

**MYKHAYLO YAKUBOVYCH**

(University of Freiburg, Germany)

ORCID: 0000-0002-8305-1166

## **Ottoman Qur’anic Studies: Case of *Tafsīr* Glosses**

### **Abstract**

Among the big corpus of the commentaries over the Qur’an, one of the special developments was a genre of gloss (*ḥāṣhiya*). The study addresses main Ottoman glosses written to the Qur’anic commentaries, contextualizing it within the internal dimensions of the content transformations. It is argued that since the glosses were used as the textbooks in the Ottoman medrese, they could be considered as the “mainstream” Ottoman reading of the Qur’an. This reading was not merely one of the practices for approaching the Qur’an, but the kind of tradition with the related authorities and meaningful developments. The research covers these patterns of interpretations applied to the case of *Āl ‘Imrān*, 3: 7, showing the way of how the philology and theology interacted in the Ottoman *tafsīr* glosses.

**Keywords:** Ottoman medrese, *tafsīr*, *ḥāṣhiya*, hermeneutics, interpretation, meaning

The genre of gloss (*ṣarḥ*, *ḥāṣhiya*, *ta’līq* etc.) is one of the most important parts of the Islamic textual legacy in the Post-Classical period (usually it is about 13<sup>th</sup>/14<sup>th</sup>–18<sup>th</sup>/19<sup>th</sup> century). In some way, the process of “commenting over” became one of the essential features of the Arabic textual practices in that period, starting from the times of Mamluk Sultanate and finishing with the late Ottoman Empire. Nowadays,

due to the studies by Asad Q. Ahmed,<sup>1</sup> Robert Wisnowski,<sup>2</sup> Eric Van Lit,<sup>3</sup> Walid Saleh<sup>4</sup> and some other contributions to this topic, process of commenting could be understood not only as the exploration or interpretation, but also the creation of a new text sometimes made on the basis of novelty and originality (in “Arabic” sense of these notions, described by Esad Durakovic, for example).<sup>5</sup> This is especially important when it comes to the logic and theology (and the role of the commentaries there, written on the various *mutūn*, i.e. basic texts), but even more significant in such a genre as Qur’anic exegetics. Here, as Andreas Görke and Johanna Pink argue in their recent study, the explanatory practices from the Qur’anic Studies were developed in the course of Islamic intellectual history, where the philology and theology were meeting each other.<sup>6</sup>

In this article, I would like to address one of the most advanced “Post-Classical” traditions of the Qur’anic Studies where the “commentaries over commentaries” played a role of the main approach to the Qur’anic text itself. That is, the Ottoman tradition where one may find at least 500 glosses (*hawāṣī*) written in the period between 14<sup>th</sup> and 19<sup>th</sup> centuries.<sup>7</sup> At least half of them were written in 16<sup>th</sup> and 17<sup>th</sup> centuries,<sup>8</sup> at the time when the intellectual life of the Empire became to be formalized over the medrese network and various glosses on the basic texts made their final path to the curriculum.<sup>9</sup> Glosses over *Al-Kaṣṣāf* by Maḥmūd az-Zamaḥṣarī, *Maḥfātih al-Ġayb* by Faḥr ad-Dīn ar-Rāzī, *Anwār at-Tanzīl* by ‘Abd Allāh al-Bayḍāwī, *Ġalālayn* by Ġalāl ad-Dīn al-Maḥallī and Ġalāl ad-Dīn as-Suyufī were so widely commented (as a whole and partially, over the specific suras or just single verses) that it is hard to image any of the *tafsīr* lessons in the Ottoman medrese without studying numerous *hawāṣī*. These glosses were extremely frequently referred in the texts of other genres, for instance, in collection of fatwas (*maḡmū‘ al-fatāwā*), works on the principles of the jurisprudence (*uṣūl al-fiqh*) and others. Browsing through the most well-known Ottoman bio-biographical works like

<sup>1</sup> Asad Q. Ahmed, *Hāshiya and Islamic Intellectual History*, “Oriens” 2013, 41, pp. 213–216.

<sup>2</sup> Robert Wisnowski, *The nature and scope of Arabic philosophical commentary in Post-Classical (ca. 1100–1900 AD) Islamic intellectual history: Some preliminary observations*, “Bulletin of the Institute of Classical Studies” 47 (2004), pp. 149–191.

<sup>3</sup> Eric van Lit, *Commentary and Commentary Tradition: The Basic Terms for Understanding Islamic Intellectual History*, “Mélanges de l’Institut dominicain d’études orientales” 32 (2017) 32, pp. 3–26.

<sup>4</sup> Walid A. Saleh, *The Gloss as Intellectual History: The ḥāshiyahs on al-Kaṣṣāf*, “Oriens” 41 (2013), pp. 217–259.

