Abstracts

The Reception of Euro-American Scholarship on the Qur'an and *tafsir*: An Overview

Andrew Rippin
University of Victoria

A forthcoming issue of *Journal of Qur'anic Studies* will present a series of papers on the 'reception of Euro-American scholarship on the Qur'an and *tafsir*' in various countries of the Muslim-majority world. This paper will serve as an introduction to the topic by sketching some of the historical background and contemporary context.

The general impression regarding Muslim reception of 'Orientalist' attempts to explain the Qur'an and *tafsir* appears to be based around certain negative occurrences in the past: Jacques Waardenburgh (in *EI2* art. 'Mustashriḳun'), for example, cites 'A.J. Wensinck's official appointment (1933) by King Fuʾad to the Royal Academy of the Arabic Language in Cairo had to be revoked in 1934 under pressure from Muslim activists in Cairo, since his article on Ibrahim in the EI (1st edition) spoke of the Ḳurʾan as relating the 'legend' of Ibrahim, not his historical reality'. The Arabic translations of Goldziher and Nöldeke are often invoked as examples as well. Contemporary treatment of the subject, especially in the popular press, seems to wish to emphasise these 'difficulties' and speak of academic studies of the Qur'an as 'dangerous' to one's health, employing typical Islamophobic idiom.

In the globalised world of academia, however, things have shifted, although it is not always clear in which way. Perhaps it would be more accurate to say matters have become more polarised. Communications have improved, education has become more available, and study abroad is far from uncommon. The reception of Euro-American scholarship is both inevitable and varied in sentiment.

Contemporary Qur'anic Studies in Iran and its Relationship with Qur'anic Studies in the West

Morteza Karimi-Nia
Encyclopaedia Islamica Foundation

This paper, while offering an overview of the state of Qur'anic studies in Iran today, aims to examine the impact of studies by Western scholars on Iranian academic circles during the last three

decades and the reception of these. Although it may not realistically be possible to advance a full and accurate assessment of the contemporary situation, this paper attempts to present a clear picture of the past and present state of *tafsir* and Qur'anic studies in Iran.

Tafsir and Qur'anic studies in contemporary Iran have been influenced by three different traditions: the Shi'i exegetical tradition; the (mainly Sunni) classical heritage of Qur'an sciences and exegesis; and modern studies about Islam and the Qur'an, some of which are by Western scholars. As in most Islamic countries, the major bulk of academic activity in Iran in this field has traditionally been undertaken by the *'ulama*; however, since the beginning of the twentieth century and changes in the educational system, there has been an increasing diversity in the field as linguists, engineers, physicians and political activists joined the debate and advanced their views on the Qur'an and its exegesis.

During the 40's and the 50's, familiarity with Western Qur'anic studies in Iranian academic circles was mostly confined to the popular writings of such authors as Carlyle, Davenport and Cragg, but acquaintance with other Western works such as those of Goldziher increased over time, mostly on the basis of their Arabic translations. Following the Islamic Revolution, changes in the structure and approach of centres of religious learning and universities, in conjunction with advances in science and communications, have meant that institutions engaged in the study of human sciences have been confronted by new conditions. As a result, the traditional Shi'i centers of learning, which until 50 years ago devoted themselves exclusively to the study of Islamic law and jurisprudence (and refrained not only from dealing with the sciences of the modern world and but also denied official recognition to even such disciplines as *tafsir* and *kalam*), today teach foreign languages, and Qur'anic sciences and exegesis, including Western studies about the Qur'an to a certain extent, and recognise the importance of almost all human sciences of the West.

The Reception of Euro-American Scholarship on the Qur'an and *Tafsir* in Turkey

Mehmet Akif Koc
Ankara University

There is an explicit academic interaction between Turkish and Western scholarship in terms of Qur'anic studies, which began when Professor Muhammad Tayyib Okiç (1902–77) was appointed to establish a department of the major Islamic disciplines (*tafsir*, *hadith* and *fiqh*) for the divinity faculties of Turkish universities. Currently approximately 70 works on Qur'an and *tafsir* have been translated from various Western languages into Turkish. And, more than 50 works also were written to evaluate the literature relating to Euro-American Scholarship on the Qur'an and *tafsir*. In addition, Fazlurrahman (1919–88) and Arab scholars such as Muhammad Arkoun (1928–2010), Hasan Hanafi (b. 1935), Muhammad 'Abid al-Jabiri (1936–2010) and Nasr Hamid Abu Zayd (1943–2010) have been influential conduits through which Qur'anic studies have been carried from the West to Turkey. Of course, Turkish academicians and intellectuals were, and are still, being sent to the West to conduct PhD research on *tafsir*, and this has also played an important role.

It is difficult to say if Western literature on the Qur'an and *tafsir* has been assessed in Turkish academic circles as it should be. Western scholarship, especially in the last 60 years, has produced

some very valuable works on the exegesis of the Qur'an. However, many Turkish scholars have not always approached these with objective and scientific criteria. This has resulted in a lack of attention being paid to even the 'diversity' in Western scholarship on the Qur'an. In addition, many Turkish scholars have focused only on countering those studies that demonstrate Western scepticism on the Qur'an. Therefore, these scholars have either missed or not dealt attentively with much of the exegetical literatures that have been produced by Western scholarship.

The One God and the Final Day in Sura 19:
An Exploration into the Method of Semitic Rhetoric

A.H. Mathias Zahniser
Greenville College

It has long been the conviction of especially Western Qur'an scholarship that the longer Medinan suras of the Qur'an lack coherent compositional architecture. Assuming that they do, I have attempted in several publications to support that assumption, using both the work of Angelika Neuwirth and the inductive approach of discourse analysis. Recently Michel Cuypers, using the discipline of Semitic rhetoric, has supported my assumption, going beyond my work with impressive results. Semitic rhetoric seems to have uncovered a significant underlying set of cultural patterns and traditions prominent in Arabic and other Semitic discourse. It has been developed inductively, mostly in Biblical studies; but now Cuypers has shown its relevance for Qur'anic studies. I have been applying it to Sura 19 while learning the method under the guidance of Cuypers himself. I will show the results of my analysis, particularly in relation to the issue of the Day of Resurrection and Judgment as revealed in this Meccan sura of the middle period. I chose this sura because the middle period features an intensity of material on Resurrection and Judgment and because its compositional structure has already been laid out by Angelika Neuwirth, using another method. I will highlight what Semitic rhetoric contributes.

Frye's Qur'an

Todd Lawson
University of Toronto

Northrop Frye, one of the preeminent literary critics of the second half of the twentieth century, changed the way the world thought about literature, primarily with his *Anatomy of Criticism*, but also in many other books and essays. In his later years, he turned almost his full attention to scripture, primarily the Bible, on which he wrote two important books and a third smaller summary. In all three, the insights he developed gave a new understanding of the coherence and integrity of the Bible in which the workings of Biblical typological figuration, time and apocalypse combined to form a coherent whole. In these works he also made scattered and frequently very perceptive remarks about the Qur'an, its form and contents. Research into his private papers and archives at the University of Toronto, where he taught all his life, reveals that his relationship with Qur'an started long before his study of the Bible. This paper will discuss this relationship, his various critical

views on the Qur'an and offer a summary assessment for future research.

إيزوتسو نموذجا الدراسة الدلالية التطبيقية في القرآن مدخلا للتأويل:

صلاح الدين زرال
جامعة سطيف فرحات عباس

لقد صار الحديث عن الدراسات القرآنية في عصرنا الحالي همّ الكثير من الباحثين ؛ وذلك لما فيه من العجائب واللطائف اللغوية و البلاغية و الفلسفية وما إلى ذلك ، ولذلك عكف جبلّ منهم على البحث عن كنوزه التي لا تفنى للتعبير بموضوعية عن مقصديته ؛ على اعتبار أن الخطاب القرآني خطاب قصدي كما عبر عنه علماء العربية القدامى.

ولقد اكد اللسانيون الغربيون في بداية القرن العشرين أن المدخل اللغوي البنيوي ضروري لتفسير وتأويل الخطاب.

