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# *SCIENTIFIC EXEGESIS REAPPRAISED: A CRITICAL STUDY OF THE AL-JAWĀHIR FĪ TAFSĪR AL-QUR'ĀN AL-KARĪM*

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### How to cite:

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MOHD-NOOR, AHMAD, YUNUS (2013) *SCIENTIFIC EXEGESIS REAPPRAISED: A CRITICAL STUDY OF THE AL-JAWĀHIR FĪ TAFSĪR AL-QUR'ĀN AL-KARĪM*, Durham theses, Durham University. Available at Durham E-Theses Online: <http://etheses.dur.ac.uk/9390/>

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# INTRODUCTION

Ever since it was revealed around fourteen centuries ago, the Qur'ān has been seen by Muslims as a source of guidance that is both infallible and valid for all time. The importance that Muslims thus place on studying the Qur'ān in order to interpret its meanings cannot be underestimated. Today, the meanings uncovered by Muslims in the Qur'ān also extend to the domain of science and technology, with a branch of exegesis devoted exclusively to finding Qur'ānic evidence which allegedly points to various scientific and natural phenomena. It is believed by proponents of what has come to be known as 'scientific exegesis' that the Qur'ān contains verses which point to scientific discoveries such as the roundness of the earth; the orbit of the earth around the sun; the uniqueness of human finger prints, and so on.

The present study is an attempt to throw light on the discipline of 'scientific exegesis' by providing a critical analysis of one of the first major works in that field, the *al-Jawāhir fī Tafsīr al-Qur'ān al-Karīm* of Ṭanṭāwī Jawharī (1862-1940).

## **Aims and Objectives of the study**

This study aims firstly to validate the attribution of the work, *al-Jawāhir fī Tafsīr al-Qur'ān al-Karīm*, to its author, Ṭanṭāwī Jawharī. Consequently, its objectives include the following:

- to reach a comprehensive definition of scientific exegesis, with special reference to prominent Muslim scholars' point of views.
- to examine claims which hold that scientific exegesis is a part of the inimitability of the Qur'ān.
- to map the development of scientific exegesis as a discrete discipline.
- to differentiate views of traditionalist and contemporary scholars regarding the case for scientific exegesis.

- to locate scientific exegesis within the larger framework of Qur'ānic exegesis, both classical and modern.
- to understand Ṭanṭāwī Jawharī's background and his contributions in scientific exegesis.
- to determine the significance of *al-Jawāhir fī Tafsīr al-Qur'ān al-Karīm*
- to gain insight into the methodology used by the author of *al-Jawāhir*
- to critique, evaluate and assess the *al-Jawāhir* as a founding document of scientific exegesis.

### **Rationale for the study**

The motivation to study scientific exegesis comes from the fact that it is widely debated amongst Muslim scholars, some of whom have accepted it as one of the signs of the 'inimitability' of the Qur'ān. The inimitability (*I'jāz*), is the concept relating to the miraculous nature of the Qur'an. The word *I'jāz* had come to mean that quality of the Qur'ān that rendered people incapable of imitating the book or any part; in content and form. By the latter part of that century, the word had become the technical term, and the numerous definitions applied to it after the tenth century has shown little divergence from the key concepts of the inimitability of the Qur'ān and the inability of human beings to match it even challenged it.<sup>1</sup> Some debates around 'modernity' in terms of modernity's position that Islam and science is not compatible. As this seems to be the crux of the debate aimed at in this study, and hence it is essential. Scientific exegesis also has become one of the most curious and controversial forms of exegesis, based as it is on the belief that it is possible in some way to find in the Qur'ān either precise revelations concerning scientific problems in areas such as astronomy, biology and geology, or passages foreshadowing scientific discoveries that have revolutionised the modern world. Further motivation was provided by the

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<sup>1</sup> Mircea Eliade, *The Encyclopedia Of Religion*, Volume 7, New York: Macmillan Publishing Company, p. 87, under *I'jaz* by Issa J Boullata. Also, see: Yusuf Rahman. 1996. *The Miraculous Nature Of Muslim Scripture: A Study Of 'Abd al-Jabbar's I'jāz al-Qur'ān*, Islamic Studies, Volume 35, Number 4, p. 409.

debates which exist with regard to the reliability of *al-Jawāhir fī Tafsīr al-Qurʾān al-Karīm* as a piece of scientific exegesis.

### **Scope and Limitations**

Of the various types of exegeses on the Qurʾān, this study is limited to exegesis based on opinion (*Tafsīr bi al-raʾy*) due to the scientific exegesis is subjective and it is primarily based on rationale and personal judgments which is classified as hypothetical or personal opinion. The scope of study will cover the definition of scientific exegesis, the historical development of scientific exegesis and its initial factors that encouraged substantial development in today's world. The focus then will be on the emphasis given on the classical and modern scholars' point of views with regard to scientific exegesis, before turning to Ṭantāwī Jawharī, his biography and his work, the *al-Jawāhir*. Particular attention will be given to a critical evaluation and assessment of the strengths and weaknesses of *al-Jawāhir* and its place in the scientific exegetical tradition.

### **Research Questions**

To achieve the above aims and objectives, this thesis attempts to answer the following main questions:

- (i) What is the definition of exegesis and its divisions? (See: Chapter One).
- (ii) What is the definition of Qurʾānic scientific exegesis from the contemporary Muslim scholars' point of views? (See: Chapter One).
- (iii) Is the Qurʾān considered to be a book of science? If not, what is the relationship between Qurʾān and science? (See: Chapter One).

- (iv) What are the purpose and sources of scientific exegesis? (See: Chapter One).
- (v) How did the history and expansion of Qur'ānic scientific exegesis develop? (See: Chapter Two).
- (vi) What are the views of classical and modern Muslim scholars on Qur'ānic scientific exegesis? Is it an 'authentic' branch of exegesis or not? (See: Chapter Two).
- (vii) How can scientific exegesis be distinguished from classical to modern time? (See: Chapter Two).
- (viii) Who is Ṭanṭāwī Jawharī and what is the extent of his contribution to the enhancement of scientific exegesis? (See: Chapter Three).
- (ix) Why was *al-Jawāhir* written and how significant has the exegesis been to Muslim exegetes as well as other scholars afterwards? (See: Chapter Four).
- (x) What is the methodology of Ṭanṭāwī Jawharī in his approach to scientific exegesis? (See: Chapter Five).
- (xi) What are the strengths and weaknesses of *al-Jawāhir*? Is it reliable as scientific exegesis or otherwise? (See: Chapter Five).

### **Research Methodology**

As a researcher, our task to do research is no different from the poets. The most challenging task is to discover what was always there and to represent it from a holistic view with a new interpretation. In dealing with such a situation, an inductive research strategy is the best means of achieving such a goal. In doing so, a researcher is just like a poet, uncovering, in ever-new situations, facts

previously hidden. Therefore, this research will use the inductive method on primary sources, which refer to the traditional and contemporary exegesis, as well as other writings of Ṭanṭāwī Jawharī on various issues, and other related topics. It also objectively assesses the position of Ṭanṭāwī Jawharī's work in dealing with the scientific exegesis.

The main method used to analyze the data consulted is content analysis and discursive analysis is the major method of data collection of this thesis since the research is mainly theoretical and discursive in nature. This method, as part of the qualitative research methodology, is used to identify specific characteristics in textual messages such as; the hermeneutical research and historical critical analysis. Owing to the fact that the thesis is exploring the views of selected traditional and contemporary scholars, the comparative method is also used to compare the classical and modern exegeses with special reference to the scientific exegesis.

In addition to the philosophical underpinnings of this research, the views of modern scholars are juxtaposed with the views of the exegetes to give a more comprehensive understanding of scientific exegesis. The diversity found in the classical and modern exegeses and the variations in the ideological inclinations of modern scholars may justify the logical adoption of all these methods. While these methods help researchers to verify data, they remain relative in the applications, making objectivity, especially in the field of religious studies, an aim that is very difficult to achieve though still helpful and essential. Besides that, this thesis is concerned with explaining the literal and technical meaning of the main terms discussed, such as *Qur'ān*, *tafsīr*, *ta'wīl*, and *'Ilm*.

This research also focuses on an analytical study of the exegesis of Ṭanṭāwī Jawharī adopting the textual library research based on the *al-Jawāhir fī Tafsīr al-Qur'ān al-Karīm*. The method of critical analysis will be applied in this research in order to find out its strength and weaknesses.

All translations of all Qur'ānic verses are quoted from 'Abdullah Yusuf 'Ali's English translation of the Qur'ān unless otherwise stated. Any explanatory comments introduced by the researcher into these quotations, as well as in other quotations, are put between square bracket. All the translations of the hadith and all Arabic terms and phrases are mine unless otherwise indicated. All Arabic words and phrases are transliterated according to the standard Journal of Qur'ānic Studies in order to help non-Arabic speaking readers to pronounce Arabic words correctly and know how they are written. Quotations from textual sources and from the Internet retain the transliteration found in the original.

### **Literature Review**

To the best of our knowledge and based on thorough reading as well as analysis on previous literatures relating to the scientific exegesis, there has been no substantial research that focuses on the historical development of scientific exegesis in detail. The researcher has not found anything in specific on Ṭaṇṭāwī's works and scholars' views regarding scientific exegesis. Most of the literatures only discuss on the matter in general. In this regard, there are several works published by Muslims and non-Muslims.

The first contribution is Muhammad Hussein al-Dhahabī's *al-Tafsīr wa'l-Mufasssīrūn* (Exegesis and Exegetes)<sup>2</sup>. It contains two volumes in which the author of the book does not focus and lack of attention to the scientific exegesis in volume 1. Rather, he deals with it in volume 2, and depends heavily on most of the modern and classical Muslim scholars' point of views on science. The author explains in general on the contribution of Ṭaṇṭāwī Jawharī in scientific exegesis. This published work also proves to be invaluable to access Ṭaṇṭāwī's scientific exegesis as a whole.

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<sup>2</sup> Al-Dhahabi, Muhammad Hussein, *al-Tafsīr wa'l-Mufasssīrūn* (N.P, V.2, 1396H/1976M). This work has been posthumously reprinted in three volumes by Shirkah Dār Arqām bin Ābī al-Arqām, n.d.; in the beginning of the third volume, the publisher mentions that this volume is based upon al-Dhahabī's lectures which he delivered at the University of Baghdad between 1960-1963.

Another major contribution to the discussion in this research is 'Abd al-Majīd 'Abd al-Salām al-Muhtasab's *Ittijāhāt al-Tafsīr fī al-'Aşri al-Rāhin* (Trends of Exegesis in the Current Era).<sup>3</sup> This work focuses on three approaches of Qur'ānic exegesis: exegesis based on transmission (*Tafsīr bi al-Ma'thūr*), exegesis based on opinion (*Tafsīr bi al-Ra'ý*), and exegesis based on science (*Tafsīr 'Ilmi*). Al-Muhtasab wrote his book mainly to mention in the section three on the Qur'ānic scientific exegesis, and its methodology based on scholars' point of views such as; al-Ghazzālī, al-Rāzī, al-Baiḍāwī, al-Naisābūrī, al-Zarkasyī and al-Suyūṭī. However, this work briefly discusses the concept and methodology of scientific exegesis from the scholars' point of views in their period. The fact that al-Muhtasab's work is published in Arabic limits its accessibility to English-speaking researchers, so the translation of this book into several European languages, or at least into English, is much to be desired.

Another main contributing book is Fahd bin 'Abd al-Rahman bin Sulaymān al-Rūmī's *Ittijāhāt al-Tafsīr fī Qarn al-Rābi' 'Asyar* (Trends of Exegesis in the Fourteenth Century).<sup>4</sup> Like al-Muhtasab, al-Rūmī refers to the methodology of exegesis by presenting his book into three chapters: methodology of Islamic jurisprudence (*Sharī'a*) in exegesis, methodology of exegesis based on indication (*al-Ishārī*) and methodology of practical scientific (*al-'Ilmi al-Tajrībī*) in exegesis. In this work, al-Rūmī deals with the scientific exegesis under final chapter which introduces the term and scholars' views on scientific exegesis. He concludes his work by rejecting the concept of scientific exegesis and supporting the motion of al-Shāṭibī who in the case against the scientific exegesis with some extent. Nevertheless, his work remains a good source for any researcher writing on against the scientific exegesis in contemporary era.

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<sup>3</sup> Al-Muhtasab, Abdul Majid Abdul Salam, *Ittijāhāt al-Tafsīr fī al-'Aşri al-Rāhin* (Amman: Maktaba an-Nahḍa al-Islāmiya, 1982).

<sup>4</sup> Al-Rumi, Fahd bin Abdul Rahman bin Sulayman, *Ittijāhāt al-Tafsīr fī Qarn al-Rābi' 'Asyar* (Beirut: Muassasa al-Risāla, v.2, 1993).



Ahmad 'Umar Ābū Hajar's *Tafsīr 'ilmī Li al-Qur'ān fī al-Mizān* (Scientific Exegesis of Qur'ān in the Balance)<sup>5</sup> is a rigorous examination of exegesis. In his discussion of exegesis, Ābū Hajar discusses in vast detail on the connotation of exegesis together with its related divisions. Even though this book mentioned on scientific exegesis, but its chapters was straightforward similar to what was practiced by al-Dhahabī and al-Muhtasab inserting relevant examples from the previous scholars' point of views. There are still several aspects yet to be examined and emphasized by the researcher. The historical development on the other hand, was briefly discussed. His discussion is clearly limited to presenting the views of the proponents and there is hardly any reference to the Muslim scholars opponents of the scientific exegesis.

With regard to Western literature, Achmad Marconi's *how this universe has been created: Al-Qur'ān and modern science approach*<sup>6</sup> is considered one of the leading studies in which Qur'ān and modern science have been discussed. In his discussion, Marconi explains relationship between Qur'ān and universe from scientists' philosophy of thought on believing God. He goes on to explore the Qur'ānic approach as a main source of knowledge and essential to examine the cosmological scientific knowledge in order to achieve the absolute truth before logical thinking becomes as a second source of knowledge for getting scientific creation of universe. Although the title of his book may indicate a considerable contribution in the field, it unfortunately bears very little relevance to the topic under discussion.

Another main contribution is Maurice Bucaille's *The Bible, The Qur'ān and Science*<sup>7</sup>. Bucaille distinctively compares the Bible and science, as well as Qur'ān and science from different perspective. He goes on to explore whether or not

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<sup>5</sup> Abu Hajar, Ahmad Omar, *Tafsīr 'ilmī Li al-Qur'ān fī al-Mizān* (Beirut: Dār al-Qutayba, 1991).

<sup>6</sup> Marconi, Achmad, *How this universe has been created: Al-Qur'ān and modern science approach*, Jakarta: PT Kiblat Buku Utama, 2003.

<sup>7</sup> Bucaille, Maurice, *The Bible, The Qur'ān and Science*, (Alastair D. Pannel. & Maurice Bucaille Translation). Selangor: Thinker's Library Sdn. Bhd., 2003.

there are any differences and similarities between Qur'ān and bible in dealing with the contemporary science. His own reading leads him to the conclusion that the bible has a lot of mistakes in term of dealing with science as source of knowledge, and Qur'ān has mutual understanding and collaboration with science especially in dealing with geology, zoology, and astronomy. While his work is distinguished by rich information, his sources lack references to original Islamic sources, especially on Qur'ānic scientific exegesis.

The latest contribution is Danial Zainal Abidin's *Qur'ān Scientific*<sup>8</sup>. In his work, Danial attempts to compile scientific discoveries which are related to Qur'ānic verses such as; the creation of universe, the creation of man, cosmology, and geology. While the title of the book has a special reference to Qur'ān scientific, he also attempts to prove that non-*Halal* food would effect to human body based on Qur'ān and Hadith perspectives and then link to medical experimentation. The entire work done by Danial offers an excellent analysis of the science in the Qur'ān, but it rarely refers to classical and modern Arabic sources. Therefore, his reliance on many secondary sources in his work has limited his contribution to the subject.

The above reviews of the literatures have been discussed in general on the topic pertaining scientific exegesis. There is no specific systematic write upon the historical development of scientific exegesis as well as the views from the classical and modern scholars on the scientific exegesis. Their contributions to the topic of this study are limited in certain aspects. This thesis, therefore, deeply hopes that it will fulfill the needs of today by presenting it in a form of a comprehensive writing in the quest of answering the related subject on scientific exegesis.

### **Structure of the study**

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<sup>8</sup> Danial, Zainal Abidin, *Qur'ān Scientific*, Selangor: PTS Millenia, 2007.

This study consists of an introduction, five chapters and a conclusion. The introduction, as discussed, explains the objectives, rationale, scope and limitations, research questions, research methodology, and literature review of the study. The first chapter provides the background of the issue by surveying the various definitions of exegesis and its divisions. The meaning of scientific exegesis will later be elucidated in the quest of identifying its specific categories. It continues with a relationship between Qur'ān and science before being discussed on the purpose of studying Qur'ān with scientific exegesis, followed by the sources of scientific exegesis.

The second chapter deals with history of scientific exegesis, its development and expansion until contemporary era. By studying the history of scientific exegesis in the contemporary Muslim world, we attempt to explore the contribution of the prominent Muslim scholars to their particular civilizations. This chapter further analyses traditionalists and contemporary scholars' methodologies, arguments, rational and textual, which, in principle case for the scientific exegesis. Later, it would differentiate between the traditionalists and modern time with regard to their methodology in dealing with the scientific exegesis.

The third chapter focuses on the overall biographical studies of one of contemporary prominent Muslim theologian and exegete; Ṭanṭāwī Jawharī. He was chosen for his great contributions in pioneering some important intellectuals in the study of scientific exegesis. It has explored the whole biographical studies of Ṭanṭāwī Jawharī which started from his family background, educational life, working life and employment, political life, and intellectual life.

Chapter four examines some of the significant matters which relate to Ṭanṭāwī's exegesis; *al-Jawāhir fī Tafsīr al-Qur'ān al-Karīm* and which should be acknowledged before commencing study of his works in dealing with the scientific exegesis. This chapter comprises of the reasons of writing *al-Jawāhir*, purposes and objectives behind it, steps of writing and publication, references

which have been used in *al-Jawāhir*, as well as the influence of scholars and exegetes on *al-Jawāhir* or vice versa. All the above discussions are essential to demonstrate Ṭanṭāwī's great works which are related to the integration of two branches of knowledge; Qur'ān and science.

The final chapter assesses the methodology of Ṭanṭāwī in dealing with the scientific exegesis, incorporated into discussions of the *al-Jawāhir* in the eyes of other prominent scholars. The aims of this chapter are to evaluate and validate the *al-Jawāhir* and therefore, this chapter critically traces its strengths and weaknesses.

In conclusion, the main findings of the study are stated and some comments and suggestions will be made on scientific exegesis in general and *al-Jawāhir* in particular in order to encourage and improve the teaching of these fields in colleges, universities, and theological schools.

# CHAPTER ONE

## DEFINITION OF ISLAMIC SCIENTIFIC EXEGESIS

### 1.1 INTRODUCTION

Before a thorough elaboration can be made on this topic, the most important that needs to be justified is the definition on its two words as the basic foundation of this research; *tafsīr* (exegesis) and *ilmīy* (science).

The second aspect that needs detailed analysis is the division of the exegesis (*tafsīr*) itself. It is greatly hoped that the explicit explanation will later benefit the readers providing vivid image of the real meaning and its subdivisions.

Generally, exegesis (*tafsīr*) is divided into three main types namely; methodology of exegesis based on transmission (*tafsīr bi al-ma'thūr*)<sup>9</sup>, methodology of exegesis based on opinion (*tafsīr bi al-ra'y*)<sup>10</sup> and methodology of exegesis based on indication (*tafsīr bi al-ishāra*)<sup>11</sup>. In addition, there are other exegeses of Qur'ān such as; methodology of exegesis based on judgments (*tafsīr al-Ahkām*)<sup>12</sup>, methodology of exegesis based on Mu'tazalite sect (*Tafsīr al-Mu'tazila*)<sup>13</sup> and methodology of exegesis based on Shiite sect (*tafsīr al-Shīa*)<sup>14</sup>.

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<sup>9</sup> This part of exegesis is attributed to scholars who used the methodology of exegesis based on transmission such as; al-Ṭabarī (d.310AH), al-Samarqandī (d.373AH), al-Tha'labī (d.383AH), al-Baghawī (d.510AH), Ibn 'Aṭīyya (d.546AH), Ibn Kathīr (d.774AH), and al-Suyūṭī (d.911AH). See: al-Dhahabī, Muhammad Hussein. (1989). *al-tafsīr wa al-Mufasssīrūn*, Egypt: Maktaba Wahba, vol.1.

<sup>10</sup> This part of exegesis is attributed to scholars who used methodology of exegesis based on sound opinion such as; al-Razī (d.606AH), Bayḍāwī (d.685AH), al-Nasafī (d.701AH), al-Naisābūrī (d.728AH), al-Khazīn (d.741AH), Abū Hayyān (d.745AH), Abī al-Su'ūd (d.952AH), and al-Alūsī (d.1270AH). *Ibid*.

<sup>11</sup> This part of exegesis is attributed to scholars who used methodology of exegesis based on indication, from signs such as; al-Tustārī (d. 283AH), al-Salmī (d. 403AH), and Ibn 'Arabī (d.1240). *Ibid*, vol.2.

<sup>12</sup> This part of exegesis is attributed to scholars who used methodology of exegesis based on rules and regulations such as; al-Jaṣṣāṣ (d.370AH), al-Harāsī (d.504AH), Ibn al-'Arabī (d.543AH), and al-Qurṭubī (d.641AH). *Ibid*.

<sup>13</sup> This part of exegesis is attributed to scholars who used methodology of exegesis based on Mu'tazalite sect such as; al-Ḥamadānī (d.415AH), al-Murtaḍa (d.436AH), and al-Zamakhsharī (d.538AH). *Ibid*.

However, the first three parts of exegeses will be only carefully clarified in this research together with the views from the scholars of the field. Emphasis will be given to the *tafsīr bi al-ray* since the scholars have different opinions toward it. The meaning of *tafsīr ilmīy* will later be elucidated in the quest of identifying its specific categories.

## 1.2 DEFINITION OF EXEGESIS AND ITS DIVISIONS

### 1.2.1 Qur'ān, Tafsīr and Ta'wīl

#### a. Literal meaning of Qur'ān

The Arabic word Qur'ān is derived from the root: *qara'a*, which has various meaning, such as; to read, to recite, to preach and to teach<sup>15</sup> as Qur'ān says:

No, we shall not even believe in your mounting until you send down to us a book that we can **read**. Say: Glory to my Lord! I am nothing but a man – a messenger?

(Qur'ān, 17:93)

Again, according to the Qur'ān:

But when we have promulgated it, follow you its **recital** (as promulgated):

(Qur'ān, 75:18)

With regards to the definition of Qur'ān, Von Denffer<sup>16</sup> goes to say that Qur'ān is a verbal noun and hence means the 'reading' or 'recitation'. The term has been used in the Qur'ān itself, and the word refers to the revelation from God in the broad sense<sup>17</sup> as the Qur'ān also says:

We send down (stage by stage) in the Qur'ān that which is a healing and a mercy to those who believe: to the unjust it causes nothing but loss after loss.

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<sup>14</sup> This part of exegesis is attributed to scholars who used methodology of exegesis based on Shiite sect such as; al-ʿAskarī (d.260AH), al-Ṭabrari (d.538AH), al-Kashī (d.1090AH), al-ʿAlawī (d.1242AH), al-Khurasānī (d.1315AH), and Ṭabāṭabāʾī (d.1402AH). *Ibid*.

<sup>15</sup> Makhluḥ, Husain Muhammad. (1987). *Ṣafwa al-Bayān li Maʿānī al-Qurʾān*, 3<sup>rd</sup> edition, Kuwait, p.756.

<sup>16</sup> Ahmad Von Denffer was born in Germany in 1949. He studied Islamic and Social Anthropology at the University of Mainz. He joined The Islamic Foundation as Research Fellow in 1978. He has published a number of books with translation in both English and German such as; *A Bibliography of Literature and Hadīth in European Languages*, *A German translation of Nawawī's Forty Hadīth*, *A Day with the Prophet* and *Islam for Children*. See: Von Denffer, Ahmad. (1989). *ʿUlūm al-Qurʾān: an Introduction to the Sciences of the Qurʾān*, Leicester: Islamic Foundation, cover page.

<sup>17</sup> Von Denffer, Ahmad. *ʿUlūm al-Qurʾān: an Introduction to the Sciences of the Qurʾān*, p.17.

(Qur'ān, 17:82)

The Muslim scripture often calls itself *kitāb*, "writing", and this word came to denote the scripture, the "written book". Thus, the significance of uttering and writing the revealed scripture was emphasized from the beginning of the new religion, and is locked into the very nouns that designate the Qur'ānic canon.<sup>18</sup>

b. Technical meaning of Qur'ān

The Qur'ān cannot, however, be viewed as a classic book that expounds a given philosophy. Indeed, as technically defined by Muslim theology, it is:

The speech of God, sent down upon the last Prophet Muhammad, through the Angel Gabriel, in its precise meaning and precise wording, transmitted to us by numerous persons (*tawātūr*), both verbally and in writing. Inimitable and unique, protected by God from corruption and fabrication.<sup>19</sup>

According to Maḥmūd Shaltūt<sup>20</sup>, the definition of Qur'ān is "the corpus of Arabic utterances sent down by God to Muḥammad, conveyed in a way that categorically establishes its authenticity".<sup>21</sup>

Indeed, a defining feature of the Qur'ān is the otherworldly quality it exhibits in its original Arabic version. In fact, Muslims believe that the Arabic language itself as sacred in a way, for it carries the original word of God. More recently, Reza Aslan<sup>22</sup> calling to all Muslims of every culture and

<sup>18</sup> M.A. Draz. (2000). *Introduction to the Qur'ān*, London: I.B. Tauris, pp. 10-15.

<sup>19</sup> Qattan, Manna'. (1983). *Mabāhith fī 'ulūm al-Qur'ān*, Beirut: Muassasa al-Risāla, p.302.

<sup>20</sup> Maḥmūd Shaltūt was born on the 24<sup>th</sup> April 1893. He was one of the prominent scholar of Egypt as well as a member of the Institute of Language in 1957 and appointed as a representative of the University of al-Azhar. On the 22<sup>nd</sup> October 1958, he was promoted as the *Shaykh al-Azhar*. He wrote many books on the Qur'ān and *al-Sunna, tafsīr*, comparative sects, theology, *Fiqh, fatwa* and the relations between the Muslims countries. He passed away on a Thursday night, 12<sup>th</sup> December 1963 at the age of 70. See: Maḥmūd Shaltūt. (1996). *Intisari al-Qur'ān*, Singapore: Pustaka Nasional, back cover page.

<sup>21</sup> Shaltut, Mahmud. (1990). *al-Islam 'Aqīda wa Sharī'a*, Cairo, p.1471. Also see: M.S. Lashin. (1982). *al-La'ālī' al-Ḥisān fī 'Ulūm al-Qur'ān*, Cairo, p.19.

<sup>22</sup> Reza Aslan was born in 1972 in Tehran, Iran. He is an Iranian-American writer, an American Muslim reformer, and a contributing editor for the Daily Beast at the University California, USA. His books include; *No God but God: The Origins, Evolution, and Future of Islam* (2005), *How to Win a Cosmic War: God, Globalization and the End of the War in Terror* (2009). See: Aslan, Reza.

ethnicity must (in prayer recite) the Qur'ān in Arabic, whether they understand it or not. According to him, "the message of the Qur'ān is vital to living a proper life as a Muslim, but it is the words themselves the actual speech of the one and only God that possess a spiritual power known as *Baraka'*".<sup>23</sup>

Echoing this statement, Murata<sup>24</sup> and Chittick<sup>25</sup> go to say:

Only the Arabic Qur'ān is the Qur'ān, and translations<sup>26</sup> are simply interpretations... One of the sources of the richness of Islamic intellectual history is the variety of interpretations provided for the same verses. Muslim thinkers often quote the Prophet to the effect that every verse of the Qur'ān has seven meanings, beginning with the literal sense, and as for the seventh and deepest meaning, God alone knows that.<sup>27</sup>

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(2005). *No God but God: The Origins, Evolution, and Future of Islam*, New York: Random House, cover page.

<sup>23</sup> *Ibid*, p.159.

<sup>24</sup> Sachiko Murata is a professor of Religion and Asian Studies at the State University of New York, Stony Brook. She is the author of several books such as; *The Tao of Islam* (1992), *Chinese Gleams of Sufi Light* (2000), *The Vision of Islam* (co-author with W. C. Chittick) and *Temporary Marriage in Islamic Law*. See: Stony Brook University Comparative Literary and Cultural Studies (CLCS). Available at: <URL>:

<http://www.stonybrook.edu/commcms/asian/faculty/SachikoMurata.shtml>

access date: 3<sup>rd</sup> December 2010.

<sup>25</sup> William C. Chittick is a professor in the Department of Comparative Studies at the State University of New York, Stony Brook. He is one of world's leading translators and interpreters of the mystical poetry of Jalāluddīn Rūmī. He is also recognized for his translation and interpretation of the writings of the great Sufi theorist and poet, Ibn 'Arabī. Among his publications are; *The Sufi Path of Love: The Spiritual Teachings of Rūmī* (1983), *The Psalms of Islam* (1988), and *Sufism: A Short Introduction* (2000). For details of his biography, see: W.C. Chittick. (2005). *The Sufi Doctrine of Rūmī*, Indiana: World Wisdom.

<sup>26</sup> Although the Qur'ān is considered authentic only in Arabic, scholars in the twentieth century have produced translations of Qur'ān into local and regional vernaculars in order to make the text available to non-Arabic speaking audiences. These translations also provide commentary so as to clarify the meaning of the text. Important contemporary translations of Qur'ān include; Yusuf 'Ali. (1975). *The Holy Qur'ān*, Lahore; A.J. Arberry. (1964). *The Qur'ān interpreted*, UK: Oxford; N.J. Dawood. (1956). *The Koran*, Harmondsworth; Marmaduke Pickthall. (1963). *The Meaning of the Glorious Koran*, New York; and Colin Turner. (1997). *The Qur'ān: A New Interpretation*, Curzon.

<sup>27</sup> Murata, Sachiko, and William C. Chittick. (1994). *The Koran*, St. Paul, Minn.: Paragon House, xiv-xvii.



According to the Muslim historians<sup>28</sup>, Qur'ānic revelations are believed to have come to the Prophet piecemeal over a period of twenty-three years. The disparate material is invariably divided into 114 sections ("suras", conventionally translated in English as "chapters"). A *sura* consists of no more than one line such as; *suras* 108 and 112, while *sura* 2, the longest, stretches over dozens of pages. Each *sura* consists of verses, each known in Arabic as *aya* (a "sign" from God).

a. Literal meaning of *Tafsīr*

The word *tafsīr* derived from the Arabic root: *fassara* - *yufassiru* - *tafsīran*, or *fasara* - *yafsuru* - *fasran*. According to Ibn Manẓūr (d.711/1311)<sup>29</sup>, the term *al-Fasru* is description and similar exegesis but later said *al-Fasru* means: to open something that is shut, and *tafsīr* gives the meaning of deriving meaning from difficult utterances.<sup>30</sup> It also means clarification, explanation, and illustration<sup>31</sup> based on verse 25: 33:

"And no question do they bring to you but We reveal to you the truth and the best **explanation (tafsīran)** of it".<sup>32</sup>

Al-Suyūṭī (d.911/1505)<sup>33</sup> goes to explain that the term *Tafsīr* is based on pattern *tafīlun* and derived from the word *fassara* which means clear and

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<sup>28</sup> Among the Muslim Historians are; Ibn Ishāq (d.767CE), Ibn Hishām (d.833CE), and al-Ṭabarī (d.923CE).

<sup>29</sup> His full name was Muḥammad ibn Mukarrām ibn 'Alī ibn Ahmad ibn Manẓūr al-Anṣārī al-Miṣrī. He was a moderate Shī'ī and became the Arabic governor of Tripoli in 668. He has studied Philology and dedicated most of his life to excerpts from works of historical philology. The most of his great contribution was *Lisān al-Arāb* which was completed in 1290. See: Gottschalks H.L. (1965). Art: *Dīwān* ii Egypt, in: *Encyclopedia of Islām II*, pp.327-331.

<sup>30</sup> Ibn Manẓūr, Abū Faḍl Jamāluddīn Muḥammad b. Mukarrām. (1968). *Lisān al-Arāb*, Beirut: Dār al-Ṣadr, vol.5, p.55.

<sup>31</sup> Qattān, *Mabāhith fī 'ulūm al-Qur'ān*, p.323.

<sup>32</sup> The entire translation of the Qur'ān in this form of writing is written based on translation of 'Abdullah Yusuf Ali. (2007). *The Meaning of the Holy Qur'ān*, UK: Islamic Dawah Centre International.

<sup>33</sup> Abū Faḍl 'Abd al-Rahman ibn Abū Bakr, Jalāl al-Dīn al-Ṣuyūṭī was born in 849 Hijrī and grew up in Cairo. He was an Egyptian writer, religious scholar, juristic expert and teacher of a wide variety of subjects in Islamic Theology. He memorised the entire Qur'ān when he was barely eight years old. After that, he went on to memorize *al-Umdah*, *Minhāj al-Fiqh wa al-Uṣūl* and *Alfiya Ibn Malik*. Al-Ṣuyūṭī travelled extensively and had more than 600 compilations. He died in 911 Hijrī in Rawḍa

sharp<sup>34</sup>. However al-Zarkashī (d.792/1392)<sup>35</sup> believed that the word *tafsīr* originated from the word *tafsīrat*, an instrument used by doctors to diagnose any diseases. It means that the scholars of *tafsīr* are able to know the condition of the verses, their meanings and reasons for their revelations<sup>36</sup>.

b. Technical meaning of *tafsīr*

Technically, the word *tafsīr* refers to the knowledge and comprehensive understanding of the book of God revealed to Prophet Muḥammad (PBWH) and elucidation of its profound meaning, extraction of its laws, wisdom and maxims.<sup>37</sup> It is also stated that it is the knowledge of research on the Qurʾān. It is further called exegesis.

According to ibn ʿĀshūr (d.1973)<sup>38</sup>, *tafsīr* can be defined as a form of knowledge that defined the meanings of the Qurʾān together with the extracts taken from the simple and widespread utterances.<sup>39</sup> Al-Ṣuyūṭī on the other hand, viewed *tafsīr* as certain related revealed verses based on its knowledge, its reasons for revelation followed by the verses sent down in

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al-Maqbas, near Cairo. For details of his biography, see: al-Suyuti, Jalal al-Din ʿAbd al-Rahman. (n.d). *al-Itqān fī ʿulūm al-Qurʾān*, edited by: Muhammad Abu Fadl Ibrahim, Cairo: Dār al-Turāth, vol.1, p.3. Also see: ʿĀdil Nuwehdh, *Muʿjam al-Mufasssīrīn*, 1:264, Zarkali, *al-Aʿlām*, 3:103-203, Kahāla, *Muʿjam al-Muallifīn*, 5:128–131.

<sup>34</sup> *Ibid*, vol. 2, p.167.

<sup>35</sup> Badr al-Din Muḥammad bin ʿAbdullah bin Baḥr al-Dīn al-Zarkashī was an Egyptian scholar in the 8<sup>th</sup> century. His specialization included *fiqh*, *hadīth*, *tafsīr* and theology. He was born in Cairo in 745H. Amongst his teachers were Shaykh Jamāl al-Dīn al-Asnawī, Shaykh Shirāj al-Dīn al-Buqainī, Ḥāfiẓ Ibn Kathīr and many more from prominent scholars of Egypt. He passed away in Egypt in the month of *Rajab* 792H and was put to rest in *al-Qarafa al-Ṣughra*. See: al-Zarkashi, Badr al-Din Muhammad bin Abdullah. (1988). *Al-Burhān fī ʿulūm al-Qurʾān*, Beirut: Dār al-Jīl, vol.1, p.3).

<sup>36</sup> Al-Zarkashi, Badr al-Din Muhammad bin ʿAbdullah, *al-Burhān fī ʿulūm al-Qurʾān*, vol.2, p.147.

<sup>37</sup> Sabuni, Muhammad ʿAli. (1401H). *Al-Tibyān fī ʿulūm al-Qurʾān*, Damascus: Maktaba al-Ghazālī, p.61.

<sup>38</sup> Muḥammad al-Ṭāhir ibn ʿĀshūr was an eminent figure in the institution of the Tunisian scholars for most of the twentieth century. He is also regarded as a Muslim reformist and his Qurʾānic exegesis *al-Taḥrīr wa al-Tanwīr* is among the influential exegesis produced in the modern era. See: Ibn ʿĀshūr, Muḥammad al-Ṭāhir. (2006). *Ibn ʿĀshūr treatise on Maqāsid al-Sharīʿa*, translated by: M.T. el-Mesawi, Washington: International Institute of Islamic Thought, p.iii.