<sup>5</sup> Esad Durakovic, *The Poetics of Ancient and Classical Arabic Literature: Orientology*, Routledge, London 2015, pp. 2–25.

<sup>6</sup> Andreas Goerke, Joannah Pink, *Tafsir and Islamic Intellectual History: Exploring the Boundaries of a Genre*, in: *Tafsir and Islamic Intellectual History: Exploring the Boundaries of a Genre*, Oxford University Press, Oxford 2014, pp. 1–23.

<sup>7</sup> Şükrü Maden, *Tefsirde Şerh Hāşiyeye ve Ta’lika Literatürü*, “Tarih Kültür ve Sanat Araştırmaları Dergisi” 3,1 (2014), pp. 183–220.

<sup>8</sup> Osman Kara, *Osmanlıda Tefsir Haşiyesi Geleneği: Atıfı Örneği*, “Abant İzzet Baysal Üniversitesi İlahiyat Fakültesi Dergisi” V, 9 (2017), pp. 41–65.

<sup>9</sup> Ahmed Shahab, Nenad Filipovic, *The Sultan’s Syllabus: A Curriculum for the Ottoman Imperial medreses Prescribed in a fermān of Qānūnī I Süleymān*, “Studia Islamica” 98/99 (2004), pp. 183–218.

*Sicil-i Osmani* by Mehmed Süreyya (1845–1909) one may easily find that most of the Ottoman scholars qualified in Qur'anic Sciences authored at least one work dedicated to *Al-Kaššāf* by Az-Zamaḥṣarī or *Anwār at-Tanzīl* by Al-Bayḍāwī.<sup>10</sup> This is particularly obvious from the late period (16<sup>th</sup>/17<sup>th</sup> centuries), when many of the scholars tried to solve the issues of contradictions between *Al-Kaššāf* and *Anwār at-Tanzīl*, accomplishing some “pro-Mu‘tazili” (or supposed to be such) statements of Az-Zamaḥṣarī with more “canonical” Aš‘arite readings of ‘Abd Allāh al-Bayḍāwī.

Taking into consideration the most popular Ottoman glosses, written over the aforementioned *tafsīrs*, I will address the interpretation of the verse where the philological implications are strictly related to the theological ones. It was a place where the authors of the glosses made their best efforts to provide final solutions. That is, *Āl ‘Imrān*, 3: 7: “It is He who has sent this Scripture down to you [Prophet]. Some of its verses are definite in meaning – these are the cornerstone of the Scripture – and others are ambiguous. The perverse at heart eagerly pursue the ambiguities in their attempt to make trouble and to pin down a specific meaning of their own: only God knows the true meaning. Those firmly grounded in knowledge say, ‘We believe in it: it is all from our Lord’ – only those with real perception will take heed”.<sup>11</sup> The issue of dichotomy between the *muḥkam* and *mutašābih* (if to acknowledge there is such, of course) was one of the most discussed in both Qur’anic exegetical traditions and academic study of the Qur’an.<sup>12</sup> Exploration of the manner in which the Ottoman authors of the glosses addressed this issue not only reveal their vision of the relations between theological and philological frameworks in Qur’anic Studies, but also the essential features of the glosses, starting from the horizons of understanding and finishing with their further religious function in the system of making and production knowledge in the Ottoman Empire within the broader context of the Islamic intellectual history.

Before going into glosses analysis, some of the preliminary remarks concerning the primary text should be made. Nor Az-Zamaḥṣarī or Al-Bayḍāwī were first to address issue of *muḥkam* and *mutašābih* in the Qur’an, since already in 4<sup>th</sup>/10<sup>th</sup> century Abū Bakr al-Ġašṣās (d. 980) broadly discussed this issue in his *Aḥkām al-Qur’ān*. Quoting past authorities among the first generations of Muslims (Ibn ‘Abbās, Ġābir Ibn ‘Abd Allāh), Abū Bakr al-Ġašṣās goes further to discuss what *muḥkam* and *mutašābih* meant; for him, interpretation of the *muḥkam* as a verse with the only meaning and the *mutašābih* with two and more is just one of the “aspects” (*waġh*) of the real sense, because presence of the meaning sometimes depends on the ability of the “listener” (*sāmi*): what is ambiguous to one person could be not such for another one.<sup>13</sup> Az-Zamaḥṣarī himself says that *muḥkamāt* verses are the one which safe from the carrying different meanings

<sup>10</sup> See: Süreyya Mehmed, *Sicilli Osmani*, Tarih Vakfi Yurt Yayınları, İstanbul 1996.

<sup>11</sup> All verses given in M.A.S. Abdel Haleem translation (Oxford University Press, Oxford 2005), unless another is stated.