ولعل أهم المداخل اللغوية هو المدخل الدلالي الذي يركز اهتمامه على توزيع المفاهيم داخل الحقول التصورية أو كما عبر عنه الفلاسفة وفق رؤية العالم ، ذلك أنّ كلّ لغةٍ تتنظم في حقولٍ دلاليةٍ، وكلّ حقلٍ دلاليٍ لـه جانبان: حقل تصوّري *Conceptual field* وحقل معجمي *Lexical field*. ومدلول الكلمة مرتبطٌ بالكيفية التي تعمل بها مع كلماتٍ أخرى في نفس الحقل المعجمي لتغطية أو تمثيل الحقل الدّلالي. وتكون كلمتان في نفس الحقل الدّلالي إذا أدّى تحليلها إلى عناصر تصوّرية مشتركة، كما يبدو أنّه يجب التّفريق بين نوعين من المفاهيم: مفاهيم مركزية بالنّسبة للحقول الدّلالية، مفاهيم مثل اللّون ، ومفاهيم تزوّدنا بالبنية الدّاخلية لهذه الحقول، كالفضاء.

وتأسيسا على ما سبق رأيت أن أتناول الدراسة الدلالية التطبيقية مدخلا للتأويل في القرآن الكريم ؛ ذلك أنها تعين التأويلية في تنظيم المفاهيم داخل الحقول وتبين رؤى الثقافات المختلفة لعالمها ، ولقد استعنت بدراسة الباحث الياباني توشيهيكو إيزوتسو الموسومة بـ : الله والإنسان في القرآن (علم دلالة الرؤية القرآنية للعالم) وهي دراسة دلالية تأولية تطبيقية للقرآن الكريم توسم فيها صاحبها بالمنهجين الوصفي أحيانا لتفسير الظاهرة القرآنية في عصرها كما خصص المنهج التاريخي ليفسر به تطور النظام المفهومي بين ما قبل نزول القرآن ووقت نزوله.

وعلى هذا الأساس فإن الورقة مقسمة منهجيا إلى ما يلي :
- مدخل : أتحدث فيه عن واقع الدراسات الدلالية نظرياً (أي النظريات الدلالية الحديثة).
- المبحث الأول : يتناول الدراسة الدلالية التطبيقية ومدى انسجامها مع تحليل الخطاب ، وكيف تكون مخلا للتأويل.
- المبحث الثاني : سيكون مخصصا لمدونة إيزوتسو ومدى مساهمته في تحليل الخطاب القرآني دلاليا وتأويليا وذلك من خلال عرض المنهج الملائم لتفسير مفردات القرآن من حيث دلالتها.

The Corpus Coranicum Project: Problems and Possibilities

Oliver Leaman
University of Kentucky

There have been a number of approaches to the Qur'an which treat sceptically the Islamic tradition as a way of approaching an accurate understanding of the Book and its original context. The latest and very impressive research project is that overseen by Angelika Neuwirth and presented in the recent volume *Der Koran als Text der Spätantike: Ein europäischer Zugang*. The hermeneutics of central religious texts is often a controversial topic, and practitioners of a religion generally resent outsiders, or even insiders, telling them how they should understand those texts, where such explanations do not accord with the traditional understandings that have developed of the text. Is there a way, though, of approaching religious texts scientifically and objectively, despite the problems that exist in the understanding of those terms, and not appearing to be critical of the normal internal approaches to such texts? It is not a huge step from a critique of traditional approaches to an implied critique of what the tradition actually deals with, the Qur'an itself.

It might seem that this is a general issue that affects all religions, at least all religions that to a degree rest on historical facts. There has been in contemporary scholarship a general demythological strategy in the analysis of religion, and it would be interesting to examine whether there are any particular reasons why such an approach is likely to be more, or less, effective when dealing with Islam as compared with other religions. I propose to isolate certain principles which are frequently found in most of these scientific approaches to the Qur'an and examine how challenging they are to the central claims of Islam. The main focus will be the recent Corpus Coranicum project, which basically argues in favour of the creation of a *Wissenschaft des Islams* in line with previous attempts by theologians to distinguish sharply between the claims that religions make about themselves, and what they are entitled to say. At the same time, the project suggests that we do not have to accept the idea of a dichotomy between aligning with a tradition and accepting a scientific approach.

The Qur'an in Space: Text and Experience in the Contemporary Urban Landscape

Ann Shafer
American University in Cairo

In traditional Muslim cultures as well as in the new Muslim West, the Qur'an plays a role in the visual appearance and physical experience of architectural space. Qur'anic passages might appear as monumental embellishments of the *mihrab*s and domes of mosques, or as quiet, vernacular reminders in storefront prayer rooms. While the role of the Qur'an in shaping the space of prayer is an interesting topic on its own terms, this paper explores the Qur'an as it enters into and enlivens the everyday space of the urban landscape. Attempting to reconcile our experience of the Qur'an with academic discourses on the phenomenology of architecture and sacred space, this study analyses the urban culture of Cairo as an example of how layered visual and aural perceptions of the Qur'an can and do shape our ever changing experience. In turn, it reflects on how these observations might lead to a more conscious integration of the Qur'an in contemporary non-

traditional environments.

Islamic Visuality between the Qur'an and Poststructuralism: Reconceptualising the Boundaries from Religious to Cultural Interpretation

Wendy M.K. Shaw
Universität Bern

Discussions of Islamic art nearly always mention that while not mentioned in the Qur'an, figural representation is restricted in Islamic art due to later interpretations of the *hadith*. The premise to this statement is that art is rooted in figural representation, and that its absence must indicate a lack: it is a statement based on the normative values of the Western tradition. As such, the absence of any mention of representation in the Qur'an comes to indicate an absence of ideas that pertain to the arts. On the contrary, if we consider art as emerging not from the field of representation, but from the broader realm mediating materiality and perception, the Qur'an is replete with references to the senses and sight that have had a profound effect on how Islamic arts, including poetry, visual arts, and music produce meaning in relation to the sensory world – not through figural or mimetic representation so much as through the relationship between faith and form established in the Qur'an and woven through many Islamic artistic expressions. The received wisdom of Islamic art history is that art is a part of the secular world: not only does the religion restrict figural representation, but the Qur'an has no direct relevance for artistic production. However, one might wonder how the sensory expression of societies informed by a religion designated through a particular text would not reflect that text. This talk provides a preliminary exploration of how a post-structuralist approach to the Qur'an, emphasising ambiguity over clarity, might provide insight into religious meanings within artistic expression. Rather than conceiving of art as a cultural product to be organised through its history, it is considered as the confluence of visuality and materiality. Thus a reading of the Qur'an with respect to art seeks guidance not in relation to the parameters of the art object, but the parameters of the human relationship with its perception.

Rhyme's Reason: Performing and Hearing the Qur'an in English

Bruce Lawrence
Duke University

In this paper, I will look at the performative and auditory dimensions of Qur'an translation. Can meaning be cleaved from sound? I will argue that it cannot, and I will begin by elaborating a theory of Qur'an translation which requires that equal attention be paid to two soundscapes: (1) the soundscape of the primary language, culture and audience (in this case, seventh century Arabic), and then (2) the soundscape of the target language, culture and audience (in this case, twenty-first century English). I hope to demonstrate that one cannot reproduce essential features – at once auditory and perfomative – that are integral to the original text without reference to *saj'*, the Qur'an's cadenced rhyming prose. Mindful of longstanding critiques directed at every effort to

translate the 'meaning' of the Qur'an, I will evaluate the professional efforts of six major translators – Sale, Arberry and Jones (non-Muslims) and Yusuf Ali, Pickthall and Shawkat Toorawa (Muslims) – in light of their attention to cadenced rhyming prose. In order to sharpen the comparison between these translators, and also to evaluate their competing arguments re *saj'*, I will restrict myself to two suras: *Surat Maryam* and *Surat al-Duha*. I will also rely on my own earlier published work (Lawrence 2005, 2007) and that of Toorawa (Toorawa 2005–6, 2011), with further reference to Muller 1969, Hasnawi 2006, Sells 1993, 2000, and Stewart 2010.