<sup>39</sup> Ibn ʿAshur, Muhammad al-Tahir. (1984). *Tafsīr al-Taḥrīr wa al-Tanwīr*, Tunis: al-Dār al-Tunisia li Nashr, vol.1, p.10.

chronological order. Chapters and verses were makkan<sup>40</sup> and madinan<sup>41</sup>, *muhkam*<sup>42</sup> and *mutashābihat*<sup>43</sup>, *nāsikh*<sup>44</sup> and *mansūkh*<sup>45</sup>, *khās*<sup>46</sup>, and *am*<sup>47</sup> *muṭlak*<sup>48</sup> and *muqayyad*<sup>49</sup>, *mujmal*<sup>50</sup> and *mufassir*<sup>51</sup>, a good promise and bad, command and forbiddance, and other related examples<sup>52</sup>.

Al-Zarkashī explained that the *tafsīr* is all about understanding the book of God sent down to Prophet Muḥammad (PBWH) with regards to the rules, regulations and its wisdom. They were assisted by the language, Grammar

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<sup>40</sup> Makkan means the Phase of the revelation lasted for about thirteen years that is from the first Revelation until the migration of the Prophet (PBWH) from Makka to Medina. There is a list of eighty-five Chapters which is considered as Makkan chapters. See: Zarkashi, Badr al-Din Muhammad bin Abdullah, *al-Burhān fī 'ulūm al-Qur'ān*, vol.1, p.193.

<sup>41</sup> Madinan means the Phase of revelation lasted for about ten years, from the migration of the Prophet (PBWH) until his demise. There are 22 chapters were revealed at Medina and consisted subject-matter of laws, comments on public events, statements of policy, advice and warnings to the hypocrites and legislation. See: I Doi, 'Abd al-Rahman, (1997), *The Sciences of the Qur'ān: A Study in Methodology and Approach*, New Delhi: Sterling Paperbacks Pvt. Ltd, p.113.

<sup>42</sup> *Muhkam* is a clearly understood and obvious verse that can be easily accepted by the mind and not intended for *ta'wīl* or *takhṣiṣ*.

<sup>43</sup> *Mutashābih* is the opposite word for *muhkam* that is ambiguous and vague in meaning and intention as well as the justification is it with a different verse or *ta'wīl*.

<sup>44</sup> *Nāsikh* is an active participle derived from the Arabic root *nasakha* which means to abrogate, to withdraw, to abolish or to transform or to efface or to replace. It primarily means to efface one thing and to substitute it with another or to alter it in to. See: Ahmad Rida, (1960), *al-Mu'jam al-Lughā Mawsū'a Lughawiyā Hadītha*, Beirut, vol.5, pp.446-447.

<sup>45</sup> *Mansūkh* is passive form means the abrogated or superseded. For example, a verse of Qur'ān abrogated another verse. See: Lanes, Edward William, (1978), *Arabic-English Lexicon*, Lahore, vol.8, p.2789.

<sup>46</sup> *Khās* is a particular utterance that referred to an individual such as the sayings of the Prophet Muḥammad (PBWH) or shared the same type or a group of people (*ufrād*) that are limited to two, three, a thousand, a group, a community and a race. A special utterance (*Lafz Khās*) is divided into; the absolute (*muṭlak*), the restricted (*muqayyad*), command (*Amr*) and forbiddance (*Nahw*).

<sup>47</sup> *Am* is a certain utterances or *naṣ* that provide a common meaning of the original creation that blanketed everybody who shared the same meaning without limited quantity.

<sup>48</sup> *Muṭlaq* is an utterance that pointed at an absolute meaning not related to a certain condition or characteristics.

<sup>49</sup> *Muqayyad* is an utterance referred to a restricted meaning that is linked its terms, characters that made it different than the *muṭlaq*.

<sup>50</sup> *Mujmal* is a verse that pointed at a vague, general statement and global meaning without the existence of details (*tafsīl*), specific (*tabyīn*) or its own exegesis (*tafsīr*).

<sup>51</sup> *Mufassir*, *mufaṣṣil* or *mubayyin* are jargons that shared the same meaning as the opposite of *mujmal* that refers to one meaning or it is considered as a text explaining on what is vague or on a text that is more general. See: Nawawi, Rif'at Syaqui. (1988). *Pengantar Ilmu Tafsīr*, Jakarta: Pustaka Bulan Bintang, pp.201-203).

<sup>52</sup> Al-Suyuti, *al-Itqān fī 'ulūm al-Qur'ān*, 2:169.

(*naḥw*), Morphology (*ṣarf*), Science of Clarification (*'ilm bayān*), the knowledge of the Principles of Jurisprudence (*uṣūl fiqh*), Qur'ānic Readings (*qirāat*), and others to the reason of its revelation as well as the abrogative (*nāsikh*) and the abrogated (*mansūkh*)<sup>53</sup>.

The meaning stated by Zarkashī is clearer and easier to be understood in two meanings. It emphasized on the understanding of the exegesis relating to the language that became the foundation of comprehending the Qur'ān.

However, according to Zarqānī<sup>54</sup> the field of *tafsīr* is a knowledge that discussed on the Qur'ān which is related to the understanding of its meaning and evidences based on humans' ability.<sup>55</sup>

In short, the explanations created an image pertaining the meaning of *tafsīr*. The real meaning of the Qur'ān is based on the capability of men and the scholars of *tafsīr* do not have the authority to restrict the meaning of the actual words of God pertaining to the rules and commands in our daily lives.

It is usual to talk about *tafsīr* and what is linked to *ta'wīl* since both words are very closely related as often debated by the scholars of *tafsīr* and law in their books.

a. Literal meaning of *Ta'wīl*:

*Ta'wīl* from the linguistic perspective is divided into three definitions.

First : *Ta'wīl* derived from the word "*al-Aulu'*" which means to return<sup>56</sup>.

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<sup>53</sup> Al-Zarkashi, *al-Burhān fī 'ulūm al-Qur'ān*, 2:148.

<sup>54</sup> Muḥammad 'Abd al-'Azīm al-Zarqānī, a professor in Qur'ānic Studies at the University of al-Azhar in Cairo, has produced a valuable four volume entitle; Springs of Knowledge in the Sciences of the Qur'ān (*Manāhil al-'Irfān fī 'ulūm al-Qur'ān*). This book based on the traditional format of most works on Qur'ānic Sciences.

<sup>55</sup> Al-Zarqani, Muhammad Abd al-'Azim, *Manāhil al-'Irfān fī 'ulūm al-Qur'ān*, Cairo: Dār Iḥyā' al-Kutub al-'Arabiya, vol.1, p.471.

<sup>56</sup> Ibn Manzur, *Lisān al-Arab*, 11:32-33.

Second : It was said to originate from the pronunciation of "*al-Maal'*" which means, to turn against, thus *ta'wīl* is to turn the sentence into different meaning which is more accurate<sup>57</sup>.

Third : It was mentioned to originate from the pronunciation of "*al-Iyāla'*" which refers to the word *al-Siāsa* equivalent to a high degree of expertise in linking the meanings accurately<sup>58</sup>.

In addition, *ta'wīl* refers to the interpretation or reclamation of meaning.<sup>59</sup> That is, an exegete reverts to a meaning of the verse from various probable meanings.<sup>60</sup> Some scholars advocate that *ta'wīl* is synonymous with *tafsīr*.<sup>61</sup> It is also mentioned that the first word is *ta'wīl* which means *tadbīr*, *taqdīr* and *tafsīr* corresponding to meditation, contemplation and interpretation<sup>62</sup> as the Qur'ān, 3:7 says:

Seeking discord, and searching for its **hidden meanings**  
(***ta'wīl***), but no one knows it's **true meanings** except Allah.

b. Technical meaning of *Ta'wīl* :

*Ta'wīl* from classical definition contained two different connotations.

First : *Ta'wīl* is an act of interpreting the words of God and clarifying them in whether they share the same literal meaning or otherwise. As a result, *tafsīr* and *ta'wīl* are sharing the same definition.

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<sup>57</sup> Al-Fityani, Khalid Ibrahim. (1992). *Muḥāḍarāt fī 'Ulūm al-Qur'ān*, Amman: Dār Ibda' Li-Nashr wa al-Tawzī', p.231.

<sup>58</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>59</sup> Sabuni, *Al-Tibyān fī 'ulūm al-Qur'ān*, p.62.

<sup>60</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>61</sup> Hamadah, Faruq. (1979). *Madkhal ila 'ulūm al-Qur'ān wa al-Tafsīr*, Rabat: Maktaba al-Ma'ārif, p.213.

<sup>62</sup> Hasan, Muhammad Ali. (1983). *Al-Manār fī 'ulūm al-Qur'ān*, Amman: Dār al-Arqam, p.139.

Second : The word *ta'wīl* means the same as the actual pronunciation. If it indicates the word as a command, then *ta'wīl* is actually the act itself and if it means hearsay, then the word will follow suit.<sup>63</sup>

However, *ta'wīl* from the contemporary scholars' point of views in the field of *fiqh*, *kalām* and *hadīth* opposed the strong meaning (*rājiḥ*) and declared it as weak or *marjūḥ* since there are certain evidences (*dalīl*) to support it.<sup>64</sup>

The difference between the two terms (*tafsīr* and *ta'wīl*) according to al-Rāghib al-Aṣfahānī is that the first is general and the second is specific. This is because *tafsīr* is more universal as compared to *ta'wīl* whereby all of them are deemed as *tafsīr* but not all are regarded as *ta'wīl*.

In an abridgement, he stated that:

- i. *Tafsīr* is more general than *ta'wīl*.
- ii. The use of the word *tafsīr* both in pronunciation and sentences are literal in meaning whereas *ta'wīl* is usually practiced in its meaning and the total number of words (*al-Jumal*).
- iii. *Ta'wīl* is widely used in the holy book sent down by God whereas *tafsīr* is applied in all other forms of revelation as well.<sup>65</sup>

These statements are supported by Ṣuyūṭī after having a thorough analysis of various possible meanings of the Qur'ān, that *tafsīr* refers to illumination of the external meaning of the Qur'ān while *ta'wīl* is the extraction of the hidden meanings and secreties of the most gracious Lord.<sup>66</sup> Simultaneously, Muḥammad Abū Shahba<sup>67</sup> added further by saying that "regardless of what is

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<sup>63</sup> Hasan, *Al-Manār fī 'ulūm al-Qur'ān*, p.139.

<sup>64</sup> Al-Dhahabi, Muhammad Hussain. (1989). *al-Tafsīr wa al-Mufasssīrūn*, Egypt: Maktaba Wahba, vol.1, p.19

<sup>65</sup> Al-Asfahani, al-Raghib. (1329H). *Muqaddima al-Tafsīr*, Cairo: al-Jamāliya, p. 16.

<sup>66</sup> Qattan, *Mabāhith fī 'ulūm al-Qur'ān*, p.327.

<sup>67</sup> Muḥammad Abū Shahba is a professor of Qur'ānic Sciences and Hadīth at the University of al-Azhar, Egypt and University of Umm al-Qura, Mecca. He has published a number of books and articles on Qur'ān and Hadīth studies in the Middle Eastern countries. One of his famous works is *al-Isrāīliyyāt wa al-Mawdū'āt fī Kutub al-Tafsīr*.

meant by the two words, they are commonly accepted with *tafsīr bi ma'thūr* or *tafsīr bi ra'y* or personal reasoning (*ijtihād*)<sup>68</sup> as being more universal and not limited to its pronunciation and meaning"<sup>69</sup>.

Based on the explanation, it is clarified that there are differences between *tafsīr* and *ta'wīl* whereby the stages are in chronological order. *Tafsīr* refers to elucidation of external meaning of the Qur'ān which is clear, whereas, *ta'wīl* refers to hidden meaning of a verse which contains various possible descriptions. However, *ta'wīl* only exists after one is able to understand the *tafsīr* thus automatically goes back to its original sources.

An expert in the field of *ta'wīl* is called a *mu'awwil* who also has the ability to interpret (*tafsīr*) and known as an exegete (*mufassir*). This is to ensure that the act of commentary (*ta'wīl*) is done correctly and accurately. However, according to al-Khālīdī<sup>70</sup> this does not mean that a *mufassir* is also a *mu'awwil* and vice versa since only a selected few by God will have both abilities.<sup>71</sup>

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<sup>68</sup> *Ijtihād* is a process of applying knowledge and reason. Actually, *Ijtihād* is a concept originates in the *hadīth* of Prophet (PBWH) and the practice and precedent of companions. In term of methodology of *Ijtihād* which is the basic theme of the science of the sources of law, however was influenced in the course of time by a variety of factors, including the political climate, the change of caliphate, and rulers of Islam. See: M.H. Kamali. (1991). *Principles of Islamic Jurisprudence*, chapter nineteen: *Ijtihād, or Personal Reasoning*, Cambridge: Islamic Texts Society, pp.315-338.

<sup>69</sup> Abu Shahba, Muhammad ibn Muhammad. (1988). *al-Isrāīliyāt wa al-Mawḍū'āt fī Kutub al-Tafsīr*, Egypt: Maktaba al-Sunna, p.28.

<sup>70</sup> Ṣalāḥ 'Abd al-Fattāḥ al-Khālīdī was a lecturer in the department of Theology, University of al-Balqā' al-Taṭbīqiya, Hashemite, kingdom of Jordan. He was teaching exegesis in different mosques, schools, colleges, faculties and universities. He has published various books and articles on exegesis such as; *al-Tafsīr al-Mawḍū'ī bayna al-Nazariya wa al-Taṭbīq*, *al-Bayān fī I'jāz al-Qur'ān*, *al-Tafsīr wa al-Ta'wīl fī al-Qur'ān*, and *Madhal ila Zilāl al-Qur'ān*, see: al-Khalidi, Salah Abd Fattah. (1996). *al-Tafsīr wa al-Ta'wīl fī al-Qur'ān*, Amman: Dār al-Nafāis Li al-Nashr wa al-Tawzī', p.1

<sup>71</sup> Al-Khalidi, Salah 'Abd al-Fattah. (1997). *al-Tafsīr al-Mawḍū'ī bayna al-Nazariya wa al-Taṭbīq*, Amman: Dār al-Nafāis Li al-Nashr wa al-Tawzī', p.15

Amongst the companions<sup>72</sup> of Prophet Muḥammad (PBWH) Ibn 'Abbās was the chosen one who prayed to have the ability of both exegesis (*tafsīr*) and commentary (*ta'wīl*) the Qur'ān<sup>73</sup>. The *tafsīr* as understood after ample elaboration is divided into two; exegesis based on the methodology of transmission (*tafsīr bi al-ma'thūr*) and exegesis based on opinion or knowledge (*tafsīr bi al-ra'y*). It is essential to explore these methodologies comprehensively to know further about their significance.

### **1.2.2 Tafsīr bi al-Ma'thūr**

*Al-Ma'thūr* falls under passive participles (*Ism Maf'ūl*) from *atharat al-hadīth atharan* which can be defined as utterances that are shifted (al-Manqūl)<sup>74</sup>. What is actually meant by *tafsīr bi al-Ma'thūr* is the exegesis that was transmitted or stated in a form of successive narration (*mutawātir*)<sup>75</sup> or the direct opposite of it.

Furthermore, according to Ibn Taymiya<sup>76</sup> the best method in an interpretation of the Qur'ān is by applying *tafsīr bi al-ma'thūr* since it is considered as the most accurate. In fact, he says that he has agreed that the *tafsīr bi al-ma'thūr* is "the contents of the Qur'ān attached with the explanations of each verses what have

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<sup>72</sup> Companion is a follower of prophet Muḥammad who embraced Islam during Muḥammad's lifetime and who physically encountered Muḥammad. As a group they are referred to as the "*Ṣaḥāba*" and have been regarded as the knowledgeable persons and masters of the Qur'ān. They were closest to the Prophet in fellowship and knowledge.

<sup>73</sup> *Ibid*, p.16

<sup>74</sup> Al-Muqri, Ahmad bin Ahmad bin Muhammad bin 'Ali al-Fayyumi. (1987). *al-Misbaḥ al-Munīr*, Beirut: Maktaba al-Lubnan, p.1

<sup>75</sup> *Mutawātir* means something reported by a sufficiently diverse group of people such that there could be no possibility of fabrication or collective conspiracy to fabricate (mistake or something false). See: 'Asqalani, Ibn Hajar. (1422AH). *al-Nukat 'ala Nuzha al-Nathr*, Saudi 'Arabia: Dār Ibn al-Jawzī, pp.51-70.

<sup>76</sup> Taqī al-Dīn Aḥmad bin Taymiya (1263-1328CE) was juris consult, and theologian. He was born in Harran, and at the age of six he fled with his father and brothers to Damascus during the Mongol invasions. Ibn Taymiya devoted himself from collect died in the citadel at the age of sixty-five. See: Ibn Kathir, Ismail ibn Umar. (1987). *al-Bidāya wa al-Nihāya fī al-Tārīkh*, vol.14, Cairo, pp.135-141.



also been uttered by Prophet Muḥammad (PBWH), his Companions and the Successors<sup>77</sup>”.<sup>78</sup>

Qaṭṭān also accepts this view and present similar arguments in its support. The term *tafsīr bi al-Ma'thūr*, he states that it is segregated into four parts namely; the commentary of the Qur'ān by the Qur'ān itself, or the commentary of the Qur'ān by the *hadīth* of the Prophet Muhammad (PBWH), or the commentary of the Qur'ān based on what has been transmitted by the Companions and lastly, the commentary of the Qur'ān by the point of view of the Prophet's successors (*tabi'īn*).<sup>79</sup>

With that in mind, those who wish to interpret the Qur'ān need to possess adequate qualifications and profound knowledge of various sciences. It means that to be one among the recognized personalities of exegesis, as stated by Suyūṭī (d.911), he should possess acquaintance in basic requirements such as; knowledge of Arabic language and its rules<sup>80</sup>, knowledge of Rhetoric<sup>81</sup>, knowledge of the Principles of Jurisprudence<sup>82</sup>, knowledge of background and circumstances of the revelation (*asbāb al-Nuzūl*), knowledge of abrogative (*Nāsikh*) and abrogated (*Mansūkh*), and knowledge of Qur'ānic Readings.<sup>83</sup>

Without in depth understanding of the language of the Qur'ān, there are many chances in which one could commit distortion and misinterpretation as a commentator. This is crucial since certain sentences are only mentioned in passing while in other sentences they are elaborated in detail. However, there

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<sup>77</sup> The Successors are the generation following the Companions and needed the guidance from them in Islamic fundamental. They were closest to the Companions in fellowship and knowledge as well as comprised the third source of exegesis.

<sup>78</sup> Ibn Taymiya, Taqī al-Din Ahmad. (1971). *Muqaddima fī Uṣūl al-Tafsīr*, Kuwait: Dār al-Qur'ān al-Karīm, p.64

<sup>79</sup> Qattān, *Mabāhith fī 'Ulūm al-Qur'ān*, p.347.

<sup>80</sup> The rules of Arabic language include knowledge of grammar, syntax, etymology, and morphology.

<sup>81</sup> The knowledge of Rhetoric includes science of Meanings (*ʿIlm al-Maʿānī*), science of clarifications (*ʿIlm al-Bayān*), and science of metaphors (*ʿIlm al-Badīʿ*).

<sup>82</sup> The Principles of Jurisprudence include *Khāṣ*, *ʿĀm*, *Mujmal* and *Mufaṣṣal*.

<sup>83</sup> Suyuti, Jalal al-Din. (1978). *al-Dūr Manthūr fī al-Tafsīr bi-l-Ma'thūr*, vol.2, pp.187-189.

are still many verses that do contain the exegesis or commentary. In these circumstances, it is best referred to the second source, the correct (*ṣaḥīḥ*) *ḥadīth*. This is because the sound *ḥadīth* provides clarity to the ambiguity of the Qur'ān as Qur'ān, 16:44 says:

And we sent down to you the Qur'ān so that you will elaborate it to all mankind what has been sent to them so that they will ponder.

Those who observe and examine the *ḥadīth* of the Prophet Muḥammad (PBWH) will be convinced that the *ḥadīth* provided explanations of some the Qur'ān. This is supported by the Prophet himself in his *ḥadīth* as stated by Miqdam bin Ma'dikarab:

Prophet says: Be conscious of the book sent down to you and what is similar (the *ḥadīth*)<sup>84</sup>

When one examines and analyses the *ḥadīth* of the Prophet, it can be seen that not all of the content are elaborated. Hence, they need to be referred to the third source of *tafsīr bi al-ma'thūr*; the opinions from the companions and their self exertion.

Ibn Kathīr interprets this *ḥadīth* in its widest sense. He reviews the various opinions of the early authorities of exegesis. He reports;

Amongst the closest companions with ample knowledge of the Qur'ān are 'Abdullah ibn 'Abbās (d.68H/ca.689) and 'Abdullah ibn Mas'ūd (d.ca.652). These people obtained the highest degree of piety and understanding of the Qur'ān. They were very insightful in learning and mastering the Qur'ān as their confessions proven so such as; from 'Abdullah bin Mas'ūd. By no other than god, the Qur'ān was not sent down until I know to whom it is sent down to, its location and if I can reach the location by riding a camel, I will do so.<sup>85</sup>

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<sup>84</sup> Abu Dawud, *Sunan Abū Dawūd*, edited by: Muḥammad Nasr al-Dīn Albānī, Riyadh: Maktaba al-Tarbiya al-'Arabī Li al-Duwal al-Khalīj, vol.3, Chapter (b) *Lizūm al-Sunna*, pp.870-871.

<sup>85</sup> Ibn Kathir, *Tafsīr al-Qur'ān al-'Azīm*, vol.1, p.15.

Ibn Taymiya offers nothing new in his book of the two companions under discussion. He goes to explain that Ibn 'Abbās who was able to translate the Qur'ān with the prayer he learnt from Prophet Muḥammad (PBWH):

Oh god, grant us great understanding of your religion and grant us the knowledge of commentary the Qur'ān.<sup>86</sup>

Ibn Taymiya then presents a categorical division among companions and their school of thought as he says:

The most knowledgeable person in the field of exegesis is the Meccan because they are the companions to Ibn 'Abbās such as; Mujāhid<sup>87</sup>, 'Aṭā'<sup>88</sup>, 'Ikrima<sup>89</sup> the slave to Ibn 'Abbās and many more.<sup>90</sup>

With regard to the above, Sufyān al-Thawrī<sup>91</sup> says: "If you obtain the exegesis from Mujāhid, it is sufficient enough".<sup>92</sup> Hence, al-Shāfi'ī<sup>93</sup> and al-Bukhārī<sup>94</sup> liked

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<sup>86</sup> Ibn Taymiya, *Muqaddima fi 'Ilm Tafsir*, p.67.

<sup>87</sup> Ābū al-Hajjāj Mujāhid (d.104/722) was born in 21AH and son of Jubayr Makhzūmī. He was a leading commentator of an Iranian origin, prominent exegete of the Muslim world after Ibn 'Abbās, and the famous successor, the generation following that of the Prophet and His companions. He had studied the sciences of the Qur'ān and produced his own exegesis. See: Al-Hamawī, Yaqut. *Mu'jam al-Udabā'*, Cairo: Dār al-Ma'mūn, vol.17, p.78.

<sup>88</sup> 'Aṭā' bin Ābī Rabāḥ (d.114/732) was born in 27AH and brought up in Mecca. He was a jurist and he belonged to the successor group. He was the most prominent successor of all and died in Mecca in 114AH at the age of eighty seven. See: Sabuni, *al-Tibyān fi 'Ulūm al-Qur'ān*, p.75.

<sup>89</sup> 'Ikrima (d.107/727) was born in 25AH. Al-Shāfi'ī stated that no one remained more prominent pertaining to the Book of God than 'Ikrima. He exhibited his profound scholarship in the field of Qur'ānic exegesis. He was a slave of Ibn 'Abbās and acquired the knowledge of the Qur'ān and *Sunna* from him. See: Dhahabi, *al-Tafsir wa-l Mufassirūn*, pp.107-109.

<sup>90</sup> Ibn Taymiya, *Muqaddima fi 'Ilm al-Tafsir*, p.32.

<sup>91</sup> Sufyān al-Thawrī ibn Sa'īd (d.161/778) was a successor Islamic scholar, jurist, and founder of *Thawrī* sect. he was also a *Hadith* compiler, of whom a great number of anecdotes are recorded. See: Tabari, Ibn Jarir. (1998). *Biographies of Prophet's Companions and Their Successors*, translated as an appendix to his *History*, vol.39, by Ella Landau-Tasseran, SUNY PRESS, p.258.

<sup>92</sup> Ibn Taymiya, *Muqaddima fi 'Ilm al-Tafsir*, p.75.

<sup>93</sup> Muḥammad ibn Idrīs al-Shāfi'ī (d.204/822) was born in 150AH, the year in which Ābū Ḥanifa died. He studied *Fiqh* in Mecca and Medina with some scholars of *ahl al-Hadith*. Then he gained knowledge from the stronghold of *ahl al-Ra'y* in Iraq. After that, he established his own approach and methodology before become as a founder and leader of the Shāfi'ī school of *Fiqh*. He published a number of valuable books such as; The Message (*Risāla*), Legal Interpretations of the Qur'ān (*Ahkām al-Qur'ān*), Conflicting *Hadith* (*Ikhtilāf al-Hadith*), the invalidity of Juristic Preference (*Ibtāl al-Istihsān*), The Congruence of Knowledge (*Jam' al-Ilm*), and Analogical Reasoning (*Qiyās*). See: al-Zarkashi, Badr al-Din Muhammad b. Abdullah. (1988). *al-Baḥr al-Muḥīṭ fi Uṣūl al-Fiqh*, Kuwait: Dār al-Ṣafwa, pp.116-122.

<sup>94</sup> Ābū 'Abdullah Muḥammad ibn Ismā'īl ibn Ibrāhīm al-Bukhārī al-Jūfī (d.256/872) was born in 194A.H./810CE in the city of Bukhara. His father Ismail was a well-respected scholar and was one

to extract the exegesis from Mujāhid. Some goes to Aḥmad ibn Ḥanbal<sup>95</sup> and many others who wrote books on exegesis".<sup>96</sup>

Indeed, the interpretation made by the successors in dealing with the content of the Qur'ān depend on its original essence, the words of the Prophet Muḥammad (PBWH) or *hadīth* as well as the views by the companions as stated in their intrinsic and meticulous writings.

Even though there are various opinions from the successors in their exegesis books, the scholars' have contradicting views pertaining the matter. Some said that it was unnecessary to accept the opinions from the successors since they did not hear them from Prophet Muḥammad (PBWH) themselves. They also were not in the situation when the Qur'ān was sent down. Lastly, there is no precise evidence pertaining to the successors' and the companions' fairness in judgments. Shu'ba ibn Hajjāj<sup>97</sup> and some others stated that the successor's opinions on the issues related to branch (*furu'*) is not an argument.<sup>98</sup>

Furthermore, according to al-Dhahabī<sup>99</sup>, most scholars of exegesis agreed that their views were adapted because they were accepted directly from the

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of the students of Malik ibn Anas. By the age of ten, he was reading the available works, and by the age of sixteen, he had memorized the works of Wakī' and 'Abdullah ibn Mubārak. For further details, see: Ibn Kathir, *al-Bidāya wa al-Nihāya fī al-Tārīkh*, vol.11, p.25

<sup>95</sup> Ābū 'Abdullah Aḥmad ibn Ḥanbal al-Syaibānī (d.241/855) was born in the city of Baghdad in the year 164A.H/780CE. He was chiefly interested in acquiring knowledge of Hadīth and traveled extensively through Iraq, Syria, Saudi Arabia and other Middle Eastern countries studying religions and collecting Prophet Hadīth. He was studying Fiqh and Jurisprudence from al-Shafī'ī and the founder of Hanbalī school of Fiqh. For further details, see: Al-Dhahabi, *Siyār A'lām al-Nubalā'*, vol.9, pp.434-547.

<sup>96</sup> Samir 'Abd al-'Aziz Shaliut, *al-Fatḥ al-Mubīn fī manāhij al-Mufasssīrīn*, p.91.

<sup>97</sup> Shu'ba ibn Hajjāj (d.160/776) was born in 82AH/701CE in the city of Baghdad. He was a great successor, universally acknowledged master of Hadīth scholarship. He was one of the early scholars who laid down the foundations of Hadīth as a major discipline in Islamic studies. He had written many books and one of them is his famous hadīth book entitled; al-Muṣannaf. See: Tabari, Ibn Jarir. (1998). *Biographies of Prophet's Companions, and Their Successors*, vol.39, SUNY PRESS, p.319.

<sup>98</sup> Ibn Taymiya, *Muqaddima fī Uṣūl al-Tafsīr*, p.76.

<sup>99</sup> Al-Dhahabi, a professor in Qur'ānic Sciences at the University of al-Azhar in Cairo, has produced an exhaustive four volume account of the development of exegesis and commentators from the earliest period until today. His first work is considered as Exegesis and Exegetes (*al-*

companions of Prophet Muḥammad (PBWH) as practiced by Mujāhid who obtained it from Ibn 'Abbās<sup>100</sup>. However, the most precise opinion on this matter was the ones from the successors who believed that the exegesis is not compulsory to be applied in situations that do not need to be pondered. Nonetheless, when the successors unanimously agreed on a certain interpretation, it is obligatory to apply them without having to refer to others' opinions<sup>101</sup>.

Having discussed briefly the exegesis based on the methodology of transmission, let us now look into the exegesis based on opinion (*tafsīr bi al-Ra'y*).

### **1.2.3 Tafsīr bi al-Ra'y**

According to Tamīm Uthāma, there is a very strong connection between *tafsīr bi al-ra'y* with *tafsīr ilmīy* because some scholars considered *tafsīr ilmīy* as a part of *tafsīr bi al-ra'y*. In his view, *Tafsīr bi al-ra'y* can be divided into two; the praiseworthy exegesis or known as *tafsīr bi al-ra'y mamdūh* and the blameworthy exegesis or known as *tafsīr bi al-ra'y al-mazmūm*.<sup>102</sup>

Before attempting to elaborate in detail on *tafsīr 'ilmīy*, one has to comprehend *tafsīr bi al-ra'y*, its divisions and the scholars' point of view towards it.

In *Lisān al-Arab*, the word *al-ra'y* has many connotations namely belief (*I'tiqād*) or the term *Ism* is not verbal noun (*maṣdar*), and the plural word is opinions (*Ārā'*)<sup>103</sup>. *Al-ra'y* is also defined as *qiyās* similar to their language, *aṣḥāb al-ra'y*

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*Tafsīr wa al-Mufasssīrūn*) was first completed in 1976 and has since seen four subsequent editions (Cairo: Maktaba Wahba, 1989).

<sup>100</sup> Al-Dhahabi, *al-Tafsīr wa al-Mufasssīrūn*, 1:129.

<sup>101</sup> *Ibid*, 1:130.

<sup>102</sup> Uthama, Tamim. (2005). *Methodologies of Qur'ānic Exegesis*, Kuala Lumpur: Pustaka Berhad, p.10.

<sup>103</sup> Ibn Manzur, *Lisān al-'Arab*, 19:13.

which means *aṣḥāb al-qiyās*. Today's generation named *aṣḥāb al-qiyās* as *aṣḥāb al-ra'y* after considering their views that do not have any *hadīths* to refer to<sup>104</sup>.

According to al-Dhahabī, the definition of *al-ra'y* is a personal reasoning (*ijtihād*) and the meaning of *tafsīr bi al-ra'y* is the interpretation of the Qur'ān with personal reasoning. It is after knowing the Arabic language, style of speaking as well as understanding its meaning, evidence and the reason on why it was sent down with it the abrogative (*nāsikh*) and the abrogated (*mansūkh*).<sup>105</sup>

With regards to al-Dhahabī's point of views, Muḥammad 'Abduh and Rashīd Riḍā believed past *Ijtihād*, which they call *al-ra'y*, not based on the Qur'ān and *Sunna*, is not binding on present-day Muslims. *Ijtihād*, therefore, could be used to adjust the law for today's changing environment. Consequently, laws which don't apply today are merely "additions" to the command of God, which past jurists are responsible for.<sup>106</sup>

After having examined the meaning of *tafsīr bi-l ra'y*, it is appropriate to mention some views of scholars in conjunction with it. Indeed, the scholars have different views on *tafsīr bi al-ra'y*. Some express that it is permissible and provide evidence in favor of their views, while others mention that it is impermissible and forbidden the motion. They later substantiate their argument by quoting evidences.

### 1.2.3.1 Views of impermissible

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<sup>104</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>105</sup> Al-Dhahabi, *al-Tafsīr wa al-Mufasssīrūn*, 1:26.

<sup>106</sup> Jansen, J.J.G. (1980). *The Interpretation of the Qur'ān in Modern Egypt*, Leiden: E.J. Brill, p.87.

Some scholars rejected the views on *tafsīr bi al-ra'y*, and have debated the issues based on rationale and evidences from the *hadīth* of Prophet Muḥammad (PBWH) that it is impermissible and prohibited to have any interpretation of the Qur'ān based on their own judgment<sup>107</sup>. If done so, it will be considered as a sin. In fact, Ibn Taymiya expressed that the interpretation of the Qur'ān absolutely based on opinion was prohibited (*harām*)<sup>108</sup>. Amongst the evidences as stated by the Prophet in his *hadīth* and reported by Ibn 'Abbās was:

Those who interpreted the Qur'ān without any knowledge, their place will be in hell.<sup>109</sup>

He reported again :

Those who interpret the Qur'ān correctly with his mind, it is considered as unacceptable (the method is wrong).<sup>110</sup>

Furthermore, the scholars debated using their mind by saying: "If the exegesis was done with sound mind, it is not something convincing since it is in the form of conjecture (*ẓan*) mentioning God using their limited knowledge."<sup>111</sup> This is because Qur'ān, 7:33 says:

... And saying things about Allah of which you have no knowledge.

Indeed, the Prophet (PBWH) says that the interpretation of Qur'ān based on opinion and speculation would lead people to the hell fire, as stated in his *hadīth*:

Beware of any statement of one except what you know, whoever believes me deliberately, his seat is in the hell fire and whoever says on the Qur'ān with his opinion his seat is in the hell fire.<sup>112</sup>

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<sup>107</sup> Some examples of scholars are; Ibn Taymiya (d.1328CE), Ibn Qayim al-Jawziya (d.751AH/1350CE), and Muḥammad al-Amīn al-Syanqīṭī (d.1393AH).

<sup>108</sup> Ibn Taymiya, *Muqaddīma fī Uṣūl al-Tafsīr*, p.105.

<sup>109</sup> Al-Tirmidhi, Abū Isa Muhammad b. Isa. 1980. *Sunan al-Tirmidhi*, Edited. 'Abd al-Rahman Muḥammad 'Usmān, Beirut: Dār al-Fikr, vol.5, p. 268. *Kitāb (k) tafsīr*.

<sup>110</sup> *Ibid*, 5: 269.

<sup>111</sup> Ibn Taymiya, *Muqaddīma fī Uṣūl al-Tafsīr*, p.79.

<sup>112</sup> Al-Tirmidhi, *Sunan al-Tirmidhi*.

This group of people also debated that the companions to Prophet (PBWH) felt sinful when interpreting the Qur'ān even though they were considered highly knowledgeable of the language used. Ābū Bakr al-Siddīq (d.13) was once asked on the Qur'ān:

Allah is the almighty and all-knowing. (Qur'ān, 4:85)

Ābū Bakr later answered; which sky will shield me and which ground will hold me if I stated the words of God with the things that I do not know<sup>113</sup>.

This group also discussed the opinions of the successors whom refused to elaborate on the Qur'ān from their point of views as well as forbid others to do so as reported by Sa'īd al-Musayyib<sup>114</sup> when asked on the Qur'ān; "Verily, I will not say a word on the Qur'ān"<sup>115</sup>. While al-Sha'bī<sup>116</sup> stated that "Three things that I would not do until the day I die are, stating about the Qur'ān, the soul (*al-Rūh*) and *al-ra'y*".<sup>117</sup>

All the absolute opinions mentioned above are points that belonged to the group who clearly stated that the exegesis based on opinion (*tafsīr bi al-ra'y*) is impermissible and similar to the *salafī* scholars' approach who felt sinful and have restrained as well as kept themselves aloof from discussing anything on the Qur'ān based on their opinion when they do not have the knowledge to so.

### 1.2.3.2 Views of Permissible

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<sup>113</sup> Ibn Taymiya, *Muqaddima fī Uṣūl al-Tafsīr*, pp.79-80.

<sup>114</sup> Sa'īd al-Musayyib (d.ca.715) was born in ca.637, during the caliphate of 'Umar ibn Khattāb. He was amongst foremost the authorities in *Hadīth*, Jurisprudence, Qur'ānic interpretation and greatest successor lived in Medina. For further details of his biography, see: Dhahabi, Muhammad Husain, *Siyār A'lām al-Nubalā'*, Hyderabad, vol.4, p.234.

<sup>115</sup> Ibn Taymiya, *Muqaddima fī Uṣūl al-Tafsīr*, p.82

<sup>116</sup> Al-Sha'bī was one of prominent successors and narrators of *Hadīth*. See: Dhahabi, *Siyār A'lām al-Nubalā'*, vol.2, p.136

<sup>117</sup> Al-Tabari, Abu Ja'far Muhammad b. Jarir. (n.d). *Jāmi' al-Bayān 'an Ta'wil Ai al-Qur'ān*, Beirut: Dār al-Fikr, vol.1, p.56.