<sup>12</sup> Hussein Abdul-Raof, *On the Dichotomy Between Muhkam and Mutashabih*, “Journal of Qur’anic Research and Studies” 3,5 (2008), pp. 47–70.

<sup>13</sup> Ibn ‘Arabī, *Aḥkām al-Qur’ān*, Dār al-Kutub al-‘Ilmiyya, Bayrūt 2003, Vol. 2, pp. 280–285.

and doubts (*iḥtimāl wa-iṣtibāh*), while the *mutaṣābihāt* are the ones with some kinds of “contradiction”, like the “Visions perceives Him not” (The Qur’an, 6:103, translation is ours) and “Looking at their Lord” (The Qur’an, 75:23, translation is ours), “God does not order immorality” (The Qur’an, 7:28, translation is ours), “We command its wealthy” (The Qur’an, 17:16, translation is ours). Despite mostly philological nature of his commentary, Az-Zamaḥṣarī makes some theological explanations that the Qur’an contains *mutaṣābihāt* to urge thinking as a way to know God and His Oneness, and every believer who is really persuaded (*al-mū’im al-muta’āqid*) will think well on the “explicit contradiction” (*at-tanāquḍ az-zāhir*) until God will ultimately open him the real adequacy (*muṭābaqa*) between *muḥkam* and *mutaṣābih*.<sup>14</sup> From his side Al-Bayḍāwī adds nothing significant to that, just pointing out the fact that the Qur’an urges to search for the real meaning in order of *taḥṣīl al-’ulūm* (“acquaintance of the sciences”).<sup>15</sup> One may note some theological shift here: Az-Zamaḥṣarī speaks about knowledge of God by the means of reason, while al-Bayḍāwī provides just a general idea of “sciences” (*’ulūm*), thus “correcting” Muta’zili views of his forerunner. However, Al-Bayḍāwī then says that the *rāsīḥūna fī al-’ilm* are the ones who “freed the reason from the covers of senses”, i.e. praises rational facility and that is why he supposes this verse to be directed against Christians who imagined God to be a father of Jesus, while the Jesus as *rūḥ* is a knowledge and not something material (“His word which He directed to Mary and a Spirit from Him”, The Qur’an. 4:171, translation is ours). Subsequently, these general statements of Az-Zamaḥṣarī or Al-Bayḍāwī appeared to be incomplete for the scholars, and much of the speculation on the *muḥkam* and *mutaṣābih* developed in later Ottoman glosses. To make final conclusion over the issue was a part of *taḥqīq* procedure (i.e. “verification” of knowledge), the ideal of the Post-Classical intellectual rationalism, as Michael Cook describes it.<sup>16</sup>

One of the first Ottoman works in a genre close to *ḥawāṣī* is the *Al-I’tirādāt ‘alā Ṣarḥ al-Kaššāf* by Ğamāl ad-Dīn al-Aqsarā’ī (d. 1388).<sup>17</sup> These *I’tirādāt* (“controversial glosses”) were written to *Ṣarḥ* of *Al-Kaššāf* by Persian polymath and theologian Quṭb ar-Rāzī at-Taḥtānī (d. 1365). The structure of the work is simple: first Al-Aqsarā’ī mentions what has been said by Az-Zamaḥṣarī himself, then he cites words of At-Taḥtānī and imposes his own *baḥṭ* (“study” of the issue). For the problem of *muḥkam* and *mutaṣābih*, Al-Aqsarā’ī makes few detailed conclusions: first of all, *mutaṣābih* are the verses which similar each other in rhetoric of the Qur’an.<sup>18</sup> Interestingly, belief of *rāsīḥūna fī al-’ilm* does not related at all to *muḥkam* and *mutaṣābih* mentioned in the previous part of the verse, so the discussion over their knowledge of *ta’wīl* is “fruitless” (*lā fa’ida*). It looks like in contrast to both Az-Zamaḥṣarī and Al-Bayḍāwī, Al-Aqsarā’ī divides the verse

<sup>14</sup> Az-Zamaḥṣarī, *Al-Kaššāf ‘an Ḥaqā’iq at-Tanzīl*, Dār al-Ma’rifa, Bayrūt 2009, p. 161.

<sup>15</sup> Al-Bayḍāwī, *Anwār at-Tanzīl*, Dār Iḥya’ at-Turāṭ al-’Arabī, Bayrūt n. d., Vol. 2, p. 6.

<sup>16</sup> Michael Cook, *On Islam and comparative intellectual history*, “IAS Newsletter” 43 (2007), p. 7.

<sup>17</sup> Ğamāl ad-Dīn al-Aqsarā’ī, *I’tirādāt al-Aqsarā’ī ‘alā Ṣarḥ al-Kaššāf*, The Ghazi Husrev Bek Library, Mss. 1381, ff. 70a.