Qur'anic Manuscripts From Late Muslim Spain (XVIth–XVIIth Centuries)

Nuria Martínez-de-Castilla
Universidad Complutense, Madrid

In spite of a widespread ignorance of Arabic among the Moriscos (the last Muslims of the Iberian peninsula), and the prohibition of the possession of books in Arabic script, the Moriscos kept transcribing and transmitting the Qur'an. To this day, about 150 such copies have been found.

These copies exhibit various peculiarities related either to their physical presentation, or to their cultural meaning. In the majority of the cases, the Qur'anic text is found along with other religious or didactical tracts within miscellanies or factitious volumes. In other cases, the manuscripts contain only Qur'anic material, followed by an amulet or a prayer. In 25% of the cases analysed, there is translation, either interlinear or paragraph by paragraph, in Spanish language written in Arabic script (aljamia). The translation is sometimes a word for word rendering, sometimes it includes explanations, with *tafsir* elements. In the remaining 75% of the cases, there is only the Arabic text of the Qur'an. However, all these copies, with a single exception, share a common feature: they are organised selections of suras of the Qur'an, not always complete ones, sometimes transcribed in a continuous manner (i.e. without any indication when passing from one sura or verse to another). These kind of Qur'anic copies can help us in understanding the creed of the Morisco communities of sixteenth and seventeenth-century Spain from a socio-cultural point of view.

Camb. MS Or. Ii.6.45: The Oldest Surviving Commentary on the Qur'an in Southeast Asia

Peter G. Riddell
Melbourne School of Theology

In 1600 the Islamic Sultanate of Aceh, already a significant regional power in Southeast Asia, entered its golden age under Sultan Iskandar Muda (r. 1607–36). Yet few documentary records remain from early seventeenth-century Aceh. Given the Sultanate's significance to regional history, it is essential that surviving records from that early period be subjected to dedicated research.

One manuscript held in Cambridge University Library offers a rare window into that period of

Acehnese history, and raises a myriad of questions. Cambridge MS OR. Ii.6.45 contains the earliest substantial portion of exegesis on the Qur'an in the Malay language, presenting extended commentary upon Sura 18 (*al-Kahf*). It can be dated to around 1600 AD, and was most likely collected by one of the earliest Dutch maritime expeditions to Aceh.

Apart from its historical significance as an early document, Camb. MS Or. Ii.6.45 is important for other reasons. It provides information on the theological concerns of Malays at a crucial period of Islamisation of the Malay world. Furthermore, it includes material considered by some as *Isra'iliyyat*, which had become controversial in centres of learning in the Arab world at the time of the production of the MS. This raises questions about convergence and divergence between theological directions in Arabia and the Malay world at the time.

This paper will consider the history of MS Ii.6.45 within its Acehnese context, its sources and theological orientation. It summarises a major project I am undertaking in preparing a detailed study of this manuscript for publication.

The Symbolic Repertoire of the Qur'anic Board in West Africa and the Maghreb

Anastasia Grib
The State Hermitage Museum, St Petersburg

The Qur'anic board is a central object in the material culture of the Qur'an in the local centers of West Africa and the Maghreb. The board features ornaments and calligraphy: a symbolic language which one needs to learn and interpret. This paper provides a transcription of the symbolic code of the Qur'anic board based on the study of 124 samples from the following collections: Brooklyn Museum, Sam Fogg, Musee du quai Branly, and Nasser D. Khalili. The boards are dated to the end of the nineteenth and twentieth centuries and represent several regions: Algeria, Morocco, Northern Nigeria, Mauritania, Sudan, Ethiopia, Somalia and Guinea; 16 boards are analysed in detail. A functional typology of the boards is discussed, i.e., festive, training, magical, and healing boards; to this a classification is added that proceeds from the consideration of material, form, ornamentation and script. Four different types of ornamentation are identified: architectural, geometric (cosmic symbols), carpet and figurative. Some ornamental motives can be described as an *ex libris* connecting the board to an important local centre or shrine; among such motives are those with pre-Islamic origin. The two boards which I localise to the Ceremony Mountains in Northern Nigeria feature anthropomorphic and zoomorphic images, their iconography traces back to Neolithic rock graffiti. Playing a crucial role in initiation, the Qur'anic board is a symbol of masculinity, as in the example of the *mba* wedding ceremony and *saukar fari* (graduation from the Qur'anic school) in the Hausa region.

The Non-linearity of the Qur'an in Sufi Commentaries from Classical to Ottoman Times

Jamal Elias
University of Pennsylvania

This paper analyses Sufi approaches to *tafsir* through a close examination of a variety of types of commentary on the Qur'an, most importantly traditionally framed commentaries on the entire text of the Qur'an, stand-alone works that comment on an individual chapter or a collection of chapters, and conscious occasions of Qur'an commentary that appear in texts of types that are not normally regarded as *tafsir* works. The historical range of materials spans the writings of so-called 'classical' commentators such as al-Sulami (d. 1021), major figures of the Persianate and Arab cultural spheres of the Islamic Middle Period, down to the influential Ottoman Sufi scholar Isma'il Hakki Bursevi (d. 1725). By analysing the disparity in the structure and content of these works as well as the specific ways in which they treat the Qur'an, I argue that many Sufi commentators on the Qur'anic text do not participate in the literary activity of writing *tafsir*, where the term *tafsir* is understood as referring to a genre of writing. Rather, Sufi writers treat the Qur'an as a 'colony text' (as distinct from a 'mainstream' text), in the sense that, for them, the Qur'an does not impart its meaning (or its 'best' meaning) through a sequential or linear progression through the entirety of the scripture. On the contrary, the Qur'an is equally meaningful regardless of the order in which its component verses (and even subsections of verses) appear. As such, the acts of Qur'anic commentary in which many Sufi writers engage not only fall outside the genre definition of *tafsir* as it has normally been understood by scholars of the Qur'an. Instead, in seeing components of the Qur'an as eternally valid independent of context, such forms of Sufi commentary are more in keeping with widespread pious understandings of the nature of the Qur'an, to which one can juxtapose traditional *tafsir* writing as a primarily scholastic enterprise. By focusing on Sufi commentaries on the Qur'an in this way, I also hope to raise questions concerning other genres of *tafsir* as well as the role memorisation of scripture plays in the practice and teaching of commentaries.

Women's Testimony and the Re-interpretability of the Qur'an

Karen Bauer
The Institute of Ismaili Studies

Q. 2:282 seems, at first glance, to be an unequivocal statement that two women should testify in the place of one man, and therefore that women's testimony is not equal to men's. This paper explores the discourse on women's testimony in classical and modern commentaries, and draws on interviews conducted in Iran and in Syria, and the texts of modern Egyptian thinkers, to speak about the modern discourse on whether women's testimony equals men's. The central question for modern interpreters is whether this verse had to do with the social circumstances at the time of the advent of the Qur'an, or whether it has to do with something intrinsic to women's nature that makes them unable to testify in certain circumstances. Those interpreters who take the latter stance maintain that women's testimony is unequal to men's in certain circumstances, but those advocating the former stance, that the verse was revealed due to the social circumstances at the time of the Qur'an's advent, are open to reinterpreting the verse in light of today's societal norms. This paper touches on two of the central questions for today's interpreters: the extent to which culture dictates

interpretation, and how one determines the limits of reinterpretation.

The Expendable Qur'an in Modern Shi'i Messianism
Robert Gleave
University of Exeter

That the available Qur'anic text is not the 'true' Qur'anic text is a recurrent notion in Shi'i thought. This extends beyond the well-known notions of *qira'at* and the missing and Satanic verses, reaching to whole *sura*s and explicit references to the designation of 'Ali. For some Shi'i movements, the Qur'an, in its entirety, is redundant as a source of guidance, either on account of its corruption, or because of its incomprehensibility. There is, then, a trend within the Shi'i tradition which views the Qur'an as, religiously speaking, expendable. The popularity of the view that the Qur'an, for religious knowledge, is expendable has had mixed fortunes in Shi'i history, but the view has invariably been associated with the so-called 'extremist' (*ghali*) and 'messianic' (*mahdawi*) intellectual trends. Since the invasion of Iraq in 2003, there have been outbreaks, often violent, of messianism amongst the Iraqi Shi'a, and amongst the views proposed by the ideologues of these movements are a range of 'heterodox' views concerning the status of the Qur'anic text. In this paper I delineate these various opinions, relate them to the so-called Shi'i mainstream, and examine why Shi'i belief in the expendability of the Qur'anic text is so often associated with messianic violence. One possibility, which I explore in the paper, is that the audacity required to dismiss the Qur'anic text reveals a certain fetish for chaos amongst messianic movements through which revelation (in this case the Qur'an, real or imagined) is re-employed as a legitimising element in the movements' justifications for violence.