Some scholars accepted and permitted exegesis based on opinion (*tafsīr bi-l-Ra'y*). They have debated by providing evidences based on the Qur'ān since the Qur'ān itself has encouraged men to analyze in detail (*tadabbur*)<sup>118</sup> and to learn from each happenings and incidents.<sup>119</sup>

Indeed, God urges mankind to contemplate, meditate and ponder over His signs and made people devotees in the recitation of the Qur'ān. The human reception of Qur'ānic verses thus depends ultimately upon the integrity of reason, without which humans would be incapable neither of comprehending the signs nor of responding to their message. The more abundant is an individual's native endowment of reason, the greater is the possibility for him or her to attain a larger magnitude of understanding and a higher level of response.

The nexus between faith and reason thus constitutes the hallmark of intelligent Islamic spirituality wherein human intellect and emotions are guided towards harmony with one another. The Qur'ān repeatedly provoked its reciters to think about the signs of God to understand God's illustrious presence in them, and ultimately vindicate the truth. Thus, contemplation and recollection will not be possible except by submerging in the mysteries of the Qur'ān in understanding its meaning.<sup>120</sup>

An example of arguments was a debate that mentioned Mujāhid who enquired from Ibn 'Abbās on the matter of exegesis with a written board in his hand. His doubt was answered with:

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<sup>118</sup> *Tadabbur* means concentrated and goal-oriented thinking provoked by the challenge to find something new or to solve difficult problems. See: al-Asfahani, Raghīb. (1964). *Mufradāt Alfāz al-Qur'ān*, Beirut: Dār Shamiya, p.249.

<sup>119</sup> Some examples of scholars are; Fakhr al-Dīn al-Rāzī, al-Bayḍāwī, al-Nasafī, al-Nisābūrī, Ābū Hayyān al-Andalūsī, and al-Ālūsī. For examples of Qur'ānic verses on *tadabbur* are; (Qur'ān, 38:29), and (Qur'ān, 47:24).

<sup>120</sup> Hamid, Muhsin. (1984). *Dirāsāt fī Uṣūl al-Tafsīr al-Qur'ān*, Morocco: Dār al-Thaqāfa, pp.137-140.

"Continue writing until I ask Ibn 'Abbās on the exegesis of the entire Qur'ān"<sup>121</sup>

This group of people later answered every issue raised by the group whose views impermissible the exegesis based on opinion (*tafsīr bi al-ra'y*) by saying that the *hadīth* reported by Ibn 'Abbās seemed like those who analyzed the Qur'ān were unknowledgeable and based on emotion as well as lack of guidance.<sup>122</sup>

However, Ibn 'Aṭīyya<sup>123</sup> stated that what was meant by the prohibition of any interpretation of the Qur'ān in the *hadīth* mentioned earlier was analyzed as that performed by unqualified individuals without the sufficient knowledge and based on their own theories and judgments. Indeed, they were not referred as scholars or that their interpretation was based on the correct methods such as; grammar (*nahw*) and principles (*uṣūl*). The analysis made which does not meet the criteria would not be accepted as a part of *hadīth* since the specialist of their own field would make their own interpretation based on their respected skills only.<sup>124</sup>

Furthermore, Ibn 'Aṭīyya had interpreted the *hadīth* and commented that the prohibited exegesis that cannot be done based on the mind are those related to the unseen phenomenon and exegesis that was done based on summary (*mujmal*) in the Qur'ān since all of them are unknown minus what was stated by God<sup>125</sup>.

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<sup>121</sup> Ibn Taymiya, *Muqaddima fī Uṣūl al-Tafsīr*, pp.74-75.

<sup>122</sup> *Ibid*, p.76.

<sup>123</sup> 'Abd al-Ḥaqq ibn Ghālib ibn 'Aṭīyya (d.542/1147) was born in 481AH. He was one of the famous judges from Spain, a versatile jurist and an expert in the sciences of *Hadīth*, exegesis, language, and literature whose surname was Ābū Muḥammad. The original title of his exegesis was *al-Muḥarrar Wajīz fī Tafsīr Kitāb al-'Azīz*. See: Sabuni, Muhammad Ali. (1981). *al-Tibyān fī 'Ulūm al-Qur'ān*, Damascus: Maktaba al-Ghazālī, p.188.

<sup>124</sup> Ibn 'Aṭīyya, 'Abd al-Haqq ibn Ghalib. (1975). *al-Muḥarrar Wajīz fī Tafsīr Kitāb al-'Azīz*, Morocco: Scientific Council in Fes, vol.1, p.17.

<sup>125</sup> *Ibid*.

This view is similar with Zarkashī's point of view in the act of interpretation the *hadīth* of Ibn 'Abbās. Al-Bayhaqī<sup>126</sup> also commented;

...if this *hadīth* is correct what was meant was opinions (*al-ra'y*) not based on evidence (*dalīl*). The examples included applying their own views in commenting on the reasons why the words of God were sent down or interpreting the Qur'ān with the same method. If the views are based on the concrete evidences, the exegesis is considered as a must. These are what were meant by Ābū Bakr when he said; "which sky will protect me and which ground will support me if I interpret the Qur'ān based on my own point of view".<sup>127</sup>

Thus, *tafsīr bi al-ra'y* is the method of interpreting the Qur'ān by using human reason (*dalīl 'aql*) or personal reasoning (*ijtihād*). In order to pursuit of conjecture in the face certitude, and surely conjecture avails nothing against the truth, the Qur'ānic emphasis on pondering over the verses<sup>128</sup> underscored a set of guidelines to ensure a correct outcome of reflection and thinking over them. As such, the group of scholars who announce that the act of interpreting the Qur'ān based on opinion is considered a must since the conjecture itself is a part of the extracted knowledge to gain the truth in religion.<sup>129</sup>

According to al-Zarqānī, what was forbidden in the *hadīth* is when the Qur'ānic text is confirmed and permanently unchangeable from the Islamic principles. However, in the case of the text which is not supported by any evidences and

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<sup>126</sup> Ābū Bakr Aḥmad ibn Husayn ibn 'Alī ibn 'Abd Allah ibn Mūsa al-Khusrawjirdī al-Bayhaqī, also known as Imam al-Bayhaqī (d.458AH/1066CE) was born in 384AH/994CE in the small town of *Khusrawjird* near *Bayhaq* in *Khurāsān*. During his lifetime, he became a famous Sunni hadīth expert, following Shafī'ī school of thought. See: Lucas, Scott C. (2008). *Constructive Critics, Hadīth Literature, and the Articulation Sunni Islam*, US: University of Arizona, p.98.

<sup>127</sup> Al-Zarkashī, *al-Burhān fi 'Ulūm al-Qur'ān*, vol.2, p.162.

<sup>128</sup> This is indicated in the numerous references in the Qur'ānic texts which encourage rational observation, thought, and reflection on the observable world and the universe beyond. See: (Qur'ān, 2:242), (Qur'ān, 7:176), (Qur'ān, 30:21), (Qur'ān, 38:29), (Qur'ān, 51:21), and (Qur'ān, 59:21).

<sup>129</sup> 'Ak, Khalid 'Abd al-Rahman. (1986). *Uṣūl al-Tafsīr wa qawā'iduhu*, Beirut: Dār al-Nafā'is, pp.180-182.

regarded as sufficient to interpret it by using human reason, it is permissible and will be granted by God.<sup>130</sup>

Based on *salafis* views, who felt sinful in interpreting the Qur'ān it was clarified by a group, who permit it (the act) by saying that the feeling arose based on the sense of humility and precaution (*iḥtiyāt*). Even though they have the sufficient knowledge on the subject, they somehow do not have enough courage to interpret what the Qur'ān is saying (*Mushkīl al-Qur'ān*) for fear of God's wrath if it was done inaccurately.<sup>131</sup>

To conclude the debate between these two scholars, the researcher would like to highlight what has been reported by al-Shāṭibī.<sup>132</sup> He said "the views based on *al-ra'y* are divided into two. They are:

First : The exegesis that is done parallel with the Arabic language as well as accurate with the Qur'ān and *sunna* is considered compulsory to be adapted based on several reasons as follows:

- i. The meaning of the Qur'ān needs to be elaborated and the rules extracted (*istinbāt*) and understood. These methods need to be practiced so that the rules (*hukm*) will not be partly or entirely disrupted.
- ii. In this situation it was obligatory for Prophet Muḥammad (PBWH) to explain in detail erasing any doubts or queries. As we all know, the Prophet did not entirely interpret the Qur'ān since he was not made responsible (*taklīf*) to do so. He only justified many verses to the scholars that cannot be understood without his explanation thus enabling them to use their legal reasoning (*ijtihād*) later on.

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<sup>130</sup> Al-Zarqani, *Manāhil al-Irfān fī 'Ulūm al-Qur'ān*, vol.1, pp.57-58.

<sup>131</sup> Ibn 'Aṭīyya, *al-Muḥarrar Wajīz fī Tafsīr Kitāb al-'Azīz*, vol.1, p.18.

<sup>132</sup> Ābū Ishāq Ibrāhīm ibn Mūsa al-Shāṭibī (d.1388) was Andalusian Suni Islamic legal scholar following Maliki sect. His surnames were "*al-Lakhmī*" due to his family's descent was from the Banū Lakhm, and "*al-Shāṭibī*" points to the city Jativa, which indicates that he was a descendant of migrants from that town in Granada. See: Mas'ud, Muhammad Khalid. (1977). *Islamic Legal Philosophy: A Study of Ābū Ishāq al-Shāṭibī's Life and Thought*, Canada: McGill University.

iii. The companions of Prophet Muḥammad were the most cautious (*al-Iḥtiyāt*) in interpreting the Qurʾān. However, their understandings were based on what they have comprehended and later the exegeses were spread to all. Hence, to limit the exegesis is only permissible through the method of Divinely-ordained prescription (*tawqīfiya*) is considered as incorrect because it is impossible to do so since the Qurʾān should be looked into from two different views as follows:

1. From the Islamic jurisprudence aspect related to the rules and regulations, the opinion which stated that it was sufficient to adapt and implement the method of Divinely-ordained prescription to prevent merely the use of the senses and sound mind.
2. Whatever that is related to the source of the Arabic language (*al-Lughawiya*) cannot apply the method of Divinely-ordained prescription.<sup>133</sup>

Secondly : Views that are not parallel and accurate to the Arabic language and to the evidence of Islamic jurisprudence is considered rejected without doubt. This is because it was regarded as interpreting the Qurʾān that is not based on the evidence which may lead to rejecting God<sup>134</sup>.

There were no clashes between the evidences used amongst the middle group with the ones who made it a must in interpreting the Qurʾān using *tafsīr bi al-raʾy*. This is based on the Prophet who forbade the exegesis of the Qurʾān with the sound mind for those who do so and not aided by the required elements such as the grammar (*nahw*), science of principles (*ʿilm uṣūl*) and many more. Hence, they interpret the Qurʾān with assumptions and those verses resulted to Ābū Bakr al-Ṣiddīq and other companions being reluctant to accept such an approach.<sup>135</sup>

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<sup>133</sup> Al-Shatibi, Ibrahim ibn Musa. (1975). *al-Muwāfaqāt fī Uṣūl al-Aḥkām*, Egypt: Dar al-Fikr al-ʿArabi, vol.3, p.422.

<sup>134</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>135</sup> Al-Shatibi, *al-Muwāfaqāt fī Uṣūl al-Aḥkām*, p.423.

From what have been stated, it can be concluded that the *tafsīr bi al-ra'y* can be divided into two. They are:

First : The praiseworthy exegesis (*tafsīr bi al-ra'y mamdūh*)<sup>136</sup> which was done using the mind parallel and accurate to the Qur'ān and *Sunna* as well as preserving the terms in interpreting the Qur'ān.

Second: The Blameworthy exegesis (*tafsīr bi al-ra'y mazmūm*)<sup>137</sup> which was not meeting with the criteria since interpreting the Qur'ān with the emotions without concrete evidences will cause the meaning to go astray.

### **1.3 THE MEANING OF ISLAMIC SCIENTIFIC EXEGESIS**

The main purpose of interpreting the Qur'ān done by the scholars, Prophet's companions and the Successors (*tābi'īn*) was to explain the Qur'ān's content related to the rules of Islamic jurisprudence when dealing in trading, marriage, crime and moral conduct. One of it aims is to purify the souls of his mankind as vicegerents of God on earth by obeying what is lawful and neglecting what is prohibited. It also aims at knowledge and understanding concerning the Qur'ān, to explain its meanings, extracts its legal rulings, and grasps its underlying reasons.

The development of knowledge inclusive of publications of books and translations have become the factor for the birth of several fields related to the differences in jurisprudence (*fiqh*) as well as the existence of the knowledge of

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<sup>136</sup> Praiseworthy exegesis is an interpretation of the Qur'ān based on personal reasoning (*Ijtihād*) far away from ignorance and deviation. It relies on proper methodology in understanding the passages of the Qur'ān. Whoever interprets the Qur'ān based on his opinion, but is absolutely committed to the comprehension of the stipulations and relied on the meanings of the Qur'ān, then this interpretation is permissible and acceptable. See: Abu Shahba, *al-Isrā'īliyyāt wa al-Mawḍū'āt fī Kutub al-Tafsīr*, pp.81-82, also see: Sabuni, *Al-Tibyān fī 'ulūm al-Qur'ān*, p.62

<sup>137</sup> Blameworthy exegesis is an interpretation of the Qur'ān without proper knowledge, that is, it is based purely on one's desire with utmost ignorance of rules and regulations of grammar and the canonical laws of Islam. It is also an interpretation of the Qur'ān based on one's vicious school and the deviationist innovation. *Ibid.*

theology (*uṣūl al-Dīn*). These were the result of theological influence, critical thinking and the knowledge of exegesis widely expanded that went through changes. It was divided into several different streams and methodologies as approaches to understanding the Qur'ān. For example, the streams of thematic exegesis (*tafsīr mawdū'ī*)<sup>138</sup>, exegesis based on indication (*tafsīr Ishārī*)<sup>139</sup>, exegesis based on juristic injunction (*tafsīr Ahkām*)<sup>140</sup>, and scientific exegesis (*tafsīr ilmīy*)<sup>141</sup>.

The meaning of exegesis has been discussed earlier whereas the connotation of *ilmīy* or science is a systematic knowledge that can be tested on its validity or a branch of knowledge based on real facts like physics, chemistry and biology.<sup>142</sup>

According to a definition provided by the New Columbia Encyclopedia, science is the organized body of knowledge concerning the physical world, both animate and inanimate; it includes the attitudes and methods through which this method of knowledge is formed. Thus science is both a particular kind of activity and the results of that activity.<sup>143</sup> However, in a sophisticated technical terminology by Sulaimān Nordīn<sup>144</sup>, science can be defined as any stimulus that is a systematic

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<sup>138</sup> It refers to the thematic exegesis of the Qur'ān which is to study the Qur'ān by taking up a particular theme from among the various doctrinal, social, and cosmological themes dealt by the Qur'ān such as; Abrogative (*Nāsikh*) and Abrogated (*Mansūkh*) verses, Causes for the Revelation of the Qur'ān (*asbāb al-nuzūl*), and variant readings of the Qur'ān (*Qirāat*). See: Al-Sadr, Martyr Muhammad Baqir. (1979). *Muqaddima fī al-Tafsīr al-Mawdu'ī al-madrasa al-Qur'āniya*, translated by: Mujahid Husayn, Beirut: Dār al-Ta'aruf wa al-Maṭbū'āt, pp.15-20.

<sup>139</sup> It is an interpretation of a verse of the Qur'ān disregarding its external meaning and it is based on indication (*isyāra*). It is not an acquired knowledge, but it is the knowledge imparted directly by God through mystic institutions due to constant remembrance of God. See: Ushama, Thameem. (1995). *Methodologies of the Qur'ānic Exegesis*, Kuala Lumpur: A.S. Nordeen, pp.33-34. It also refers to *Tafsīr Ṣūfī* which is the 'unveiling' (*kashf*) to the individual ṣūfī commentator of a relationship between a Qur'ānic verses and ṣūfī concept.

<sup>140</sup> This kind of exegesis aims to deduce juristic injunctions and rulings from Qur'ān and there are a lot of exegeses books written by Muslim Scholars in this field such as; *Ahkām al-Qur'ān* by Jaṣṣāṣ, *Ahkām al-Qur'ān* by Ibn al-'Arabī, and *al-Jāmi' Li Ahkām al-Qur'ān* by al-Qurṭubī.

<sup>141</sup> This kind of exegesis with full discussion will be **pointed out with** further details in the next point of this research.

<sup>142</sup> Teuku Iskandar, (1996), *Kamus Dewan*, Kuala Lumpur: Dewan Bahasa dan Pustaka, p.1196.

<sup>143</sup> Harris, W. and Judith S. Levey, (1975), *The New Colombia Encyclopedia*, London: Colombia University Press, p.2451.

<sup>144</sup> Sulaiman Nordin was a coordinator and associate professor of the Centre for General Studies, the National University of Malaysia. He has published a number of compilation of books such as;

knowledge based on observations, experiments and tests. It is also a systematic phenomenal analysis by applying specific methods (terms applied) in the quest of new findings.<sup>145</sup> Alparslan Acikgenc<sup>146</sup> then asserts that the definition of science is considered as a body of knowledge (in the sense of discipline), which arises as a result of the process of determining a subject matter that is investigated by scholarly developed method yielding theories.<sup>147</sup> Hence, it can be said that the field of science is actually a group of organized discipline based on researches done on animate and inanimate objects with objective methods as stated earlier to prove on its validity. It might, therefore, be appropriate to quote Bertrand Russell's<sup>148</sup> definition:

Science is the attempt to discover, by means of observation and reasoning based upon it, first, particular facts about the world, and the laws connecting facts with one another and (in fortunate cases) making it possible to predict future occurrences.<sup>149</sup>

However, al-Attas<sup>150</sup> has comes up with the term 'environmental context' which is abstract in nature in order to make science epistemologically possible. For

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*Science from Islamic Perspective, Islam, al-Qur'ān and contemporary Ideology and Science, Philosophy and Islam.*

<sup>145</sup> Sulaiman Noordin. (1993). *Sains, Falsafah dan Islam*, Bangi: National University of Malaysia, p.148.

<sup>146</sup> Alparslan Acikgenc was visiting professor at the International Institute of Islamic Thought and Civilization (ISTAC), Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia. In 1998, he was visiting professor at the Department of Philosophy, Jordan University in Amman. He also served as a Dean of Faculty of Arts and Sciences at Fatih University, Turkey. Presently, he works as a professor of history of philosophy at the Yildiz Technical University, Turkey. He has published a number of books, and articles which are related to Islam and Science such as; *Scientific Mentality and Islam, Islamic Understanding of Science and Philosophy*, and *Islamic Science: Towards a definition*.

<sup>147</sup> Acikgenc, Alparslan. (1996). *Islamic Science: Towards a definition*, Kuala Lumpur: International Institute of Islamic Thought and Civilization, p.14.

<sup>148</sup> Bertrand Arthur William Russell (d.1970) was a British philosopher, logician, and best known for his work in Mathematical logic and Analytic Philosophy. He made significant contributions, not just philosophy and logic, but it also including education, history, political theory, and religious studies. He was awarded the Order of Merit in 1949 and the Nobel Prize for Literature in 1950. See: Blackwell, Kenneth, and Harry Ruja. (1994). *A Bibliography of Bertrand Russell*, 3Vols, London: Routledge, pp.1-10.

<sup>149</sup> B. Russell. (1935). *Religion and Science*, Oxford: Oxford University Press, p.8.

<sup>150</sup> Syed Muhammad Naquib al-Attas, born September, 5, 1931 in Bogor, Java. He was the Founder-Director of the International Institute of Islamic Thought and Civilization (ISTAC), Malaysia. He is considered as a prominent and contemporary scholar due to his great contributions in philosophy, theology, metaphysics, history, and literature. He has published



example, his definition of science under general process of Islamicisation of knowledge as follows:

Islamic science is that scientific activity which takes place ultimately within the Islamic worldview (which can now be identified also as the Islamic conceptual environment); but as an extension of it directly within the Islamic scientific conceptual scheme (which can be identified also as the Islamic context of sciences).<sup>151</sup>

After reviewing the meanings of science one may be able to comprehend the meaning of scientific exegesis (*tafsīr ilmīy*). There are several definitions of scientific exegesis that was an analysis by distinguished scholars such as al-Dhahabī, al-Muḥtasab<sup>152</sup> and al-Khaulī<sup>153</sup>.

With regard to the definition of scientific exegesis, al-Dhahabī writes;

*Tafsīr 'ilmīy* is an exegesis which is discussed in detail the academic terminologies found in the Qur'ān and have attempted to extract knowledge and philosophy from the holy book.<sup>154</sup>

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substantially of books and articles on those particular fields such as; *Prolegomena to the Metaphysics of Islam, Islam and the Philosophy of Science, and The concept of Religion and the Foundation of Ethics and Morality*. See: Wan Mohd Nor Wan Daud. (1998). *The Educational Philosophy and Practice of Syed Muhammad Naquib al-Attas: An Exposition of the Original Concept of Islamisation*, Kuala Lumpur: International Institute of Islamic Thought and Civilization (ISTAC), pp. x-5.

<sup>151</sup> Al-Attas, Syed Muhammad Naguib. (1989). *Islam and the Philosophy of Science*. A keynote address delivered on 30<sup>th</sup> May 1989 to the International Seminar on Islamic Philosophy and Science held under the auspices of the University of Science (USM), Penang, Malaysia. Kuala Lumpur: International Institute of Islamic Thought and Civilization (ISTAC).

<sup>152</sup> 'Abd al-Majid 'Abd al-Muhtasab, born in Palestine, in 1937 and obtained Ph.D. from Cairo University, Egypt. He has published numerous books in Arabic such as; *Taha Hussein Mufakkiran, fī Mīzān al-Islam, Naqā'id Jarīr wa al-Aḥṭal*, and *Ittijāhāt al-Tafsīr fī al-'Aṣr al-Rāhin*. Currently, he is a lecturer of Arabic Language and Literature, Jordan University in Amman. See: Palestine. (2002-2009). Available at: <URL: [www.falestiny.com/writer\\_cv/486](http://www.falestiny.com/writer_cv/486), access date: 3<sup>rd</sup> June, 2010.

<sup>153</sup> Amīn al-Khaulī was considered as a prominent Muslim thinker due to his great contribution in a new approach in dealing with Qur'ānic exegesis. He was also known as a reformist and one of Muḥammad 'Abduh's students. He was become very famous and popular in Egypt when Professor Naṣr Ḥamīd Ābū Zayd always referred his statements and ideas. It became controversial issue in Azhar University. See: al-Khaulī, Amin. (1984). *al-Tafsīr: Nashātuhu, Tadarrujuhu, Taṭawwuruhu*, Beirut: Dār al-Kitāb al-Lubnānī, 1<sup>st</sup> edition, cover page.

<sup>154</sup> Al-Dhahabi, al-*Tafsīr wa al-Mufasssīrūn*, vol.2, p.454.

Al-Muhtasab accepts this point of views and presents similar arguments in its support. He discussed at some length, however, the technical meanings of the term *tafsīr 'ilmīy*, he says:

The *tafsīr 'ilmīy* is a process of transforming the symbolisms found in the Qur'ān to become theories and academic terminologies as well as extracting the knowledge and philosophies from it.<sup>155</sup>

According to Amīn Khaulī, the *tafsīr 'ilmīy* here means the exegesis which is related to scientific terms in Qur'ānic idioms and research finding in order to discover various scientific knowledge and philosophical opinions from it.<sup>156</sup>

These three definitions are quite similar even though the scholars use slightly different theories and terminologies. It is slightly different as some articulated the theories and academic terminologies. Others on the other hand, used the cosmological (*kawniyāt*) related to knowledge. Hence, it can be concluded that *tafsīr 'ilmīy* is the exegesis that discusses the words of cosmology in the Qur'ān and later analyze it based on the theories and scientific findings that are considered as firm and unwavering. It was noted during the era when the Qur'ān was sent down as evidence that it is not the creation of Prophet Muḥammad (PBWH) but from God and is one of the miracles<sup>157</sup> of Qur'ān.

#### **1.4 RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN THE QUR'ĀN AND SCIENCE**

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<sup>155</sup> Al-Muhtasab, 'Abd al-Majid. (1973). *Ittijāhāt al-Tafsīr fī al 'Aṣr al-Rāhīn*, Beirut: Dār al-Fikr, p.247.

<sup>156</sup> Al-Khauḍī, Amin. (1984). *al-Tafsīr: Nashātuhu, Tadarrujuhu, Taṭawwuruhu*, p.49.

<sup>157</sup> A miracle (*mu'jiza*) is defined as something that goes beyond the laws that God has placed in the universe, and is not subjected to causality. It cannot be attained by personal effort and, regardless of its time and nature, is a gift from God. See: al-Suyuti, Jalal al-Din, *al-Itqān fī 'ulūm al-Qur'ān*, p.148. The Qur'ān uses instead of word "mu'jiza" such as; *aya*, *bayyina*, *burhān*, and *sultān*. For examples, see: (Qur'ān, 6:109), (Qur'ān, 7:73), (Qur'ān, 28:32), and (Qur'ān, 14:11). However, Muṣṭafa Muslim points to the fact that the term "aya" is also used for "verse" in the Qur'ān. Therefore, "mu'jiza" was chosen in order to avoid terminology with more than one meaning. See: Muslim, Mustafa. (1999). *Mabāhith fī I'jāz al-Qur'ān*, Damascus: Dār al-Qalam, pp.17-18.

According to Mouly's<sup>158</sup> point of view, science in nature is based on curiosity of physics, the natural phenomena and other facts are confirmed through experiments, observations and tests which are later accepted as information. The details are recognized as valid if other researchers unanimously arrived at the same conclusion based on the same research methods. The research process involved three concepts. **Firstly** are the rules and regulations, **secondly** is the theory and **thirdly** is the hypothesis.<sup>159</sup>

The rules and regulations are the facts that are outlined based on groups. They are the links attaching the groups of theories that can be proven such as Newton's law<sup>160</sup> and others. On the other hand, theory is regarded as an academic assumption that is suitable with one another and is supported with evidences yet to be entirely proven such as the Big Bang Theory.

Meanwhile, hypothesis is the temporary statement on the connection between objects. It is organized in the form of assumptions to make justification on the said relation. It is more to a form of trial and error methods.

To qualify as 'Islamic science', Muslims believe that in the process of doing research, all these concepts must be from the Islamic approach. It is because the way of thinking and the application of science and technology are acceptable as long as they do not diverge from the text of the Qur'ān and *Sunna*. It has been claimed by A.H. Hobbs<sup>161</sup> in his book entitled "*Social Problems and Scientism*'

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<sup>158</sup> George Joseph Mouly was an author and Psychologist. He has published numerous books on education and psychology such as; *Educational Psychology*, *Educational Research: The Art and Science of Investigation*, and *Psychology for Teaching*.

<sup>159</sup> Mouly, George J. (1978). *Educational Research: The Art and Science of Investigation*, USA: Pearson Allyn and Bacon, pp.122-123.

<sup>160</sup> Amongst the Newton's law (1642-1729) that can be proven is the gravitation. It is mentioned that two objects that are placed in one air-tight container, different in weight when drop from the same height will reach the ground both at the same time. For further details, see: Russell, Bertrand. (1946). *History of Western Philosophy*, London: George Allen and Unwin Ltd., p.620.

<sup>161</sup> Albert H. Hobbs was a professor of Sociology and a historian of ideas, University of Pennsylvania, USA. He has published numerous books and distinguished journals articles as *American Sociological Review*, such as; *Dignity and Degradation*, *Welfarism and Orwell's Reversal*, *the false face of Science*, *the Claim of Sociology*, and *Social Problems and Scientism*.

that scientific research is considered as pseudo-science<sup>162</sup> or scientism<sup>163</sup> due to certain phenomenon in modern western science has been contradicted with methodology and science logic itself. The main reason is that the scientific research is not based on the belief in absolute perfection of God as a Creator of the universe<sup>164</sup> as Qur'ān, 45:24 says:

And they say: What is there but our life in this world? We shall die and we live, and nothing but time can destroy us. But of that they have no knowledge: they merely conjecture.

In fact, a modern rational human based on Naik's<sup>165</sup> view, however, never accept a religious scripture which says,

In the best possible poetic language, that the world is flat. This is because we live in an age, where human reason, logic and science are given primacy. Not many would accept the Qur'ān's extraordinarily beautiful language, as proof of its divine origin.<sup>166</sup>

Citing Albert Einstein, Naik says, "Science without religion is lame. Religion without science is blind."<sup>167</sup> Therefore, Naik suggests that the study of Qur'ān, and its analysis with modern sciences are essential to determine whether they are compatible or not. It is because according to him the Qur'ān is not a book of

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See: The Intercollegiate Review, *A Journal of Scholarship and Opinion*, ISI, vol. 1, No.1, January, 1965, pp.17-22.

<sup>162</sup> Pseudo-Science is pretending to be scientific, falsely represented as being scientific. See: (2007), *MacMillan English Dictionary for Advance Learners*, published by: Macmillan Publishers Limited, p.1196. It is also a methodology, belief or practice that is claimed to be scientific or that is made to appear to be scientific, but which does not adhere to an appropriate scientific methodology, lacks supporting evidence or plausibility or otherwise lacks scientific status. See: Hansson, Sven Ove, *Defining Pseudoscience*, *Philosophia Naturalis*, 33, pp.169-176.

<sup>163</sup> Scientism describes the position that the natural science is the most authoritative worldview or aspect of education and that it is superior to all other interpretations of life. See: Sorell, Tom. (1994). *Scientism: Philosophy and Infatuation with Science*, New York: Routledge Curzon, p.1ff

<sup>164</sup> Hobbs, Albert H. (1953). *Social Problems and Scientism*, Harrisburg, Pennsylvania: Stackpole, pp.220-232.

<sup>165</sup> Zakir 'Abdul Karīm Naik was born in October 1965 and has served as a Medical Doctor by education and professional training. He was a Founder and President of the Islamic Research Foundation (IRF), Mumbai, India and expert in Comparative Religion studies. He also has delivered lectures in USA, Canada, UK, Saudi Arabia, UAE, South Africa, Malaysia, Singapore, India and many other countries of the world. See; *Qur'ān and Modern Science: Compatible or incompatible?*, cover page.

<sup>166</sup> Naik, Zakir 'Abdul Karīm. (2001). *Qur'ān and Modern Science: Compatible or incompatible?*, Kuala Lumpur: Saba Islamic Media, p.7.

<sup>167</sup> *Ibid.*

science but a book of 'signs', i.e. *ayahs* and there are more than six thousand 'signs' in the Qur'ān of which more than of thousand deal with science.<sup>168</sup>

Indeed, Muslims believe that the miracle (*mukjiza*) that can be found in the Qur'ān lasted till the end of time. This type of miracle is known as conceptual (*ma'nawī*) that can be understood by the mind touched on theology (*uṣūl al-Dīn*), Fiqh, ethic (*akhlak*), the history of the believers and the prophets as well as the world's phenomena.

Today, there exist a lot of theories relating to the origins of the world. The most popular theory accepted widely by fellow astronomers and considered valid is the Big Bang Theory. The same facts were used to come up with the conclusion from the Islamic perspective on the creation of the universe. According to the Qur'ān:

Do not the unbelievers see that the heavens and the earth were joined together (as one unit of creation), before we clove them asunder? We made from water every Living thing. Will they not then believe?  
(Qur'ān, 21:30)

This verse has been revealed to prophet Muḥammad (PBWH), and it is also believed that he was granted the miracle of sense (*mukjiza ḥissī*) that can be seen and felt similar to the act of dividing the moon<sup>169</sup>, providing water for the companions' ablution through his gaps in between his fingers<sup>170</sup> as well as other miraculous abilities.

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<sup>168</sup> Naik. *Qur'ān and Modern Science: Compatible or incompatible?*. p.6.

<sup>169</sup> As reported in a *hadith* by Anas:

"Anas narrated that the people of Mecca requested from Prophet Muḥammad to prove his ability as the messenger of God by dividing the moon". For detail, see: *Fatḥ al-Bārī*, vol.6, p.631, *Kitāb (k) Manāqib. Sunan al-Tirmidhī*, vol.5, p.370, *Kitāb (k) Tafsīr. Musnad Aḥmad*, Vol.1, p.377, vol.3, p.165. *Saḥīḥ al-Muslim*, vol.2, p.521, *Kitāb (k) Faḍā'il*.

<sup>170</sup> As a *hadith* reported by Anas:

Anas bin Malik once said: "I looked at Prophet Muḥammad (PBWH) when 'Aṣr was drawing near and he wanted to perform ablution but there was no water available. He was later given a container and he put his hands into it. He later told his companions to use the water for ablution. I saw myself water coming out from between the gaps of his fingers. The companions and others from the surrounding area used the water to purify themselves before praying". For detail, see: *Sunan al-Tirmidhī*, vol.5, p.556, *Kitāb (k) Manāqib, Sunan al-Nasā'ī*, vol.1, p.52, *Kitāb (k) Ṭahāra*.)

However, the most effective miracles after the era of Prophet Muḥammad (PBWH) is believed by some Muslims to be the miracle relating to conceptual (*mukjiza ma'nawī*) such as; the verses pertaining to the creation of the universe. Today, there are a lot of scientific findings that are considered to be related to the ones stated in the Qur'ān and *Sunna*. For example; the shapes of the bacteria from cholera and how they are transmitting and could be infected to others may arguably be inferred from the Prophetic Tradition below:

If you heard of a cholera outbreak in one area, do not enter the infected area, and if you are from the said area, do not come out from there.<sup>171</sup>

In fact, no one knows the shapes of the bacteria and how they were transmitted. It was only in the 19<sup>th</sup> century, a scientist named Louis Pasteur<sup>172</sup> came out with the theory on how the disease can be transmitted.<sup>173</sup>

Nowadays, scientists have reached the highest degree of knowledge especially in the research done on the mysteries of the world. It can be proved by the usage of high technology equipments ensured the accuracy of each needed measurement. After all the hard works spending countless hours to unveil the mystery, it is believed that those findings can actually be found in the Qur'ān.

Indeed, amongst the findings included in the Qur'ān are those related to *halal* and *haram* in dealing with the social sciences, civilization, commerce, socio culture, war and international relation. There is also information, hints or suggestions on the issues that have become the topic of scientific research such as; the creation of heaven and earth, earth is round in shape and moves in its

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<sup>171</sup> Al-'Asqalani, Ahmad b. 'Ali b. Hajar. (n.d.). *Faḥḥ al-Bārī bi Sharḥ Ṣaḥīḥ al-Bukhārī*, Egypt: Dār al-Fikr li al-Ṭibā'a wa al-Nashr wa al-Tawzī', vol.10, p.179, *Kitāb (k) al-Ṭib*.

<sup>172</sup> Louis Pasteur (27 December 1822-28 September 1895) was a French biologist and chemist whose works with germs and micro-organisms. He was a professor of chemistry at the University of Lille in 1854. He won the Rumford medal of the British Royal Society for his work on the structure of crystals when he made his first foray into bacteriology in 1854. See: Dubos, R.J. (1996), *Louis Pasteur: Free Lance of Science*, San Francisco: Da Capo Press, pp.1-5.

<sup>173</sup> Sternberg, George M. (1991). *A Textbook of Bacteriology*. New York: William Wood and Company, pp.278-279.

own orbit, earth evolves based on its orbit around the sun, all creatures are created in pairs and finger prints are possible to use as humans' identification.

Thus, the basic concept here is the principle of non-contradiction between Qur'ān and science. Both, the open book of the universe and the revealed Book are inter-related and come from the same source and they should reflect the same message. If not, it is either not science or not revelation, or the wrong interpretation of either one or both. Nevertheless, the Qur'ān motivates humanity to study the universe and the humanity is invited to go beyond the scenery world as well as to make a spiritual link between natural phenomena and the ultimate reality.

### **1.5 THE PURPOSE OF STUDYING THE QUR'ĀN WITH *TAFSĪR 'ILMĪY***

It would appear that the main purpose of studying the Qur'ān with *tafsīr 'ilmīy* is that when one studies and analyses in detail the cosmological words in the Qur'ān, it can be seen that most of them ended in motivating us to study more on God's creations. In numerous passages, the Qur'ān argues for the creation of heavens and earth, for example in many "signs" verses:

Do they see nothing in the government of the heavens and the earth and all that God has created? (Do they not see) that it may well be that their term is near drawing to an end? **In what Message after this will they then believe?**

(Qur'ān, 7:185)

The Qur'ān, 13:2 also says:

Allah is He, who raised the heavens without any pillars that you can see, then He established Himself on the Throne (of Authority); He has subjected the sun and the moon (to His Law)! Each one runs (its course) for a term appointed. He does regulate affairs explaining the Signs in detail that **you may believe with certainty in the meeting with your Lord.**

Again, according to the Qur'ān:

And among His Signs is this that He created for you mates from among yourselves, that you may dwell in tranquility with them, and He has put love and mercy between your (hearts): **verily in that are Signs for those who reflect.**"

(Qur'ān, 30:21)

Also:

And from the fruit of the date-palm and the vine, you get out wholesome drink, and food: **see, in this also is a Sign for those who are wise.**"

(Qur'ān, 16:67)

Based on these Qur'ānic verses, it can be understood that the main intentions of the cosmological words are best interpreted using scientific exegesis. Indeed, the existence of the main essence of knowledge in the Qur'ān is not the actual reason of it being sent down to mankind. It is believed that the optimal purpose it to know God and His creation based on Qur'ānic verses which is revealed to the Prophet for guidance to all mankind on earth and later to worship Him. Other knowledge is just a branch of evidence of the power of God.<sup>174</sup>

Hence, it can be concluded that the main purposes of studying Qur'ān with *tafsīr 'ilmīy* are seen as the following:

- i. To firm the existence of Allah, the God of all creations. The Qur'ān contained the knowledge of the world in the heaven and the earth as well as the creation of mankind whereby men's limited capacity of the mind is unable to absorb. As a result, it will lead men to acknowledge the existence of God, the Almighty and most Powerful.