<sup>18</sup> Ibid.

into two (at least) meaningful but not closely related parts, i.e. one before *rāsiḥūna fī al-‘ilm* and after it. So the following part of the verse (“The perverse at heart eagerly pursue the ambiguities...”) is about some another case, not the one discussed in the first part of the verse.<sup>19</sup> As it could be easily argued, Al-Aqsarā’ī came to completely other conclusions than Az-Zamaḥṣarī, the author of the primary text.

Another well-known Ottoman *ḥawāṣī* on *Anwār at-Tanzīl* is written by Ibn at-Tamḡīd (d. 1475), a teacher of Sultan Mehmet the Conqueror. He provides complete another way of discussion. Ibn at-Tamḡīd quotes Faḥr ad-Dīn ar-Rāzī, especially his statement about *muḥkam* as the verse with one meaning and *mutaṣābih* with many ones.<sup>20</sup> Finally, Ibn at-Tamḡīd conceptualizes Al-Bayḏāwī’s “anti-Christian” statement (that Christians follow *mutaṣābih*) and goes to the polemics with Az-Zamaḥṣarī concerning the words *lā tuziḡ qulūbunā*, who interpreted it in a “Mutazili” way, since both *idlāl* (“going into error”) and *hidāya* (“guidance”) are from Lord alone.<sup>21</sup> So, following the “canonical” Sunni doctrine of predestination the verse must be read *‘alā ḡāhir* (literally). For Ibn at-Tamḡīd we see quite popular (numerous copies of this gloss preserved and the printed edition exists) but conservative reading where some oldest trends of polemics against Mu‘tazilism were active. What is new here, however, is that in contrast to his forerunner Al-Aqsarā’ī, Ibn at-Tamḡīd provides intertextual ties of the text, connecting it to the fourth and fifth verses from the same sura (“He is the one who forms you in the wombs however He wills”, The Qur’an, 3:6, translation is ours).

After Ibn at-Tamḡīd, many new glosses to specifically *Anwār at-Tanzīl* appeared. It was Muḥī ad-Dīn Šeyḡ Zāde (d. 1544) from Koç who wrote the “the most useful, profoundly beneficial and the simplest gloss” (as Kâtip Çelebi says in his *Kašf az-zunūn*).<sup>22</sup> This work has been published at least twice, despite any of the editions could be really described as the critical one (in a strict sense).

First of all, Šeyḡ Zāde follows the same pattern of thought as Al-Bayḏāwī. He proposes detailed classification (in a manner close to the approach of *uṣūl al-fiqh*, since he states that these are *uṣūl al-ḥanafīyya*) of the “external meanings” for *muḥkam*, denoting some of them as *naṣṣ* i.e. explicitly imperative, and other ones as *mufassir*, meaning the ones which demands on the interpretation. He explains the “contradictory” meanings of the verses stated in Az-Zamaḥṣarī’s and Al-Bayḏāwī’s *tafsīrs*, arguing that some of them could be easily explained by the other ones, meaning intertextual procedure.<sup>23</sup> Answering to the question (already posed by previous scholars) of why God does not made all the Qur’an *muḥkam* only (i.e. with a clear meaning), Šeyḡ Zāde provides four

<sup>19</sup> Ibid.

<sup>20</sup> *Hāšiyat al-Qūnawī ‘alā Tafṣīr al-Bayḏāwī wa-ma’ahu ḥāšiyat Ibn at-Tamḡīd*, Dār al-Kutub al-‘Ilmiyya, Bayrūt 2001, Vol. 6, p. 17.

<sup>21</sup> Ibid., p. 31.

<sup>22</sup> Kâtip Çelebi, *Kašf az-zunūn ‘an Asāmī al-Kutub wa-al-Funūn*, Dār Iḥya’ at-Turāṡ al-‘Arabī, Bayrūt n.d., Vol. 2, p. 275.

<sup>23</sup> *Hāšiyat Muḥī ad-Dīn Šeyḡ Zāde ‘alā Tafṣīr al-Qāḏī al-Bayḏāwī*, ed. Muḥammad Šāḥīn, Dār al-Kutub al-‘Ilmiyya, Bayrūt 1999, Vol. 4, p. 10.

answers. The first one is that the harder way to the truth is the biggest reward could be received for it. The second one (which is similar to the proof already stated by Az-Zamaḥṣarī and Al-Bayḏāwī) is that will the Qur'an all be *muḥkam* there would be no necessity in usage of the rational proofs and, as a result, human being would remain in ignorance and blind following (*taqlīd*). Thirdly, states Šeyḥ Zāde, human must be acquired with many sciences in order to make the right decision over the procreative meanings (*tarġīḥ*). The most powerful (as Šeyḥ Zāde himself says) is the fourth answer which is based on the idea that the Qur'an addresses both intellectual elites and masses. Since it is hard for the ordinary people to understand the existence of being which is not a body and not limited to a place, they could fall in complete negation, so it is better to use more simple language even if the terms to be said belong to the category of *mutašābih*.