Al-Maturidi (d. 333/944) and the History of Early *Tafsir*
Walid Saleh
University of Toronto

The recent publication of the Qur'an commentary of al-Maturidi, *Ta'wilat ahl al-sunna* has made available a major early Qur'an commentary for study and analysis. The author stems from the same historical period as al-Tabari (d. 310/923) and *Ta'wilat ahl al-sunna* is as voluminous as that of al-Tabari's *Jami' al-bayan*. The introduction of *Ta'wilat* is unfortunately hardly illuminating, consisting of barely a few paragraphs – compared to the sprawling introduction to al-Tabari it hardly allows for an insight into the theoretical conceptions of its author. However, the situation is not as hopeless as might first appear. For reasons that are unexplained, the most detailed theoretical musings on the hermeneutic principles governing al-Maturidi are to be found in his interpretation for *Surat al-Mulk* (Q. 67). This paper will analyse these statements in light of the actual practice of al-Maturidi.

This is a straightforward affair. The more intriguing issue is historical: what does the existence of this early Sunni Qur'an commentary which is contemporaneous with al-Tabari – with its radically different approach to that of al-Tabari – mean for our understanding of the history of early *tafsir*.

More importantly, can a close reading of the methodology of al-Maturidi inform our understanding of what al-Tabari was attempting to do in his own commentary. My contention is that a close analysis of the material points to the radical nature of al-Tabari, and demonstrates that he was attempting to haul Sunni hermeneutics onto a different path than was usual. In this light, al-Tabari is not the conservative that he appears to be, if conservatism is to be understood as non-innovation, but rather a great innovator in the field of *tafsir* in a manner that is totally different from our usual understanding of his role.

The Exegetes of Nishapur: A Preliminary Survey
of Previously Unexamined Qur'anic Works

Martin Nguyen
Fairfield University

This paper surveys several previously unstudied works on the Qur'an, each of which has been ascribed to an important fifth/eleventh century member of the Shafi'i elite of Nishapur. Previous studies have documented the importance of the city in the formation of the classical *tafsir* tradition. Scholarly attention has been drawn to the Sufi *tafasir* of al-Sulami (d. 412/1021) and al-Qushayri (d. 465/1072) and the encyclopaedic commentaries of al-Tha'labi (d. 427/1035) and his student al-Wahidi (d. 468/1076). Nevertheless, other important Nishapuri personalities demonstrating a wide range of interests have yet to receive proper coverage. By examining the bio-bibliographical records and the surviving manuscript evidence, I will introduce these overlooked Nishapuri scholars of the Qur'an and outline the nature of the exegetical works in question in order to nuance and expand our appreciation of how the period and region shaped the development of Sunni *tafsir* more broadly. The first work is a Qur'an commentary composed by the important Ash'ari theologian Ibn Furak (d. 406/1015), the second is another commentary attributed to his colleague Abu Muhammad al-Juwayni (d. 438/1047), the father of Imam al-Haramayn al-Juwayni (d. 478/1085), and the final text is an *'ulum al-Qur'an* treatise ascribed to Abu al-Qasim Ibn Habib (d. 406/1016) the famed Qur'an scholar who marks the beginning of the Tha'labi-Wahidi lineage of exegetical development.

Qur'an Hermeneutics in the Islamic 19th Century:
Reform, Reformation, Modernity

Johanna Pink
Freie Universität

It is often assumed that modernisation in the exegesis of the Qur'an started in the late nineteenth century AD, a period in which, after centuries of near stagnation, traditional methods and contents were challenged by new ways of thinking and attempts to redefine the place of the Islamic cultural heritage vis-à-vis a Western counterpart. The intense debate around the role of the Islamic eighteenth (and, in fact, early nineteenth) century, however, has up to now not been taken into account with respect to the study of *tafsir*. This debate has highlighted the sustained presence of indigenous reform attempts in the Muslim world before the influence of Western modernity that

were characterised by a critical attitude towards much of the intellectual heritage of Islam, especially the schools of law, and by the declared intention to go back to the sources of Islam.

In this context, the long-neglected study of Qur'anic exegesis in the first half of the nineteenth century can reveal much about the prevalence of reformist hermeneutics in this period and about the degree to which these have influenced later modernists. Specifically, the question of an Islamic *sola scriptura* approach and its influence on different brands of the Salafiyya will be of interest.

In order to shed light on these issues, this paper proposes to examine two important exegetes of the first half of the nineteenth century whose *tafasir* have rarely been the object of serious study, namely al-Shawkani (1760–1835) and al-Alusi (1802–54). It will analyse their hermeneutics and situate their exegesis in the larger framework of Islamic reform, both against the background of eighteenth-century Sunni reform movements and as potential forerunners of modernism in late nineteenth-century Qur'anic exegesis.

What Is Mu'tazila *Tafsir*?
Toward a Definition of a sub-Genre in Qur'anic Exegesis

Suleiman A. Mourad
Smith College

The Mu'tazila tradition of Qur'anic exegesis has not yet received proper scholarly attention, and, except for a few recent studies, our knowledge of the Mu'tazila *tafsir* tradition is still rudimentary. This paper will focus on two major *tafasir* from the late Mu'tazila period: *al-Tahdhib fi tafsir al-Qur'an* by al-Hakim al-Jishumi (d. 494/1101) and *Tafsir al-Kashshaf* by al-Zamakhshari (d. 538/1144). Both works are depositories of earlier Mu'tazila *tafsir* and, equally important, have had

tremendous impact on influential *tafasir* by Shi'i and Sunni scholars; such as *Majmaʿ al-bayan* by al-Tabrisi (d. 548/1154) and *Mafatih al-ghayb* by al-Razi (d. 606/1210). This paper will investigate three issues. First, it analyses the approach, methodology, exegetical and hermeneutic principles employed by al-Jishumi and al-Zamakhshari. Second, it identifies the criteria that allow us to determine whether or not a *tafsir* is a Mu'tazili *tafsir* and if *kalam*/theology is the key factor, which will further help us assess the challenges later Sunni and Shi'i scholars faced when they incorporated Mu'tazila exegetical glosses into their own works. And third, it investigates the issue of al-Zamakhshari's *Kashshaf* dependance, as generally believed, on al-Jishumi's *Tahdhib* in an effort to establish if the Mu'tazila *tafsir* tradition is uniform or if there are distinct trends within it.

The Qur'an as *Sign-enthymeme*: Legal-political Implications

Ulrika Mårtensson
The Norwegian University of Science and Technology

This paper draws on a publication (Mårtensson 2008) as well as recent explorations of al-Tabari's

ta'rikh and *ta'wil*. Aristotle's rhetorical concept *sign-enthymeme* will be employed heuristically to explore the Qur'anic concept *al-hujja al-baligha*, 'the convincing demonstration' (Q. 6:139). Aristotle's rhetoric was developed out of the conviction that public speakers should convince the audience through rational argumentation rather than playing on emotions, and that the demonstration must be adapted to the audience's knowledge. Sign-enthymeme is a way of demonstrating the truth of the argument by using 'signs' rather than abstract propositions when the audience are the general public rather than philosophers. Signs are references to events which are known to the audience and which serve to convince them of the truth of the speaker's argument. The main argument here is that the Qur'an's *form* is that of a sign-enthymeme seeking to demonstrate the necessity for legal justice of maintaining the divine covenant (*meaning-content*). In support of this interpretation al-Tabari's concept of divine revelation and prophecy will be used, as expressed in his *ta'rikh* and *ta'wil*. Lastly it will be explored how reference to Aristotle's rhetoric can further our understanding of the Qur'an's legal-political significance. If read as sign-enthymeme is becomes clear that the Qur'an insists on 'rule of law'; on addressing the public on terms they can understand; and on the public's agreement in order for its message to become effective. In Habermasian terms these are essential traits of liberal democracy and rational public discourse.

