the formative period, the systematization period, the maturity period and, the modern period. Pursuing an intellectual maturity, the author, inspired by Rufayda’s approach, indicated that by considering the various classification styles available in the classical period, the classification of Rufayda and the classification he made before, he will try to determine the place of Ṭabarī in his current periodization (p. 24). According to the author, the most obvious characteristic of the formative period, is that the first seeds of systematic tafsir activity were planted in this process (29).

From the beginning of the second century, the science of tafsir began to be compiled and the first written works of tafsir began to appear. However, it is too early to see the science of tafsir as a fully formed science during the mentioned period. In response to the known discussion regarding the origin of tafsir, Kaya, positioned himself to see tafsir, as, though rudimentary then, but as an evolving independent field. Not as others put it to be “initially formed as a branch of the science of hadith, but that it emerged as an independent science”. Kaya, as other scholars did, also classifies Ṭabarī as the turning point in tafsir. He, under the title “the period of systematization” discussed how and why Ṭabarī is considered to be a game changer in tafsir, in terms of his writing and methodology. He conducted such task in reference to elite prominent scholars and works. Under the title “period of maturity”, the author, moving century wise, discussed what and how each century contributed to the evolvement of tafsir by mentioning the works, theories, authors and discussions held for the desired end. Ṭabarī, not surpassed in the field, became and unmounted mountain, a source only revolved around. Considered to be stagnant after Ṭabarī by some scholars<sup>3</sup>, the field of tafsir transited into a new realm. One entitled as “Taḥqīq: The Period of Commentary, Annotation and Treatises”. After which followed the period of Translation and Tajdīd, in which, as the title depicts, focused on the translation of classical sources to Muslim majority languages in search of ways to keep the field moving in the contemporary era. Finally, the Contemporary Period/Social Interpretation Period (XX. Century) is in search of making Qur’an a social phenomenon, making it available to the public.

Given the title of the book, the introductory part seems longer than necessary. However, since the section is well written, it could have been a separate article on its own. For, though

<sup>1</sup> Mesut Kaya, “Dönemsel İlmî Şartların Müfessirin Donanımı Üzerindeki Belirleyiciliği: Klasik ve Modern Dönem Mukayesesi”, *Marife*, Kış 2013, 9-31.

<sup>2</sup> Ibrahim Abdullah Rufayda, *al-Naḥw wa Kutub al-Taḥsīn* (Bingazi: Dār al-Jamāhiriyya, 1990), 563-568.

<sup>3</sup> Jalāluddīn al-Suyūtī, *al-Itqān fī Ulūm al-Qur’ān*, thk. Muhammed Abū al-Fadl Ibrahim (Cairo: al-Hay’ah al-Miṣriyah al-‘Āmmah lil-Kitāb, 1394/1974), IV/242.

the section helped in mapping out Ṭabarī, that could have been achieved differently. As for the historiography of tafsir provided in the introductory section, not much could be said to be added to the already existing literature. On the other hand, Kaya, indeed revised his view of the historiography of tafsir, and the new stance appear to be more comprehensive and rigorous. Additionally, the added table at the end of the introduction part serves as a summary of the chapter presented in persistent and effective way of learning and remembering.