Šeyḥ Zāde also inquires about the word *uḥar* ("others"), meaning how many verses are meant. First of all, he argues, it is about "many" verses because only one verse cannot be *mutašābih* in the sense of "similar" since one thing needs another one to "be similar". *Uḥar*, as some grammar examples show (*ġā'anī Zayd wa-raġul aḥar*, "Zayd came to me and other men"), could mean not only "other", but also "later". That is, because "*aḥar* as root is a subject for the difference in the attribute but then is became to be [a subject] for the difference in essence" (*fī al-aṣl mawḏū'an li-al-iḥtilāf fī aṣ-ṣifa fa-naqala ilā al-iḥtilāf fī dāt*). So, *uḥar* could refer to both verses which are similar to other ones and, in a more general meaning, to some specific verses of the Qur'an not necessary being "similar" (and thus "ambiguous").

Going further, Šeyḥ Zāde states his own vision of a difference between *tafsīr* and *tā'wīl*: *tafsīr* is the "exploration of meaning of the verse, its content (*ša'nuhā*), its narrative (*qiṣṣatuhā*) and the reason of why it was revealed, which could be known only from the listening to authorities and those who transmit from them".<sup>24</sup> In contrast to this, *tā'wīl* is the "alteration of the verse from its external meaning to the one provided by composition (*naẓm*) if the desired meaning is supposed to be in agreement with the Qur'an and Sunna". The one qualified for *tā'wīl* must be well-versed in language sciences, starting from *i'rāb* and finishing with metaphor and allegory. So the blamed one in the verse ("those who seek discord", *fitna*) are those who pursue *tā'wīl* of *mutašābih* making some of the meanings contradicting other ones in religion.<sup>25</sup>

Nevertheless, understanding of the Qur'an merely in a philological perspective seems to be insufficient for Šayḥ Zāde. Discussing belief of the "firmly grounded in knowledge" (*rāsihūna fī al-'ilm*) Šayḥ Zāde writes that priority (*tarġīḥ*) of some metaphorical meanings could be established only within the scope of the language and these *tarġīḥāt luġawiyya* provide only *ẓann* ("supposition"). So, it is impossible to state anything sure about the Qur'an only on the basis of this "supposition".<sup>26</sup>

<sup>24</sup> *Hāšiyat Muḥī ad-Dīn Šayḥ Zāde 'alā tafsīr al-Qāḏī al-Bayḏāwī*, p. 13.

<sup>25</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 14.

<sup>26</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 15.

One of the later and still most popular glosses to *Anwār at-Tanzjīl* was written by Šihāb ad-Dīn al-Ḥafāḡī (d. 1659), well-known Ottoman scholar from Egypt who spent most on his life in as a judge in various places.<sup>27</sup> His comprehensive gloss, entitled as *‘Ināyat al-Qāḡī wa-Kifāyat ar-Rāḡī*, already appeared in press in 1283/1866. Interpretation of *Āl ‘Imrān*, 7 by this scholar was mostly directed to the problem of tradition and reason in Islam (*naql wa-‘aql*). It was the search for the answer of how *mutašābih* could be correctly apprehended by the human rational facility. For Al-Ḥafāḡī, *mutašābih* were some of the attributes of God. For al-Ḥafāḡī, knowledge of *tāwīl* depends on how we understand this word, because it also may mean “explanation of something” (*tarḡamat aš-šay’*) and not only alteration of literal meaning. He also explains that *uḡar* used here in a single form (and not pluralis) because of the kind of *tafḡīl* used here to emphasize the “highest rank” of the verses. *Tā’wīl* for Al-Ḥafāḡī is also the usage of some meanings for the “corrupted aims” like the one who introduces something new into religion. So, *tā’wīl* in this case is equated with *finta*. The issue of the waqf (i.e. stop) over the knowledge of *tā’wīl* by “established in knowledge” (meaning do they really know it or God alone knows it) has been addressed by Al-Ḥafāḡī with full attention, despite in the very end of discussion he states that “the truth” (*fa-al-ḡaqq*) is that the stop should be made. He makes this conclusion on the basis of the contradistinction (*muqābala*) of the “firmly established in knowledge” and “the perverse at heart”; merely “grammatical meaning” makes it necessity to conclude that only God alone knows the *tā’wīl* while those who pursue its knowledge without belief are the blamed ones.<sup>28</sup> What is interesting to note, is that Al-Ḥafāḡī openly makes *Anwār at-Tanzjīl* opposing to *Al-Kaššāf*, however, not going into his own discussion of the Mu‘tazili views as some of his forerunners; it looks like for the 17<sup>th</sup> century it was already enough just to note earliest response to some of the statements from *Al-Kaššāf*, especially the one made by Al-Bayḡāwī himself.