Adam and the Fall Between History and *Tafsir*: An Initial Exploration into al-Tabari's Methodological Strategies

Marianna Klar
SOAS, University of London

This paper seeks to establish how thoughts of genre and projected audience influenced the material chosen for citation and elucidation in al-Tabari's (d. 310/923) *Tafsir* and historiographical works. Although there is a certain amount of overlap between the two sources, al-Tabari includes significantly more material in the version of the Adam and Eve story provided in his Commentary than he does in his History; the vast majority of the anecdotes he apparently had at his disposal are omitted from the History, while the History in turn includes among its pages an amount of unique material that relates, directly or indirectly, to the Fall. This paper seeks to argue that the differences we perceive between the two sources are deliberate ones, in which material was consciously edited in order to suit its new environment in the History.

Mu'tazilism in a 20th Century Zaydi Qur'an Commentary: 'Ali b. Muhammad al-'Ajri's *Miftah al-sa'ada*

Gregor Schwarb
Freie Universität Berlin

The Zaydis in Yemen are the only current within Islam that fostered the continuous transmission and study of Mu'tazili *kalam* up to the present time. Since the bulk of previous scholarship assessing the legacy of Mu'tazili *kalam* among the Zaydis has focused on the pre-modern period, its

preservation and transformation in Zaydi compositions of modern and contemporary times, which as a rule have been associated with a gradual decline of Zaydi-Shiʻi Islam, has attracted far less attention and remains largely unexplored. This paper aims to examine the presence and quality of Muʻtazili *kalam* in a major Zaydi composition of the 20th century, namely the *K. Miftah al-saʻada* by ʻAli b. Muhammad al-ʻAjri (1320/1902–1407/1987). This commentary on the *Istiʻadha* and *Q.* 1:1–2:106 was completed in May 1952, incidentally only two months after the renowned delegation of Egyptian scholars had left Yemen with images of a few hundred 'old manuscripts' – a mission that stimulated a noticeable surge in editions of and studies on Muʻtazili texts – and only ten years before the Republican revolution of 1962 dismantled the Zaydi-Shiʻi imamate and completely changed the face of traditional Zaydi scholarship, leaving the system of thought on which it was based in suspension.

Natural Theology and the Qur'an

Robert Morrison
Bowdoin College

While the Qur'an's doctrine of *naskh* means that the particulars of a revealed text were significant, the Qur'an's discussion of humans' *fitra* and *hanif*s, along with its evocation of the wonders of creation as evidence of God's existence and power, meant that at least some of the Qur'an's message might not have to depend on a specific revealed text. Modern Muslims, such as Tariq Ramadan, have spoken of the universe being a revealed book like the Qur'an.

The import of the Qur'an's references to order in nature has long been a question probed by commentators. This presentation will examine the responses of the *mufassir* and *mutakallim* al-Baydawi (c. 1300). I have chosen to focus on al-Baydawi because al-Baydawi wrote a *tafsir* informed by *kalam* at a time when *kalam* texts, including al-Baydawi's, began to incorporate the approach and findings of *falsafa* and natural science. This presentation examines comments of al-Baydawi in which he navigated the tension between acknowledging Ashʻari *kalam*'s arguments that scientists' conclusions were contingent and the Qur'an's insinuations that the human intellect could detect a meaningful order in nature.

Al-Baydawi's comments on Q. 21:32 held that one could learn more about these signs (*ayat*) in physics and astronomy. But if astronomy could provide independently certain truth about God, might astronomy be on a par with *kalam*? Al-Baydawi rebutted such a possibility in his comments on Q. 2:29 in which he noted that observational astronomers disagreed about the number of orbs.

Then, in his interpretation of Q. 2:164, al-Baydawi referred to the technical terminology of astronomy in order to argue that while there was order in nature, astronomy could not, on its own, provide an explanation for the existing order, as opposed to another possible order. Astronomy was necessary in order to appreciate and explain its own limitations, limitations that necessitated a recourse to God's omnipotence as an explanation.

Forgetting Rhyme: Ibn al-Athir's Criticism of al-Zamakhshari

Devin Stewart
Emory University

Diya' al-Din Ibn al-Athir (d. 637/1239) is one of a handful of scholars of the Qur'an, along with Abu Hilal al-'Askari (d. 395/1005), Ibn al-Sa'igh al-Hanafi (d. 776/1375), and others, who saw the influence of rhyme as quite pervasive. In his view, recognition of the exigencies of end-rhyme could explain many unusual constructions in the text that puzzled other commentators or led them to propose quite different alternative explanations. A particular problem of interpretation where a clear conflict exists between those who insist that rhyme has a crucial effect and those who ignore the influence of rhyme in favour of other rhetorical and stylistic considerations is the figure of *hysteron proteron* or *taqdim wa-ta'khir*. In his rhetorical manual *al-Mathal al-sa'ir*, Ibn al-Athir takes al-Zamakhshari (d. 538/1144) to task for what he sees as an egregious error: al-Zamakhshari claims that *hysteron proteron* regularly serves to convey *ikhtisas* or 'exclusivity'. In Ibn al-Athir's view, *hysteron proteron* instead often occurs in order to facilitate end-rhyme, a feature of the text that al-Zamakhshari seems to ignore completely. The best-known example of this is *iyyaka na'budu wa-iyyaka nasta'in*: for al-Zamakhshari and many other commentators, the inverted word order – 'You we worship …' – means 'We worship you *exclusively or in particular*', while in Ibn al-Athir's view the verse means simply 'We worship you' and the unusual word order is caused by the need to maintain an end-rhyme of –*in*, which would be ruined in the ordinary word order *na'buduka wa-nasta'inuk*. This study examines Ibn al-Athir's reasoning and the examples he cites in detail, drawing on earlier and later commentaries, in order to assess the validity of his interpretations and his criticism of al-Zamakhshari on this point.

Unveiling the Qur'an: The Contribution of al-Suyuti to *Tafsir al-Jalalayn*

Anthony Johns
Australian National University

Tafsir al-Jalalayn is one of the most popular *tafasir* in the Muslim world, and is a basic text in *madrasa* curricula from Morocco to the Moros. Many scholars regard it as a lightweight single volume work. According to the literature it was begun by Jalal al-Din al-Mahalli (d. 1459), and completed by Jalal al-Din al-Suyuti (1445–1505). 'Completed' however understates the input of al-Suyuti. He contributed to it the *tafsir* of Suras 2–17 almost 15 *juz'*, and thus half the Qur'an.

This paper is based on his exegesis of a pericope of *al-Baqara*, vv. 40–152, a pericope that opens with God's reproach to the Jews for their ingratitude to Him and closes with an injunction to all humankind to think on Him, and be thankful. It has a significant role in identifying Islam as the primal religion revealed to a new prophet, reifying the covenant God had made with the Jews, and ending the nexus between religion and ethnicity. Drawing on the repertory of well-established exegetic techniques, al-Suyuti bears the reader fluently through the pericope, treating it as a frame within which he highlights the continuities and underlying themes that contour its coherence, and marks its closure with a *hadith qudsi*. He gives a sense of reality and lived experience to the debates between the Prophet, and the Jews confronting him in the pre-Badr period at Medina, without losing sight of historical distance between events in the remote past – that of Moses and Abraham, those taking place in the Prophet's present, as he faced his opponents in Medina, and the circumstances of

his own time.

The paper suggests that in al-Suyuti's contribution at least – without prejudice to al-Mahalli – the work is more than a brief introduction to the meaning of the Qur'an. It is the fruit of a skilful distillation of vast learning in *'ulum al-Qur'an* and the other core Islamic sciences, designed to bring readers of the *mushaf* to share his experience of the wonders of a 'text transformed into discourse'. The succinctness of the work is testimony to a consummate literary skill.