The first chapter deals with Ṭabarī's journey to different cities in search of knowledge (Rihla). For a better understanding and visualization of the said journey, the author provided the reader with a map portraying Ṭabarī's journeys sided with the distance in kilometers. Analysis regarding the author's life, death and any other relevant bibliographical information, like his authority in different fields, his theological stance and how he is viewed by prominent scholars is given by referencing the ṭabaqāt books. Under the title "*Jāmi' al-bayān* and Its Characteristics", dating from his childhood, the author, narrated how Ṭabarī envisioned himself as a mufassir by saying, "Ṭabarī himself states that the idea of writing tafsir dates back to his childhood, as he stated that, 'When I was a child, a voice inside me was whispering this to me'. When Ṭabarī intended to write his tafsir, he prayed and asked for Allah's help for three years in order to actualize his dream and his prayer got answered" (p. 79). Another significant feature of this chapter is that it manifests an in-depth analysis of *Jāmi' al-bayān* in reference to scholars' views of it, how and why the exegesis is considered to be more inclusive and comprehensive than the previous works and how it served as an irremissible and unavoidable source. In addition to its positioning of Ṭabarī's tafsir, the provided analysis enlightens our understanding of exegetical activities with regard to the relevant time and environment. Under 10 bullet points, Kaya, dealt with the content of Ṭabarī's exegesis. Said differently, the author confronts us with all the necessary characteristics of the tafsir by referring to how Ṭabarī handled different issues related to the history of tafsir, history of the Qur'ān and the methodology of tafsir such as Israiliyyat, different readings (*qirā'āt*) theological and jurisprudential matters (p. 89). Meanwhile, the author also used the opportunity to discuss contemporary discussions on tafsir methodology, such as that of riwāyah – dirāyah dichotomy, and to which Ṭabarī's tafsir belongs to (p. 86). Subsequently, under the title "Studies on the Sources of Classical Works", Kaya, introduced us to what will serve as foundational to our understanding of classical works and how, if need be, a person can extract the used sources in any classical work. After the expertly written previous section, the author proceeded, to what can be considered to be the first most relevant title in accord with the book's title. Entitled as "Introduction to the Sources of Ṭabarī's Commentary", Kaya, initially acquaint us with the primary sources of Ṭabarī. According to him, the most mentioned commentators in Ṭabarī's tafsir are the *mawālī* exegetes and the tafsir is largely shaped by their works. As a matter of fact, it is stated that "the narrations corresponding to 60 percent in Ṭabarī's tafsir were transmitted by the commentators of the Tābi'ūn (successors) period, and approximately 11488 tafsir narrations were attributed to Mujāhid and Qatāda" (p. 104).<sup>4</sup> The discussions held towards the end of this chapter, prepares the mind to what is to come in the upcoming chapter. For, it dealt with narration and information related to classical sources, which the later parts of the book tackled.

Under the heading "Mujāhid's narrations in Ṭabarī's tafsir", Kaya commenced with short introduction of Mujāhid's life in collaboration with how scholars viewed him and posi-

<sup>4</sup> Also see: Muhammed b. Abdullah al-Hudayri, *Tafsir al-tabīn: Ardḥ wa dirāsa muqārana*, (Riyad: Dār al-Watan, ts.), I/21-24.

tioned him in different fields of Islamic studies. In that regard, Abdurrahman al-Ṭāhir b. Muhammad al-Suratī in 1976 under the name of *Tafsiru Mujāhid* published a tafsir attributed to Mujāhid. From the portrayed picture of the tafsir, it seems to be recognized as unavoidable milestone achievable by few. As for Mujāhid’s relationship with Ṭabarī, he is considered to be one of the leading tafsir commentators from whom Ṭabarī conveys the most opinions on tafsir, often preferring, approving and sometimes criticizing his views (p. 117). By analyzing 10 primary narrators from Mujāhid, Kaya thoroughly discussed how Mujāhid contributed to Ṭabarī’s tafsir reaching the zenith of compilation (p. 123-132). The first isnād (chain of narration), via which Mujāhid’s narrations took place in Ṭabarī’s tafsir is through Ibn Abī Najīh. After giving a synopsis of the narrator, other transmitters through which reports appeared in Ṭabarī’s tafsir are dealt with by citing examples. Same is the case for the second chain, actualized through Ibn Jurayj. Who is considered to be the second reporter with the most narrations in Ṭabarī’s tafsir. The third chain, occurred through Mansur b. Mu’tamar, brought to light the distinct narrations reported through him from Ibn Jurayj. The fourth isnād through Lays b. Abī Sulaiman al-Kūfī is given with an exemplary narration. As for the final narrator in this regard, the fifth chain is through Qāsim b. Abī Bazzah. A striking feature in this part of the book is the way the section is conducted. The author, with expertise, gave us a summary of each name’s biography and any relevant information. He, additionally, presented tables showing who reported from which narrator and how they are all dating back to Mujāhid. The author also cited various examples of reports exemplifying the narrators’ existence in his work. Following the same approach, Kaya, under the title “Reporters Transmitting Less Than Mujāhid”, mentioned narrators, as the title depicts, who have lesser reports than Mujāhid, who are in the name of Jābir al-Ju’fi, al-A’mash, Humayd al-A’raj, Husayf b. Abdurrahman, Hakam b. Utayba, and Ayyūb al-Sakhtiyānī. While and after each discussion, the author, manifested his expertise and authority over the topics at hand. which is obvious through his usage of resources, how he analyzed them and the meaningful and relevant conclusions he drew from them. Additionally, Kaya, added a headline with the name “Other Reporters from Mujāhid”, which is probably as a result of later discovery. For the author seems to have laid his hands on more narrators from Mujāhid, who he didn’t include under the most relevant title and felt the need to include them. However, if the latterly discovered narrators had been given under the most relevant title, the set up would have been more appealing.