Another late comprehensive gloss written to *Anwār at-Tanzjīl* is the one by ‘Išām ad-Dīn al-Qūnawī (d. 1780). For him, statement of Al-Bayḡāwī (that *muḡkam* is preserved from generalization, *iḡmāl*) means something “clear in meaning”, as Aš-Šāfi‘ī says.<sup>29</sup> This “clear” for Al-Qūnawī is the meaning which “appears in reason”, so *muḡkam* is a “clear signification by the external side of the text” (*wāḡih dalālat az-zāhir*). Going further with this kind of hermeneutics, Al-Qūnawī also mentions what Al-Bāqillānī (d. 1013) says about *muḡkam*.<sup>30</sup> It is obvious that for Al-Qūnawī the issue was more theological, that philological (in contrast to other glosses where the starting point was the language analysis).

Making phrase-by phrase analysis of Al-Bayḡāwī’s work, Al-Qūnawī raises similar issues as other scholars like what *mutašābih* mean, how to understand *uḡau* (“others”)

<sup>27</sup> Šihāb ad-Dīn al-Ḥafāḡī, *‘Ināyat al-Qāḡī wa-Kifāyat ar-Rāḡī*, At-Tiba‘a al-Ḥidiwiyya, Al-Qāhira 1866, Vol. 2, p. 5.

<sup>28</sup> Šihāb ad-Dīn al-Ḥafāḡī, *‘Ināyat al-Qāḡī wa-Kifāyat ar-Rāḡī*, p. 17.

<sup>29</sup> Ḥāšiyat al-Qūnawī ‘alā *Tafsīr Al-Bayḡāwī wa-ma’ahu ḡāšiyat Ibn at-Tamḡid*, Bayrūt 2001, Vol. 2, p. 18.

<sup>30</sup> Ibid.

and where to make stop after *illā Allāh*. He follows the same approach as Al-Ḥafāḡī before (quoting Ibn Mālik, d. 1274) and then goes to the more detailed explanation how to understand “firmly grounded in knowledge” and what the *fitna* means. Without much going into details about *rāsihūna fī al-‘ilm* (just stating that this is about the priority of the scholars over masses), Al-Qūnawī dedicated few pages to Al-Bayḡāwī’s vision of the *‘adūl ‘an al-ḥaqq* (“abstaining from the truth”). *‘Adūl* is the “evasion from the straightness (*istaqāma*), like the one practiced by the innovators, *mubtadi‘a*”. First of all, they are anthropomorphists, but in general they are the ones who goes beyond the “external meaning” without the necessary proof.

Continuing the topic of *‘adūl* from the Truth, Al-Qūnawī re-reads Al-Bayḡāwī’s text. For Al-Qūnawī, *‘adūl* is the “appearance of doubt” (*taškīk*), but later he explains that *taškīk* is a search for the contradictions in the Qur’an, whether *taškīk* in the external meanings of *mutašābih* is not blamed.<sup>31</sup> Moreover, following to the external side of the *mutašābih* is a pursuit of *fitna*, so those who makes *tā‘wīl* goes to *fitna*. In contrast to them, those who “established in knowledge” should make *mutašābih* equal (*yuṭābiq*) to *muhkam*. What is also interesting here is that Al-Qūnawī interprets *‘ilm* as knowledge, stating that it is strange to mean *īmān* by it as “some other say”.<sup>32</sup> In such a way, Al-Qūnawī represents typical rational approach of *kalām* to the Qur’anic hermeneutics. Finally, stop should be made after *Allāh* (ie. Only He knows *tā‘wīl*), since it is a big trial for the “established in knowledge” who should abstain from further search and finally dedicate their efforts to God alone, the Only One Who knows the meaning better. This is also a kind of rational of approach since it is definitely about doctrinal issues (*kalām*) and nor the *fiqh*. His discussion of *Āl ‘Imrān*, 7 is finishing with the issue of senses and reason in approaching the Truth, where Al-Qūnawī mostly quotes At-Taftāzānī (d. 1390) emphasizing the “perfect reason” and “rational power” which “governs” human body.