The Structure of *Surat al-Baqara* According to Amin Ahsan Islahi

Mustansir Mir
Youngstown State University

Amin Ahsan (d. 1997), following the exegetical principles enunciated by his teacher Hamid ad-Din al-Farahi (d. 1930), seeks to discover and establish *nazm* ('coherence') in the Qur'anic suras. Central to the Farahi-Islahi *nazm* theory is the idea of the *'amud* – the central theme or axis – of a sura: every sura revolves around its particular *'amud*, and a sura's verses, taken together, represent a systematic unfolding of that *'amud*. The *'amud* of the second and longest Qur'anic sura, *al-Baqara*, is affirmation of the prophecy of Muhammad and election of a new religious community – the Islamic community – which, furnished with a new Shari'a, will be tasked with presenting scripture-based guidance to humankind. It is in light of this understanding that Islahi explains the sura's critique of the historical practice of the Jewish religious community, the sura's reference to Abraham's building of the Ka'ba in Mecca, and the sura's description of major elements of the Islamic Shari'a. I will present Islahi's division of sura's verses into pericopes and summarise his explanation of the interconnection of the periscopes, showing how, on Islahi's analysis, it is seen to have organic unity, and how this organic unity, in turn, alters, exegetically, the significance of a number of statements made and incidents narrated in the sura.

القراءة الصوفية للنص القرآني (الغزالي نموذجا)

وليد بن محنوس بن أحمد الزهراني
جامعة الباحة

فإن التفسير الصوفي خطوة من خطوات فهم القرآن الكريم، له طرقه، وأساليبه، ووسائله، وله ضوابطه، وإن الوقوف على جهود العلماء المُبرزين في علوم الشريعة عمومًا، وعلم التفسير على وجه الخصوص؛ إذ إن دراستهم، وتحريرهم، وإشاراتهم تكشف عن الكثير من أسرار هذا العلم الوسيعة أعماقه، البعيدة أطرافه.

ومن هؤلاء العلماء الإمام أبي حامد، محمد بن محمد الغزالي، المتوفى سنة (505ه) رحمه الله، فهو صاحب إشاراتٍ عزيزة، وتلميحات مفيدة، فأحببت أن ألج فيما نسجه من إشاراتٍ لأسرار الكتاب

العزيز، وحرَّره فأبدع حتى يُظن أن لا مزيد! فكان هذا البحث غيضٌ من بحر فيوضه، وكلمات من وفير عروضه.

أهمية البحث: إبراز منهج من مناهج تفسير القرآن، وطريقة قراءاتهم للنص القرآني متمثل بإبراز جهود الغزالي في فهم وتدبر القرآن على المنهج العرفاني.
خطة البحث: قُسِّم البحث على مقدمة، وثلاثة مباحث، وخاتمة.
المقدمة: تشتمل على الماحة لعلو كعب الإمام الغزالي في فهم القرآن
المبحث الأول: الأعمال القلبية، وأثرها في فهم القرآن
المبحث الثاني: التفسير الظاهر وأهميته في فهم القرآن، وفيه مبحثان:
المبحث الثالث: الاستنباط وفهم دلالات القرآن، وفيه أربعة مباحث:
المطلب الأول: جواز الاستنباط، وإعمال العقل في فهم القرآن
المطلب الثاني: أثر معرفة فضائل السور في فهم القرآن
المطلب الثالث: مقاصد القرآن وأثرها في فهم معانيه.
المطلب الرابع: رموز القرآن وإشاراته، وطُرُق تحصيل فهمها.
ثم خاتمة: في عرض أهم نتائج البحث.

Reiteration and Representation: *Asbab al-nuzul* and the Discursive Formation of the Qur'anic Narrative

Ahmed Ragab
Harvard University

Asbab al-nuzul literature has been read in conjunction with exegeses as a source of Haggadic and Halakhic accounts, which serve to clarify and to deepen the Qur'anic and the exegetical narrative. Utilising tools of intellectual history, this paper proposes to read the *asbab* literature in their original anecdotal nature through re-linking them with their genealogical extensions in *sira*. In this view, *asbab* serves as a source of anecdotal historiography of the revelatory process situating the Qur'anic narrative within the hagiographies of *sira* and re-emphasising the *nuzul* and *tanazzul* processes as distinct and complementary. In this reading, the multiplicity of reports attached to any given verse could imply a process of reiteration/re-revelation of these verses in various situations, which leads to a construction of a multilayered entendre and forms a discursive space surrounding each verse. In these discursive spaces, additional meanings are created with additional anecdotal evidence, different legal, Haggadic, Halakhic or hagiographic symbols or categories are distinguished and/or amalgamated through the layered nature of reiteration, and other symbols and/or meanings are obliterated.

This reading of the *asbab* literature allows for exploring three important intellectual phenomena of medieval Islamic scripture: (1) the nature of the revelatory process as a reiterative repetitive construction rather than linear single layered series of emanations; (2) the different connotative layers of exegesis, which are built on the layered nature of *asbab*; (3) and, finally, a better understanding of the complex nature of Qur'anic quotations and of the integration of Qur'anic text within 'secular' writing (as in *adab* or *diwan* writings) recalling the narrativistic symbolism and the

discursive identity of texts through their connotative associations as built in their anecdotal identity.

In brief, this paper proposes a reading of *asbab* multiple anecdotes as incidents of multiple revelations or reiterations of the verse, that work complementarily to construct a discursive space around the verse giving it different meanings and identities. This reading will be rooted in a case study of the verses on *Bani Isra'il* and how the dynamics of reiteration allowed for the creation of a unified other with Christians and with the Meccan polytheists at times and for the appropriation of the Exodus story by the early Muslim community in the making of a trans-historical believer self.

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الهيرمنوطيقا وعبور الفجوة التاريخية في فهم النص القرآنـــي
أحمد بوعود
الأكاديمية الجهوية للتربية والتكوين تطوان

إذا كانت وظيفة قارئ القرآن اليوم هي البحث في معاني السابقين وتفسيراتهم وأفهامهم ومدى صلاحيتها اليوم، والبحث عن معان جديدة، تتجاوز أفهام السابقين، تحقق للنص خلوده من غير مساس بقدسيته، فما هي مقتضيات ذلك ؟

وللإجابة عن هذا الإشكال سيتطرق البحث إلى:
1 - شلايرماخر الذي جعل الهيرمينوطيقا في تأويل لغوي قواعدي جنبا إلى جنب مع تأويل نفسي، وقال بضرورة فهم النص في ضوء معناه العام وسياقه الكلي، أو فهم الجزئي في ضوء الكلي.
2 - وعرض تصور دلتاي حول الفهم باعتباره تجربة.
3 - والوصول إلى جادمير الذي يرى أن الأحكام المسبقة شرط للفهم، وأن كل تفسير للنص هو تفسير صحيح، أو كل قراءة له تعتبر صحيحة.
4 - ثم ما الذي يمكن استنتاجه من هيرمينوطيقا الارتياب، التي تسعى إلى تحطيم الأسطورة والأصنام وتجاوز كل فهم ساذج بغية الوصول إلى المعنى الحقيقي للعقيدة ؟

كل هذا مع بيان، كل نقطة، وكيفية الاستفادة منها في عبور الفجوة التاريخية في فهم النص القرآني.

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Accuracy and Correctness in the Consonantal Qur'an:
Aspects of Oral and Written Renditions in the Context of *lahn* in Medieval Discourse

Amidu Sanni
Lagos State University

At the instance of 'Uthman the third caliph, an official, documentary text of the Qur'an was commissioned with the ultimate aim of putting an end to variations in the oral and written forms of

the Book among the faithful. But on the submission of this official version, *textus receptus*, 'Uthman is reported to have said: '*inna fi'l-mushaf lahn fa-satuqimuhu'l-'Arab bi-alsinatiha*' ('There is indeed *lahn* in the scripture, but the Arabs will put this in order through their idiolects (lit. tongues)'). The only occurrence of the word *lahn* in the Qur'an is in Q. 47:30. Its exact meaning has been the subject of some serious debate in medieval exegetical and philological scholarship, and some aspects of this have been dealt with in some of my recent publications. The consignment of the Qur'an into writing, which craft, according to Abdel Haleem (1994), was by no means perfect at the time of 'Uthman, and the contentious issue of appropriateness and correctness in the various reading patterns, became fundamental issues. The multiplicity of the Arabic dialects and the near absence of a definitive orthographical schema highlighted the problematic of correctness of reading and orthographical traditions. This led to the characterisation of particular models as 'error' or 'fault'. But the comment by 'Uthman related above provoked an enduring discussion in the hermeneutical and interpretive traditions as to the exact referent of the term *lahn* in regard to the holy Text. The involvement of 'Uthman and 'A'isha, the wife of the Prophet Muhammad, in the controversy, provided materials for scholars in their discourse on the language, form, and structure of the Qur'an. It also highlighted the gap between the oral and the written forms of the Book, which gap was of theological, philological, and hermeneutical value. The issue has attracted some passing attention in studies by some Western scholars, notably Gilliot and Larcher, Burton, Bellamy and Leehmuis, but none of these can be said to have examined in any analytical fashion the text and context of the 'Uthmanic pronouncement in the framework of the linguistic and hermeneutical paradigm of the language of the Qur'an and its associated literature. Al-Baqillani (d. 403/1013) dedicates a whole work, namely, *al-Intisar li'l-Qur'an*, to issues such as this, and I also intend to examine his discussion on the subject among other medieval sources.