After notifying us with Ṭabarī’s main resources on narrations, the author continued the elucidation by acquainting us with Ṭabarī’s fundamental exegetical sources in the third chapter. The author asserted “One of Ṭabarī’s most trusted sources is Ali b. Abī Talha’s compilation of narrations from Ibn Abbas” (p. 208). The first part of the chapter, thoroughly discussed the position of Ibn Abbas in tafsir and how he is considered to be an unshakable and comprehensive authority. It can indeed be considered as a short encyclopedia for Ibn Abbas. Generally, the third chapter can categorically be divided into two. In connection with the chapter’s title, the first and most salient feature, is the analysis of 19 early period exegetical works by including biographical information of every author together with other scholars’ analysis and criticisms of the author. The said 19 early period exegetical works together with their authors are as follows; *Tafsiru Daḥāk b. Muẓāhim*, *Tafsiru Aṭīyya al-Awfi*, *Tafsir al-Ṣuddī*, *Tafsiru Rabi’ b. Anas*, *Tafsiru Muqātil b. Ḥayyān*, *Tafsiru Ibn Jurayj*, *Tafsiru Said b. Abī Arūba* (*Tafsiru Qatāda*), *Tafsiru Muhammed b. Sawr* (*Tafsiru Qatāda* through the chain of Ma’mar b. Rashīd), *Tafsiru Abdurrazzāk*, *Tafsiru Shu’ba b. Hajjāj*, *Tafsiru Sufyan al-Sawrī*, *Tafsiru Abdullah b. Mubārak*, *Tafsiru Sufyān b. Uyayna*, *Jami’ Abdullah b. Wahb* (*Tafsiru Abdurrahmān b. Zayd*, *Tafsiru Zayd b. Aslam*), *Tafsiru Hushaym b. Bashīr*, *Tafsiru Waki’ b. Jarrāh*, *Tafsiru*

Yazīd b. Hārūn and Tafsiru Sunayd (Hussain b. Dāwūd al-Missisi). The second characteristic of this chapter is that, in addition to the titled tafsir works, Ṭabarī, narrated a huge number of reports from a group of people who are not mentioned to have authored any exegetical work, yet occupied a considerable place in the tafsir. In accordance with that, Ṭabarī narrated over 450 narrations from Abū Aḥmad al-Zubayrī, 50 reports from Musa b. Abdurrahmān al-Masrūqī and 50 narrations from Kalbī (p. 308-316). With regards to the criticisms associated with the name Kalbī in *tabaqāt* books, Kaya favoured the opinion that the Kalbī reported from, in the tafsir, is not the same as the Kalbī criticized in *tabaqat* works. Unfortunately, though, provided with an analysis of his intellectual personality, Abdulwāris b. Said's narrations are not numbered like the previously mentioned narrators. However, regardless of his prominence, Ṭabarī, did not narrate any report from Muqātil b. Sulaimān (p. 316). He considered the evaluations regarding him striking enough to make him unreliable. At the end of the chapter, Kaya discussed and evaluated Yāqut al-Hamawī's analysis of some narrations in Ṭabarī's tafsir. For, al-Hamawī listed names of narrators and the number of reports he considered to be available in Ṭabarī's exegesis.