Apart from *Al-Kaššāf* and *Anwār at-Tanzīl*, glosses were written to other commentaries as well. For the commentary known as *Ġalālāyn*, it was Mullā ‘Alī al-Qārī (d. 1606) who authored the one of the earliest and the most comprehensive gloss entitled as *Al-Ġamālayn ‘ala Tafsīr al-Ġalālāyn* and preserved in a few manuscript copies.<sup>33</sup> Since this scholar spent most of his life in Ottoman Mekka, his legacy could be regarded as “Ottoman” (moreover, he belonged to the dominating Ḥanafī-Māturīdī tradition).<sup>34</sup> It is remarkable to note that Al-Qārī used different copies of *Ġalālāyn*, since in every page he makes some comparison between them (*fī nuṣṣa... wa-fī nuṣṣa*). Also *Al-Kaššāf*, *Anwār at-Tanzīl* and other commentaries were of high importance for ‘Alī al-Qārī; in some way, his

<sup>31</sup> Ibid., p. 24

<sup>32</sup> Ibid., p. 25.

<sup>33</sup> The one used for this study is dated by 18<sup>th</sup> century and preserved in Staatsbibliothek zu Berlin (Mss. Ahlwardt, 894).

<sup>34</sup> Ahmet Özel, *Ali el-Kari*, in: “Türkiye Diyanet Vakfı İslam Ansiklopedisi”, Türkiye Diyanet Vakfı, Istanbul 1989, 2, p. 404.



gloss could be considered as a try to contextualize late Mamluk *Ġalālāyn* within the Ottoman tradition.

For *Āl 'Imrān*, 7, Al-Qārī follows wording of *Ġalālāyn* and comments some of their expressions. For *mutašābih* these are the words which could be understood only “by means of search and *iğtihād*”.<sup>35</sup> The notion of *fitna*, Al-Qārī mentions some statements of *Ġalālāyn* which are absent in present-day edition. It is said that they look for *fitna li-ḥubbihim la-hā* (“for their love to it”), while Al-Qārī also explains the meaning of the word *ğuhhāla-hum* (“their irrogant”) completely absent in the contemporary published version. Blame of those who follow doubts and doubtful also related to their “adoration of the external meaning”; however, belief of “established in knowledge” is praised because of their devotion and true belief without asking of how (*bi-lā kayfa*) and abstaining from the insistence on the detailed meaning (*adam al-ğazm bi-al-murād*). Obviously, this is also kind of theological statement, probably related to the issue of attributes of God and their reality.

When comparing the material listed in glosses to the original Ottoman *tafsīrs*, some obvious parallels could be found. For example, well-known masterpiece of Abū Sa‘ūd al-‘Imādī (d. 1574) *Iršād al-‘Aql as-Salīm* (“Guidance for the Sound Reason”) provides the same pattern of interpretation as the glosses associated with *Anwār at-Tanzīl*: there are the same expressions used for the definition of *muḥkam* (“free from the plurality of meanings and doubts”), the term *uḥar* (“others”) analyzed in the same way. Summarizing the reason of why God revealed *mutašābihāt*, Abū Sa‘ūd al-‘Imādī answers that it is made “to show dignity of scholars and to urge their efforts...”.<sup>36</sup> Some of the phrases related to the *tā’wīl* are very similar to the aforementioned Al-Qārī’s gloss on *Al-Ġalālāyn*: (Abū Sa‘ūd: *ya talaqūna bi-zāhir al-mutašābih min al-kitāb aw bi-tā’wīl bāṭil... rāsihūna fī al-‘ilm tabatū wa-tamakkanū*, Al-Qārī: *ta’līq bi-zāhir aw bi-tā’wīl bāṭil... rāsihūna fī al-‘ilm tabatū wa-tamakkanū*). It looks like Abū Sa‘ūd al-‘Imādī’s *tafsīr* (written much earlier) was one of the sources for later Al-Qārī’s gloss on *Al-Ġalālāyn*, so here we have an example of how the writing of glosses and *tafsīrs* were closely connected to each other. The same model of interpretation could be found in a later Ottoman work, *tafsīr Rūḥ al-Bayān* by Ismā‘īl Ḥaqqī al-Burūsawī (d. 1725) who strictly followed wording of Al-Bayḍāwī and Abū Sa‘ūd.<sup>37</sup>

Due to the big size of the manuscript material preserved (first of all, in the largest Turkish libraries like Suleymanie), a comprehensive analysis of the glosses impact into the Post-Classical Qur’anic exegesis is still far from the final goal. Preliminary research (done in this and some other articles), however, already provides few solutions to the stated research questions. First of all, it is clear that Ottoman glosses passed through much of different approaches used, starting from the single glosses revealing rhetorical features of a sample *tafsīr* and finishing with the all-encompassing explanatory works

<sup>35</sup> Alī al-Qārī, *Ġamālayn ‘alā Tafsīr al-Ġalālāyn*, Staatsbibliothek zu Berlin, Mss. Ahlward 894, 385 ff.

<sup>36</sup> *Tafsīr Abū Sa‘ūd*, Bayrūt, n. d., Vol. 2, p. 78.