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<sup>174</sup> Muslim, Mustafa. (1999). *Mabāhith fī I'jāz al-Qur'ān*, p.25.



As Muḥammad Ghazālī<sup>175</sup> says;

There is no other way to know God besides the route of analysis in detail (*tadabbur*) from His attribute. However, the passage to know God is through analysis in detail on His creations.<sup>176</sup>

- ii. According to Maḍāt Ibrāhīm, as understood from chapter (*Sūra*) *Sabā'* on the existence of micro mini objects such as the atom (*zarra*), academic research has concluded that these atoms are divided into smaller particles with its contents known as nucleus and electron. These were not found until the 20<sup>th</sup> century. This scientific finding is essential to those who only accept entities that can be sensed through the five senses and not something that cannot be detected otherwise. Based on the scientific researches done on the relevance of the Qur'ān via observation and modern equipments became the concrete evidence on the greatness of the Creator.<sup>177</sup>

As Qur'ān, 10:61 says:

In whatever business you may be, and whatever portion you may be reciting from the Qur'ān, and whatever deed you (mankind) may be doing, We are witnesses of it when you are deeply engrossed in it. Nor is hidden from your Lord (so much as) the weight of an atom on the earth or in heaven. And not the least and not the greatest of these things but are recorded in a clear record.

- iii. *Tafsīr 'ilmīy* is amongst the inimitability evidences from the Qur'ān in contemporary modern era. The people during Prophet

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<sup>175</sup> Muḥammad al-Ghazālī was born in Buwayra, Egypt in 1917. He eventually entered the faculty of *uṣūl al-Dīn* at the University of al-Azhar. In the course of his life, he was Imam and lecturer at the *al-Maktaba al-Khaḍra* in Cairo, a member of Muslim Brotherhood and close associate with Ḥasan al-Banna, undersecretary of Islamic Da'wa in the Egyptian Ministry of Awqāf, and held numerous other posts and teaching positions. He published over sixty books and died in 1996. See: al-Ghazali, Muhammad. (2009). *The Sunna of the Prophet*, translated by: Aisha Bewley and edited by: 'Abd al-Haq Bewley, London: Dār al-Taḳwa Ltd, p.iii.

<sup>176</sup> Al-Ghazali, Muhammad, *Naḍarāt fī al-Qur'ān*, Cairo: Dār al-Kutub al-Ḥadītha, p.134.

<sup>177</sup> Madat Hafiz Ibrahim. *Al-Isyāra al-'Ilmiya fī al-Qur'ān al-Karīm*, Cairo: Maktaba Gharīb, p.95.

Muhammad's (PBWH) era believed in the power of the Qur'an and that the religion taught by the Messenger is true. This type of exegesis is one of the branches from the inimitability of the Qur'an (*i'jāz al-Qur'an*)<sup>178</sup> in the modern world since the content of the Qur'an is considered suitable to be used till the end of time.

## 1.6 THE SOURCES OF ISLAMIC SCIENTIFIC EXEGESIS

Basically, the explanation of the Qur'an by the Qur'an itself and the explanation of the Qur'an by the Prophet (PBWH) are considered as the two highest sources for Islamic scientific exegesis. Next to these ranks is that the explanations by the companions of the Prophet –those who-, were educated and well trained by the Prophet himself and were witnesses to the revelations. Of course all reports of explanations by the companions must be followed by the reports of the Successors (*Tābi'in*) and the books of sciences become the final source of the Islamic Scientific exegesis.

### a. The Qur'an

The first source of the Islamic scientific exegesis is the Qur'an itself. Accordingly, it happens very often that a certain point which is brief and requires explanation is invariably clarified by some other verses of the Qur'an itself. For example, there appears that sentence of four footed animals in the verse 5:1

Lawful to you (for food) are all beasts of cattle with the exceptions named;

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<sup>178</sup> The word *i'jāz* derived from the root *'ajazā'*, has various meanings, including, "to disable, to incapacitate, to be impossible, and to be inimitable", see: Lane, Edward W. (1984). *An Arabic-English Lexicon*, Cambridge: Islamic Texts Society, vol.2, pp.1959-1962. In technical language, it means the inimitable and unique nature of the Qur'an which leaves its opponents powerless or incapable of meeting the challenge which the revelation poses to them. See further: Von Denffer, Ahmad. (1989). *Ulūm al-Qur'an: an Introduction to the Sciences of the Qur'an*, Leicester: Islamic Foundation, p.149.

Now it is not clear here as to whom are those exceptional named in that particular verse? But the explanation on the exceptions named is mentioned very clearly where it is said:

Forbidden to you (for food) are: dead meat, blood, the flesh of swine, and that on which has been invoked the name of other than Allah.

(Qur'ān, 5:3)

The above verses show that the Qur'ān itself is self-explanatory in many respects. Therefore, all honest attempts at scientific exegesis must begin with the exegesis of the Qur'ān by Qur'ān itself. At this point, Ahmad Von Denffer elaborates:

The interpretation of the Qur'ān by the Qur'ān is the highest source of *tafsīr*. Many of the questions which may arise out of a certain passage of the Qur'ān have their explanation in other parts of the very same book, and often there is no need to turn to any sources other than the word of Allah, which in itself contains *tafsīr*. To seek to explain an *aya* from the Qur'ān by referring to another *aya* from the Qur'ān is the first and foremost duty of the *mufassir*. Only if this does not suffice, he will refer to other sources of *tafsīr*.<sup>179</sup>

Concerning these issues, what is given in a general form in one place is discussed in detail in some other places in the Qur'ān and what is dealt with briefly at one place is expanded in some other places.

#### b. The Hadīth

Muslims believe that God had sent the Qur'ān to the Prophet (PBWH) solely for the purpose that he should explain to people explicitly about the correct meaning of the Qur'ān as the Qur'ān, 62:2 says:

He it is Who sent among the unlettered ones a messenger (Muḥammad) from among themselves, reciting to them his verses, purifying them (from the filth of disbelief and polytheism), and teaching them the Book (this Qur'ān, Islamic Laws and Islamic jurisprudence) and ***al-Hikma*** (*al-Sunna*: legal ways, orders, acts of

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<sup>179</sup> Von Denffer, Ahmad, *'Ulūm al-Qur'ān: an Introduction to the Sciences of the Qur'ān*, p.126.

worship, etc. of prophet Muḥammad) and verily, they had been before in manifest error.

According to al-Shāfi'ī, the term ***al-Ḥikma*** in the verse refers to Prophet *Hadīth*. It has laid the greatest emphasis on *Hadīth* as the second source of knowledge, after the Qur'ān. However, because of some sorts of narrations such as; sound, weak, and fabricated are included in *Hadīth*; therefore, research-oriented commentators do not accept a narration as trustworthy until it withstands the principles used in the scrutiny of *Hadīth* narrations. Hence, finding a *hadīth* report somewhere, looking at it, and then employing it to determine a certain *tafsīr* is not correct, because that report might be weak, even contrary to other stronger reports.<sup>180</sup>

As far as the *Hadīth* is concerned, the Prophet (PBWH) was the foremost expounder of the Qur'ān for he has been spiritually appointed to illuminate the revelation to humanity. For example, the Qur'ān, 2:187 says:

...And eat and drink until the white thread of dawn appears to you distinct from its black thread.

Quoting *hadīth* of al-Bukhārī, al-Jaṣṣāṣ<sup>181</sup> goes to say:

Whenever this verse was revealed, 'Ādī ibn Ḥatim took two ropes; one white and another one black and looked them, but failed to distinguish one from another. After that, he went to the Prophet (PBWH) in the morning and narrated to him about what had happened. Then the

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<sup>180</sup> Al-Shafi'ī, Muhammad ibn Idris. (1980). *Aḥkām al-Qur'ān*, vol. 1, p.71.

<sup>181</sup> Aḥmad ibn 'Alī al-Rāzī al-Jaṣṣāṣ (d.370AH) was prominent scholar in the fundamental of *Fiqh* and *hadīth*. He had excellent memory of recalling the *Hadīths* of Ābū Dawūd, Ibn Ābī Shayba, 'Abd Razzāq, and Ti'yālīsī. He had written a number of books in Islamic Jurisprudence such as; *al-Fuṣūl fī al-Uṣūl*, *Mukhtaṣar al-Ṭaḥāwī*, *al-Jāmi' al-Kabīr*, and *Aḥkām al-Qur'ān*. See: al-Jaṣṣāṣ, Aḥmad ibn 'Alī al-Rāzī. (1986). *Aḥkām al-Qur'ān*, Istanbul, Vol.1, p.2.

Prophet (PBWH) explained that it was the darkness of the night and the whiteness of the day.<sup>182</sup>

Indeed, when the Prophet (PBWH) was asked about some verses of the Qur'ān, the answers he gave became authoritative explanations of those verses.

### c. The Reports from the Companions

Third source of the Islamic Scientific exegesis remains here for discussion, which is also considered to be reliable and acceptable, for the noble companions lived with the Prophet (PBWH) and received their education directly from the Prophet. Furthermore, they were personally present on the scene when revelation was coming down, and they had themselves witnessed all circumstances and backgrounds of the revelation. They are therefore seen as being highly qualified to give a correct understanding of the Qur'ān.

Among the Companions those who are considered as the most knowledgeable persons in exegesis such as; Ābū Bakr, 'Umar, 'Uthmān, 'Alī, Ibn 'Abbās, Ibn Mas'ūd, 'Ubay b. Ka'ab, Zaid b. Thābit, Ābū Mūsa al-Ash'arī, and 'Abdullah b. Zubair.<sup>183</sup>

As an example of exegesis from a companion, Ahmad Von Denffer elaborates on the verse;

When comes the help of God and victory and you do see the people enter God's religion in crowds, celebrate the praises of your Lord, and pray for His forgiveness: for He is Oft-Returning (in grace and mercy).

(Qur'ān, 110:3)

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<sup>182</sup> Al-Jaṣṣāṣ quotes this *hadīth* from Muḥammad ibn Ismā'īl al-Bukhārī, *al-Ṣaḥīḥ*, on the margin of *Fatḥ al-Bārī*, Cairo, Vol.3, p.64. Also, see: *Aḥkām al-Qur'ān*, vol.1, p.288.

<sup>183</sup> For a brief summary on early *tafsīr*, see: al-Sawwaf, Mujahid Muhammad. (1979). '*Early Tafsīr – A Survey of Qur'ānic Commentary up to 150 A.H.* in the book *Islamic Perspectives* edited by: Kurshīd Aḥmad and Zafar Ishāq Anṣārī, Leicester: The Islamic Foundation, pp.135-145.

Von Denffer says that, with reference to the above verse, some Companions said: "We are ordered to praise God and ask for His forgiveness, when God's help and the conquest (of Mecca) come to us. Some others kept quiet and did not say anything. On that 'Umar asked me: 'Do you say the same, O Ibn 'Abbās? I replied: 'No'. He said: 'What do you say then?' I replied: 'That is the sign of the death of God's apostle which God informed him of as Qur'ān says in verses 110: 1-3. On that 'Umar said: 'I do not know anything about it other than what you have said'.<sup>184</sup>

Hence, in the case of verses the explanation of which is not found in the Qur'ān or Prophet *Hadīth*, statements recorded from the Companions are given the highest priority. However, if the statements of Companions differ in the interpretation of a certain verse, then the commentators who come later examine them in the light of arguments and determine as to which interpretation can be given preference.

#### d. The Reports from the Successors (*Tābi'īn*)

The Reports from the Successors (*Tābi'īn*) are considered as one of important sources of Islamic Scientific exegesis. It refers to statements of Successors who have learnt the exegesis of Qur'ān from the Companions themselves. In fact, their statements too have great importance in the science of exegesis, although there exists a difference among scholars whether or not the statements of the Successors are decisive in exegesis<sup>185</sup> but their importance something which cannot be denied.

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<sup>184</sup> Von Denffer, Ahmad. (1989). *Ulūm al-Qur'ān: an Introduction to the Sciences of the Qur'ān*, Leicester: The Islamic Foundation, p.129.

<sup>185</sup> Al-Suyuti, Jalal al-Din. (1995). *al-Itqān fī 'Ulūm al-Qur'ān*, vol. 2, p.179.

There are three well-known groups of Qur'ānic exegetes among the Successors; the Meccan Group<sup>186</sup>, the Madinan Group<sup>187</sup> and the Iraq Group<sup>188</sup>. All these groups have their prominent Successors who have contributed for setting-up the group as well as enhancing their quantity of followers.

#### e. The books of Islamic Sciences

There are a lot of Islamic Science references which is essential in dealing with the Islamic Scientific exegesis due to its' scientific approach and methodology. Indeed, a number of Muslim scientists who devoted themselves and responded by attempting to synthesize Islam with the scientific point of views on aspects beyond material reality such as; al-Farabī (d.339/950), Ibn Sīnā/Avicenna (d.428/1037), and Ibn Rushd/Averroes (d.593/1198). They have produced many sciences books which are containing scientific facts and values such as; medicine, mathematics, physics, biology, chemistry, astronomy and geography.

Furthermore, one of prominent Muslim scholars and the most influential figure in the field of philosophy of science was Ābū Hāmid al-Ghazzālī (d.520/1121) via his famous work, the Incoherence of the Philosophers (*Tahāfut al-Falāsifa*) which he stated within the Muslim community supposed to be mastering the natural sciences. In fact, he distinguished

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<sup>186</sup> Among the Successors of the Meccan Group are; Mujāhid (d.104/722), 'Ikrima (d.107/727), and 'Aṭā' (d.114/732). See: Muhammad Husain al-Dhahabi. (1961). *al-Tafsīr wa al-Mufasssīrūn*, vol.1, Cairo: Dār al-Kutub al-Ḥadītha, pp.103-104.

<sup>187</sup> Among the Successors of the Madinan Group are; Ābū-l 'Alliya al-Riyāhī (d.90/708), Zaid b. Aslam (d.130/747), and Muḥammad b. Ka'b al-Qarzī (d.117/735). See: Von Denffer, *'Ulūm al-Qur'ān: an Introduction to the Sciences of the Qur'ān*, p.131.

<sup>188</sup> Among the Successors of the Iraq Group are; Masrūq b. al-'Ajda' (d.63/682), Ibrāhīm al-Nakha'ī (d.95/713), and al-Ḥasan al-Baṣrī (d.121/738). See: Zarqani, *Manāhil al-Irfān fī 'Ulūm al-Qur'ān*, p.21.

metaphysics from natural sciences which he considered not to be in conflict with religion.<sup>189</sup>

Simultaneously, al-Ghazzālī produced couple of books in order to advocate the use of science in expanding the meaning of the Qurʾān. For example, the Jewels of Qurʾān (*Jawāhir al-Qurʾān*) where he cited a number of verses in clarification of his point of views on sun and moon<sup>190</sup> and the Revival of the Religion Sciences (*Iḥyāʾ ʿUlūm al-Dīn*) where he wrote that 'all ideas and theories that thinkers found ambiguous, and that people disagree on are implied in signs and indications in the noble Qurʾān that only specialized, knowledgeable people can apprehend'.<sup>191</sup>

The book of Islamic Sciences as a source of Islamic Scientific exegesis can be understood further in the next chapter when a discussion on it takes place under the Islamic Scientific exegesis endeavor.

## 1.7 CONCLUSION

Whatever views one takes on the definition of Islamic Scientific exegesis, the researcher believes that the traditional and contemporary debate over it is essential in understanding the scientific exegesis, and it's conceptual. It is possible, however, to draw certain conclusions from the above discussions.

As far as the above discussion is concerned, it can be divided into five main divisions. First, definition of exegesis, and its divisions by prominent Muslim scholars by using their own point of views which are containing the term of Qurʾān itself, *Tafsīr*, *Taʾwīl*, *Tafsīr bi al-Maʾthūr*, and *Tafsīr bi al-Raʾy*. Second, those who strongly emphasize the definition of Islamic Scientific exegesis by

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<sup>189</sup> Al-Ghazzali, Abu Hamid. (1966). *Tahāfut al-Falāsifa*, ed. Sulayman Dana, Cairo: Dār al-Maʾārif, p.152.

<sup>190</sup> Al-Ghazzali, Abu Hamid. (n.d.). *Jawāhir al-Qurʾān*, Cairo: Maktaba al-Jundī, p.30.

<sup>191</sup> Al-Ghazzali, Abu Hamid. (1989). *Iḥyāʾ ʿUlūm al-Dīn*, Cairo: Muṣṭafā al-Ḥalabī Press, vol.1, p.296.



defining the term of 'science', the result of which is the adoption of the technical meaning of this scientific exegesis expressions.

The third is the relationship between Qur'ān and Science. It is noteworthy that the Muslim experience with science is in many ways distinct. Muslims believed to use science as a new evidence to support the truth of the Qur'ān. In fact, in the last few decades, it is believed that a number of newly discovered scientific facts have been found in the Qur'ān. However, using scientific approach in the interpretation of the Qur'ān is not a new methodology and it has been used by previous scholars.<sup>192</sup> Nevertheless, it still remains on-going debate among scholars in contemporary Muslim world.

The purpose of studying Qur'ān with scientific exegesis had been discussed in the fourth division in the above discussions. It has been stated that Muslims believe that by learning the cosmological verses and understanding further details on the scientific exegesis will lead people to acknowledge the existence of God on earth.

The fifth division is mostly concerned with the sources of Islamic scientific exegesis and the various readings. It includes the Qur'ān and Prophet's *Ḥadīth* as the major source of Islamic scientific exegesis. It later followed by the Reports from Prophet's Companions and Successors. Both Reports are essential and vital sources for those who emphasizes on the study of Qur'ānic exegesis because the companions and the successors are inter-related due to their strong relationship and might have similar school of thought. Finally, the books of science which is containing various scientific facts and it is appropriate to be used for those who integrate between two branches of knowledge; Qur'ān and science in their field of studies. All these sources are considered very important in dealing with the endeavor of Qur'ānic scientific exegesis.

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<sup>192</sup> Naik. *Qur'ān and Modern Science: Compatible or incompatible?*. pp.5-8.

# **CHAPTER TWO**

## **THE HISTORY OF ISLAMIC SCIENTIFIC EXEGESIS AND ITS EXPANSION**

### **2.1 INTRODUCTION**

Based on discussion in the last chapter concerning the definition of scientific exegesis in general, and relationship between Qur'ān and science, its purposes as well as sources of scientific exegesis in particular, this chapter will be discussing more about scientific approach based on prominent scholar's point of views. Having stated that, it is our purpose in this chapter to elaborate further on history of scientific exegesis, its development and expansion until contemporary era. By studying the history of scientific exegesis in the contemporary Muslim world, we attempt to explore the contribution of the prominent Muslim scholars to their particular civilizations.

This chapter will also examine traditionalists and contemporary scholars' methodologies, arguments, rational and textual, which, in principle case for the scientific exegesis. By scrutinizing these methodologies, however, we do not intend to cover all of the methodologies which are currently implemented within this field, partly due to the comprehensiveness of the methods, and partly owing to the limitations of this discussion. Hence, we would only discuss a number of chosen scholars' methods based upon their popularity and being well-known in Muslim world.

Moreover, we will differentiate between the traditionalists and modern time with regard to their methodology in dealing with the scientific exegesis. Finally, the researcher made a general conclusion on the overall assessment on the history of Islamic scientific exegesis and its expansion.

## 2.2 ISLAMIC SCIENTIFIC EXEGESIS ENDEAVOR

Muslims consider the Qurʾān to be a Divine miracle for all generation ever since it was compiled and written on fronds of date trees, animal skins and bones together with the sayings of the Prophet Muḥammad (PBWH) until the computerized era of the twentieth century today.

Muslims claim that one of the greatest miracles of the Qurʾān is that it provides a treasure of knowledge in spite of the fact that the Prophet (PBWH) did not know how to read (*ummi*). It is not a specialist book on any particular subject like a book of history, sociology, law, economics, physics, chemistry, botany, biology, but it is a book of guidance, instruction, and legal norms. It has subtle references to esoteric and exoteric truths. It makes far reaching references to the phenomena of nature, medicine, geography, environment, culture and civilization.

Indeed the main reason behind the commentators gave birth to a scientific exegesis is the fact that the number of the verses of Qurʾān, either explicitly or implicitly that commanded mankind, especially Muslim themselves, to explore science, as well as the desire to know the dimension of miracles of the Qurʾān in the light of modern science. Hence the scientific exegesis endeavor in Islam began with the textual standardization of the Qurʾān, and with the systematic transmission, collection and authentication of the *ḥadīth*.<sup>193</sup>

In fact, the prophet's companions were exposed in the interpretation of Qurʾānic verses that was connected to scientific exegesis. For example, Ibn ʿAbbās and Ibn ʿUmar used daily Arabic language that was easy to be comprehended by the locals in interpreting the signs of Qurʾān. According to Ibn Kathīr:

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<sup>193</sup> BOHAS, G., GUILLAUME, J.-P., & KOULOUGHLI, D. E. (1990). *The Arabic Linguistic Tradition*. London: Routledge, p.15.

Ibn 'Umar was asked on the Qur'ān, 21:30. He later answered "go to ibn 'Abbās". The person later went to meet ibn 'Abbās and asked him on the meaning of the verse and was answered. Verily earth before was in a solid form with no vegetation. It was similar to the sky with no raindrops falling from it. God separated earth with plants growing and the sky with rain.<sup>194</sup>

After the person left, Ibn 'Umar said: "Now, I am confident that this man (Ibn 'Abbās) is granted knowledge by God."<sup>195</sup> Another view that supported this evidence was by Ibn Mas'ūd himself when he said "those who wishes for knowledge of the ancients (*'ilm awwālīn*)<sup>196</sup> and knowledge of the moderns (*'ilm akhirīn*)<sup>197</sup> has to observe and understand the Qur'ān deeply"<sup>198</sup>.

Indeed, Franz Rosenthal<sup>199</sup> through his book entitled; *Knowledge Triumphant*, addressed that knowledge (*'ilm*) is considered as an essential part in the Islamic civilization, "for *'ilm* is one of those concepts that have dominated Islam and given Muslim civilization its distinctive shape and complexion."<sup>200</sup> Qur'ān also, as a Divine revelation from God repeatedly shows that its verses are only understandable for those who wise as Qur'ān says:

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<sup>194</sup> Ibn Kathir, Ismail. (n.d). *Tafsīr al-Qur'ān al-'Azīm*, Egypt: Dār Ihyā' al-Kutub al-'Arabiya, vol.3, p.177.

<sup>195</sup> *Ibid*.

<sup>196</sup> It refers to the sciences of the earlier people such as; Greeks and Indian, and comprising ethics, logic, music, philosophy, mathematics, and astronomy.

<sup>197</sup> It refers to the sciences of the later people, and comprising of *Sharia*, Sufism, and history. Al-Ghazzālī, however, claims that the phrase 'knowledge of the ancients and knowledge of the moderns mean; all Islamic subjects of study that came into existence from the early Islam up to his time. See: al-Ghazzālī, Abū Hāmid. 1977. *The Jewels of the Qur'ān*, translated by: M. A. Quasem, London: Kegan Paul International, p.20.

<sup>198</sup> Ibn Kathīr, *Tafsīr al-Qur'ān al-'Azīm*, vol.3, p.177.

<sup>199</sup> Franz Rosenthal (August 31, 1914-April 8, 2003) was a professor of Semitic languages at Yale from 1956 to 1967 and Sterling Professor Emeritus of Arabic, scholar of Arabic literature and Islam at Yale from 1967 to 1985. He was a prolific and highly accomplished scholar who contributed much to the development of source-critical studies in Arabic in the USA. He has published a numerous books which have been translated into Arabic, Russian and Turkish. Among his works are; *History of Muslim Historiography*, *The Muslim Concept of Freedom*, *The Classical Heritage in Islam* and *Knowledge Triumphant: The Concept of Knowledge in Medieval Islam*. See: In Memoriam: Franz Rosenthal, 87. The text is based on the necrologies in the Yale Bulletin & Calendar, published: April 15, 2003.

<sup>200</sup> Franz Rosenthal. (1970). *Knowledge Triumphant: The Concept of Knowledge in Medieval Islam*, Leiden: E. J. Brill, p.2

See! In the creation of the heavens and the earth; in the alternation of the night and the day; in the sailing of the ships through the ocean for the profit of mankind; in the rain which God sends down from the skies, and the life which He gives with it to an earth that is dead; in the beasts of all kinds that He scatters through the earth; in the change of the winds, and the clouds which they trail like their slaves between the sky and the earth – (here) indeed are signs for a people that are wise. (Qur'ān, 2:164)

Hence, from this verse proves that the scientific exegesis is inter-related and integrated between knowledge based on nature (*'ilm kawniyāt*) and the exegesis itself. It is one of the streams in the interpretation of the Qur'ān began during the golden era of the Abbasid Caliphate.<sup>201</sup> It started with the efforts made in synchronizing the Qur'ān with other interpretations of other external or branches of knowledge (*'ulūm juziyya*) together with the modern era until it became strong in the 5<sup>th</sup> century *hijrī* and years to come. It later emerged glorious and spread widely from the 19<sup>th</sup> century until today.<sup>202</sup>

There are a number of traditional scholars and exegetes who interpreted the Qur'ān by using scientific exegesis approach in order to reach with the only aim of finding the ultimate truth of the modern science in the Qur'ān and to encourage Muslims to explore it. This is because Muslims believe that scientific exegesis appearing as intellectual discourse and become popular among the scientists and religious scholars.

### **2.2.1 Traditional scholars who interpreted the Qur'ān using scientific exegesis**

At the peak of golden era of Islamic civilization, language, philosophy and science have been codified. Indeed, the development of highly advanced appeared in the field of translation and other classic works from pre-Islamic civilization, various approach, methods and flow of interpretation of the Qur'ān. It was also discovered methods of scientific exegesis oriented

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<sup>201</sup> The Classical Abbasid Period started from 750-1000.

<sup>202</sup> Al-Muhtasab, *Ittijāhāt al-Tafsīr fī al-'Aṣr al-Ḥadīth*, p.245.

utilization of the findings in the field of science to prove the truth of scientific fact.

A discussion of scientific exegesis would not be complete without some mention of the intellectual discourse between Qur'ān and science. Indeed, Muslims believe that the discourse existed previously and it still integrated each other obviously goes beyond the scope of the Islamic worldview. In other words, by accepting this integration of two branches of knowledge, the scientific exegesis would drastically form and gain access to the Muslim world.

Among the theologians and traditional scholars who discussed and interpreted the Qur'ān by rational exegesis using scientific exegesis included al-Ghazzālī, al-Rāzī, al-Zarkashī, and al-Suyūṭī. They unanimously agreed on the issue pertaining to the scientific exegesis; but they do have their own methods of interpreting the Qur'ān. However, these methods will be changing based on the passing of time. Ghazzālī's method for instance differs with Rāzī's who came soon after the great scholar.

These differences are visible and will be highlighted later by the researcher in discussing in detail each and every one of the Muslim scholars which comprised from as early as the 18<sup>th</sup> century till 20<sup>th</sup> century.

#### **i. Abū Hāmid al-Ghazzālī (d.505H)<sup>203</sup>**

Ghazzālī<sup>204</sup> was a great scholar and had studied the exact philosophical sciences such as; mathematics, logic, natural sciences, theology, politics, and

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<sup>203</sup> Abū Hāmid al-Ghazzālī was born in Ṭūs, Persia in 1058/450H. He was well known for his contribution in the history of the Muslim thinkers. He travelled widely for seeking knowledge purposes as far as Jūrjān and ended in Naisābūr with al-Juwaynī as his teacher better known as Imām Haramayn. He was later called for by *Nizām al-Mulk*, a diplomat of Sultān Seljuk, Turkish who reigned over Abbasid Caliphate in Baghdad to be appointed as a Professor of the University of Niẓāmiya, Baghdad. He returned to Ṭūs and died on a Monday, 14<sup>th</sup> Jamādil Ākhīr 505H. It was told that he had written a total of 400 books but what was salvaged were equivalent to a handful of 50 books only. See: Al-Ghazzālī, Abū Hāmid. (1967). *Ihyā 'Ulūm al-Dīn*, Egypt: *Muassasa al-Halabī wa Sharīkahu li al-Nashr wa al-Tawzī'*, vol.1, p.1.

ethics. Besides that, in the world of Islam, Ghazzālī is believed to be a pioneer of scientific exegesis theoretically. According to W. Montgomery Watt, Ghazzālī had stated concerning the natural sciences that;

This is the investigation of the sphere of the heavens together with the heavenly bodies, and of what is beneath the heavens, both simple bodies like water, air, earth, fire, and composite bodies like animals, plants, and minerals, and also of the causes of their changes, transformations and combinations. This is similar to the investigation by medicine of the human body with its principal and subordinate organs, and of the causes of the changes of temperament.<sup>205</sup>

Furthermore, Ghazzālī had mentioned in his magnum opus, *Revival of Religious Sciences (Ihyā' 'Ulūm al-Dīn)* in the fourth chapter comprising of the ethics in reading and understanding the Qur'ān as well as interpreting it by using his own intellectual and opinion. He proceeds to explain that even signs showed that the Qur'ān contained many meanings for those who are able to understand and after discussing the inimitability of the Qur'ān, Ghazzālī then goes on to assert that;

The entire knowledge included in attribute of God and His characteristics, the content of the Qur'ān is endless. It is a sign of God's greatness requiring in depth analysis not just via on-the-surface usage of exegesis with the mind alone albeit all the contradicting motions on different theories. There exist the evidential signs that are only visible to the knowledgeable persons.<sup>206</sup>

Ghazzālī also emphasizes his views on the religious science and ways of applying them. He says:

Most of you probably thought that other knowledge apart from religious science such as medicine, astronomy, geography, veterinary

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<sup>204</sup> Some of the earliest traditional biographers have written concerning whether his name should be spelled with one or two Z's. I have adopted the spelling with two Z's following what is called a standard view that is *nisba* from Ghazzāl - for his father was a spinner of wool, which he sold in his small shop. While, other scholars hold that the correct spelling is Ghazālī (with single Z) that is derived from Ghazāla, a village near Tūs. See: M. Saeed Sheikh. (1995). *al-Ghazzālī: A History of Muslim Philosophy*, 2 vols, ed. M.M. Sharif, Delhi: Low Price Publications, pp.581-587. Also see: Gerhard Bowering. (1985). *Ghazālī: Islamic Biography in Encyclopaedia Iranica*, 10, no.4, pp.358-363.

<sup>205</sup> W. Montgomery Watt. (1953). *The Faith and Practice of al-Ghazālī*, (London: George Allen and Unwin), pp.30-36.

<sup>206</sup> Al-Ghazzālī, Abū Hāmid. (1967). *Ihyā' 'Ulūm al-Dīn*, vol.1, p.378.

and surgical operations on parts of the body do not go astray from the Qur'ān but were extracted from it with no boundaries. If the entire sea becomes ink to be used to document all of Allah's knowledge, it will run out even before everything is finished.<sup>207</sup>

However, pertaining to the signs of nature which are related to the universe, the sun, the moon and eclipse were highlighted when he interprets numerous Qur'ānic verses as Qur'ān, 10:5 says:

It is He Who made the sun to be a shining glory and the moon to be a light (of beauty), and measured out stages for it: that you might know the number of years and the count (of time).

Qur'ān, 75:7-10 also says:

At length, when the sight is dazed, and the moon is buried in darkness, and the sun and moon are joined together – that day will man say: "Where is the refuge?"

Again, Qur'ān, 35:13 says:

He merges night into day, and He merges day into night, and He has subjected the sun and the moon (to His law): each one runs its course for a term appointed.

And Qur'ān, 36:38 says:

The sun runs its course for a period determined for it: that is the decree of (Him), the Exalted in Might, the All-Knowing.

Based on his commentary on the above Qur'ānic verses, Ghazzālī goes on to say:

The real meaning of the movements of the sun and the moon according to a fixed reckoning and of the eclipse of both, of the merging of the night into the day and the manner of the wrapping of one of them about the other, can only be known by him who knows the manner of the composition of the heavens and the earth, and this itself is a science [i.e. astronomy].<sup>208</sup>

Another example of scientific approach occurs in the context of his interpretation on the Qur'ān, 82:6-8:

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<sup>207</sup> Al-Ghazzālī. *Jewels of the Qur'ān*, p.7.

<sup>208</sup> Al-Ghazzālī. *Jewels of the Qur'ān*, pp.46-47.



O man! What has seduced you from your Lord Most Beneficent? Him Who created you. Fashioned you in due proportion, and gave you a just bias; in whatever form He wills, does He put you together.

Ghazzālī does relate the verses to those who study the anatomy of man's limbs, internal organs of the human body as well as its functions as he later added that the Qur'ān has outlined various aspects including the knowledge of the ancients (*'ilm awwālīn*) and knowledge of the moderns (*'ilm ākhirīn*).<sup>209</sup>

From Ghazzālī's point of views on the Qur'ānic exegesis, it can be concluded as the following<sup>210</sup>:

1. He believed that the Qur'ān is like an ocean which is pearls remains hidden in the bottom of the ocean. This is a metaphor to hidden the wonderful meanings behind the Qur'ānic verses.
2. It is made necessary for the specialists in the field of medicine, astronomy, geography, veterinary and others to study the verses of the Qur'ān and understand it meanings in relation to their respective subjects. This is because the Qur'ān is considered as guidance that revealed on the miraculous creation of the heaven and earth, the sun and the moon which are the evidence of God's greatest power.
3. The academic interpretation made by the religious scholars together with those who are familiar to the same content would be a tool for one to understand Qur'ān in more detailed. This is analogous to the comprehending of perfection of shape (*al-taswiya*), breath (*al-nafkḥ*) and soul (*al-rūh*) in the concept of the creation of mankind.

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<sup>209</sup> Having stated before, these two terms mean knowledge, subject of study or intellectual discipline. They are not mean science which is opposite of arts. In fact, these terms have been mentioned in Prophet (PBWH) *hadith*. For details, see: Ibn Mājah, Muhammad Ibn Yazīd al-Qazwīnī. (1953). *Sunan, Fitan*, Cairo, p.20. Also, see: Al-Ghazzālī, Abū Hāmid. (1977). *Jewels of the Qur'ān*, p.47.

<sup>210</sup> *Ibid*, pp.15-25.

With regards to Ghazzālī's method, he does not discuss in details on scientific exegesis. This is due to the fact that Ghazzālī was using the term 'science' in his works as a loose sense; which referred to knowledge and producing many supporting theories.<sup>211</sup>

This, then, is the post-Ghazzālīan theologian; Fakḥr al-Dīn al-Rāzī who was the first to apply the science and interpreted it widely in his books.

## ii. Fakḥr al-Dīn al-Rāzī (d.606H)<sup>212</sup>

Fakḥr al-Dīn al-Rāzī was the prominent exegete who brought to comprehensive absolutely the intellectual work of the Islamic scientific exegesis in his celebrated *Mafātīh al-Ghayb*.<sup>213</sup> In this work, Rāzī did not simply apply the academic theories in interpreting the natural verses of Qur'ān but as a mediator (*wasīla*) in comprehending the inimitability of Qur'ān in total precision.

There is lot of inimitability of Qur'ān in Rāzī's approaches which carried out in a large scale especially, in dealing with the scientific exegesis. In fact, it was visible in how he construed the Qur'ān as the following:

Praise be to God, the Cherisher and Sustainer of the Worlds. (Qur'ān, 1:1)

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<sup>211</sup> Al-Ghazzālī, *Jewels of the Qur'ān*, p.20.

<sup>212</sup> He was Muhammad ibn 'Umar ibn Hussein ibn 'Alī and better known as Ibn Kḥāṭib al-Ray since his father was the *kḥātib* of the al-Ray Mosque. Al-Rāzī was born in the month of Ramaḍān year 543H or 544H, his early education comprised of lessons taught by his own father who mastered the knowledge of theology. He practiced the sect of al-Shāfi'ī al-Asha'arī. He began his travelling for knowledge from Khawarazmī and later to Samarkhan, India and finally to Bukhāra. He left Bukhāra and headed back to his hometown, al-Ray. Historians believed that his writing comprised of 200 books amongst the popular ones was a book of exegesis entitled *Mafātīh al-Ghayb* and *Nihāya al-I'jāz fī Dirāsa al-I'jāz*. He died in 606A.H. See: Barakāt, 'Abd al-Ghānī Muhammad Sa'ad. (1989). *al-I'jāz al-Qur'ān Wujūhuhu wa Asrāruhu*, Cairo: Maktaba al-Wahba, p.231. Also see: al-Zarkali, *al-A'lam*, 6:313, Kahala, *Mu'jam al-Muallifīn*, 11:79-80, al-Suyuti, *Ṭabaqāt al-Mufasssīrīn*, p.100, al-Dawadi, *Ṭabaqāt al-Mufasssīrīn*, 2:215-218.