Known to be a historian himself, Ṭabarī, seems to have been impacted by his predecessor, Ibn Ishāq in various aspects. As the author noted, "the structure and method of Ṭabarī's tafsir have similar characteristics (to that of Ibn Ishāq's *Maghāzī*) to a large extent. Considered to be the earliest of its kind, Ibn Ishāq's *Maghāzī*, is an encyclopedic source on its own. Covering distinct issues beginning with prophet Adam till the time of its writing. One of the outstanding roles of Ibn Ishāq's work on Ṭabarī's tafsir, is that, it served as the most significant source informing and explicating the period before the prophethood of Muhammad (PBUH) (p. 330). Although the work didn't survive till today, Kaya asserted that Ṭabarī had a complete copy of Ibn Ishāq's work while writing his exegesis (p. 331).<sup>5</sup> Besides giving a detailed analysis of Ibn Ishāq's life and work, Kaya, moved on to discuss other aspects of roles his work served in Ṭabarī's tafsir. The author, narrowed down reports from Ibn Ishāq in four main categories. Narrations he transmitted from Ibn Abbas, reports he narrated from the successors like Mujāhid, the ones he reported from *ahl al-kitāb* narrators and the ones whose source is himself. Citing examples under each category, Kaya, remarked that with his usage of a work classified in the field of history and *sirah* as a source in his tafsir, in a way that we have not seen in any commentator before him, enabled him to make a transformation in tafsir (p. 357). The fourth chapter ended with a table, showing the sources of Ibn Ishāq's narrations.

In the final chapter, Kaya deftly equipped the reader with information regarding early linguistic exegetical activities, hence facilitating the reader's understanding of what is to come. By discussing the rudimentary endeavors in linguistic tafsir under the title "Pre-Ṭabarī Linguistic Interpretation", the author gave a short introduction of early linguistic approaches in understanding the Qur'ān, by mentioning and analyzing the main works and their authors. Being comprehensive in all aspects, Ṭabarī didn't neglect the usage of linguistic sources for its immense effect in understanding the Qur'an. While Ṭabarī interpreted the Qur'an from a philological point of view, he sustained the discussions carried out in the works written before him into his tafsir and analyzed the views when need be. When making a linguistic reference to semantic and syntax scholars, Ṭabarī used the phrase "Qāla ba'du ahl al-Kūfa", or "Qāla ba'du ahl al-Basra" or "Qāla ba'du ahl al-Arabiyya" in situations where he chose not to mention names (p. 364). Following an extensive discussion of the earliest most prominent works in exegetical

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<sup>5</sup> Heribert Horst, "Ṭabari'nin Kur'an Tefsiri'ndeki Rivayetler", çev. Sabri Çap, *Dinbilimleri Akademik Araştırma Dergisi*, 16/1 (2016), 323, 324, 328.

linguistic, is an analysis of Ṭabarī’s usage of *qirā’āt* works. Ṭabarī, having a certificate of authority (*ijāzah*) on Abū Ubayd Qasim b. Sallam’s work, who is classified as the first reliable Imam to collect the recitations (*qirā’āt*) in a book, identifying 25 reciters, including those famous seven<sup>67</sup>, used the source adequately (p. 388). However, Ṭabarī didn’t only refer to Abū Ubayd’s book on this subject, but also included the opinions of the Imams of recitation without the need for any attribution (p. 395).

In conclusion, the book at hand is thoroughly researched and meticulously written. Thanks to the author’s expertise and motivations in writing the book. For his analysis of the mentioned classical works, authors and historical events, especially in connection with the field of tafsir is admirable. The fact that you can feel the author’s existence in almost every page, makes the work’s originality meritorious. However, there exists some repetitions in the book. Nevertheless, the book serves as an encyclopedia as well as a source for further research or a source to be taught at higher institutes.

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<sup>6</sup> Ibn al-Jazari, *Sharhu Tayyibat al-Nashr*, thk. Anas Muhra (Beirut: Dar al-Kutub al-Ilmiyya, 1420/2000), I/159.



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**Etik Beyan / Ethical Statement:**

Bu çalışmanın hazırlanma sürecinde bilimsel ve etik ilkelere uyulduğu ve yararlanılan tüm çalışmaların kaynakçada belirtildiği beyan olunur / It is declared that scientific and ethical principles have been followed while carrying out and writing this study and that all the sources used have been properly cited.

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