Tempting God With A Hapax
Orhan Elmaz
University of Vienna

The proposed paper will enquire into the possibility of an intratextual relationship between two words in the Qur'an, *qitt* and *hitta*. *Qitt*, a hapax legomenon which is the only word of its root, occurs only once in the ending of a passage of comfort to the Prophet, and more specifically in Q. 38:16 (*They say, 'Our Lord! Advance us our share of punishment* (*qittana*) *before the Day of Reckoning!*). *Hitta*, however, occurs twice, in Q. 2:58f. and Q. 7:161f., in both of which forgiveness is offered to wrong-doers but made dependent on saying '*hitta*' the etymology of which has been repeatedly stated to be unclear. As words on C_1itt- seem to be not of genuine Arabic origin, we will try to name cognates of these Arabic terms first. Subsequently, we will deal with the main question, namely whether the mentioned substitution in Q. 2:59 and Q. 7:162 (*But the wrongdoers substituted a different word from the one they had been given*) is the one of *qitt* for *hitta*. This would allow the interpretation of the supplication in Q. 38:16 as a cynic invocation for retaliation based on a substitution. In fact, this intrinsic substitution alludes to a narrative of divine chastisement – a narrative, in which forgiveness was well offered indeed. Therefore, the single word *qitt*, which occurs nowhere else in the Qur'an, can be seen as a placeholder for a whole narrative and as a single word through which non-believers challenged the Qur'anic prophecy of retaliation.

Moses and the Sorcerers: The Qur'anic Use of the 'Point of View' as a Device of Thematic and Stylistic Unity

Sarah Bin Tyeer
SOAS, University of London

The confrontation between Moses and the sorcerers at Pharaoh's court is related in four accounts in the Qur'an: Q. 7:113–22; Q. 10:79–82; Q. 20:60–9 and Q. 26:38–48. The four accounts all describe the same event: the challenge between Moses and the sorcerers; each account though offers a different point of view in describing the incident. Thus, while difference in length, form, content and tone in recounting the prophets' accounts occur throughout the Qur'an in varying contexts to serve a thematic purpose; repetition of details is also related from a perspective that serves a purpose within their contexts. This article aims to offer a novel prospect on the employment of the stories of the prophets. It focuses on one detail of the story of Moses, namely, the sorcerers' challenge incident to put forward a close examination of this quadruple–repeated account of the incident in the context of their respective suras. An analysis of the 'points of views' of each account in relation to the themes of the suras centres around the thematic and stylistic coherence as well as the language of the Qur'an.

تفسير ''يا أخت هارون'' على ضوء الدراسات المقارنة في علم الأديان

نادية الشرقاوي
الرابطة المحمدية للعلماء

تعددت كتب تفسير القرآن الكريم وتعددت مواضيعها حسب المجال الذي يهتم به المفسر والمنهج الذي يتبعه، فأفرزت لنا مدارس مختلفة، منها مدرسة التفسير بالأثر، التفسير بالرأي، التفسير اللغوي، التفسير الإشاري، التفسير الموضوعي، وقد كشفت لنا هذه المدارس مدى اهتمام علماء الإسلام بكتاب الله العزيز، كما حاولت تقريب فهم القرآن الكريم للقارئ من خلال ذلك التراث الكبير الذي تركه لنا هؤلاء العلماء.

ولا شك أن هذه الجهود محمودة وإن شابها بعض النقص في بعض الجوانب لكن الإشكال الذي يطرح هنا هو أن البعض يحاول ـتحت تأثير الأحكام المسبقة عندهمـ أن يستغل هذه التفاسير، وما جاء فيها من هفوات للإساءة من خلالها للقرآن، والتشكيك في صحته وإثارة الشبهات حوله، فكثيرا ما يثير البعض الكثير من الأحكام المسبقة، ومن أشهر الأمثلة على ذلك ما يقال عن القرآن أنه خلط بين شخصيتين معروفتين في الكتاب المقدس، وذلك في قوله تعالى على لسان بني إسرائيل في مخاطبتهم لمريم:(يَا أُخْتَ هَارُونَ) الواردة في سورة مريم في الآية 28، والشخصية الأولى مذكورة في أسفار العهد القديم، وذلك في سفر العدد، الإصحاح 26: 59، وهي **مريم أخت هارون** وموسى، والشخصية الثانية مذكورة في الأناجيل، وذلك في إنجيل متى، الإصحاح1: 16، وهي **مريم أم** المسيح عليه السلام،

فما حقيقة هذا اللقب الذي لقبت به مريم عليها السلام؟ وكيف فسره علماء التفسير؟ وكيف يمكننا من خلال الدراسات المقارنة للأديان رفع الشبهة عن هذه الآية؟

للإجابة عن هذه الأسئلة، فقد اخترت أن أسهم في هذا المؤتمر الدولي:" القرآن، النص والمجتمع والثقافة" المشاركة بالموضوع التالي: "تفسير (يَا أُخْتَ هَارُونَ) على ضوء الدراسات المقارنة في علم الأديان".

سورة محمد أنموذجاً الاتساق التقابلي في القرآن الكريم
محمد عبدالله علي العبيدي
جامعة قطر

قد يبدو للوهلة الأولى أن اتساق النص وترابطه لا يكون إلا بالتماثل والتشابه، ولكن الواقع اللغوي يؤكد أن علاقة التقابل اللغوي من أهم علاقات الاتساق النصي، فأشياء الكون كلها مبنية على الثنائيات التقابلية، مثل: (الليل – النهار، الخير – الشر، الحق – الباطل، الجن – الإنس، الجمال – القبح، الحركة – السكون، ...)، واستحضار إحدى الثنائيات التقابلية يستدعي مقابلها، الأمر الذي يؤدي إلى ما يسمى توارد الألفاظ الذي يعمل على ترابط النص، وهذا النوع من الترابط يمكن أن نسميه الاتساق التقابلي، الذي يعدُّ نوعاً من الاتساق النصي.

ويرى الباحث إمكانية توظيف منجزات اللسانيات النصية في دراسة القرآن الكريم، بوصفه نصاً متكاملاً، يُعدُّ الاتساق النصي من أهم ملامح إعجازه البياني، وقد شجع الباحث على الخوض في هذا المجال ما وجده عند العلماء العرب القدامى الذي عنوا بدارسة النص القرآني من إشارات صريحة ودراسات معمقة تتناول وجوه التناسب والترابط بين ألفاظ القرآن وجمله وآياته وسوره، فضلاً عن الإشارات المهمة إلى التقابل الدلالي ووظيفته في ترابط النص.

ويطمح هذا البحث أن يكون لبنةً في صرح مشروع طموح – أسهم فيه عدد من الباحثين- يرمي إلى توظيف اللسانيات المعاصرة في دراسة النص القرآني لاختبار مدى جدوى تطبيق منجزات الدرس اللساني المعاصر على القرآن الكريم، مع الأخذ بعين الاعتبار جهود العلماء المسلمين في هذا المجال، بهدف السعي نحو صياغة نظرية لسانية إسلامية تستلهم أصالتها من التراث اللغوي العربي الإسلامي، وتفيد من التراكم المعرفي اللساني، وتمتد لتحتوي آفاقَ الدرس اللساني المعاصر، غير مكتفيةٍ بمجاراة نظرياته أو تقليدها، وإنما تعمل على إثرائها.