<sup>213</sup> *Mafātīh al-Ghayb* is known as *Tafsīr al-Kabīr* by Fakḥr al-Dīn al-Rāzī. This exegesis is very comprehensive, covering a wide range in the field of exegesis, including science, theology and philosophy. The interpretations based on sound arguments and it belongs to the class of exegesis based on opinion.

With regards to this verse, he mentioned that "it needs to be noted that indeed every praises on the bounty granted by God to men is denied unless they themselves are aware of them."<sup>214</sup> The bounties are countless as mentioned by Qur'ān, 14:34:

And He gives you of all that you ask for. But if you count the favors of God, never will you be able to number them.

In this verse, Rāzī promoting the favors of God by inspiring the believers to understand its deeper significance and then he explains the creation of miraculous universe as well as creation of mankind on earth. According to him, the structure of human physical comprises body (*jasad*) and soul (*Rūh*) and there are a number of creations of God such as; sea, ocean, plant, animals, and galaxies which would be benefit for mankind. Indeed, in pointing the reader towards the way of the people of realized truth, Rāzī encourages people to ponder about the creation of men which may consist of ten thousands queries.<sup>215</sup>

There are other wonders such as Divine Throne (*Arsh*), the Divine Footstool (*Kursī*), layers of the sky, molecules and the universe inclusive of the flora and fauna all of which require thorough researches. It is obvious when Qur'ān, 16:66 says:

And verily in cattle (too) will you find an instructive sign. From what is within their bodies between excretions and blood, We produce, for your drink, milk, pure and agreeable to those who drink it.

In his commentary on the verse, Rāzī quotes *Hadīth* as reported by al-Kalbī, narrated by Ābū Ṣāleḥ from ibn 'Abbās by saying: "when a portion of food is in the stomach (big), the lower part of the digestion system produce excretion,

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<sup>214</sup> Al-Rāzī, Fakḥr al-Dīn. (2000). *Mafātīḥ al-Ghayb*, vol.1, Beirut: Dār al-Kutub al-'Ilmiya, p.5

<sup>215</sup> *Ibid*, vol.19, pp.102-103.

blood on the upper part and milk in the middle section. The blood than flow in its stream whereas the milk its section and the excretion where it should be."<sup>216</sup>

Rāzī in this matter has criticized what has been reported by al-Kalbī by saying; whatever theories those are unreasonable and incorrect cannot be accepted. Such theories included the formation of the milk since the evidence showed that inside the slaughtered animals' big stomach do not contained milk or blood.<sup>217</sup>

The latter interpretation is clearly a reference to his scientific approach as he says:

In reality when an animal eats food, it will reach the animal's stomach. When a human being does the same act the food will also enter his big stomach. When a livestock or alike swallow food and digested in the first stage what is clean and clean will be absorbed by the heart whereas what is thick will make its way down to the intestine. The liver will later process the liquid into blood which is also known as digestion of the second phase. During this stage, the blood will be combined together with the yellow and black increasing its thickness. The yellow product will go to the bile and the black to the liver. Water on the other hand will be absorbed by the kidney and some by the gall bladder. Blood will flow in the veins and the sweat glands situated in the heart thus triggering the third phase in the digestive system. In between the heart and the breast there exist a big number of veins enabling blood to flow through them all the way to the milk gland. The milk gland can be described as meat with soft and whitish glands. God has redirected the blood into the said gland transforming its original form to become milk. It was later added by al-Rāzī that this is the correct way of milk formation.<sup>218</sup>

Another example on to the methods upheld by Rāzī in interpreting the miracles of bees in the Qur'ān would be when he interpreted these verses:

And your Lord taught the Bee to build its cells in hills, on trees, and in (men's) habitations. Then to eat of all the produce (of the earth), and find with skill the spacious paths of its Lord: there issues from within their bodies a drink of varying colours, in which is healing for men:

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<sup>216</sup> Al-Rāzī, *Mafātīḥ al-Ghayb*, vol.20, pp.52-53.

<sup>217</sup> *Ibid*, p.53.

<sup>218</sup> *Ibid*, pp.53-54.

verily in this is a sign for those who give thought.

(Qur'ān, 16:68-69)

It was long debated on the art of constructing bee hives, and based on Rāzī's point of views, the miracles of bees that enable them to build their homes and the senses in extracting honey from the nectars (flowers).<sup>219</sup>

In conclusion, the scientific facts are clearly and textually found in the Qur'ān. It is noteworthy that the Muslim scholars experience with science is in many ways distinct. However, Rāzī attempted to use his own approaches in dealing with the scientific exegesis in order to interpret and to come out new evidence comprehensively as well as to support the truths and signs of Qur'ānic verses. He must be considered as a precursor of this school of scientific exegesis, for he used the scientific knowledge of his time to illuminate his exegetical efforts which will lead people to acknowledge the existence of God on earth.

The scientific exegesis is also reinforced in the Qur'ānic literature with the phenomenal work compiled by subsequent commentators; Badr al-Dīn al-Zarkashī and Jalāl al-Dīn al-Suyūṭī.

### **iii. Badr al-Dīn al-Zarkashī (d.792H)**

Zarkashī discovered in the second chapter of his book entitled *al-Burhān fī 'Ulūm al-Qur'ān* on the needs of the scholars of exegesis to understand and master the science deeply. Indeed, he brought forward the views from several companions such as Ibn Mas'ūd on the matter related to the scientific exegesis. Furthermore, he also extracted the opinions of Ghazzālī from his book, *Revival of Religious Sciences*.

Furthermore, Zarkashī claims that Qur'ān is a deep ocean requiring complicated understanding of its content. The meanings can only be deciphered by those

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<sup>219</sup> Al-Rāzī, *Mafātīḥ al-Ghayb*, vol.20, pp.56-59.

with sufficient knowledge and utmost devotion in practicing Islam in secret or vice versa as well as avoiding any doubtful acts (*shubahāt*).

To sum up his point of views, he claims that science (*'ilm*) is included in actions (*af'al*) of God and His characteristics. The contents of Qur'ān explained his existence instilling the notion that the Qur'ān's meaning is endless, difficult verses that can only be deciphered after combining the sentences without excluding the actual meaning since the process of comprehension is delayed without it.

He also continued by saying that whoever claim understanding the Qur'ān but do not have the notion of the actual meaning he can be said as someone who has reached his garden but yet to go through his door.<sup>220</sup>

#### **iv. Jalāl al-Dīn al-Suyūṭī (d.911H)**

Jalāl al-Dīn al-Suyūṭī followed the footstep of his predecessors in promoting scientific exegesis. It is evidential through his books entitled *al-Itqān fī 'Ulūm al-Qur'ān*, *al-Iklīl fī Istīnbāṭ al-Tanzīl* as well as another book, *Mu'tarak al-Aqrān fī I'jāz al-Qur'ān*.

In *al-Itqān*, Suyūṭī included verses, *hadīths*, and an opinion of the scholars of exegesis to justify the Qur'ān is complete with all types of intellectual disciplines<sup>221</sup> as Qur'ān, 6:38 says:

Nothing have we omitted from the Book.

Qur'ān, 16:89 also says:

And We have sent down the Book explaining all things.

In this Qur'ānic example, it can be seen how far Suyūṭī has come from a *hadīth* pertaining to slanderous accusation were forwarded by the companions as to the

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<sup>220</sup> Al-Zarkashī, *al-Burhān fī 'Ulūm al-Qur'ān*, vol.2, p.155.

<sup>221</sup> Al-Muhtasab, *Ittijāhāt al-Tafsīr fī al-'Aṣr al-hadīth*, p.256.

methods of escaping from it. However, prophet (PBWH) answered by stating that the Qur'ān contained the science of the past, today and the future inclusive of the rules and regulations for mankind.<sup>222</sup>

Suyūṭī continues his commentary by quoting *hadīth* which reported by Sa'īd ibn Maṣū' from Ibn Mas'ūd "whoever longed for knowledge, he has to refer to the Qur'ān since it comprised the contribution of past scholars and the contemporary ones".<sup>223</sup> There is certainly no obvious connection between this *hadīth* and the scientific exegesis. However, by following closely Suyūṭī's exegetical train of thought, it will be possible to see how he claims that the Qur'ān is inclusive of *'ilm* as he quotes *hadīth* from Bayhaqī and reported from al-Hassan "God sent down one hundred and four books whereby the knowledge [includes sciences] is in the four holy books which are Torah, Injīl, Zabūr and *Furqān*. The first three books were later instilled in the Qur'ān".<sup>224</sup> By alluding to this *hadīth*, Suyūṭī has supported his point of view by stating *hadīth* from Ibn Saraqa as reported from Abī Bakr ibn Mujāhid that "everything in this world [i.e. all knowledge and sciences] is included in the Qur'ān".<sup>225</sup>

Another example of Suyūṭī's interpretation can be seen in the Qur'ān, 24:29:

It is no fault on your part to enter houses not used for living in, which serve some (other) use for you.

This verse might be elaborated in various views; however, Suyūṭī argues that the Qur'ān as a source of knowledge contains the sciences of the ancients as well as of the moderns as he says:

Qur'ān contains everything. There is no basic section or problem of any science for which there is no indication in the Qur'ān. In the Qur'ān, one finds the wondrous aspects of the creatures, the spiritual

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<sup>222</sup> Al-Suyūṭī, *al-Itqān fī 'Ulūm al-Qur'ān*, vol.4, p.116.

<sup>223</sup> *Ibid*, vol.2, p.24.

<sup>224</sup> *Ibid*, pp.25-26.

<sup>225</sup> *Ibid*, p.27.

dimension of the heavens and the earth, what is in the horizon's loftiest part and what is beneath the sod, the beginning of creation.<sup>226</sup>

However, Suyūṭī's analysis has been criticized by a number of scholars. Shāṭibī, for example, point out that the virtuous predecessors are considered more understandable and knowledgeable in terms of Qur'ānic exegesis than we are, and they absolutely never ever talk about the scientific approach in the Qur'ān.<sup>227</sup>

Based on what have been discussed earlier, they may have said that the Qur'ān is inclusive of all types of *'ilm*, but this is not to state directly that the Qur'ān should be understood scientifically. In other words, it is by implication only.

### **2.2.2 Contemporary scholars who interpreted the Qur'ān using scientific exegesis**

Historically, the Muslim world is behind in terms of politics, economy as well as thinking until the late 18<sup>th</sup> century. This is because the development of the western civilization in the 16<sup>th</sup> century and the late 18<sup>th</sup> century did not reach Muslim geographical area. It was not until the beginning of the 19<sup>th</sup> century that the Muslims were awoken by the consciousness that they need to have a connection with the western world by importing materials excluding their thoughts.

Furthermore, in the mid-19<sup>th</sup> century, the backward position of the Muslim world, while the western world improved in terms of scientific knowledge as well as in the manufacturing sectors. Indeed, government in the Muslim world does not have any initiatives and concrete planning to bring back the lost scientific glory.

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<sup>226</sup> Al-Suyūṭī, *al-Itqān fī 'Ulūm al-Qur'ān*, pp.28-29.

<sup>227</sup> Al-Dhahabī, Muhammad Hussain, *al-Tafsīr wa al-Mufasssīrūn*, pp.485-489. Also see: 'Ammara, Muhammad. (2003). *al-Islām wa Qaḍāyā al-'Aṣr*, Beirut: Dār al-Wahda, p.75.



In referring to this point, Muṣṭafa Abū Sway<sup>228</sup> elaborates more clearly:

The colonial period led to some inferiority complex and the gap between the Islamic world and the western world remained practically intact. Failing to bridge the gap, Muslims developed a kind of nostalgia about the contribution of the Islamic civilization to the sciences. It became a kind of escapism and a flight to the past, rather than an attempt to analyze the paradigm that existed at the time and how to revive the ethos that led to the production of science. There is a dire need to understand the role of the Qur'ān and the *Hadīth* in advocating knowledge and in the preparation of the Muslim psyche in ways that paved the way for the rise of science in the golden ages of the Islamic civilization.

With that fear in mind there was a group of people who believed that the source of knowledge ought to be referred to the Qur'ān and none other. This was when scientific exegesis began to flourish and expanded in the early 20<sup>th</sup> century when contemporary scholars contributed in scientific exegesis<sup>229</sup>.

According to Rotraud Wielandt<sup>230</sup>, the scientific exegesis approach was started by Muḥammad ibn Aḥmad al-Iskandarānī<sup>231</sup>, who repeatedly construed his

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<sup>228</sup> Muṣṭafa Abū Sway is a Professor of Islamic theology at al-Quds University in Abu Dis, east of Jerusalem. He studied philosophy at Boston University, USA, where he also taught for many years. Sway is observant Muslim, but has been influenced by western liberalism. He was a member of the Muslim-Christian Council in Jerusalem, and is frequent quests at International conferences on inter- religious dialogue. For details of his biography, see: Abu Sway, Mustafa. (1996). *al-Ghazzālī: A Study in Islamic Epistemology*, Kuala Lumpur: Dewan Bahasa dan Pustaka, back cover page.

<sup>229</sup> Al-Muhtasab, *Ittijāhāt al-Tafsīr fī 'Aṣr al-Hadīth*, p.360.

<sup>230</sup> Rotraud Wielandt was a professor Emeritus of Islamic and Arabic Studies at Otto-Friedrich-Universität, Bamberg, Germany. His work focuses geographically on the eastern Arabian region, as well as Turkey, and throughout her career she has worked extensively on Islamic theology and cultural history on the nineteenth and twentieth century. See: Wielandt, Rotraud. (2002). *Exegesis the Qur'ān: Early Modern and Contemporary*. In *the Encyclopedia of the Qur'ān*, vol.2, ed. J. D. McAuliffe, Leiden and Boston: Brill, p.1.

<sup>231</sup> Muḥammad ibn Aḥmad al-Iskandarānī was a physician who around 1880 published his book that purported to *The unveiling of the luminous secrets of the Qur'ān in which are discussed celestial bodies, the earth, animals, plants and minerals (Kashf al-Asrār 'an al-Nūrāniyya al-Qur'āniyya fī-mā yata'allaqu bi-l ajrām as-Samāwiyya wa'l- Ardiyya wa'l ḥaywānāt wa'l nabāt wa'l-Jawāhir al-Ma'dāniyya)*, 3 vols. Cairo: Maktaba al-Wahba. After this publication, al-Iskandarānī published another book in 1883 that dealt with the *Divine Secrets in the world of vegetation and minerals and in the characteristics of animals (Tibyān al-Asrār al-Rabbāniyya fī'l-Nabāt wa'l Ma'ādīn wa'l-Kḥawāṣ al-Haywāniyya)* Damascus. See: Wielandt, Rotraud. (2002). *Exegesis the Qur'ān: Early Modern and Contemporary*. In *the Encyclopedia of the Qur'ān*, vol.2, ed. J. D. McAuliffe, Leiden and Boston: Brill, pp.124-141.

explanations of the Qur'ānic verses to prove the presence of specific European inventions and discoveries in the verses of the Qur'ān.<sup>232</sup>

In 1879, Sayyid Aḥmad Khān<sup>233</sup> had started his work on exegesis; however it was not completed until he passed away in 1898. By producing this work, perhaps, Khan aims to identify specific discoveries and inventions. Indeed, he was hoping to motivate Muslims over the world to explore modern science.<sup>234</sup> Hence, the scientific exegesis later on appear as a differentiated field of studies on Qur'ānic exegesis and has received special attention from contemporary scholars, but it still less accepting granted if compared to other types of exegeses, such as; juristic exegesis and linguistic exegesis.

However, in the twentieth century saw a steady stream of such works in several languages. One of the first was that of Sayyid Jamāl al-Dīn al-Afghānī<sup>235</sup>, who

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<sup>232</sup> For examples, see: al-Iskandarānī, Muhammad ibn Ahmad. (1883). *Tibyān*, p.5, 29, and 132.

<sup>233</sup> Sayyid Ahmad Khān (1817-1898) was born in the twilight of the Indian *Timūri* era to a distinguished family, Khān was involved in a wide range activity; from politics to education. He was to leave a deep mark on the new Islam and science discourse through his writings and by influencing at least two generations of Muslims who studied at the Aligarh College; the higher educational institutions he founded and established in 1881, which became a university in 1920 and which remained the mainstay of Muslim education in the Indian subcontinent until 1947. See: Malik, Hafeez. (1980). *Sir Sayyid Ahmad Khān and Muslim Modernism in India and Pakistan*, New York: Columbia University Press, pp.88-89.

<sup>234</sup> Khān declared in his book entitled "*Tahrīr fī uṣūl al-Tafsīr*" that nature is the "Work of God" and the Qur'ān is the "Word of God" and there could be no contradiction between the Qur'ān and the modern scientific knowledge. This exegesis faced fierce resistance not only from scholars but also from Khān's staunch admirers and friends. For example, Nawab Muhsīn al-Mulk wrote to him two long letters expressing his anguish at Khān's radical interpretation of certain verses of the Qur'ān. For a discussion on Khān's reinterpretations, see Troll, C. W. (1979). *Sayyid Ahmad Khān: A Reinterpretation of Muslim Theology*, Karachi: Oxford University Press.

<sup>235</sup> Sayyid Jamāl al-Dīn Muhammad ibn Safdar al-Afghānī (1838/39-1897) was a prominent Muslim scholar and reformer due to his impact on a large number of influential thinkers. He had travelled to various countries including Afghanistan (in December 1868), Bombay, India (March-April 1869), and then to Egypt where he delivered lectures at al-Azhar. From Egypt, he went to Istanbul where he stayed for almost two years (1869-1871); he returned to Egypt in 1871 for a fruitful eight-year stay during which he gained tremendous popularity among the young intellectuals of Egypt who were beginning to realize the dangers of Khedive's complaisance toward the French and British. In September 1879, Afghānī was expelled from Egypt; he was put on a boat destined for Karachi; thus he returned to India. Afghānī died on March 9, 1897 and was quietly and hurriedly buried in Istanbul, which gave rise to suspicions of poisoning. For useful biographical information on Afghānī, see: Kedourie, Elie. (1966). *Afghānī and 'Abdūh: An Essay on Religious Unbelief and Political Activism in Modern Islām*, London: Frank Cass & Co. Ltd. This work mostly deals with Afghānī's influence on 'Abdūh. See also: Master's thesis of Sharīf al-

represents an important link in the changes that took place in the Islam and science discourse during the colonial era.

According to Keddie N.R.<sup>236</sup>, Afghānī had written a letter in Paris in order to response to a talk on “Islām and Science” by Ernest Renan. It had been first delivered at the Sorbonne and had been published in the *Journal des Débats* on March 29, 1883.<sup>237</sup> In reference to Afghānī’s letter, Keddie N.R. goes on to assert:

It had sought to prove that there was something inherently wrong with Islām and Arabs in reference to cultivation of science, Afghānī’s language remains apologetic throughout his letter of response.<sup>238</sup> He also constructs a case of “warfare” between religion and philosophy and all religions for being intolerant and being an obstacle for the development of science and philosophy, thus agreeing with Renan.<sup>239</sup>

In the contemporary Muslim scholars, there are many of them have been influenced by Afghānī’s approach in standing against colonization. Among of

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Mujāhid. (1954). *Sayyid Jamāl al-Dīn al-Afghānī: His Role in the Nineteenth Century Muslim Awakening*, Canada: McGill University.

<sup>236</sup> Nikki R. Keddie is a Professor of the Department of History and the Von Grunebaum Near East Centre of the University of California, Los Angeles. She is a leading specialist in Iranian history and Society. For her full biography, see: Nikki R. Keddie biography and CV. Available at: <URL: <http://www.sscnet.ucla.edu/history/keddie/NKeddieBiographyCV.htm>, access date: 25<sup>th</sup> January, 2011.

<sup>237</sup> Keddie, Nikki, R. (1972). *Sayyid Jamal al-Din "al-Afghani": A Political Biography*, Berkeley: University of California Press, p.189.

<sup>238</sup> Indeed, Afghani had declared in a lecture in 1882, “...it is evident that all wealth and riches are the result of science. There are no riches in the world without science. In sum, the whole world of humanity is an industrial world, meaning that the world is a world of science. If science were removed from the human sphere, no man would continue to remain in the world.” See: Afghani’s Lecture on Teaching and Learning, in al-Afghani, Jamal al-Din, 1886. *Ar-Radd 'ala ad-Dahriyin (Refutation of the Materialists)*, Beirut; English translation by Keddie, Nikki, R. (1968). *An Islamic Response to Imperialism, Political and Religious Writings of Sayyid Jamal al-Din al-Afghani*, Berkeley: University of California Press, pp.102-103.

<sup>239</sup> Renan had repeated the usual orientalist claim that “early Islam and the Arabs who professed it were hostile to the scientific and philosophic spirit and that science and philosophy had entered the Islamic world only from non-Arab sources”. Renan summaries his answer by saying that Afghani had “brought considerable arguments for his fundamental theses: during the first half of its existence Islam did not stop the scientific movement from existing in Muslim lands; in the second half, it stifled in its breast the scientific movement, and that to its grief.” *Ibid*, pp.174-185. See also: Keddie, Nikki, R. *Sayyid Jamāl al-Dīn "al-Afghānī": A Political Biography*, p.196.

them are; Muḥammad 'Abdūh<sup>240</sup>, Abd al-Razaḳ Nawfal<sup>241</sup>, Muḥammad al-Ghamrāwī<sup>242</sup>, Muṣṭafa and Ṣādiq al-Rāfiī<sup>243</sup> in Egypt and Bedī'uzzamān Saīd Nūrsī<sup>244</sup> in Turkey. By the emergences of the prominent Muslim scholars, the

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<sup>240</sup> Muhammad 'Abdūh (1850-1905) was a prominent Egyptian religious scholar, reformer, and a jurist. His home based traditional religious education was continued to al-Azhar, where 'Abdūh became influenced by Sufism. However, 'Abdūh's nationalistic inclinations tendencies resulted in his expulsion from al-Azhar in 1882 and had been exiled to Beirut. He was invited by Afghānī to join him in Paris, which he did and they launched their joint venture publication of the newspaper in 1884, entitled "*the Firmest Bond (al-'Urwa al-Wuthqa)*". Between March and October 1884, eighteen issues of *al-'Urwa* were published. But then its publication ceased because of a number of reasons, including financial and political. For useful biographical information on 'Abduh, see: Badawī, M. A. Zakī. (1978). *The Reformers of Egypt*, London: Croom Helm, pp.35-95.

<sup>241</sup> Abd al-Razaḳ Nawfal was born in 1917 and an Egyptian writer in modern era and a pious Muslim university scholar who devoted his time into writing books on the inimitability of scientific exegesis of Qur'ān. As a graduate from the faculty of Agriculture where he studies various subjects on plants, animals, insects and biology, he stated that he dedicated his life for sixteen years upon graduating to revise and relearn on what he had once studied in the university based on the latest development in the field of sciences from time to time. He later elaborated on Islām being a religion as well as knowledge for mankind. (Khālid Rahman al-'Ak. (1994). *al-Furqān wa al-Qur'ān*, Beirut: al-Hikma li al-Ṭibā'a wa al-Nasyr, p.427. Also see: Ibrahim al-Bathi. (1997). *Ṣaḥsiya al-Islāmiya al-Mu'aṣira*, pp.267-286.

<sup>242</sup> Muḥammad Aḥmad al-Ghamrāwī was born in 1893 in Zafti City (western district of Egypt). He was a prominent chemistry professor in the Faculty of Pharmacy at the University of Cairo, and expert in Qur'ānic studies as well. After couple of years, the board of al-Azhar University instructed him to move into the Faculty of theology due to his expertise in scientific exegesis; He also was one of the five scholars who established the board of writers and translators well known in Egypt. Indeed, he translated various western sciences which related to the universe, philosophy and education. See: al-Ghamrāwī, Muhammad Ahmad. (1973). *Al-Islām fī 'Aṣr al-Ilmīy*, 1<sup>st</sup> edition, Egypt: Maṭba'a al-Sa'āda, Introduction.

<sup>243</sup> Muṣṭafa Ṣādiq Rāfiī was born in January 1880 in Egypt. Both his parents originated from Syām and then migrated to Egypt in 1243. Rāfiī did not officially complete his education due to the disease that took away his hearing. He later continued his education by studying on his own the books written by the previous Muslim scholars in the field of religion, logic and ethics. With his powerful memory and understanding, he achieved the highest degree in the knowledge of ethics and poetry. He published a number of books such as; *Wahy al-Qalam*, *Tahta Rāyati al-Qur'ān*, *I'jāz al-Qur'ān*, and *balāghah al-Nabawiya*. He passed away in 1937 in the city of Ṭanṭa, Egypt. See: Barakah, 'Abd al-Ghanī Muhammad Sa'ad. (1989). *al-I'jāz al-Qur'ānī Wujūhuhu wa Asrāruhu*, Cairo: Maktaba Wahba, p.228).

<sup>244</sup> Bedī'uzzamān Saīd Nūrsī (1877-1960) was a prominent late ottoman revivalist thinker, activist and founder of the Nurcu movement in Turkey, who was exiled to western Anatolia in 1925 along with hundreds of other Muslims. Born in Nurs, Saīd Nūrsī was a descendant of a family reputed for a lineage of great scholars. During his studies, Nūrsī had to change several institutions and scholars because of his precocity and extraordinary genius. In fact, Nūrsī had produced a numerous works on logic such as; *Ta'liqāt*, a commentary on *al-Burhān* by Ismail Gelenbevi (d.1791), and *Kizil I'jāz 'ala Sullām*. He also, dictated his famous exegetical work, *Ishārāt al-I'jāz*. For biographical of Saīd Nūrsī, see: Vahide Sukrān. (2005). *Islam in Modern Turkey: An Intellectual Biography of Bedī'uzzamān Saīd Nūrsī*, New York: Albany. See also: Abū Rabī', Ibrāhīm M. (2003). *Islam at the Crossroads: on the Life and Thought of Bedī'uzzamān Saīd Nūrsī*, New York: Albany.

Islamic science has been successfully come back to the Islamic world through the process of Enlightenment as Afghānī says:

The strangest thing of all is that our scholars these days have divided science into two parts: Muslim Science and European Science. Because of this, they forbid others to teach some of the useful sciences. They have not understood that science is that noble thing that has no connection with any nation, and is not distinguished by anything but itself. Rather, everything that is known is known by science, and every nation that becomes renowned becomes renowned through science. Men must be related to science, not science to men... The father and mother of science are proof, and proof is neither Aristotle nor Galileo. The truth is where there is proof, and those who forbid science and knowledge in the belief that they are safeguarding the Islamic religion are really the enemies of that religion. The Islamic religion is the closest of religions to science and knowledge, and there is no incompatibility between science and knowledge and the foundation of Islamic faith.<sup>245</sup>

#### 1. Muhammad `Abduh

Muhammad `Abduh is well known Muslim scholar has started interpreting the Qur`ān with the scientific approach after getting impact from western science and civilization. He, for example, interpreted the "birds" in the story of the Companions of the Elephants (*Aṣḥāb al-Fīl*) as microbes<sup>246</sup> as Qur`ān, 105:1-5 says:

See you not how your Lord dealt with the companions of the elephants? Did He not make their treacherous plan go astray? And He sent against them flights of birds, striking them with stones of baked clay. Then did He make them like an empty field of stalks and straw, (of which the corn) has been eaten up.

In the commentary of this verse, `Abduh quoted *hadīth* as reported by `Ikrima for the first time on the measles and chicken pox have been occurred that infected Abraha's army in the Arab land. He later says;

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<sup>245</sup> Keddie, Nikki, R. (1968). *An Islamic Response to Imperialism, Political and Religious Writings of Sayyid Jamāl al-Dīn al-Afghānī*, Berkeley: University of California Press, p.107.

<sup>246</sup> Al-Dhahabī, Muhammad Hussein, *al-Tafsīr wa al-Mufasssīrūn*, vol. 2, p.543.

Indeed this chapter explained to us on how the said diseases emerged from a wet stone that fell onto the soldiers riding the elephants with a flock of birds as the mediator commanded by God with the wind. It is a must for you to assume the birds were the type of insect or fly that brought with them microbes of certain diseases. The stones were from the poisonous and dry soil that was later flown by the wind attaching themselves to the feet of the animals. When there were directly contacted to the human bodies, they made their way into the body system through the glands resulting to gangrene to the human skins. There existed a lot of these feeble birds as the armies of God to annihilate what they had to among mankind. These micro-sized animals are later known today as microbes.<sup>247</sup>

'Abduh's interpretation formed a part of *Tafsīr al-Manār*, which was mostly written by Muḥammad Rāshid Riḍā<sup>248</sup>. In term of interpretation of the Qur'ān, 'Abduh goes on to say:

The people have serious need for an interpretation whose primary concern focuses on the guidance of the Qur'ān in accordance with the glorious verses that were revealed with its revelation, including warning, glad tiding, guidance and reform.<sup>249</sup>

Furthermore, 'Abduh saw Islam as the religion of reason and progress and was thus totally compatible with modernity. The Qur'ānic revelation aspires to give God's guidance to humankind, thus 'Abduh states that God's wish for human actualization can only occur if the Qur'ān is interpreted in a clear, simple, and rational form. Indeed, 'Abduh clearly demonstrates a propensity to concentrate on the rationality of Islam and has an affirmative outlook towards science in the

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<sup>247</sup> Abū Hajar, Ahmad 'Umar. (1991). *Al-Tafsīr al-'Ilmiy li al-Qur'ān fī al-Mīzān*, Beirut: Dār al-Qutaybah, p.176.

<sup>248</sup> Abduh's interpretation goes from the beginning of the Qur'ān reaching chapter 4: 125, and Riḍā did the same and continued the interpretation until chapter 12:107. Both of them interpreted some short chapters of the Qur'ān which are located at the end. It is known that Riḍā used to publish 'Abduh's series of lectures on the exegesis of the Qur'ān in the *Manār Journal*. Eventually, *Tafsīr Manār* was published in 12 volumes in 1927 and his lectures on the Qur'ān were edited and published by Ṭāhir al-Tanākḥī as *Durūs min al-Qur'ān al-Karīm*, Cairo: Dār al-Hilāl, n.d. However, Al-Dhahabī stated that there is no difference between the two men except in very rare cases. See: Al-Dhahabī, Muhammad Hussein, *al-Tafsīr wa al-Mufasssīrūn*, 2:551.

<sup>249</sup> *Ibid*, vol 2, p.552.

*Tafsīr al-Manār*.<sup>250</sup> For example, in his book entitled "Juzu' Amma" (Qur'ān, 81:6), his commentaries on the verse as follows:

...what is meant by the boiling sea is when a strong earthquake occurs it forms vast oceans with each overflowing into one another... it was heated with fire. The centre of the earth contained fire which will later resulted to earthquake causing the upper layer of the earth to separate. Water will turn into vapor leaving behind nothing but fire in the sea.<sup>251</sup>

According to Abū Ḥajar<sup>252</sup>, 'Abduh's argument pertaining to the existence of fire in the centre of the earth is based on reports that the sea is actually the lid of hell fire even though it cannot be proven as correct. However, scientific discoveries have proven that the larva flowing out of the volcano could cause earthquake and demolish the mountains like what happened in Jawa that was never thought of by anyone to ever take place.<sup>253</sup>

In addition, 'Abduh's commentary also demonstrates the complexity of locating a path between blind obedience to tradition (*taqlīd*) and jettisoning Islām for a western modernity; this conflict manifest itself time and again throughout 'Abduh's writing. Also like Ahmad Khān, 'Abduh attempts to erase components of popular Muslim belief and practices which he considered to be superstitious.<sup>254</sup>

## 2. Abdul Razak Nawfal

Abdul Razak Nawfal is among the contemporary Muslim scholars who contributed a lot in writing books on the connection between Qur'ān and scientific findings. Indeed, he interpreted the Qur'ān based on the scientific theories which were sometimes considered as extreme especially when dealing with the certain

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<sup>250</sup> Kurzman, Charles. (2002). *Modernist Islām, 1840-1940*. United States: Oxford University Press, p.105.

<sup>251</sup> 'Abduh, Muhammad. (1980). *Tafsīr Juz' 'Amma*, Cairo: al-Maṭba'a al-Amīriya, pp.3-6.

<sup>252</sup> Ahmad 'Umar Abū Hajar was an academician and author of *Al-Tafsīr al-'Ilmiy li al-Qur'ān fī al-Mizān*.

<sup>253</sup> Abū Hajar, Ahmad 'Umar. (1991). *Al-Tafsīr al-'Ilmiy li al-Qur'ān fī al-Mizān*, Beirut: Dār al-Qutaybah, p.173.

<sup>254</sup> Adams, Charles. (1968). *Islām and Modernism in Egypt: a study of the modern reform movement inaugurated by Muhammad 'Abduh*, New York: Russell & Russell, p.168.

scientific terms such as; atom, proton, and electron. For example, he inscribed in his book entitled *Qur'ān and Modern Science (al-Qur'ān wa al-'Ilm al-Hadīth)* that Qur'ān, 7:189 says:

It is He Who created you from a single person, and made his mate of like nature, in order that he might dwell with her (in love). When they are united, she bears a light burden and carries it about (unnoticed).

In his commentary of the above verse, he says:

The soul is a proton and its partner is an electron with both of them containing the element of atom and the structure of the body comprised of cells. This is the academic truth explored by modern scientists have already been highlighted clearly by God since the past one thousand and four hundred years ago. It was verified by the verse that God created humans from one soul and it is with that soul that their partners are created and represented by the terms proton and electron.<sup>255</sup>

After discussing the human soul as a proton and an electron, Nawfal goes on to say that:

The electric wave also contained the positive and negative eons and scientists have found that the positive ones are similar to proton whereas the negative ones with electron. The perfect match of these two eons triggered the existence of the atom as well as controlling the movements and contents producing electricity at the end product. A minor mismatch between these components will destroy the atom as well as life. Thus, the entire common and contrasting eons in proton and electron are able to produce electrical power.<sup>256</sup>

Furthermore, Nawfal claims that contemporary thought judged Qur'ān as a book of science and it has various knowledge, includes; scientific phenomenon, kinds and bounty as he says:

Thus, when we prove to non-Arabs that the Qur'ān contains the principles of modern science and it has already spoken of every new scientific phenomenon, in this kind of miracle of the Qur'ān not enough to attract their attention to the Qur'ān... isn't the scientific miracle of the Qur'ān the way to attract non-Arabs to Islām? The day that we accomplish the translation, into various languages, of what the Qur'ān has predicted and the development of various sciences has confirmed, our mission would be

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<sup>255</sup> Nawfal, Abd Razak. *al-Qur'ān wa al-'Ilm al-Hadīth*, pp.154-155.

<sup>256</sup> Nawfal. *al-Qur'ān wa al-'Ilm al-Hadīth*, pp.156-157.



over and our call would be communicated, and the miraculous nature of the Qur'ān would be clear for non-Arabs.<sup>257</sup>

However, this argument has been strongly challenged by a number of Muslim scholars on the grounds that the Qur'ān was not sent down to teach mankind science and technology; rather, it is a book of guidance. Hence, it is beyond its mission and vision to talk about physical sciences.

On the other hand, Nawfal points out that all today's findings have already described in the Qur'ān earlier. Based on his justifications and efforts in relating with the scientific theories and findings, he produced a number of books such as; God and Modern Science (*Allah wa al-'Ilm al-Hadīth*), Islām and Modern Science (*Islām wa al-'Ilm al-Hadīth*), Qur'ān and Modern Science (*Al-Qur'ān wa al-'Ilm al-Hadīth*), Muslims and Modern Science (*Al-Muslimūn wa al-'Ilm al-Hadīth*), Between Religion and Science (*Bayna al-Dīn wa al-'Ilm*), Qur'ān and Modern Society (*Al-Qur'ān wa al-Mujtama' al-Hadīth*), and a part of Scientific verses (*Min al-Ayāt al-'Ilmiya*).

Another problem with this approach is that it is unreasonable and unacceptable due to the fact that science is changeable theories and has not reached its ultimate findings. Indeed, a theory might be very famous during a period, and after couple of years it would be replaced by another theory. Therefore, this method of Qur'ānic interpretation might be unbelievable in the contemporary Muslims world.