<sup>37</sup> Ismā‘īl Ḥaqqī al-Burūsawī, *Tafsīr Rūḥ al-Bayān*, Dār al-Fikr, Bayrūt 2006, 2, pp. 6–7.

which are not less informative than the works written as *tafsīrs*. Obviously, one may note a kind of historically motivated variations behind this, so all the Ottoman glosses written on *Al-Kaššāf*, *Anwār at-Tanzīl*, *Ġalālāyn* and other commentaries could be categorized within two main fractions: formative ones, written in 14<sup>th</sup>–middle of 16<sup>th</sup> centuries as well as post-formative, developed in later 17<sup>th</sup>/18<sup>th</sup> centuries. The turning point here could be gloss by Muḥī d-Dīn Šeyḥ Zāde (d. 1544) whose legacy is one of the highest points of the Ottoman intellectual tradition. If the first glosses were merely concerned with grammar, rhetoric and other features of the Qur’anic texts (in a line with *tafsīrs* commented on), the later one contained much of theological, philosophical and even historical material. This turn makes later commentaries (like the one by ‘Iṣām dDīn al-Qūnawī (d. 1780)) so much comprehensive and full of details, that they became more like *tafsīrs* as they are, and not merely “secondary” texts written to explain some early authority. If the earliest commentaries related much on the philology, the later one (“theological”) were more polymath and creative in nature. Notwithstanding the fact that later glosses incorporated much of material from the previous works, for many cases they still were critical (for example, working with different copies of the *tafsīrs* commented).

Philology in all its dimensions (mostly grammar, morphology, rhetoric) was a main concern for all the glosses listed here, but the usage of it as a tool of understanding differed much. Philological practices mostly repeated statements of *Al-Kaššāf* as a leading authority of “*tafsīr* in accordance with the rules of language”, but in many cases some structures of the Qur’anic texts were the subjects of direct analysis. The point of interest varied from the grammatical forms of the nouns up to the syntax and of course literal features (metaphor, ellipsis etc.). Final goals of all these tools was however strictly theological one, which is to free *Al-Kaššāf* from all “Mu‘tazili” doctrines and even more, to make *Anwār at-Tanzīl* contextualized within the dominating Ḥanafī-Māturīdī tradition (dispatching from its original Šāfi‘ī-Aš‘arī). Even such a work as *Ġalālāyn* became a subject of Ḥanafī-Māturīdī intervention proposed by Mullā ‘Alī al-Qārī (d. 1606). In this meaning, genre of the glosses integrated different traditions into the mainstream “knowledge-making industry” of the Ottoman Empire. Even the most copious Ottoman encyclopedic works (like *Kulliyāt* by Abū al-Baqā’ al-Kafawī, d. 1682/1684) discussed basic vocabulary of the Qur’an) quoting not only *tafsīrs*, but also glosses as the most profound explanation; for example, issue of *mutašābihāt* was covered with a reference to the gloss by Šaraf ad-Dīn aṭ-Tayyibī (d. 1342) over *Al-Kaššāf*.<sup>38</sup>

For the selected case, model of interpretation has been based on a few points. First of all, it was an attempt to explain *muḥkam* and *mutašābih* within the framework of philology, stating the issues of polysemy and measures of understanding. Binary opposition of the “true believers” (firmly rooted in knowledge”) and “those who pursue *fitna*” was a tool to blame opponents, varying from Mu‘tazila in the earliest glosses and finishing with

<sup>38</sup> Abū al-Baqā’ al-Kafawī, *Kitāb al-Kulliyāt*, ed. by ‘Adnān Darīš and Muḥammad al-Miṣrī, Ar-Risalā, Dimašq 1998, p. 845.

imagined “anthropomorphists” (*muğassima*) in the later ones. For the authors of the glosses this verse was a praise of “responsible scholars” who uses *mutašābih* as the inspiration for independent research, *iğtihād*. Among different “layers” of meanings (the one stated by the Qur’an, the one stated by the *tafsīr* commented) authors of the glosses opted for the final solutions to the hermeneutical problems proposed, so in some way the *matn* (*tafsīr*) raised the questions and *hāšiya* provided the answers. If the earliest glosses could be regarded as didactical tools for the study of Az-Zamaḥṣarī and Al-Bayḍāwī in madrasa, the later one were all-encompassing source for the close reading of the Qur’an. In some way, it were really encyclopedic works covering all the “Qur’anic sciences” in their Post-Classical classification (the one made by Badr ad-Dīn az-Zarkašī in *Al-Burhān fī ‘Ulūm al-Qu’rān* or As-Suyūṭī in his *Al-Itqān fī ‘Ulūm al-Qu’ān*). Since just a few of hundreds glosses are edited and published until now, further research may provide new answers to the question of how these textual practices contributed to the intellectual history of Islamic world.