ولتحقيق هذا الغرض سيعتمد البحث المنهج الوصفي في الكشف عن وجوه الاتساق التقابلي، على نحو يبرز روعة النظم القرآني وخصوصيته، ويفسر جوانب جديدة من وجوه الإعجاز البياني النصي في القرآن الكريم، وسيكون التطبيق على سورة محمد التي بنيت على التقابل الدلالي، بحيث لا يمكن فهم السورة ومقاصدها فهماً صحيحاً شاملاً إلا بمراعاة الاتساق النصي الذي تحقق بالتقابل بين آياتها.

القواعد الاعتقادية في القرآن الكريم: سورة المائدة نموذجا

حسن الشافعي
جامعة القاهرة

يقوم هذا البحث بتأمل "مورة المائدة"، السورة الخامسة في القرآن الكريم، وبعض ما تتضمنة "قواعد اعتقادية"، معتمدا في ذلك على النظر للقرآن باعتباره المصدر الأول للعلوم الشرعية ومنه تستمد وعليه تعتمد، وأن بيان مضامينه والكشف عنها هو الغرض الأول أيضًا لتلك العلوم على اختلاف حقولها ومناهجها. يركز الباحث على أهم ما تحويه السورة الكريمة من القواعد الاعتقادية إذ يرى أنها نالت من البيان والتوكيد في مواضع عديدة من السورة الكريمة ما لم تنله قواعد أخرى تضمنتها السورة أيضًا.

The Significance of Qur'anic Quotations in the *basmala*

Asad Q. Ahmed

Washington University in St. Louis and *Institute for Advanced Study, Princeton*

Introductory sections to works in various genres and disciplines in Islamic scholarship normally begin with the *basmala*, which includes pithy Qur'anic statements in praise of God. Such statements are usually considered to be negligible by modern scholars because they appear to be formulaic and routine expressions of divine praise. This implicit assessment of the content of the *basmala* – that it generally has no internal worth – is perhaps also erroneously confirmed by the fact that texts in disciplines ranging from exegesis to logic all include them to some extent. In other words, since they lack any meaningful specificity, it is taken for granted that these statements contribute little to one's understanding of a particular text. On the basis of a study of certain texts of logic and theology and their commentaries/glosses, this paper argues that such brief introductory statements were usually prompts for engaging and taking positions on theological and ethical issues that were both significant at the time of authorship and central to the larger argument of a text. Among other things, the Qur'anic quotations in the *baslama* are markers of sectarian identity, they are clues to an author's training and his sense of a scholarly canon, and they offer preliminary positions on principles dealt with more thoroughly in the body of a given text.

Moby-Dick and *Mushaf*: The Qur'an Translating American Classics

Jeffrey Einboden
Northern Illinois University

US Orientalism has long offered a topic for scholarly debate, with recent treatments emphasising early American receptions of the Qur'an in particular. The present study seeks to reverse this traditional focus, addressing a reciprocal, and inverse, process of Qur'anic reception. Rather than classic US authors reading the Qur'an, this paper will consider how the Qur'an has been used as a

lens to read US classics, with Arabic and Persian translators recruiting Qur'anic language to render and revise iconic works of American Literature. Revealing shifts in aesthetic contours and literary significance, we will explore the implications of re-writing US canonicity through tropes and terms original to the Muslim scripture. When translating *Moby-Dick* into Arabic, how is the crew and quest of Melville's novel recast through Qur'anic characterisation? What is the effect of interpolating *Surat al-Nas* into Hawthorne's *Scarlet Letter* within Persian rendition? What is the proper means of approaching Washington Irving's own quotations from the Qur'an when translating his work for Muslim readers? Surveying the Qur'anic afterlives of American classics, this paper will also confront broader issues and ironies, exploring how the Qur'an both resists definitive Western translation, yet also serves as a translatory medium for Western texts and traditions.

The Modern Literary (After)Lives of al-Khidr

Shawkat M. Toorawa
Cornell University

Prominent examples of Qur'anic characters appearing in modern world literature include Joseph- and Zuleikha-like characters in *The Hostage* (1984) by the Yemeni writer Zayd Muti Dammaj and the fictionalised portrayal of the women around the Prophet Muhammad in Algerian filmmaker and novelist Assia Djebar's *Far from Medina* (1991). In this paper, I focus on a 'minor' Qur'anic character, al-Khidr (cf. Q KAHF 18:65–82).

I begin by looking briefly at the evolution of al-Khidr in Islamic literatures generally and then focus on his deployment in several short fictional accounts, viz. the 1991 French novella *L'homme du livre* by Moroccan author Driss Chraibi; Victor Pelevin's 1994 Russian short story, 'The Prince of Gosplan'; the 1998 short story, 'The Mapmakers of Spitalfields', by Bangladeshi-British writer Manzu Islam; and Reza Daneshvar's Persian tale, 'Mahboobeh and Ahl' (2004). I characterise the ways in which these modern authors draw on the Khidr type, persona and legend, and go on to suggest how and why the use of al-Khidr in contemporary literature is productive and versatile. I have looked at the use of the Qur'an in modern writers in two earlier published works (2005, 2006) and several conference papers: this is a continuation of that research.

All Animals Are Equal, or Are They?
Ikhwan al-Safa's Animal Epistle and its 'Unhappy' End

Sarra Tlili
University of Florida

The Case of the Animals versus Man Before the King of the Jinn is a remarkable refutation of anthropocentric views, yet due to its unexpected end, it is also an intriguing work. In a fictional legal suit brought by nonhuman animals against human beings in the court of the King of the Jinn Ikhwan al-Safa' allow their nonhuman characters to refute humans' claims to a privileged status founded solely on species membership. Yet animals still lose their case. In this paper I argue that the discrepancy between the body and the outcome of this narrative stems from the divergence

between the Neoplatonic and the Qur'anic worldviews. The Ikhwan al-Safa' are well known for their adherence to Neoplatonism, which conceives of the world as a hierarchical structure. The egalitarian stance in the epistle, on the other hand, stems from the Qur'an, which forms the main subtext of this narrative. Although Qur'anic animal themes are discussed extensively in other works, particularly the genre of *tafsir*, this epistle is the only known medieval work fully dedicated to this topic. It is remarkable that the mere departure from the linear methodology characterising *tafsir* and the focus on animal themes in the Qur'an yielded such egalitarian outlook. Due to their hierarchical worldview, however, the Ikhwan could not afford an egalitarian conclusion, which resulted in the discrepancy between the body and the outcome of this narrative.

The Ethical Foundations of Sufi Interpretation of the Qur'an and its Impact on the Interaction between World Religions Today

Dheen Mohamed
College of Sharia and Islamic Studies

Among the several approaches to interpretation of the Qur'an that were established very early on was one taken by several Sufi masters which was essentially based on an ethical view of the Qur'an. My assertion is that in modern times Sufi interpretations of the Qur'an have been given the cold shoulder, much in the same way that there have been attempts to marginalise *tasawwuf*. It is also in modern times, however, that world religions have started making endeavours to come together. This endeavour needs to be based on solid foundations which I feel can be aptly provided by Sufi interpretation of the Qur'an, an interpretation which in turn is based on the ethical foundations of the Qur'an itself, which take love of God as their starting point. Thus the whole edifice of Sufi interpretation is constructed on and derives its inspiration from the love of God. This love of God, by the very nature of things, leads to acknowledgement of all things in the universe as creatures of God which can hence claim a right over man. As a result, man learns not only to accept the inherent diversity of God's creatures but also to love them all as manifestations of the One God. Perhaps nothing would be more helpful in forging better relations between world religions than working to persuade the followers of these religious traditions to base their interaction on ethical foundations. This paper will endeavour to show how Sufi masters such as al-Sulami, al-Tusturi, al-Qushayri and Ibn Arabi have proceeded to do this and how their interpretations could lead to better relationships between the followers of the major world religions.