### 3. Muhammad al-Ghamrāwī

Ghamrāwī was among the modern translator of the Qur'ān, who used scientific exegesis as a new approach in order to interpret the Qur'ān. Thus, he had studied the verses of Qur'ān and proved that are not less than 800 verses of Qur'ān that talk and drive people to the advancement of science. He also elaborated on some examples of the phenomena of the universe which have

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<sup>257</sup> *Ibid*, p.26.

been mentioned in the Qur'ān since the 14<sup>th</sup> century and stated that the explanations of the Qur'ān were similar to the new findings in modern science and other spectacular achievements as Qur'ān says:

Praise be to God, the Cherisher and Sustainer of the Worlds. (Qur'ān, 1:1)

Based on his point of views on the verse, Ghamrāwī described that:

The Arab did not know of the existence of the other world besides the one they lived in. Until today, humans do not discuss on other world probably because they assume that the other one is similar to the ones inhabited by man, genies and angels or animal world, vegetations and others.<sup>258</sup>

In addition, Ghamrāwī believes that astronomy emerged with its intense and critical analysis based on mathematics that referred to other world or places far away. According to him, "if planet earth consists of inhabitants and moves in its own orbit there is a possibility of other planets to be of the same criteria."<sup>259</sup> In fact, Ghamrāwī had clarified that sun moves from the east to the west and vice versa based on Qur'ān, 36:38,

And the Sun runs (*tajrī*) his course for a period determined for him: that is the decree of (Him), the exalted in Might, the All-knowing.

With regards to the verse, Ghamrāwī stated that the verb in the word '*tajrī*' is sufficient in explaining on the meaning that the course of the sun from the east to the west. He added that the word signifies its actual movements also determined by science together with its own programmed speed of twelve miles per second directed to the west in the specific galactic spaces. In term of the verb, he mentioned that it does not just mean the migration or movement occurring to the sun but also included its speed as well.<sup>260</sup>

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<sup>258</sup> Al-Ghamrāwī, Muhammad Ahmad. (1973). *Al-Islām fī 'Asr al-'Ilmiy*, 1<sup>st</sup> edition, Egypt: Maṭba'a al-Sa'āda, p.229.

<sup>259</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>260</sup> Al-Ghamrāwī. *Al-Islām fī 'Asr al-'Ilmiy*, p.230.

Besides that, Ghamrāwī criticized humans' thought that earth is static and motionless since the pressure cannot be felt unlike the sun that relatively moves from the east to the west. He says,

...indeed humans are still in confusions even after the Qur'ān was sent down. There existed various evidences in the Qur'ān in the forms of symbolism and vague to preserve its authenticity. If the contents were directly revealed, others would accuse it by being composed by human beings. Hence, together with its highest inimitability and miracle in its language style have made humans aware of its subject matter pertaining to the earth's movement in its own orbit circling the sun.<sup>261</sup>

Then, Ghamrāwī take postulates that the earth's movement in its own orbit by referring to the term "*al-Iḍbar*"<sup>262</sup> as Qur'ān says:

And by the Night as it retreated (*adbara*). (Qur'ān, 74:33)

According to Ghamrāwī, the term "retreated" means;

Moving away and the actual movement is not understandable until we recall on the darkness is as a result of certain locations that are blocked disallowing the sun ray to penetrate trough. When we are able to visualize that the earth moves in its orbit from the east to the west in a day towards the sun, it is when the night and day take turn to occur... God places night over day by revealing the centre of the earth that is always in darkness. This applies to the day over night as well as directing the part directed toward the sun as morning.<sup>263</sup>

Hence, there were clearly mentioned that Ghamrāwī was trying to convict Qur'ān with all phenomena of the universe, the earth, the planets and the orbits. He believes that this is an important point to clarify the truth of Qur'ān and its inimitability appropriate for all times and ages.

However, it seems that Ghamrāwī's approach in dealing with the scientific exegesis is questionable and such explanations tend to overlook the fact that the

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<sup>261</sup> *Ibid*, p.251.

<sup>262</sup> The term "*al-Iḍbār*" means "*al-Iqbāl*" which both wordings literally referred to one meaning that is darkness at the beginning and bright in the end. See: Ibn Manzūr, Jamāl al-Dīn Muhammad ibn Mukram. (1968). *Lisān al-'Arab*, vol.4, p.2941. According to Ibn 'Ashūr, the terms actually meant oppositely which is, after nigh time *comes* the day and after the day comes the night. See: Ibn 'Ashūr, Muhammad Ṭāhir. (1984). *Tafsīr al-Tahrīr wa al-Tanwīr*, vol.30, p.154.

<sup>263</sup> Al-Ghamrāwī, *Al-Islām fī 'Asr al-'Ilmīy*, p.252.

previous Muslim scientists, like Farabi, Ibn Sīnā, and Bīrūnī did not seek scientific and mathematical calculations in the Qurʾān, though they were very expert on it. Indeed, if we could be able to find out scientific theories in the Qurʾān, what we would have is like scientific encyclopedia. It is no more than that. Besides that, the key problem with this explanation is that it opens the door for unacceptable commentary and might threaten the originality of the Qurʾānic facts.

#### 4. Mustāfa Ṣādiq al-Rāfiʿ

Mustāfa Ṣādiq al-Rāfiʿ was a prominent figure, who devoted his life for seeking the truth of Qurʾān by using scientific exegesis. A special section in his book entitled "The inimitability of Qurʾān and Rhetoric of Prophet hood (*Iʿjāz al-Qurʾān wa al-Balāgha al-Nabawiya*) under a topic of Qurʾān and Science (*al-Qurʾān wa al-'Ulūm*) obviously clarified that each time new findings were discovered aided by high technology machineries the academic truth will be more magnified.

An example would be when he interpreted Qurʾān, 23:12-14:

Man We did create from a quintessence (of clay); then We placed him as (a drop of) sperm in a place of rest, firmly fixed. Then We made the sperm into a clot of congealed blood; then of that clot We made a (fetus) lump; then We made out of that lump bones and clothed the bones with flesh; then We developed out of it another creature. So blessed be God, the Best to create!

According to Rāfiʿ, the term "a quintessence" (*al-Sulāla*) is originate from a dark soil. Then, he elaborated the term "a place of rest" (*makīn*) as could only be deciphered by scientists and doctors who studies anatomy of the human body. The term actually refers to the mother's womb where humans are formed because it is the strongest location for its preservation away from bacteria. It also consists of liquids that protect the fetus from destruction by any sources.<sup>264</sup>

In term of the phenomena of the universe, Rāfiʿ takes postulates as follows:

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<sup>264</sup> Al-Rāfiʿ, Mustāfa Ṣādiq. (1969). *Iʿjāz al-Qurʾān wa al-Balāgha al-Nabawiya*, Egypt: al-Maktaba al-Tijāra al-Kubrā, p.144.

So He completed them as seven firmaments in two Days, and He assigned to each heaven its duty and command. And We adorned the lower heaven with light, and (provided it) with guard. Such is the Decree of (him) the Exalted in Might, Full of Knowledge.

(Qur'ān, 41:11-12)

Again, according to the Qur'ān, 65:12:

God is He Who created seven Firmaments and of the earth a similar number.

One question that needs to be asked, however, is whether Rāfi'ī's commentary on Qur'ānic verses which are related to scientific theories might be accepted or not? It is based on the grounds that if the Qur'ān comprises all natural sciences, the intellect of human beings would remain idle and would be meaningless for human freedom.

##### 5. Bedī'uzzamān Sa'īd Nūrsī

The modern scholar of Europe; Sa'īd Nūrsī and his famous work; *Risāle-ī Nūr*<sup>265</sup> is considered as an exemplary of the discourse on Islām and science. The purpose of the *Risāle-ī Nūr* was not merely to supply a scientific exegesis, but to provide spiritual guidance for all Muslims over the world.

However, at the same time, Nūrsī was considered a knowledgeable person in the scientific approach during his time. This is because Nūrsī does not go against the western science, but he attempts to integrate between the two branches of knowledge and it appears as a highly influential in his approach. In fact, he has

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<sup>265</sup> According to Muzaffar Iqbāl, *Risāle-ī Nūr* is a collection of sermons in early 1911. It was delivered at the Umayyad Mosque and has been attended of ten thousand participants, including one hundred scholars. The sermons after that have been printed twice in one week which contain twenty books, four of them have been translated into English by Sukran Vahide: *Sozler (the Words)*, (Istanbul, 1992), *Mektuba (the Letters)*, (Istanbul, 1994), *Lem 'Alar (The Flashes)*, (Istanbul, 1995), and *Sualar (the Rays)*, (Istanbul, 1998). See: Iqbāl, Muzaffar. (2002). *Islām and Science*, United Kingdom: Ashgate Science and Religion Series, pp.270-271. Also, see: Nūrsī, Bedī'uzzamān Sa'īd. (1989). *The Damascus Sermon*, translated from the Turkish by Sukran Vahide, publisher's Preface.

elaborated one chapter in his *Risāle-ī Nūr* on the Qur'ān's miraculous eloquence and references to modern scientific developments.<sup>266</sup>

According to Nūrsī, the cosmic verses of the Qur'ān in the light of contemporary sciences was a starting point in order to come out a new approach of substantiating Islamic belief on the basis of the reading the cosmic verses of the Qur'ān within the scope of scientific discoveries.<sup>267</sup>

A few examples of his point of views with regards to the miracles of prophets as mentioned in the Qur'ān, 34:12;

And the Solomon (We made) the wind (obedient): its early morning (stride) was a month's journey, and its evening (stride) was a month's journey; and We made a font of molten brass to flow for him; and there were *Jinns* that worked in front of him, by the leave of his Lord, and if any of them turned aside from Our command, We made Him taste of the penalty of the blazing fire.

With regards to this verse, Nūrsī interprets it as follows:

Suggests that the road is open for man to cover such a distance in the air. In which case, O man! Since the road is open to you, reach this level! And in meaning Almighty God is saying through the tongue of this verse: "O man! I mounted one of my servants on the air because he gave up the desires of his soul. If you too give up laziness, which comes from the soul, and benefit thoroughly from certain of my laws in the cosmos, you too may mount it..." the verse specified final points far ahead of today's aero planes.<sup>268</sup>

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<sup>266</sup> Since Nūrsī, like many of his contemporaries, was aware of the power of modern natural sciences and, written during his exile, *Risāle-ī Nūr* was later described as a commentary which expounds the truths of the Qur'ān and certainly believed in the universal objectivity of their discoveries. For further details of Nursi's scientific approach see: Nūrsī, Bedī'uzzamān Sa'īd. (1998). *The Words*, being the English translation of the Turkish *Sözler*, USA: New Jersey, pp.259-279.

<sup>267</sup> Nūrsī also composed several important books in Arabic; a short exegesis and a commentary on sūra al-Fātiḥa and the initial 30 verses of sūra al-Baqara which is entitled "*Ishārāt al-I'jāz fī Mizān al-I'jāz'*", edited by Ihsan Q. al-Salihi (Istanbul, 1994), available in English as *Signs of Miraculousness: The inimitability of Qur'ānic Conciseness*, translated by Sukran Vahide (Istanbul, 2004), and a mystical work, *al-Mathnawī al-'Arabī al-Nurī*, edited by Ihsan Q. al-Salihi (Istanbul, 1994).

<sup>268</sup> Nūrsī, Sa'īd Bedī'uzzamān. (1998). *The Words*, pp.262-263.

In light of this passage, it appears that Nūrsī is interpreting the wind that has been sent by God based on prophet Solomon's command for traveling in a long distances with a short period of time. This argument is referred to the future prediction of travelling in the air in general, as well as aircraft in particular.

To clarify further the state to which Nūrsī is alluding here, it will be helpful to refer to another example from Nūrsī's *Risāle-ī Nūr* as Qur'ān says:

Allah is the light of the heavens and the earth. The parable of His light is as if there were a niche and within it a lamp; the Lamp enclosed in glass; the glass as it were a brilliant star; lit from a blessed tree an olive; neither of the east nor of the west, whose oil is well-near luminous, though fire scarce touched it: Light upon light! Allah does guide whom He will to His light. Allah does set out parables for men; and Allah does know all things. (Qur'ān, 24:35)

In this verse of the light, it obviously shows us that Nūrsī clearly engaged with the scientific exegesis as he says:

Among many of the other profound and esoteric meanings of the light verse, which depicts God as the 'light of the heavens and earth', is the allusion to the future invention of electricity whose continuous diffusion of light is compared to the Qur'ānic expression 'light upon light' (*nūrun 'ala nūr*) mentioned in the verse.<sup>269</sup>

Indeed, in his commentary on the story of Prophet Abraham's miracle, as mentioned in the Qur'ān, 21:69

We said: "O fire! Be you cool, and (a mean of) safety for Abraham!"

In order to bring people to a new approach of Qur'ānic interpretation, Nūrsī does not simply comment upon matters of Islāmic history on the story of Prophet Abraham, but he expands his commentary upon scientific approach as he says:

One type of heat burns through coldness. Through the phrase "*Be you cool,*" God Almighty ordered the cold: "Like heat, do not burn him." It is simultaneously fire and cold. Science has discovered a fire called "white heat", which does not radiate its heat. Instead, by attracting the

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<sup>269</sup> Nūrsī, *The Words*, p.263.

surrounding heat, it causes the surrounding area to become cold enough to freeze liquids and in effect burns them through its cold.<sup>270</sup>

In this passage it can be seen how Nūrsī has made commentary of Qur'ānic verses with scientific discoveries, such as; wind, electricity, oil, mineral water, iron, and natural gas. However, all the previously mentioned method would have been much more interesting if the author had included some motivations to Muslims in order to go after natural and physical sciences, and not remain content with the hints given there.

In sum, all the contemporary scholars as noted above have supported and made the case for the scientific exegesis of the Qur'ān. The birth of scientific exegesis also is the attempt of Muslim scholars to always look for miracles and inimitability of the Qur'ān in the light of the findings of various alien sciences in contemporary Muslim world. Most of them have devoted their entire life for seeking the legitimacy of scientific findings and bridging the Qur'ān with pure sciences. Thus, the scholars have integrated between two branches of knowledge and intended to avoid any conflicts between religious teachings with scientific findings.

### **2.3 DEVELOPMENT FACTORS OF ISLAMIC SCIENTIFIC EXEGESIS IN CONTEMPORARY MUSLIM WORLD**

There is a number of social, political, historical and civilization, individual and scientific journalism factors contributed to the expansion and development of the Islamic scientific exegesis. It's were occurred in the last three decades of the twentieth century and rose step by step until contemporary Muslim world.

#### **First: Social factor**

The development of the Islamic scientific exegesis was not being completed without a social factor. It is an essential factor due to the fact that a number of

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<sup>270</sup> *Ibid*, p.273.



forces have occurred between 1700 and 1950 in the Muslim world. Indeed, the forces bring negative impact to the social way of life, destroy old institutions, and replace old languages with new language which would be comprehended by only a few percentage of the community. As a result, it's led the scientific tradition to an overall collapse. However, after couple of years, nature of discourse between Islam and science developed and completely transformed as a catalyst to the integration between two branches of knowledge.<sup>271</sup>

In another context, Muzaffar Iqbāl<sup>272</sup> observes that several centers of learning appeared as a platform for resolving issues of Muslims community, especially issues of Islam and science. Indeed, these centers provided prominent scholars and academicians, who are able to disseminate of intellectual and ideas throughout the Muslims world.<sup>273</sup>

Besides that, Arabic language had become as a medium of instruction in the Muslim world.<sup>274</sup> Thus, the Muslim society could understand the Arabic literature and Qur'ān became the main reference for them. Through Arabic as a language of the Qur'ān, scientific exegesis is the best technique used to elaborate clearly on the Qur'ān and Islam in contemporary era of science and technology since the contents are suitable till the end of time.

According to Iqbāl, the divine origin of the Qur'ān via scientific exegesis approach has been attempted to be proved by Muslim scientists. It has

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<sup>271</sup> Iqbāl, M. (2002). *Islam and Science*. Burlington, VT, Ashgate, p.203.

<sup>272</sup> Muzaffar Iqbāl was born in 1954 in Lahore, Pakistan. He is a well-known scientist, Islamic scholar, and President of Center for Islam and Science (CIS) based in Canada. Iqbāl is also the President of the Journal of Islam and Science: Journal of Islamic Perspectives on Science. His works on Islam and Science is considered as a major contribution in contemporary Muslim world. His publications include; (Islam and Science), (God, Life, and the Cosmos: Christian and Islamic Perspectives), (Islam, Science, Muslims, and Technology: Seyyed Hussein Nasr in Conversation with Muzaffar Iqbāl), and (co-Translator of Volume VII of *Tafhīm al-Qur'ān*). Indeed, he has delivered lectures on the areas of Islam and science at numerous international conferences, seminars, and universities.

For further information on his biography, see: Integrated Encyclopedia of the Qur'ān. Available at: < URL: <http://www.iequran.com/advisory.php>, access date: 3<sup>rd</sup> February, 2011.

<sup>273</sup> Iqbāl, M. *Islam and Science*, p.208.

<sup>274</sup> *Ibid*, p.209.

conclusively been shown that the scientific approach is still unpopular in the final decades of the 19<sup>th</sup> century. However, it become essential and gets attentions in the 20<sup>th</sup> century not only in the Arab countries but in all over the world. It is due to the fact that the new educational system appeared with the main objective to not only believe in the concept of Unicity (*wahdāniya*)<sup>275</sup> of God and submission to His will, but to seek knowledge of the divine attributes based on Qur'ān and Sunna, integrated with science of cosmology and various other marvels of God creation.<sup>276</sup>

In a number of passages quoted earlier, we saw that the social factor has played an important role in development of scientific exegesis of Qur'ān in contemporary Muslims world. After having huge challenges, scientific exegesis develops steadily and well established in the 20<sup>th</sup> century. In another passage, Iqbāl describes the emergence of several learning centers as a venue of intellectual discourse for all Muslims to discuss issues on Islam and science. He continues by indicating that Arabic language acts as the main language of Muslims community, not only in Arab countries but includes other countries due to the Qur'ān as a source of knowledge becomes the main reference for Muslims.

### **Second: Political factor**

Politic has been identified as major contributing factors for the great uprising of the scientific exegesis. It develops in the late 1970s and 1980s when many organizations including scholars and government have vast interest in the study of scientific knowledge of the Qur'ān. Therefore, Iqbāl draws our attention to

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<sup>275</sup> Unicity (*Wahdāniya*) conveys two basic meanings: the denial of partners and equals with regards to God, and the denial of multiplicity in the divine essence. The term "unicity" is not only means that God is one but also He is transcendent and it is evident through the historical context of the famous revelation of *sūra al-Ikhlās* in which the prophet is commanded to reply affirmatively to a group of Christians who inquire about the description of his God that He is one. For examples; see: (Qur'ān, 2:163), (Qur'ān, 112: 1-4). For further discussion, see: Al-Rāzī, Fakhr al-Dīn, *Mafātīḥ al-Ghayb*. vol. 11, p.357.

<sup>276</sup> Iqbāl, M. *Islam and Science*, p.208.

prove that the Commission for Scientific Miracles of Qur'ān and Sunna<sup>277</sup> (*Ha'it al-I'jāz al-'ilmī fī'l-Qur'ān wa'l-Sunna*) has conducted International conferences on Qur'ān and science in various countries.<sup>278</sup>

In his seminal work, Iqbāl identified five International conferences which have been organized by the commission and many participants have attended in such conferences such as; scholars, philosophers, and scientists<sup>279</sup> between 1987 and 2000.<sup>280</sup>

Iqbāl continues by explaining that the first conference of the commission in 1987 was under General Muhammad Zia-ul Haq, who acts as patron of the conference as well as military ruler of Pakistan. Indeed, various papers which related to Qur'ān and science or integrally linked both to each other have been successfully presented and read by others.<sup>281</sup>

In the principal conclusion of the conference, Iqbāl writes "There is complete harmony between science and Qur'ān...the proceedings of the conferences is videotaped and then these tapes are widely distributed throughout the world."<sup>282</sup> From this statement, it is clearly describing the efforts of all individual scholars and government, especially the commission in order to promote a discourse on the divine nature of the Qur'ān through modern science or vice versa. It is

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<sup>277</sup> The Commission has published about twenty books dealing with the "scientific miracles" of the Qur'ān in various fields such as; embryology, botany, geology, astronomy and cosmology. See: Moore, Keith L. (1982), *the Developing Human: With Islamic Additions*, Commission for Scientific Miracles of Qur'an and Sunna.

<sup>278</sup> Iqbāl, M. *Islam and Science*, p.286.

<sup>279</sup> There are Muslims and non-Muslims scientists who have participated in these conferences such as; 'Abdūl Majeed Zindanni, its founder and first secretary-general and Zaghloul al-Najjar, an Egyptian geologist, Joe Leigh Simpson, a gynecologist, William Hay, a marine scientist, and Keith Moore, the author of a widely used embryology textbook, *The Developing Human*, which was published by the Commission with "Islamic Additions: Correlations Studies with Qur'ān and Hadīth" by Abdūl Majeed Zindānī. He also published, *Qur'ān and Modern Science: Correlation Studies*, Jeddah: Islamic Academy for Scientific Research. 1993. For details, see: Iqbāl, M. *Islam and Science*, p.287.

<sup>280</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>281</sup> *Ibid*, p.288.

<sup>282</sup> *Ibid*, p.287.

politically contributing to the development of scientific exegesis of the Qur'ān when all people take part and distribute their works throughout the world.

### **Third: Historical and civilization factor**

Analysis of the scientific exegesis involved in historical and civilization factor was first carried out by Ā'ishah 'Abd al-Raḥmān<sup>283</sup>. In her major work, Ā'ishah discusses the Muslims of the yesteryears faced arduous challenges especially in the modern civilization. Indeed, new academic scientific findings encouraged the scholars and to give great importance in interpreting the Qur'ān with scientific exegesis as a symbol of religious unity that stressed on the role of all Muslims as vicegerents on earth. It was these factors that stimulated them to govern the world and achieving excellence throughout the eras.<sup>284</sup>

In a large longitudinal study, Iqbāl found that the scientific exegesis appears within the colonial rule of the Muslims world and parallel with the appearance of other types of exegesises such as; theological exegesis (*Tafsīr Kalāmī*), and mystical exegesis (*Tafsīr Sūfī*) as he says:

The appearance of the scientific exegesis of the Qur'ān at a time when most of the Muslim world was under colonial rule, its linkage with the agenda of the reformers with their insistent demands for the acquisition of modern science and technology and the historical absence of a differentiated field of scientific exegesis cast suspicion on the genre. But all of these, can be, and have been, set aside. For example, the historical absence can be discarded as an obstacle because after all, all other genres of exegesis made their appearance in historical time. *Tafsīr Kalāmī*, for instance, arose when *Kalām* tradition had matured and overshadowed many other aspects of Islamic intellectual tradition. Likewise, the mystical exegesis arose in its own historical time. The proponents of this genre argue that the Qur'ān has always been looked upon as a book of guidance

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<sup>283</sup> Ā'ishah 'Abd al-Raḥmān (b.1913) is an Egyptian writer and Professor of Arabic Language and Literature and Qur'ānic Studies. She has produced various books, and articles on Arabic, Qur'ān, and theological studies. For details of her biography, see: *The Oxford Encyclopedia of the Modern Islamic World*. 2001. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

<sup>284</sup> Ā'ishah 'Abd al-Raḥmān. (1982). *al-Qur'ān wa-qaḍāyā al-insān*, Beirut: Dār al-'Ilm lil-Malāyīn, p.311.

and knowledge. There is no reason not to extend the range of Qur'ānic guidance and knowledge to modern science.<sup>285</sup>

According to J.J.G. Jansen<sup>286</sup>, the birth of the modern scientific exegesis is part of a great debate that took place in the Muslim world since the beginning of the influence of science and technology in the Arab world. This debate revolves around whether the study of non-Islamic science and non-Arabs to be accepted among the Muslims or not.<sup>287</sup>

In these discussions, it can be seen how Qur'ān historically acts as not only a book of guidance and knowledge, but it also draws attention to a variety of natural phenomena and physical world.<sup>288</sup> It is considered as one of the development factors of scientific exegesis in contemporary Muslims world.

#### **Fourth: Individual factor**

The individual factor is essential in developing the Islamic scientific exegesis in contemporary Muslim world. Among the individual figure of this era that had a great experience in term of modern science via his travels in the Western world was Jamāl al-Dīn Afghānī.

Quoting from Afghānī's own works, Iqbāl goes on to assert that Afghānī was a dedicated and charismatic man of action, and his works might impact on a large number of scholars as he says:

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<sup>285</sup> Iqbāl, M. *Islam and Science*, pp.288-289.

<sup>286</sup> Johannes Jansen J.G. was an expert interpretation of the Qur'ān from Leiden, Netherlands. He has published a numerous publications on Islam such as; *The Interpretation of the Qur'ān in Modern Egypt*, *The Neglected Duty: The Creed of Sadat's Assassins and Islamic Resurgence in the Middle East*, and *De betekenis van het Islamitisch fundamentalisme: De lotgevallen van de Shukri-groep in Egypte (the tenets of the Shukri group in Egypt and the way in which the group distinguished itself from Islamic fundamentalism)*.

<sup>287</sup> Jansen, J.J.G. (1974). *The interpretation of the Qur'ān in the Modern Egypt*, Leiden: E.J. Brill, p.11.

<sup>288</sup> For example, the Qur'ān refers to the order and balance that characterizes the universe (Q. 25:2, 55:5-7, 67:3). It also mentions the harmonious interdependency of various parts of the physical world, and describes regularities of celestial movements. Indeed, Qur'ān refers to the various stages of the fetus development (Q. 22:5, 23:12-14, 40:67), and concept of pairs (Q. 13:3, 36:36, 53:45, 55:52) which refers to the principle of the complementary of opposites seems to characterize a large part of the physical world.

Afghānī was a charismatic man of action more than his writings; it was his “presence”, his message of hope and his personal influence that helped to lose some of the mental shackles in which the Muslim intellectuals of the colonial era had found themselves such as; Muhammad `Abduh, and Rashīd Ridā. Both of them were deeply influenced by Afghānī, though each in his own way and not without significant departures from Afghānī’s courageous stands against colonization.<sup>289</sup>

In fact, Afghānī has a great influence when he draws the attention of the Muslim professionals and intellectuals to the religious, philosophical and ethical challenges of the modern science. It can be proved through his famous response to Ernest Renan, which is related to a talk on *Islam and Science*, delivered at Sorbonne, Paris. It can be seen that Afghānī criticizes Islamic world with regards to cultivation of science due to intolerant of all religions towards development of science and philosophy. This message has been published later on in the *Journal des Debats* on March 29, 1883.<sup>290</sup>

Another individual prominent scholar is Bedī’uzzamān Saīd Nūrsī, who has made a great influence for Turkish survival through his excellent works and expands his popularity to be an influential figure in contemporary Muslim world. His works entitled *Risale-I Nūr*, are considered valuable and very popular among Muslims world due to the fact that it consists of spiritual exegesis and has been circulated over the world. Indeed, it’s have been translated into various languages and considered as a distinguished contribution in which the discourse on Islam and science well-developed in Turkey.<sup>291</sup>

### **Fifth: Scientific Journalism factor**

A closer investigation of the development factors of the scientific exegesis reveals that scientific journalism also has its influence and significant contribution in contemporary Muslim world. According to Iqbāl, there are four scientific journals which have been published frequently on the issues of the science and

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<sup>289</sup> Iqbāl, M. *Islam and Science*, p.264.

<sup>290</sup> Iqbāl, M. *Islam and Science*, p.262.

<sup>291</sup> *Ibid*, pp.268-269.

religion, especially concerning their relationship which are entitled; *al-Manār*<sup>292</sup>, *al-Muqataṭāf*<sup>293</sup>, *al-Hilāl*<sup>294</sup>, and *al-Mashriq*<sup>295</sup> <sup>296</sup>.

Besides that, it can be identified that the journalism is not only concerned on religious studies, but also from secular's point of views. Indeed, the journalism suggested that Arabs need to implement modern science into their life. Hence, the journalism has published journals on science and religion dialogue for the first time, and highlighted particular issues such as Darwinism<sup>297</sup>, and big bang theory, which is very dominant in the discourse.<sup>298</sup>

By the emergence of this scientific journalism, the scientific exegesis become popular and well developed especially after several authors produced numerous works on the Qur'ān and science such as; Maurice Bucaille<sup>299</sup>, Zaghloūl el-Najjār<sup>300</sup>, and Muzaffar Iqbāl.

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<sup>292</sup> *Al-Manār* was a series of lectures on the Qur'an delivered by Muḥammad 'Abduh and edited by Rashīd Ridā.

<sup>293</sup> *Al-Muqataṭāf* was a scientific journal which has been started in Beirut in 1876.

<sup>294</sup> *Al-Hilāl* was founded by Jūrjī Zaydān (1861-1914), a Lebanese Christian in Cairo in 1892.

<sup>295</sup> *Al-Mashriq* was launched by Father Louis Cheikho, S. J., an Arab Christian in 1898 and it lasted until 1971.

<sup>296</sup> For a survey of Arabic periodicals see: Hartmann, Martin. (1899). *The Arabic Press in Egypt*, London, cited in Ziadat, Adel A. (1986). *Western Science in the Arab World: The Impact of Darwinism, 1860-1930*, London: Macmillan and Houndmills, p.12 and notes 51-53. Also see: Iqbāl, M. *Islam and Science*, p.275.

<sup>297</sup> Darwinism is Darwin's theory of evolution by Adnān Oktar (whose penname is Hārūn Yahya). It is focused on differences concerning the creation of man according to Charles Darwin and the Qur'ānic verses. For further discussion, see: Umit Sayin and Aykut Kence. (1999). *Islamic Scientific Creationism: A New Challenge in Turkey*, in *Reports of the National Center for Science Education*, vol. 19, no. 6, pp.18-29.

<sup>298</sup> Iqbāl, M. *Islam and Science*, pp.275-276.

<sup>299</sup> Maurice Bucaille (19 July 1920-17 February 1998) was a French medical doctor, an author of numerous books on Qur'ān and science, and member of the French society of Egyptology. In 1976, Bucaille had published his major work which is entitled; *The Bible, The Qur'ān and Science*. He also published other books such as; *What is the Origin of Man?*, *Mummies of the Pharaohs: Modern Medical Investigations*, *The Responses of science and Scripture*, *Moses and Pharaoh*, *The Hebrews in Egypt*, and *Man where is he coming from?*. See: Bucaille, Maurice, *The Bible, The Qur'ān and Science*.

<sup>300</sup> Zaghloūl Rāgheb Mohamed el-Najjār was born on 17<sup>th</sup> November 1933 in Gharbiyāb, Egypt. He is a Professor of Geology, Chairman, and Committee on Scientific Notions in the Glorious Qur'ān, Supreme Council of Islamic Affairs, Cairo, Egypt. El-Najjār had been awarded various honors, and scientific affiliations at National and International levels due to his great contributions in the Qur'ān and Modern Science. He also has published hundreds books, journals,

## **2.4 The differences of traditional Islamic scientific exegesis and modern time**

After a thorough discussion made earlier on the history and development, the traditionalist, as well as the contemporary of the scientific exegesis included, it is best to look at the differences of amongst these groups of scholars.

First: In the early stage of scientific exegesis contained methodologies based on reason and logical thinking in striking the relations with the existence of God, power and knowledge as mentioned by the traditionalists like Ghazzālī and Rāzī. This approach had been pioneered by Ghazzālī and has practiced by Rāzī in his methods of interpreting the Qurʾān with scientific approach. However, the contemporary Muslim scholars differ on their methodologies and attempt to interpret the Qurʾān with regards to the inimitability of Qurʾān.

Second: The contemporary Muslim scholars are not only expert in religious knowledge but also master in integrated knowledge such as; physics, chemistry, biology, zoology, sociology, and psychology as compared to the previous era. They are professionals in other field of studies but integrate the Qurʾān with other branches of knowledge. Their extensive backgrounds will deem their interpretation of the Qurʾān more valid and unwavering.

Third: The contemporary Muslim scholars increase all information pertaining to the latest academic findings. Instead, they effortlessly aim at extracting the entire data found in the Qurʾān so as to be able to elaborate them in a more orderly manner. Indeed, they were seen to be applied the dictum of the Qurʾān to strengthen their arguments that the script has surpassed the time, and western civilization by miles. While, the traditionalists Muslim scholars have unanimously agreed that they only deliberate on the issues of the Qurʾān's dictum over the cosmological phenomena.

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and articles in Arabic and English. For details of his life and works, see his personal website: Welcome to ElNaggarZr site. Available at: < URL: <http://www.elnaggarzr.com>, access date: 2<sup>nd</sup> February, 2011.



Fourth: The traditionalists Muslim scholars did not merely interpret the Qur'ān based on scientific exegesis alone. They also applied Grammar, Linguistic, philosophy, history and civilization in their works such as; the practice of Rāzī, Zarkashī and Suyūṭī. On the other hand, the contemporary Muslim scholars like 'Abd Razāk Nawfal and Muḥammad Ghamrāwī unanimously agree to apply the scientific exegesis by deriving the cosmological and natural phenomenon in each chapter of the Qur'ān in their works.

Fifth: It is prominent that the scientific exegesis was not clear in terms of its patterns and characteristic as what it is today. No traditionalists' scholars named it as scientific exegesis. However, today, the characteristics of scientific exegesis are very clear based on the related academic theories and findings.

Sixth: Most traditionalists' scholars used to interpret the Qur'ān with science by explaining them in portions. Even though the remaining verses are connected to the title, they did not compile the entire wordings while arguing on subjects pertaining to the creation of the sky, animals or vegetations. They later interpreted them at the same and explaining on the relationship between half the wordings with the remaining half. Today, most contemporary scholars would compile the wordings that dealt with the same topic and later make comparisons amongst the topics selected before interpreting them.

## **2.5 CONCLUSION**

In sum, the Qur'ān proclaims, but it also offers arguments. It does not merely command faith, but commands the kind of thinking that can lead to the discovery of ultimate truth. When asking its audience to believe, or to adopt a virtue, the Qur'ān invariably presents arguments based on premises that it takes to be universally accessible, since it addresses unbelievers as well as those who have accepted it as the word of God. It thus provides an original model for those who would like to know further about its inimitability and scientific approach which has been explored by traditional as well as contemporary scholars.

It has been shown throughout this chapter that the birth of scientific exegesis is the attempt of Muslim scholars to prove that everything in the universe can be seen from the inimitability verses of Qur'ān. Indeed, Muslim scholars attempt to develop a support to the foundation of all modern sciences in the Qur'ān. This is because the origins of contemporary sciences might be able to find in the Qur'ān and it is tolerated by wish to draw our attention that the Qur'ān is compatible with the modern Western science.

There were traditional scholars who use the scientific exegesis which led by al-Ghazzālī as their main approach in dealing with the modern science. In subsequent periods, the emergence of scientific exegesis is to reconcile the various alien sciences and simultaneously seeking the legitimacy of scientific findings from internal and external sources of Islamic literature. This chapter has pointed out that during the Abbasid era; the scientific exegesis has become the most powerful scientific tradition anywhere in the world.

Indeed, most of the Qur'ān commentaries are considered free of direct references to science. However, the role of Muslim scientists and exegetes has not been merely to hand over to Europe what they have acquired from the ancients and predecessors, but they were able to enrich it by their own methods and new techniques. The history of scientific exegesis and its expansion shows that it reached its highest stage of development between the ninth and eleventh centuries, and subsequently experienced a number of major revivals during the twelfth and thirteenth centuries. In addition, the translation from Arabic into Latin of the major Islamic works revived the spirit of learning in Western Europe during the late middle Ages. It would be proved when the works of the prominent Muslim scholars like Rāzī, and Suyūṭī were widely read and frequently cited by Western writers.

The scientific exegesis is continuously relevant until contemporary era and many Muslim scholars contributed to this field of studies such as; Jamāl al-Dīn Afghānī,

Muḥammad 'Abduh, Mustāfa Ṣādiq al-Rāfi'ī, 'Abdul Razāk Nawfal, Muḥammad al-Ghamrāwī and Bedi'uzzamān Sa'īd Nūrsī. Most of them have practiced science within the ethical framework of Islam and not only preserved the classical achievements of the ancients but also added new and original data to come out a new finding in human knowledge.

Furthermore, the scientific exegesis is developed very well due to social, political, historical and civilization, individual and scientific journalism factors. All these factors contributed to the spread and development of the Islamic scientific exegesis in contemporary Muslim world. It will be discussed further in the next chapter with regards to one of contemporary prominent Muslim theologian and exegete; Ṭanṭāwī Jawharī, his overall biographical studies and his distinguished works.

## CHAPTER THREE

### BIOGRAPHICAL STUDIES OF ṬANṬĀWĪ JAWHARĪ

#### 3.1 INTRODUCTION

In this chapter, researcher attempts to analyse the overall biographical studies of one of contemporary prominent Muslim theologian and exegete; Ṭanṭāwī Jawharī, before passing on to the analytical studies of his distinguished works, is *al-Jawāhir fī Tafsīr al-Qurʾān al-Karīm* (The Jewels of Exegesis of the Qurʾān) in chapter four. He was chosen for his great contributions in pioneering some important intellectuals in the study of scientific exegesis. In terms of structure, this chapter will be divided into five headlines: (1) Ṭanṭāwī's family background, (2) educational life, (3) working life and employment, (4) political life, and (5) intellectual life will be presented and, in conclusion, an overall evaluation will be attempted.

#### 3.2 ṬANṬĀWĪ'S FAMILY BACKGROUND

There have been several investigations into the biographical studies of Ṭanṭāwī Jawharī and all the sources that came across by researcher only mentioned the name of the Ṭanṭāwī and the name of his father. It has been suggested that his name was Ṭanṭāwī Ibn Jawharī<sup>301</sup> without reference to his grandfather or clan and researcher has not found anything referring to the other parts of his name except that, as Ṭanṭāwī himself mentioned, he had a paternal uncle called

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<sup>301</sup> Omar Rida Kahala. 1978. *Muʿjam al-Muallafīn*, Damascus: Maṭbaʿa al-Turkī, vol.5, p.42. Also see: Khir al-Din al-Zarkily. 1984. *al-Aʿlām*, Beirut: Dār al-ʿIlm li al-Malāyīn, vol.3, p.333. See also: Zaki Muḥammad Mujahid. 1980. *al-ʿAlām al-Sharqīya fī al-miaṭ al-Rābiʿa al-hijriyaṭ*, Cairo: Dār al-Ṭibāʿa al-Miṣriya al-Hadīthaṭ, vol.2, p.116, Muḥammad ʿAbd al-Jawad. 1980. *Taqwīm Dār al-ʿUlūm*, Cairo: Dār al-ʿUlūm, p.192, Elias Zakhūraṭ. 1966. *Marʿaṭ al-ʿAṣr fī tarājum wa rusūm akābir al-Rijāl bi Miṣr*, Cairo: Maṭbaʿa Eliās Zakhūra, vol.2, p.225, and see: Anwar al-Jundi. 1970. *Tarājum al-Aʿlām al-Muʿāṣirīn*, Cairo: Egypt Anglo Library, p.181.

Muḥammad Shalabī.<sup>302</sup> Unless it was a composite name, Shalabī was thus the name of the Ṭanṭāwī's grandfather or tribe.

According to Jādo, at the time he was known as 'Ruler of Islam (*Hakīm al-Islām*) and it was Muṣṭafa Kāmil<sup>303</sup> who, as a mark of respect, first gave him this title.<sup>304</sup> In the *al-Jawāhir*, Ṭanṭāwī states that he was born in the eastern village of *Kafr 'Aḍ Allah Ḥijāzī*<sup>305</sup>; the village was named after *'Aḍ Allah Ḥijāzī*, the grandfather of Ṭanṭāwī's mother.<sup>306</sup> This village is close to the Pharaoh remains at Būbastis (Tel Baṣṭa), South East of Zagāzīg.<sup>307</sup> It is an attractive rural village with a small population.<sup>308</sup>

There are various opinions regarding the year of Ṭanṭāwī's birth. Some scholars<sup>309</sup> claim that he was born in 1862 and some claim that he was born in

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<sup>302</sup> Tantawi Jawhari. 2000. *al-Jawāhir fī Tafsīr al-Qur'ān al-Karīm*, Cairo: al-Maktaba al-Islamiya, vol.3, p.223.

<sup>303</sup> Muṣṭafa Kāmil was born in 1874 and was leader of National Party, who had studied in France and came to know a group of writers and politicians opposed to the British occupation in Egypt. On returning to Egypt in 1894, he had reached an understanding with the khedive group on the basis of their common opposition to the British occupation. By his speeches and writings (in 1900 he founded his own newspaper, *al-Liwā*), he endeavored to create an Egyptian patriotism that would rally the entire nation around the khedive. Muṣṭafa Kāmil had died in 1908. For details of his biography and contributions, see: History of Art: Visual history of the World. Available at: <URL:

[http://www.all-art.org/Visual\\_History/01egypt1.htm](http://www.all-art.org/Visual_History/01egypt1.htm), access date: 25<sup>th</sup> January, 2012.

<sup>304</sup> 'Abdul 'Aziz Jādo. 1990. *al-Sheikh Ṭanṭāwī Jawharī: Dirāsaṭ wa Nuṣuṣ*, Cairo: Dār al-Ma'ārif, p.19

<sup>305</sup> Ṭanṭāwī Jawharī, *al-Jawāhir fī Tafsīr al-Qur'ān al-Karīm*, vol.8, p.176. With regards to Ṭanṭāwī's place of birth, Muhammad Rajab al-Bayūmī had stated that Ṭanṭāwī was born in one of the al-Manūfiat villages. See his book: 1980. *Al-Nahda al-Islamiya fī siyari a'lāmuhā al-Mu'āṣirīn*, Cairo: Majma' al-Buhūth al-Islāmiya al-Sana 11, vol.2, p.210. Baron Carra de Vaux however, wrote that Ṭanṭāwī was from the Delta region and he perhaps thought that Ṭanṭāwī was related to Ṭanṭa [one of territories in Egypt]. For further details, see his book: 1991. *Les Penseurs de L'Islam*, Paris: Library Paul Geuthner, vol.5, p.275.

<sup>306</sup> Zaki Mujahid. 1990. *Al-A'lām al-Sharqiya*, vol.2, p.116.

<sup>307</sup> 'Ali Jumblati. 1982. *Fī Zikrā Ṭanṭāwī Jawharī*, Cairo: al-Dār al-Qawmiya, p.9.

<sup>308</sup> According to Jomier, statistic in 1885 shows the population of the village numbered 237 people. See: Jacques Jomier. 1988. Article: *Sheikh Ṭanṭāwī Jawharī and his commentary of Qur'ān*, in the magazine: *Dominicain Institute of Oriental Studies (MIDEO)*, Cairo: Dār al-Ma'ārif, vol.5, p.117.

<sup>309</sup> Muhammad Rajab al-Bayumi, *al-Nahda al-Islamiya fī siyari a'lāmuhā al-Mu'āṣirīn*, vol.2, p.210, Ali Jumblati, *Fī Zikrā Ṭanṭāwī Jawharī*, p.9, Abdul Aziz Jado, *al-Sheikh Ṭanṭāwī Jawharī: Dirāsaṭ wa Nuṣuṣ*, p.11.

1870.<sup>310</sup> However, in my point of views, the former is more likely, i.e. that he was born in 1862. This is based on the following evidences: First: Ṭanṭāwī was pensioned off in 1922. He would have been when he was sixty years old, the age of retirement.<sup>311</sup> Second: in a lecture he gave in 1939 at the Science Club, Ṭanṭāwī mentioned that he was seventy-seven years old<sup>312</sup> and third: Ṭanṭāwī began his studies in al-Azhar in 1877 at the age of fifteen.<sup>313</sup> After reviewing the evidences of the year of Ṭanṭāwī's birth, Jomier<sup>314</sup> concludes that Ṭanṭāwī's sister said he was born on that year, and it confirmed for us that he was born in 1862.<sup>315</sup>

In explaining further details on his environmental life, Ṭanṭāwī then explains that he grew up and settled in the rural village of Kafr 'Auḍ Allah amid captivating nature and beautiful views. He claims that he loved his family ardently and was deeply attached to them, even he spent most of his life walking between the fields and orchards and enjoying sitting by the canal or the side of the Abī

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<sup>310</sup> Al-Zarkily, *al-A'lām*, vol.3, p.333, Omar Rida Kahala, *Mu'jam al-Muallafīn*, vol.5, p.42, Muhammad Mujahid, *al-A'lām al-Sharqīyaṭ*, vol.2, p.116, Muhammad 'Abd al-Jawwad, *Taqwīm Dār al-'Ulūm*, p.192, Ahmad 'Atiya Allah, Article: *Adwa' jadīdaṭ 'ala 'ālam kabīr majhūl*, in magazine *'al-Muṣawwar'*, Issue 2511, 24 November 1982, p.30. Also see: C. Brockelmann, 1982, *Geschichte der Arabeschen litteratur*, Netherlands: Leiden Brill, vol.3, p.326.

<sup>311</sup> Tantawi Jawhari, *al-Jawāhir fī Tafsīr al-Qur'ān al-Karīm*, vol.17, p.185 and vol.26, p.108.

<sup>312</sup> See: Article on *'Leila fī al-Nādī* in the Science House publication, Year 5, Issue 4, April 1979, p.146.

<sup>313</sup> 'Ali al-Jumblati, *Fī Zikrā Ṭanṭawī Jawharī*, p.12.

<sup>314</sup> Jacques Louis Gaston Jomier (7 March 1914-7 December 2008) was studied Arabic in Paris and then to Cairo. He was a professor and member of the Dominicans in Cairo in 1953. He was then established Dominican Institute of Oriental Studies. Jomier was appointed as a visiting professor at the Theological faculty of the University of Kinshasa (Zaire). He also taught in Cairo, Mosul, and Ibadan in between 1963 to 1983. Jomier was then became consuler to the Secretariat for non-Christians to the Vatican. He was a member of Institute of Egypt and was among the first to publish a modern translations of the Qur'an. He published a number of books such as; *Manār Qur'ānic Commentary*, *Bible and Qur'ān*, *The major themes of the Qur'ān*, *A Christian reads the Qur'ān*, *God and man in the Qur'ān* and various articles in the *Encyclopedia of Islām*. For further details, see: Maria Teresa Urvoy. 2002. *In Tribute to Father Jacques Jomier op*, Cerf, pp.5-15.

<sup>315</sup> J. Jomier, MIDEO, vol.5, p.118.

Akhḍar River contemplating God's creations among the birds, flowers and insects.<sup>316</sup>

Describing his childhood passion for the beauty of nature, he says:

From my earliest youth I began to think of divine matters, the miracles of God, the marvels of the Master and the Kingdom, the curiosities of the earth and sky, the plants and animals, the diversity of shapes and colours and the beauty of the crafts of the Merciful. Whenever I withdrew to be alone or finished my studies, hurried towards it to enjoy the nature.<sup>317</sup>

Ṭanṭāwī also says that he was created in love with cosmic wonders and delighted by natural marvels and fascinated by the beauty and perfection of what is in the sky and the earth.<sup>318</sup> Thus, Ṭanṭāwī believed that his village and the beauty of its fields gave him his primary education.<sup>319</sup> As much as Ṭanṭāwī loves the beauty of his village, he avoids and distances himself from its people as he hates their actions and their way of thinking and complains of them as he says;

They despise the honest and honour the wicked, sly man.<sup>320</sup> They preferred the rich to the poor, sitting around to working which they thought of as degradation.<sup>321</sup> An honourable man for them was someone who owned big farms – without this a person had no worth or value.<sup>322</sup>

With regards to the statement, it is clearly states that the early awakening of Ṭanṭāwī; from childhood he keenly felt the problems of his society and other negative effects.<sup>323</sup> In any cases, his aversion to the people of his village caused

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<sup>316</sup> Tantawi Jawhari, *al-Jawāhir fī Tafsīr al-Qur'ān al-Karīm*, vol.6, p.109, vol.23, p.154, and vol.26, p.179.

<sup>317</sup> Tantawi Jawhari, Article "Nizām al-'Ālam (The Order of the World)" in *The Message Magazine*, Year 7<sup>th</sup>, Issue 298. Reprinted: 20<sup>th</sup> March 1989, p.85.

<sup>318</sup> Tantawi Jawhari, *al-Jawāhir fī Tafsīr al-Qur'ān al-Karīm*, vol.1, p.2. This passion for nature stayed with him until the end of his life. In his old age he hated the overcrowding of Cairo of roofs. He was always going to the fields of *Kafr al-Bāshā* near Cairo to look at the beauty of nature there. Tantawi Jawhari, *al-Jawāhir fī Tafsīr al-Qur'ān al-Karīm*, vol.26, p.186.

<sup>319</sup> *Ibid*, vol.23, p.154.

<sup>320</sup> *Ibid*, vol.5, p.13 and vol.8, p.126.

<sup>321</sup> *Ibid*, vol.10, p.126.

<sup>322</sup> *Ibid*, vol.5, p.159.

<sup>323</sup> For an example of his childhood feelings of social and political injustice, see: Tantawi, *al-Jawāhir fī Tafsīr al-Qur'ān al-Karīm*, vol.20, p.202.

him to become more deeply attached to the beauty of nature and his love of isolation and solitude.<sup>324</sup>

In term of his family's life, Ṭanṭawī had mentioned that they have been working in agricultural and cultivation sector. They were also considered as religious scholars and loved learning due to the fact that his family had a good contact with the scholars of al-Azhar mosque who constantly came to call on the head of the family each year.<sup>325</sup> It seems that Ṭanṭawī's family had a renowned and distinguished past as Ṭanṭawī says:

When I was in the fields with my father he would start telling me about the early days of our family and their proud glory and perfect honour and that they were victorious over their enemies. My mother's grandfather, with the whole family, delighted in great banquets which they held in celebration of their victory and wealth.<sup>326</sup>

Ṭanṭawī's mention in this passage of his background family had huge property and wealth, but then left the family in poverty; Ṭanṭawī's father for example owned nothing but "half acre"<sup>327</sup> and Ṭanṭawī himself was forced to work in the fields to sustain the family when his father was ill.<sup>328</sup> Due to poverty, and strong interest to study at al-Azhar, Ṭanṭawī was forced to walk ten miles from his village to Balbess and from there to the Ismā'īliya Canal where he travelled, for a small sum, on board one of the merchant cargo vessels.<sup>329</sup>

As for Jawharī – Ṭanṭawī's father –, he was a humble farmer who nothing in the way of education. He had been sent to the *kuttāb* (elementary Qur'ān school) as

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<sup>324</sup> Ṭanṭawī explains that if it was not for his love of study and learning he would have liked to isolate himself from society as he says: "In certain phases of my life, I tended towards silence, inactivity and seclusion except to gain knowledge and develop some things better. However, the keen to study and gain knowledge was a reason for my attachments with all nations of Islam, among them the upper class of Egypt." *Ibid*, vol.20, p.189.

<sup>325</sup> Tantawi Jawhari, Article "Nizām al-'Ālam wa Nizām al-Duwal (The Order of the World and the Order of Nations)" in *The Message Magazine*, Year 7<sup>th</sup>, Issue 298. Reprinted: 20<sup>th</sup> March 1989, p.85.

<sup>326</sup> Tantawi Jawhari, *al-Jawāhir fī Tafsīr al-Qur'ān al-Karīm*, vol.17, pp.181-182.

<sup>327</sup> J. Jomier: MIDEO vol.5, p.118

<sup>328</sup> Tantawi Jawhari, *al-Jawāhir fī Tafsīr al-Qur'ān al-Karīm*, vol.26, p.204.

<sup>329</sup> 'Ali Jumblati, *Fī Zikrā Ṭanṭawī Jawharī*, p.12.



a child, stayed three days then the teacher hit him and he ran away and did not return. He used to say after that: "I have not been fortunate with learning so let [it be that] my son is so!"<sup>330</sup> He prayed to God to give him a wise son.<sup>331</sup>

After discussing his father's background, Ṭanṭāwī then explains his mother's background and goes on to assert that she died in 1918.<sup>332</sup> Jādo believes, that she was from an influential and powerful tribe called '*al-Ghanāima*' and she lived in a nearby town called *al-Ghār*.<sup>333</sup> In this town, Jādo mentions that Ṭanṭāwī had a grandmother who took special care of him, loved him very much and could not bear to be parted from him.<sup>334</sup>

In further discussion on his family's life, Ṭanṭāwī was reported that he had many siblings<sup>335</sup>, including the sister who Jomier visited whose name is not recalled. He also had a brother called Muhammad who, at the time of Ṭanṭāwī's death, was an inspector at the Ministry of Justice.<sup>336</sup>

In his brief introduction to his own family life, Ṭanṭāwī clearly indicates that he married with 'Aisha al-Hasaniya who was descended from Hassan ibn 'Alī. Ṭanṭāwī believes that she was a virtuous wife and had in-charged with the task of performing ritual prayers and religious observances.<sup>337</sup> Ṭanṭāwī continues by saying that in that marriage, both of them have been awarded two children who were named Ahmad and Jamāl al-Dīn. Due to limited sources, researcher does not get any information about the former, except his name but on the other

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<sup>330</sup> 'Abdul Aziz Jado, *al-Sheikh Ṭanṭāwī Jawharī: Dirāsaṭ wa Nuṣuṣ*, p.12

<sup>331</sup> Elias Zakhura, *Mar'aṭ al-'Aṣr fī tarājum wa rusūm akābir al-Rijāl bi Miṣr*, vol.2, p.225.

<sup>332</sup> Tantai Jawhari, *al-Jawāhir fī Tafsīr al-Qur'ān al-Karīm*, vol.1, p.257.

<sup>333</sup> 'Abdul 'Aziz Jado, *al-Sheikh Ṭanṭāwī Jawharī: Dirāsaṭ wa Nuṣuṣ*, p.11

<sup>334</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>335</sup> Tantai Jawhari. 1985. *The Thoughts of al-Jawharī*, Cairo: Maṭba'a al-Ta'lif, p.76.

<sup>336</sup> Al-Ahrām Newspaper, 13<sup>th</sup> January 1999, p.8.

<sup>337</sup> Ṭanṭāwī Jawharī, *al-Jawāhir fī Tafsīr al-Qur'ān al-Karīm*, vol.13, p.81

hand, researcher knows that Jamāl al-Dīn was an officer in the Egyptian Army at the time of his fathers' death.<sup>338</sup>

### 3.3 ṬANṬĀWĪ'S EDUCATION

Ṭanṭāwī presents in a number of stages during his life as a student, beginning with the Elementary Qur'ān School (*kuttāb*) and ending with his graduation from the College of Sciences. The following points illustrate the stages and the most significant events that occurred at those times:

#### 3.3.1 The *Kuttāb* (Elementary Qur'ān School)

In the beginning of his educational life, Ṭanṭāwī explains when he reached the age of puberty, his father sent him to the elementary Qur'ān school in the town of *al-Ghār*, the home of his mother's family.<sup>339</sup> According to Zakhuraṭ, Ṭanṭāwī quickly learnt the Qur'ān and had an excellent memory as well as outstanding intelligence.<sup>340</sup> However, Ṭanṭāwī claims that he was not happy in the way he learnt Qur'ān in the school due to the fact that it was merely memorising without understanding the verses.<sup>341</sup>

#### 3.3.2 The University of al-Azhar

After completing his studies at the elementary Qur'ān school, Ṭanṭāwī directed his interest towards studying in al-Azhar.<sup>342</sup> This concurred with a desire of his father to see him become a prominent scholar of al-Azhar University.<sup>343</sup> Therefore, Ṭanṭāwī studied all the area of sciences, jurisprudence, logic and

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<sup>338</sup> Tantawi, *al-Jawāhir fī Tafsīr al-Qur'ān al-Karīm*, vol.26, p.253, p.256. Also see: al-Ahrām newspaper, 13 January 1999, p.8.

<sup>339</sup> Tantawi Jawhari, Article "*Niẓām al-Ālam wa Niẓām al-Duwal'*" in the *Message* magazine, Year 7, issue 298, reprinted: 20<sup>th</sup> March 1989, p.85.

<sup>340</sup> Elias Zakhuraṭ, *Mar'aṭ al-'Aṣr fī tarājum wa rusūm akābir al-Rijāl bi Miṣr*, vol.2, p.225.

<sup>341</sup> Tantawi Jawhari, *al-Jawāhir fī Tafsīr al-Qur'ān al-Karīm*, vol.6, p.110, vol.22, p.5, and vol.23, p.155.

<sup>342</sup> *Ibid*, vol.5, p.22.

<sup>343</sup> Tantawi Jawhari, Article "*Niẓām al-Ālam wa Niẓām al-Duwal'*" in the *Message* magazine, Year 7, issue 298, 20<sup>th</sup> March 1989, p.85.

theology.<sup>344</sup> Indeed, he spent lots of his time to think about sky and stars, as well as spending many nights gazing at them.<sup>345</sup>

Ṭantāwī later on elaborates that as soon as the holidays started, he would set off for his village to take solitude and enjoyed the beauty and wondered of God's creations.<sup>346</sup> He also spent most of his day to contemplate God's creations, and recite the books of Layla Majnūn<sup>347</sup> as he says that he leave the houses hoping to talk to the soul about God in the night unrestrained.<sup>348</sup>

Due to love of nature, Ṭantāwī directed himself towards the natural sciences. In discussion of the natural sciences, Ṭantāwī claims that he had spent two weeks holiday for reading a book on astronomy which entitled '*al-Jaghmin*'<sup>349</sup>. Indeed, he was so enamoured with this book that he read in the whole night and day. He was then spent his remaining holiday to copy the book by hand which consisted of one hundred pages.<sup>350</sup>

According to 'Alī Jumblāṭī, after spending five years at al-Azhar, Ṭantāwī was forced to stop studying due to the fact that the Arab Revolution and the British

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<sup>344</sup> Tantawi Jawhari, *al-Jawāhir fī Tafsīr al-Qur'ān al-Karīm*, vol.23, p.108, p.155.

<sup>345</sup> *Ibid*, vol.22, p.5.

<sup>346</sup> *Ibid*, vol.18, p.41, and vol.21, p.191. See also: Tantawi Jawhari, *al-Tāj al-Muraṣṣa'* (*The Jewelled Crown*), pp.20-21.

<sup>347</sup> Leila Majnūn is a classical Arab story, popularized by Persian poet; Nizami Ganjavi's masterpiece, Layli o Majnun. It is based on the real story of a young man called *Majnūn* in (today's Iraq) during the Umayyad era in the 7<sup>th</sup> century when Arabs defeated Byzantines and Persians, and Syria and Iraq were conquered. In one version, he spent his youth together with Layla, tending their flocks. In another version, upon seeing Layla, he fell passionately in love with her. For further details, see: 'Ali Asghar Sayyid Gohrab. 1973. *Layli and Majnun: Love, Madness and Mystic Longing*, Leiden: Brill Studies in Middle Eastern literature, pp.1-10.

<sup>348</sup> Tantawi Jawhari, *al-Jawāhir fī Tafsīr al-Qur'ān al-Karīm*, vol.6, p.106.

<sup>349</sup> *Al-Jaghmin* is an astronomy book written by Sharaf al-Dīn Maḥmūd ibn Muḥammad ibn 'Umar al-Jaghminī al-Khwārizmī. It is an elementary summary of the configuration of the celestial and terrestrial worlds, and the orbs and sublunary levels contained therein. This work composed of an introduction and two sections. The introduction is an explanation of the divisions of the bodies in general; Section 1 is divided into five parts and is an explanation of the celestial orbs and what pertains to them; and Section 2 is divided into three parts, and is an explanation of the Earth and what pertains to it. See: Suter, Heinrich and rev. by J. Vernet. (1965). "*Al-Djaghminī*." In *Encyclopaedia of Islam*. 2nd ed. Vol. 2, Leiden: E. J. Brill, p.378.

<sup>350</sup> Tantawi Jawhari, *al-Jawāhir fī Tafsīr al-Qur'ān al-Karīm*, vol.4, p.41, and vol.26, p.204.

colonizing Egypt in 1882.<sup>351</sup> For this reason, Ṭaṇṭāwī returned to his village and was afflicted by a severe gastric illness. Simultaneously, he found that his father was suffering from other ailments which had stopped him from working. While occupied with finding treatment for them both, he was forced – in spite of his illness - to work on the farm instead of his father. This situation continued throughout his period of absence.<sup>352</sup>

During this period of time, Ṭaṇṭāwī experienced an ideological crisis. In essence, he began to look at the things around him and feel that they were randomly scattered, without order or harmony. It seemed to him that the world was disarrayed and imperfect, with no precision or stability and he began to doubt that there was any ruling system, as he says,

Does this world have a god? I do not believe anything except that which my reason believes to be true, and this world has no order... and if order and perfection is lost, then there is no creator, there are just changing situations and random affairs brought about by chance and haphazard coincidence.<sup>353</sup>

Ṭaṇṭāwī also says:

In front of me were two possibilities: either I believe that the world is balanced by a fixed and determined measure and acknowledge that it is directed by a powerful maker, or I, exhausted, believe that it is disordered and random.<sup>354</sup>

With regards to the statements, Ṭaṇṭāwī searched for an answer, and began to read theology and found studies of philosophy and logic in which he read that the world was indeed in order and he believes that these studies gave him some degree of assurance.<sup>355</sup> Indeed, he also applied himself to the study of ancient

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<sup>351</sup> 'Ali Jumblati, *Fī Zikrā Ṭaṇṭāwī Jawharī*, p.14.

<sup>352</sup> Tantawi Jawhari, *al-Jawāhir fī Tafsīr al-Qur'ān al-Karīm*, vol.11, p.71, and see: Tantawi Jawhari. 1984. *Nahḍat al-Ummaṭ wa hayātuhā*, Cairo: Muṣṭafa al-Bābī al-Ḥalabī, p.17.

<sup>353</sup> Tantawi Jawhari, *al-Jawāhir fī Tafsīr al-Qur'ān al-Karīm*, vol.11, pp.71-72.

<sup>354</sup> Tantawi Jawhari, *al-Tāj al-Muraṣṣa'*, p.23 and p.31 onwards. See also, *al-Jawāhir fī Tafsīr al-Qur'ān al-Karīm*, vol.6, p.172.

<sup>355</sup> Tantawi Jawhari, article: *Niḏām al-'Ālam wa Niḏām al-Duwal*, p.85.

philosophy, as he says "For being a wise person, I must know the whole world."<sup>356</sup> Due to his strong interest in these studies, he published some pieces of works and will be explaining in the next point.

In this context, Ṭanṭāwī seems to show the important of seeking knowledge and he was then started to fast some days and prayed through some nights, asking God to deliver him knowledge from the state he was in this world.<sup>357</sup> Ṭanṭāwī also understands the divine purpose in creation as being for the sake of knowledge and love. In this respect, he devotes numerous passages to God's love which, in particular, is directed towards humanity. God's love for human beings preceded the existence of man and the world.<sup>358</sup> Hence, Ṭanṭāwī believes that God was helped him to understand God's attributes when came across various books of al-Ghazzālī.<sup>359</sup>

In another context, Ṭanṭāwī begins to connect verses of Qur'ān to the living creatures and creations he saw around and proud with the world order, perfection and intricacy of the universe.<sup>360</sup> Ṭanṭāwī observes that he himself preferred to know further about other branches of knowledge. Thus, according to al-Ahrām<sup>361</sup>, Ṭanṭāwī had stated that he missed al-Azhar and would like to further his studies in that particular institution. He also frequently prayed to God to return him there and after waiting for couple of years, Ṭanṭāwī returned to al-Azhar after an absence of three years.<sup>362</sup> He added that he was then spent

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<sup>356</sup> Tantawi Jawhari, *al-Tāj al-Muraṣṣa'*, p.30.

<sup>357</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>358</sup> Indeed, it will be seen that the main reason for God's creation of Adam was for love as Qur'ān says: "We created you from a single soul". (Qur'ān, 39:6). According to Ṭanṭāwī, the term 'a single soul' means God created Adam and Hawa from a single person for love. See: Tantawi Jawhari, *al-Jawāhir fī Tafsīr al-Qur'ān al-Karīm*, vol.18, p.183.

<sup>359</sup> Tantawi Jawhari, *al-Tāj al-Muraṣṣa'*, p.31.

<sup>360</sup> *Ibid.* See also: Tantawi Jawhari, *al-Jawāhir fī Tafsīr al-Qur'ān al-Karīm*, vol.11, p.72 and p.198.

<sup>361</sup> Al-Ahrām (The pyramids) is a daily newspaper published in Cairo and considered as Egypt's most influential newspaper as well as the most important papers in the Arab world. It was founded in Alexandria in 1875 by two Lebanese Christian brothers, Salīm and Bishārah Taqlā'. For further details, see: Laura S. Etheredge. 2011. *Middle East: Region in Transition*, Britannica Educational Publishing: New York, pp.88-89.

<sup>362</sup> Tantawi Jawhari, *al-Jawāhir fī Tafsīr al-Qur'ān al-Karīm*, vol.11, p.71, vol.26, p.204.

another four years there before graduating as an outstanding student among his peers.<sup>363</sup>

### 3.3.3 College of Science (*Dār al-'Ulūm*)

In 1890, Ṭanṭāwī had completed his studies at al-Azhar and, along with a small group of fellow students, progressed to the College of Science. Indeed, the students were selected from al-Azhar and studied modern scientific subjects which had not been on the curriculum there.<sup>364</sup> Ṭanṭāwī later on spent three years there before graduating in 1893.<sup>365</sup>

It is worth indicating that the time he spent at the College of Science was a turning point for Ṭanṭāwī. He claims that it satisfied his desires and interests and he found in abundance whatever his soul wished for.<sup>366</sup> A wide window was opened for him on a big world of which he had been ignorant as he says:

With God's permission I entered the college of science. Upon my life, I had not known that there was in the whole world any philosophy apart from what we had studied, or natural sciences apart from what we had read of...when I entered the school I heard that it offered natural sciences and chemistry and I started to study them along with arithmetic, engineering, algebra and astronomy. I believed that my religion required me to do that.<sup>367</sup>

Indeed, Ṭanṭāwī devoted himself to the study of natural sciences with obvious passion, to the point that his friends were astonished at the lengths his application to and zeal for the subject matter. Whenever they asked him; "why he loved something which was of no benefit?" he was then answered: "Only one who has suffered from longing knows what it is, and only one who has been in

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<sup>363</sup> *The Death of a Great Scholar* in al-Ahram Newspaper, 13 January 1990, p.8.

<sup>364</sup> Tantawi Jawhari, *al-Jawāhir fī Tafsīr al-Qur'ān al-Karīm*, vol.17, p.176 and vol.19, p.155

<sup>365</sup> Ahmad Atiya Allah, article: "Aḍwa' jadīdaṭ 'ala 'ālam kabīr majhūl", in magazine 'al-Muṣawwar', issue 2011, 23 November 1972, p.30.

<sup>366</sup> Tantawi Jawhari, *al-Jawāhir fī Tafsīr al-Qur'ān al-Karīm*, vol.11, p.72.

<sup>367</sup> Tantawi, *al-Tāj al-Muraṣṣa'*, pp.30-31.

love can understand it.”<sup>368</sup> He did let their words impede him, so his friends complained to their teacher; Hassan al-Taweel<sup>369</sup>, telling him that Ṭanṭāwī was “obsessed with these sciences the Christians brought.” These words were of no avail; Ḥassan answered: “Let him seek God in the skies and the earth....let him”<sup>370</sup>

Due to his strong effort and zeal, Ṭanṭāwī excelled his peers and obtained very high marks in these subjects.<sup>371</sup> It is worth noting that Ṭanṭāwī had also studied Ḥanafī jurisprudence under Ḥasūna al-Nawāwī<sup>372</sup> in preparation for the judiciary.<sup>373</sup> On graduating from the College of Science, Ṭanṭāwī had completed student life. However, he did not even for one day stop researching, studying and gaining knowledge.<sup>374</sup>

### 3.3.4 Ṭanṭāwī’s teachers

According to Ṭanṭāwī, he was influenced by many of the teachers who taught him in al-Azhar and the College of Sciences. These included Muḥammad al-

<sup>368</sup> Elias Zakhurat, *Mar’at al-‘Aṣr fī tarājum wa rusūm akābir al-Rijāl bi Miṣr*, vol.2, p.226.

<sup>369</sup> Ḥassan bin Aḥmed bin ‘Alī Ābū Muḥammad al-Ṭaweel was born in *Minia Shahala* in *Menoufia* in 1834 and died in Cairo in 1899. He memorised the Qur’ān at a young age and studied in *Ṭanṭa* then al-Azhar. He excelled in all subjects and studied natural and mathematical sciences and engineering in addition to religious sciences. He dedicated himself to education and after holding a post correcting printing errors with the war office he became a supervisor at the Ministry of Education. He liked very much to go out into the country which he would do for two days every week. He was renowned for his clear rejection of heresy and heretics and was a jurist of the Maliki school of thought. Ahmad Taymur, one of his students described him as having a “strange ascetic character; he distanced himself from base habits and hypocrisy and was humble with everyone he met. He was an innocent regarding food, clothes and home and he spent very little of his wages on himself, giving the rest as alms in secret.” He published a number of books and one of them entitled “Elucidation”. For further details, see: Ahmad Taymur, *Biographies of Important Personalities of the 13<sup>th</sup> and 14<sup>th</sup> Century*, pp. 120-129. See also: al-Zarkali, *al-A’lām*, vol.2, p.183, and see: Omar Kahala, *Mu’jam al-Muallafīn*, vol.3, p.202.

<sup>370</sup> Tantawi Jawhari, *al-Jawāhir fī Tafsīr al-Qur’ān al-Karīm*, vol.4, p.170.

<sup>371</sup> Elias Zakhurat, *Mar’at al-‘Aṣr fī tarājum wa rusūm akābir al-Rijāl bi Miṣr*, p.227.

<sup>372</sup> Ḥasūna al-Nawāwī was a Professor of judiciary, College of Science, Cairo, Egypt.

<sup>373</sup> Tantawi Jawhari, About the *Fatwa* in al-Fatah magazine, Year 11, Issue 536, reprinted: 29 Zulkaidah, 1355 Hijri, p.12.

<sup>374</sup> Muḥammad bin Yūsuf al-Kāfī al-Tūnisī stated that Ṭanṭāwī completed his studies in Europe. See his book, *al-Masāil al-kāfiya*, p.141. Brockelmann however, stated that Ṭanṭāwī had studied in the Egyptian university. See his book: *Geschichte Der Arabischen Litteratur*, vol.3, p.326.

Najdi<sup>375</sup> who taught him literature<sup>376</sup>, and 'Alī al-Bulāghī<sup>377</sup> who taught rhetoric and was fascinated by natural sciences. He used to say of astronomy: "I would not be a Muslim if I did not study this science".<sup>378</sup> At the College of Science there was Ismā'īl Bek Rafat<sup>379</sup> who taught him history<sup>380</sup>, Aḥmad Affendī Ḥamdī<sup>381</sup> who taught him mathematical science<sup>382</sup> and 'Abd al-Majīd Affendī<sup>383</sup> who taught astronomy.<sup>384</sup> Among these was Ḥassan al-Ṭaweel who influenced Ṭanṭāwī and supported him in his scientific interests and studies to the degree that Muslims believe that Ṭanṭāwī's scientific thinking passed into him via Ḥassan al-Ṭaweel.<sup>385</sup>

### 3.4 ṬANṬĀWĪ'S WORKING LIFE AND EMPLOYMENT

Explaining his working life and employment, Ṭanṭāwī describes that as soon as after completing his studies, he started his official employment in education and had been teaching in the higher institutions until he retired. The following briefly enumerates the establishments in which he taught:

Ṭanṭāwī first worked in the Damanhūr state school but stayed there for only three months before leaving because of illness.<sup>386</sup> He was then taught in the second department of the College of Sciences.<sup>387</sup> Jado presents another explanation for Ṭanṭāwī's working life as he claims that Ṭanṭāwī had been teaching in al-Nasīrī Elementary School in Giza, and then in Giza Secondary

<sup>375</sup> Muḥammad al-Najdī was a professor of literature, University of al-Azhar.

<sup>376</sup> Tantawi Jawhari, *al-Jawāhir fī Tafsīr al-Qur'ān al-Karīm*, vol.23, p.108

<sup>377</sup> 'Alī al-Bulāghī was a professor of Arabic Language, specialization in rhetoric, University of al-Azhar.

<sup>378</sup> Tantawi Jawhari, *al-Jawāhir fī Tafsīr al-Qur'ān al-Karīm*, vol.26, p.204.

<sup>379</sup> Ismā'īl Bek Rafat was a professor of history, University of al-Azhar.

<sup>380</sup> Tantawi Jawhari, *al-Jawāhir fī Tafsīr al-Qur'ān al-Karīm*, vol.4, p.213.

<sup>381</sup> Ahmad Affendī Hamdī was professor of mathematical sciences, University of al-Azhar.

<sup>382</sup> Tantawi Jawhari, *al-Jawāhir fī Tafsīr al-Qur'ān al-Karīm*, vol.26, p.205.

<sup>383</sup> 'Abd al-Majīd Affendī was professor of astronomy, University of al-Azhar.

<sup>384</sup> Tantawi Jawhari, *al-Jawāhir fī Tafsīr al-Qur'ān al-Karīm*, vol.26, p.205.

<sup>385</sup> Muhammad bin Yusuf al-Kafī. (1984). *al-Masā'il al-kāfiya*, Cairo: Maṭba'a Hijāzī, p.141.

<sup>386</sup> Tantawi Jawhari, *al-Jawāhir fī Tafsīr al-Qur'ān al-Karīm*, vol.8, p.120.

<sup>387</sup> Elias Zakḥūra, *Mar'aṭ al-'Aṣr fī tarājum wa rusūm akābīr al-Rijāl bi Miṣr*, vol.2, p.227. See also: Muhammad 'Abd al-Jawwad, *Taqwīm Dār al-'Ulūm*, p.192.



School.<sup>388</sup> However, Zakhūra indicates that from 1900 to 1910, Ṭanṭāwī taught at the Khedivial Preparatory School, in al-Jamāmeez<sup>389</sup>.

In another context, Jawwād observes that during this time, some of Ṭanṭāwī's students taught him English, in which he became proficient.<sup>390</sup> Ṭanṭāwī was also, in this period, nominated to teach Arabic philosophy at the University of London but was apparently prevented from travelling by the machinations of colleagues.<sup>391</sup>

Elsewhere, Zakhūra demonstrates that when Aḥmad Pasha took over the management of public education in 1911, he appointed Ṭanṭāwī as a teacher of Qur'ānic interpretation and Hadīth in the College of Sciences.<sup>392</sup> Due to his enthusiasm, Ṭanṭāwī was given the General Order of Education Ministry in 1912-1913 to give lectures in Arabic Philosophy in the Egyptian University, taking the place of Sultān Bey Muḥammad. However, Ṭanṭāwī taught there for a short period of time before the authorities discharged him because of his roles and nationalist sentiments and brought a Portuguese Orientalist to take over his position.<sup>393</sup> Simultaneously, Ṭanṭāwī applied to serve with the law department but then his application was not accepted.<sup>394</sup>

After working at the Egyptian University, Ṭanṭāwī was sent to the Ministry of Education. He was refused by all the supervisors of the Egyptian school except an Irishman; Mr. Frins who was the head of the Khedivial School at that time.<sup>395</sup>

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<sup>388</sup> Abdul Aziz Jado, *al-Sheikh Ṭanṭāwī Jawhari: Dirasaṭ wa Nuṣuṣ*, p.16

<sup>389</sup> Elias Zakhūra, *Mar'aṭ al-'Aṣr fī tarājum wa rusūm akābir al-Rijāl bi Miṣr*, vol.2, p.227.

<sup>390</sup> Muhammad 'Abd al-Jawwad, *Taqwīm Dār al-'Ulūm*, p.192. Indeed, Ṭanṭāwī explained that his goal in learning English was to study western sciences in order to compare them with the sciences of the Arabs. See his book: *al-Tāj al-Muraṣṣa'*, p.39.

<sup>391</sup> Abdul Aziz Jado, *al-Sheikh Ṭanṭāwī Jawhari: Dirasa wa Nuṣuṣ*, p.16.

<sup>392</sup> Elias Zakhūra, *Mar'aṭ al-'Aṣr fī tarājum wa rusūm akābir al-Rijāl bi Miṣr*, vol.2, p.227.

<sup>393</sup> 'Abd al-Aziz Jado, *al-Sheikh Ṭanṭāwī Jawhari: Dirasaṭ wa Nuṣuṣ*, p.17. Also see: Tantawi Jawhari, *al-Jawāhir fī Tafsīr al-Qur'ān al-Karīm*, vol.11, p.73.

<sup>394</sup> Muhammad 'Abd al-Jawwad, *Taqwīm Dār al-'Ulūm*, p.192. Indeed, Ṭanṭāwī and the Chief Lawyer have been chosen to be the first Islamic Law judges from the College of Science. For further details, see: Tantawi Jawhari, *About the Fatwa* in al-Fatah magazine, Year 11, Issue 536, 29 Zulkaedah, 1355 Hijri, p.12.

<sup>395</sup> Abdul Aziz Jado, *al-Sheikh Ṭanṭāwī Jawhari: Dirasaṭ wa Nuṣuṣ*, pp.17-18.

In 1914, following the declaration of World War I, Ṭaṇṭāwī was the target of machinations by some who appear to have taken a dislike to him.<sup>396</sup> Indeed, they denied Ṭaṇṭāwī from teaching work in Cairo, and he was then sent to Alexandria where he taught at the Abbasid Secondary School<sup>397</sup> although they knew that Ṭaṇṭāwī was outstanding in his teaching methods, as will be shown in the next chapter.

In 1917 he was invited again to teach in the Khedivial School<sup>398</sup> and five years after, Ṭaṇṭāwī left teaching as he had reached the legal retirement age.<sup>399</sup> In the next point, researcher will be focusing on Ṭaṇṭāwī's contributions towards teaching as it is essential to enhance people way of thinking.

### **3.4.1 Ṭaṇṭāwī as a teacher**

As a teacher, Ṭaṇṭāwī was an example of a virtuous educator and always shows a praiseworthy character for his students to follow, calling on them to adhere to virtue and urging them towards righteousness and wellbeing.<sup>400</sup>

Indeed, Ṭaṇṭāwī had a great influence on his students, to the extent that some of them adopted his ideas and opinions and imitated him as Elias Zakḥūra says:

The students in both elementary and secondary school took on his ideas and opinions and many of them imitated him. This could be proven when one of school teachers; Lambier, in Litton School<sup>401</sup>, even asked some of his pupils there while they were in the garden: "Why do you love looking at nature so much?" They answered: "We studied 'Creative Writing' with Ṭaṇṭāwī in 1907 and we love looking at existence." He said that this was amazing and if there were three

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<sup>396</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>397</sup> 'Ali Jumblati, *Fī Zikrā Ṭaṇṭāwī Jawharī*, p.21.

<sup>398</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>399</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>400</sup> See some of his sayings to the students regarding prayer, honesty, and opposition to colonialism in *al-Jawāhir fī Tafsīr al-Qur'ān al-Karīm*, vol.14, pp.163-164.

<sup>401</sup> Litton School is a law school in France.

people in Egypt like him, then they should come here and teach in the Oriental College.<sup>402</sup>

Also, Ṭanṭāwī's friend; Muḥammad 'Abd al-Jawwād described his appealing style of teaching as he says:

I knew him as a teacher at the College of Science. In his lessons he was like a caged bird; he tried to stick to the limits of the curriculum but his learning and deep thinking would not help or obey him. He would determine a subject, and in his explanation cite examples from his book which is entitled '*Ṣiḡḡār al-huwām wa al-hasharāt*' and then he would take you flying through the air through the world of astronomy and the heavens. Before the lesson was even over you would feel that you had been on an aeroplane and watched the skies from it or that you had travelled the seas by steamboat and seen the wonders of the oceans, or roamed through the fields and contemplated the marvels of the plants, or travelled between the plains and the mountains and learnt the unspoken wonders. He indeed, could inspire you with a single sentence, and you never got bored of his words. He would give examples of things you thought ordinary, things that you pass by every day and don't pay any attention to. Furthermore, he would conclude his observations and if you found the subject difficult to comprehend or of there was something in it which held you back, you could be guided by thinking and contemplation. With observation and diversion you learnt that you live in a world which is full of things to learn and things which grab the attention...<sup>403</sup>

Later, in the same book of the *Taqwīm Dār al-'Ulūm*, 'Abd al-Jawwād says:

His conduct with the students outside of the classroom was outstanding and he set great hopes on some of his pupils. He would walk arm in arm, talking warmly with one of them and the student would not notice how far they walked until they arrived at the house of either the teacher or the student. He would stop a little while then cordially wish him a kind farewell. Ṭanṭāwī did not have time for anything else as he exhausted with himself in preparing and printing notes for his students, and published four study books.<sup>404</sup>

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<sup>402</sup> Elias Zakḥūra, *Mar'aṭ al-'Aṣr fī tarājum wa rusūm akābir al-Rijāl bi Miṣr*, vol.2, p.227.

<sup>403</sup> Muḥammad 'Abd al-Jawwad, *Taqwīm Dār al-'Ulūm*, pp.191-193.

<sup>404</sup> Muḥammad 'Abd al-Jawwad, *Taqwīm Dār al-'Ulūm*, pp.193-194.

From these varied statements, it can be concluded that Ṭanṭāwī was sincerely devoted to his work, well respected and had considerable influence on the intellect of the people, especially students in higher institutions. Indeed, he used various methods in their ways of teaching, and thinking, in order to attract students become more interested in the subject matter.

### 3.4.2 Ṭanṭāwī and the Nobel Peace Prize

In the concept of Nobel Peace Prize, Ṭanṭāwī had been recognized as one of the recipients due to his principle ideas and outstanding contributions in the contemporary Muslims world.<sup>405</sup> Ṭanṭāwī also, via his books and articles, called for peace and harmony for all human beings over the world. He endeavoured to obtain the Nobel Peace Prize, which he presents in a number of writings, that the greatest contributions on the global peace and among of them are:

First: Book entitled: "Dreams in Politics and How to Achieve Universal Peace".

Second: Book entitled: "*Aina al-Insan?* (Where is the Human?)"

Third: An illustration of the writings of important of the East and the societies and scholars of Europe in those two books.<sup>406</sup>

Fourth: Book entitled: "The Foundation of International Order and Equilibrium between the Outlooks of the leaders of East and West and the Modern Egyptian."

Fifth: A transcribed copy of Eastern Magazine (in Rome) by Santillana D. about Ṭanṭāwī and his book "Where is the human?" and a synopsis of the book.<sup>407</sup>

Sixth: A copy in French of the synopsis of the book "Dreams in Politics"<sup>408</sup>, which was sent to the author by Christian Gibb<sup>409</sup> from Luxembourg<sup>410</sup>.

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<sup>405</sup> See: magazine '*al-Risāla*', issue 290, 23 January 1989, p.188.

<sup>406</sup> There is a copy of the illustration in the Dār al-Kutub al-Miṣriya, Cairo and available under reference number i.7401. It consists of 24 pages and is written by using type writer.

<sup>407</sup> Mustapha Bey Riyadh translated Santillana's writings which entitled: "Echoes of the Voice of the Egyptians in Europe".

In February 1939, Ṭaṇṭāwī was nominated for the Prize by the Dean of the College of Science, Muṣṭapha Muṣhrifaṭ Bey and Doctor `Abd al-Ḥamīd Saīd MP. According to *al-Risāla*; The Egypt Foreign Ministry took up this nomination and sent Ṭaṇṭāwī's publications to the Norwegian Parliament, accompanied by reports of his labours in behalf of learning and peace. Simultaneously, scholars from England, France, Italy and Germany testified to the importance of his writings and he was the first Arab Muslim to apply for the prize.<sup>411</sup>

However, the Nobel board did not agree to award the prize to Ṭaṇṭāwī and some writers have attempted to justify this with incorrect and imprecise explanations.<sup>412</sup> Looking at the list of those who claimed these prizes, it is unlikely that Ṭaṇṭāwī could have been awarded it due to the fact that he had vast contributions compared to the rest of the winners which came from international institutions such as the International Nansen International Office for

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<sup>408</sup> There is a copy of the book in the Egyptian Library under reference number D 6001. It consists of 27 pages and is written by a type writer.

<sup>409</sup> Christian Gibb was a Professor at the University of Luxembourg.

<sup>410</sup> See: magazine *'al-Risāla'*, Year 7, Issue 290, reprinted: 23<sup>rd</sup> January 1989, p.188. See also: details of the College of Science publication, Year 5, issue 4, reprinted: April 1991, pp.146-154.

<sup>411</sup> Magazine *'al-Risāla'*, issue 293, reprinted: 13 February 1991, p.327.

<sup>412</sup> Fata al-Nile Newspaper and Ahmad Fahmi Abu al-Khir claim that Ṭaṇṭāwī did not get the prize because of his death as the prize could only be given to a living genius. For details, see: *In Memory of a Philosopher of Islām: Sheikh Ṭaṇṭāwī Jawharī* in Fata al-Nile newspaper, 20 January 1981, p.1 and Ahmad Fahmi al-Khir, article: "*Ṭaṇṭāwī Jawharī: The Spiritual Scholar*", in *'Scholar of the Spirit'* magazine, Year 9, issue 5, reprinted: March 1986, p.2.

This is incorrect as the fourth article in the Prizes Law stipulates that: "Accomplishments achieved by a deceased person cannot be awarded the prize unless the death occurred after the submission of the proposal in the specified manner and the accomplishments are worthy of the prize." See: "*The Nobel Foundation, its organisation, and the boards' preparation for the world prizes*", p.89. It is known that Ṭaṇṭāwī Jawharī died in 1940, *after* his nomination (*Ibid*, p.91) thus the rejection arose throughout Ṭaṇṭāwī's life.

`Alī Jumblaṭī however, offers another explanation: "Politics and colonialism played a role in here; England put its weight on (the Nobel committee) and Mr. Chamberlain was chosen for the Peace Prize.", see: `Alī Jumblaṭī, "Where is the human?" and the Nobel Prize" in *al-Akḥbar* newspaper, 7<sup>th</sup> February 1969, p.6. This analysis is imprecise as nobody was awarded the Nobel Prize in 1939 or for the following three years. Mr Chamberlain that has been mentioned in the text was a British politician who was awarded the prize in 1925. See the index of winners in the book "The Nobel Peace Prize" by Edith Patterson Meyer, pp.202-206.

Refugees, 1938 and the International Committee of the Red Cross, 1944 and others.<sup>413</sup>

### 3.5 ṬANṬĀWĪ'S POLITICAL LIFE

A cursory look at the most significant distinction of Ṭanṭāwī's political life was his association with The National Party and with the Muslim Brotherhood organisation (*Jamā'at al-Ikhwān al-Muslimīn*). In this following section will briefly explore the relationship of Ṭanṭāwī with the National Party and his membership with the Muslim Brotherhood organization.

#### 3.5.1 Relationship with the National Party

According to Santillana<sup>414</sup>, Ṭanṭāwī was a prominent member of the National Party which was founded by Muṣṭapha Kāmil and he was "one of the leaders" of the movement.<sup>415</sup> In fact, Muṣṭapha Kāmil admired Ṭanṭāwī and was the first to give him the title of '*Hakīm al-Islām*' as he told to Ṭanṭāwī, "People like you will rise up the nation."<sup>416</sup> Indeed, M. Kāmil asked him to write down long articles for *The Standard (al-Liwa')*, the party newspaper and Ṭanṭāwī wrote over sixty articles under the title "The Life and Awakening of The Nation (*Nahḍa al-Umma wa hayātuhā*)".<sup>417</sup> The admiration was then mutual when Ṭanṭāwī praised

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<sup>413</sup> See: the index of winners in the book "The Nobel Peace Prize" by Edith Patterson Meyer, pp.202-206.

<sup>414</sup> David Santillana (1855–1931) was born in Tunisia; he was then studied at the University of Rome where he obtained a doctorate in Law. He was excellent in term of knowledge on Islamic jurisprudence, philosophy and had comprehensive understanding of the Malikite and Shafi'itic school of thoughts. He had been taught philosophy in Egypt, and taught later on Islamic law in the University of Rome. For further details, see: 'Abd al-Rahman Badawi. (1984). *Encyclopaedia of Orientalists*, Beirut: Dār al-'Ilm li al-Malāyīn, pp.232-236 and Najib al-'Aqiqi. (1964). *The Orientalists*, Cairo: Dār al-Ma'ārif, vol.1, pp.374-375.

<sup>415</sup> Santillana D., *Echoes of the Voice of Egyptians in Europe*, translated by Mustapha Bey, Cairo: Maṭba'a al-Ma'ārif, p.10.

<sup>416</sup> Abdul Aziz Jado, *al-Sheikh Ṭanṭāwī Jawharī: Dirāsaṭ wa Nuṣuṣ*, p.18.

<sup>417</sup> *Ibid*, p.19.

Muṣṭapha Kāmil's efforts in spreading the spirit of freedom and patriotism in the souls of the young people and described him as "a man of genius (*nābighaṭ*)".<sup>418</sup>

Based on researcher's point of views, there are several possible reasons for the association of Ṭantāwī into the National Party instead of the other political parties as follow:

First: The National Party was well-known party which was the most accepted party to in-charge Egyptians' affairs and had been given authority to serve and save the nation.

Second: At the outset of this century, Egypt witnessed two opposed movements. The first saw no divergence or contradiction between the ties of nationalism and the ties of religion. While, the second held the opinion that ties to religion distinguish between people of one kind and people of one nation. With regards to these movements, Muṣṭapha Kāmil and his party were of the first movement as he says:

Religion and patriotism are like Siamese twins. A man who holds religion in his heart loves his country faithfully and would sacrifice his soul and everything he owns for it.<sup>419</sup>

M. Kāmil also claims that "trust in Islām and its laws is the foundation of labour"<sup>420</sup>, and "It is impossible to bring to life the nation and its awakening in any way other than through religious truth."<sup>421</sup> Hence, the varied statements show us that the National Party was working within the framework of Islamic thought, unlike the other parties of the time.

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<sup>418</sup> Tantawi Jawhari, *al-Jawāhir fī Tafsīr al-Qur'ān al-Karīm*, vol.20, p.190

<sup>419</sup> 'Abdul Rahman al-Rafa'i. (1985). *Tārikh al-Harakaṭ al-Qawmiyaṭ fī Miṣr*, Cairo: Dār al-Nahḍa, p.142.

<sup>420</sup> Muhammad 'Ammāra. (1976). *al-Jāmi'a al-Islāmiya wa al-Fikra al-Qawmiya 'inda Muṣṭafa Kāmil*, Cairo: al-Muassasa al-'Arabiya Li al-Dirāsa wa al-Nasyr, p.97.

<sup>421</sup> *Ibid*, p.95, and for further details, see: Chapter "*Bayna al-Waṭaniya wa al-Dīn* (Between Nationalism and Religion)".

In the *Political History of Egypt from Independence to Victory*, Aḥmad 'Abd al-Rahīm Muṣṭapha demonstrates that Ṭanṭāwī was not alone in developing of the party, but he had a wide agreement between his ideas and the National Party's political agenda with respect to methods of reform, spreading of education, benefiting of the sciences of the age and independence.<sup>422</sup> He adds, during this period of time, there were no clearly Islamic developments with complete agendas. Therefore, as soon as the Muslim Brotherhood organisation appeared, Ṭanṭāwī quickly joined and attempted to strengthen the Muslim brotherhood.<sup>423</sup>

### **3.5.2 Relationship with the Muslim Brotherhood (*Ikḥwān al-Muslimīn*)**

According to Ḥassan al-Bannā, the Muslim Brotherhood is considered to be one of the first Islamic organisations which originated in Egypt. Al-Bannā, via his Letter to youth, claims that the organization proposed a comprehensive plan to restore the great Islamic society, set out ambitious objectives and strove with all its energy to realise them in the real world lives of Muslims.<sup>424</sup>

He continues by saying that the organisation was distinct from other parties in that called for Islamic unity and attempted to find a pure Islamic society and liberate the Muslim nations from the clutches of colonialism.<sup>425</sup> Indeed, in the Letter of the fifth conference, al-Banna emphasized that the party was likewise distinct in its universality because it comprised of a complete set of reformatory concepts.<sup>426</sup>

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<sup>422</sup> To read the manifesto of the National Party, see: Ameen Saied, *The Political History of Egypt*, Beirut: Dār Ihyā' al-Kutub al-'Arabiya, p.159. Also see: Ahmad Abdul Rahim Mustapha. (1967). *The Political History of Egypt from Independence to Victory*, Cairo: Dār al-Ma'ārif, pp.44-45.

<sup>423</sup> Ahmad Abdul Rahim Mustapha, *The Political History of Egypt from Independence to Victory*, p.45.

<sup>424</sup> To study the agenda and goals of the organisation, see: Hassan al-Banna, Letter to the Youth – Collected Letters, Cairo: Dār al-Ma'ārif, pp.85-86.

<sup>425</sup> Hassan al-Banna, *Letter to the Youth – Collected Letters*, p.86.

<sup>426</sup> Hassan al-Banna, "Letter of the fifth Conference", *Collected Letters*, Cairo: Dār al-Ma'ārif, p.156.



Maḥmud 'Abd al-Haleem presents a comprehensive review of all events regarding the participation of Ṭanṭāwī into Muslim Brotherhood Organization. He then goes on to assert that at the beginning of the 1930s, Ṭanṭāwī joined the organization and was "one of the first" to meet its founder; Hassan al-Banna.<sup>427</sup> Following this participation, Ṭanṭāwī pledge of allegiance to al-Banna, and asked him about his missions. Al-Banna then explained the aims, objectives, missions and visions of the organization. He later on asked Ṭanṭāwī to be the organisation's guide and chief as well as outstretched his hand in order to pledge allegiance to him. However, Ṭanṭāwī refused it by saying "You are the author of this mission, and you are talented person to the position and eligible of it". He then pledged his loyalty to al-Banna.<sup>428</sup>

Indeed, a warm relationship grew up between both of them when al-Banna often visited Ṭanṭāwī at home<sup>429</sup> and Ṭanṭāwī does, on one occasion, indicates a political system of al-Banna as he says:

In my point of views, Hassan al-Banna is great mixture of political courage and subtlety. He has the heart of 'Alī and the mind of Mu'āwiya and he fills the call to wakefulness with a military element and returns the Islamic element to the National movement.<sup>430</sup>

In these few examples, it can be seen how Ṭanṭāwī had given his time and effort to the Muslim Brotherhood and respected al-Banna as a leader of the organization. This role may partly be attributed to the organization's achievement to ensure its' missions more relevant and to reach a wider audience.

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<sup>427</sup> Mahmud 'Abdul Haleem. (1983). *The Muslim Brotherhood—Events that made History*, Alexandria: Dār al-Da'wa, vol.1, p.49.

<sup>428</sup> *Ibid*, pp.186–187.

<sup>429</sup> J. Jomier, MIDEO vol.5, p.130.

<sup>430</sup> Anwar al-Jundi. (1978). *Hassan al-Bannā: The Herald Imām and Famous Reformer*, Beirut: Dār al-Qalam, p.277. For further details on the other statements of Ṭanṭāwī towards al-Bannā, see: 'Abbas al-Sisi. (1986). *In the Muslim Brotherhood Convoy*, Cairo, vol.1, p.49.

Among of his most contributions and significant activities<sup>431</sup> in enhancing the ranks of the organisation were as follows:

First: Editing the Muslim Brotherhood newspaper.

In 1933, the first issue of *al-Tahrīr* (The Independence) was published and it continued to be published for five years. As an editor of the Muslim Brotherhood newspaper, Ṭaṇṭāwī worked for four years since the first issue<sup>432</sup> and wrote on numerous and varied subjects.<sup>433</sup>

Second: Holding Science Lessons

As a science lessons holder, Ṭaṇṭāwī gave two recurring teachings to the members of the organisation: first, Qur'ānic interpretation, where he would elucidates the Qur'ān via modern sciences;<sup>434</sup> and second, philosophy, in which he would, illuminates some philosophical treatises.<sup>435</sup>

Third: Establishing General Studies in the name of the organisation and thus initiating the mission's entry into the Egyptian University.

In 1936, six students from the Egyptian University came to ask Ṭaṇṭāwī about matters of doctrine. He was then answered the questions and a week after, the students came back with their colleagues and the number of students increased

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<sup>431</sup> Rauf al-Shalabi. (1977). *Sheikh Hassan al-Bannā and his School*, Cairo: Dār al-Anṣār, pp.136-137. For details on Tantai's activities in the organisation, see: Hassan al-Banna. (1966). *Muzakkirā al-Da'wa wa al-Dā'iya*, Beirut: Dār al-Qalam, p.152, and p.237. See also: Muslim Brotherhood Newspaper, Year 322, entitled: "Greeted by the Guardian of the Hejaz Capital", issue 28, 10 November, 1974, also see: Ṭaṇṭāwī's Speech in the Third General Advisory Council, issue 41, 21 March 1975, and see: "Cairo Delegates", issue 42, 28<sup>th</sup> March 1975.

<sup>432</sup> The first issue was published on Thursday 21 March, 1932, which corresponds to 1933 in the Gregorian calendar. Indeed, Ṭaṇṭāwī had written the opening article in the first issue and gave the readers an outline of the sections contained in the newspaper. Ṭaṇṭāwī also remained as one of the editors until the final issue of 50 in March 1937.

<sup>433</sup> The most important books are; *the memoirs, advice to the Egyptian youth, Interpretation of sūra al-Fātiha*, (from *al-Jawāhir fī Tafsīr al-Qur'ān al-Karīm*), *scientific and historical articles and philosophy*.

<sup>434</sup> Mahmud 'Abdul Haleem, *The Muslim Brotherhood: Events that made History*, vol.1, p.42.

<sup>435</sup> Muslim Brotherhood Newspaper, Year 34, Issue 1, 13<sup>th</sup> April 1976, p.2.

and later on became a large lecture in the organisation. Thus, via those six students and the others, the Islamic missionary spread into the Egyptian University and lead to the formation of a large Islamic squadron<sup>436</sup>.

### **3.6 ṬANṬĀWĪ'S PERSONAL LIFE**

Ṭanṭāwī is one of the most famous and influential figures in the history of contemporary Muslim scholars. It could be argued through his intellectual life which consists of personality and writings. Thus, although the background to Ṭanṭāwī's educational life has to some extent been discussed in previous points, it is appropriate to discuss the intellectual life of Ṭanṭāwī in here before looking at his works on *al-Jawāhir*.

#### **3.6.1 Ṭanṭāwī's personality**

Unlike other prominent scholars and exegetes, Ṭanṭāwī is considered by Egyptian scholars as an outstanding and multifaceted personality who excelled in many spheres of philosophy and philanthropy. The researcher had decided to limit this discussion to seven main aspects which throw light on his personality:

##### **3.6.1.1 Ṭanṭāwī as the Herald of Reform**

Muslims believe that the highest position of a man could be raised into the life of the temporal world through exemplary of messenger, which they consider that human being's faith might be higher whenever they really worshipping God. For example, on one occasion Ṭanṭāwī had been asked on whose faith was higher than prophet's companions, he says:

The position of men whom their God has decided and chosen from among his creation is that those who in-charge to fight with corruption

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<sup>436</sup> Mustapha Muhammad al-Tir. (1986). *Scholar of the Spirit* magazine, Year 9, Issue 6, pp.5-6. See also: Hassan al-Banna, *Muzakkirā al-Da'wa wa al-Dā'iya*, p.152.

and oppression. It also depends on those who lights the torch of faith in God in people's hearts and spreading the spirit of brotherhood among believers.<sup>437</sup>

Indeed, Ṭanṭāwī considers it is the duty of Muslims to work and propagate their religion throughout the earth. Therefore, he opines that by achieving the higher position as a believer, it would bring triumph in his life, and if they died for their religion it would also bring triumph in their religion, and that scarifying time and spirit was a joy for believers.<sup>438</sup>

Also, Ṭanṭāwī had seen the grief of his people, nation and the fragmentation that afflicted the Islamic world. He then exerts all his efforts in mending the rifts putting an end to the agony. He felt deep down that he was responsible for sorting the political corruption out and he claims that if he failed to do so would be a sin of negligence.<sup>439</sup>

Ṭanṭāwī also believes in universal reform in diverse spheres of life such as education, religion, economics and others. He played a clear role in striving for reform and offering council to the nation and those concerned. The following are the most significant measures and efforts taken by the Ṭanṭāwī in order to achieve reform for his society:<sup>440</sup>

#### **a. The Publication of Books and Letters**

Ṭanṭāwī compiled a large collection of books and letters, among them his call for reform which brought to light and then prescribed remedy for the nation's sicknesses. Ṭanṭāwī also offers logical suggestions for change which were

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<sup>437</sup> Mahmud `Abd al-Haleem, *the Muslim Brotherhood: Events that made History*, vol.1, p.186.

<sup>438</sup> Tantawi Jawhari, *al-Jawāhir fī Tafsīr al-Qur'ān al-Karīm*, vol.10, p.228.

<sup>439</sup> On one occasion, Ṭanṭāwī considers himself as a "criminal" due to the fact that he had not admonished some Muslim youths who were drinking wine which had been offered to them by a Greek orthodox man. For details, see: a story in the Muslim Brotherhood newspaper, Year 3, issue 26, 18<sup>th</sup> October 1985, p.50.

<sup>440</sup> Discussion here will be more on his working efforts. However discussion on his reformist ideas will be deferred until we reach the topic on 'The Reformist Movement'.

instructed by both the experiences of nation's long history and by the experiences of European societies.

Ṭanṭāwī was merciless in his criticism of all manifestations of backwardness and corruption in society and rejected apathy, blind imitation and laziness. He severely condemned instruments of corruption such as alcohol, bribery and usury and criticised the empty traditions, beliefs and superstitions from which Egyptian society suffered.<sup>441</sup>

His words were not confined to Egypt but addressed all of the Islamic countries. He sent them private letters calling on them to reform their state of affairs and set right their mistakes.<sup>442</sup> Offering them sincere advice, he urged them towards development, progress and political liberation.

## **b. Working with Islamic Organisations**

Ṭanṭāwī believed in the benefit of organised team work and played a prominent role in establishing organisations with reformist objectives, some of which he shared. In 1909 he headed the Islamic Equality Society (*al-Musāwā al-Islāmīya*) and worked towards its development and success.<sup>443</sup> Indeed, Ṭanṭāwī was one of

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<sup>441</sup> For examples, Ṭanṭāwī warned his society against drinking alcohol and French drinks. He mentioned in the letter *Taḥṭir al-Muslimūn on al-Kḥāṭir fīmā yashrubūn* (A warning to the Muslims of the dangers of what they are Drinking), which in 1932 he sent to the Far Maghreb where it was published. See: *al-Jawāhir*, vol.24, pp.83-86. In a letter of *Nidā ila al-Mulūk wa sa'āda al-ashrāf* (A Call to Kings and Dignitaries) which was directed to the people of Malaya, Java and the Eastern Indian peninsula, Ṭanṭāwī urged them towards learning, education and to open schools. See: *al-Akḥbar Newspaper*, 5<sup>th</sup> December 1984, p.4. According to Ṭanṭāwī, he had written another letter to the people of Morocco in 1350H, spreading hope in their hearts and urging them to resist colonialism. See: *al-Jawāhir*, vol.25, pp.247-249.

<sup>442</sup> One of the letters is; *The Qazania Letter* which he dispatched to the people of *Qazan* and in which he directed them towards knowledge and industry and working towards progress and civilisation. See: Ṭanṭāwī, *Nahḍat al-Ummaṭ wa hiātihā*, pp.226-245.

<sup>443</sup> For further details, see: Elias Zakhūra, *Mar'ā al-'Aṣr*, 2:228, and Muhammad 'Abdul Jawwad, *Taqwīm Dār al-'Ulūm*, p.192.

the founders of the organisation which practically began at his hands. Its aim was to fight against alcohol in Egypt and it also offered some social services.<sup>444</sup>

However, when Ṭanṭāwī was exiled to Alexandria, he seized the chance of being there to form a society named *al-Jamīya al-Jawharīya*, (The Jawharī Society) which had a good influence on the spreading of national and cultural awareness among the youth.<sup>445</sup> He also participated in the establishment of the Muslim Brotherhood and put his soul and his wealth in their services. In addition, he was the head of the Muslim Brotherhood organisation and responsible for the committees of publishing and lectures.<sup>446</sup> Therefore, it brought together the Muslim students from the Middle East and the Near East who had come to Egypt for study and education.<sup>447</sup> Ṭanṭāwī was then a member of other organisations such as; The Righteousness and Charity Society (*Jamīya al-Bir wa al-Ihsān*)<sup>448</sup> and The Society of Muslim Youth (*Jamīya al-Shabbān al-Muslimīn*)<sup>449</sup> and the Muslim Brotherhood which has already been mentioned in the previous.

### 3.6.1.2 Official Projects and Proposals for Reform

Ṭanṭāwī offered several proposals to the official Egyptian bodies for reforming certain spheres of life and the systems which applied to various areas, which are related to education, health and economics.

**Education:** Ṭanṭāwī submitted a report to the Egyptian parliament and the Ministry of Education for the reform of secondary education in

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<sup>444</sup> See: the story of its establishment in Ṭanṭāwī's words in the Muslim Brotherhood newspaper, Year 3, Issue 44, 11<sup>th</sup> February 19, 1976.

<sup>445</sup> 'Abdul 'Aziz Jado, *al-Sheikh Ṭanṭāwī Jawharī: Dirāsaṭ wa Nuṣūṣ*, p.18.

<sup>446</sup> Muhammad Hassan al-Aghtami, article: *al-'Allāma al-Sheikh Ṭanṭāwī Jawharī*, in *Fata al-Nile* newspaper, March 1989, p.5.

<sup>447</sup> See: 'Ali Jumblati, *Fī Fikrā Ṭanṭāwī Jawharī*, p.22.

<sup>448</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>449</sup> 'Ali Jumblati, *Fī Fikrā Ṭanṭāwī Jawharī*, p.22.

Egyptian schools.<sup>450</sup> He later on submitted another report entitled '*al-Muqtarahāt al-Jawhariya*' (Jawharian Proposals) to the Ministry for Social Affairs which commented on primary education and the raising of standards in villages and rural areas.<sup>451</sup> Ṭantāwī also proposed a scheme to take care for foreign Muslim students which would safeguard their studies and subsistence.<sup>452</sup>

**Health:** In term of Health issue, Ṭantāwī submitted proposals pertaining to the health of Egyptian homes and villages.<sup>453</sup>

**Economics:** Indeed, Ṭantāwī made many proposals in the economics issues, one of them had been submitted to the Egyptian government entitled "A Proposal for the Easing of the Fiscal Crisis". In the proposal, Ṭantāwī pointed out that the interest accumulating from money in foreign banks could be benefited from rather being exploited by foreigners.<sup>454</sup> In 1911 he also proposed the prohibition of hunting twelve types of birds because of their importance to agriculture and farmers. The government agreed and issued a resolution on it.<sup>455</sup>

Indeed, Ṭantāwī proposed economic proposals to the government in 1930 when locusts were plaguing the land. Supporting his proposal with calculations and figures, he suggested that the government might be able to earn profit from the dead locusts by selling them to foreign companies who would extract oil for

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<sup>450</sup> Tantawi Jawhari, *al-Jawāhir fī Tafsīr al-Qur'ān al-Karīm*, vol.2, pp.31-33. The researcher also finds that Ṭantāwī compiled a comprehensive letters on Education, curriculum and teaching methods in Egypt. See his book entitled; *al-Nizām wa al-Islām*, pp.242-267.

<sup>451</sup> *Fata al-Nile* newspaper, 18<sup>th</sup> December 1939, pp.5-6.

<sup>452</sup> Ṭantāwī Jawharī, *Fī Sabīl al-'Ilm wa al-Dīn*, in al-Akḥbār newspaper, 8<sup>th</sup> September 1924.

<sup>453</sup> Ṭantāwī Jawharī, *Ahlām fī Siyāsa*, pp.60-62.

<sup>454</sup> Al-Ahrām newspaper, 11<sup>th</sup> October, 1933 reprinted: August 1987.

<sup>455</sup> Ṭantāwī Jawharī, *al-Jawāhir fī Tafsīr al-Qur'ān al-Karīm*, vol.3, p.139, and vol.7, p.2.

aircrafts and use it for livestock market. The government therefore profited rather than losing money from the costs of eradicating the locusts.<sup>456</sup>

Looking at Ṭanṭāwī's various proposals, it could be noted that Ṭanṭāwī was proficient not only in religious affairs, but he also was political astute which has a sharp mind and foresight.

### 3.6.1.3 Ṭanṭāwī Jawharī the Patriot

There are many definitions and concepts of patriotism.<sup>457</sup> However, in my point of views, the term of patriotism in here refers to the belonging of a man to his people and his country as well as the effort to do all he can to uphold them, as this is required and commanded by religion.<sup>458</sup> This concept needs to be mentioned in here in order to not misunderstand and no one might think that it means fanatical patriotism or the rejection of everything else.

Ṭanṭāwī believes that patriotism was a deviation from religion and those who turned their faces to patriotism alone had adopted it as a false god in the way of the sanctification of all things.<sup>459</sup> He adds that patriotism and belonging to ancestors or tribe had been and continued to be a cause of internecine fighting

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<sup>456</sup> Ṭanṭāwī, *al-Jawāhir fī Tafsīr al-Qurʾān al-Karīm*, vol.17, p.114. Ṭanṭāwī stated that a Belgian company had officially informed the Egyptian government that it wanted to buy the locusts but then the government was not interested to sell them as they were very important for the Egyptian government and had memorandum of understanding with the British government.

<sup>457</sup> According to Stephen Nathanson, in quoting views of Tolstoy on patriotism, he says: "Patriotism is a preference of one's own country or nation above the country or nation of anyone else." See: Stephen Nathanson. (1993). *Patriotism, Morality and Peace*, United States: Rowman and Littlefield Publishers, p.4. Jacob Hornberger however, mentions that the term of Patriotism means the support of one's own government and the actions which the government takes on behalf of citizenry. For further details, see: Jacob Hornberger. (1991). *Gun control, Patriotism, & Civil Disobedience*, United States: Virginia, p.1.

<sup>458</sup> In the concept of patriotism, Islam asks Muslims to be proactive in any society they live in. Indeed, every Muslims need to play their roles in the process of establishing a better life for all the people living together as members of society. Muslims also have to be positive and have to participate in public life in a way that enjoins what is right and forbids what is wrong as Qurʾān says in 5:2, 4:134, 16:90, and 49:10-13. Besides that, Islam urges Muslims to do their best in order to appear as good citizens in the countries they reside in. For example, Muslims have to respect the rules of the country where they live as long as such rules do not contradict with the Islamic fundamental.

<sup>459</sup> Ṭanṭāwī, *Nahḍat al-Ummaṭ wa hiātihā*, p.79.



and division and it was religion alone that had united the people.<sup>460</sup> He also believes that the correct way of patriotism was for the nation first to embrace its religion and then the nation would be upheld as religion commands it. However, in a country with no religion or restrictions, deceit will be widespread through its people and they will destroy their nation.<sup>461</sup> In this issue, however, Ṭaṇṭāwī observes that the nationalist disputes were merely a result of colonial policy, the aim of which was to sow dissent among the ranks and that it was the West that had put this idea to human's minds with the aim of abandoning the link with religion and spreading division through nationalism.<sup>462</sup>

Indeed, when Ṭaṇṭāwī reached twenty years old, he saw British soldiers destroy the cities of Egypt and a new age of colonialist domination and oppression began. Ṭaṇṭāwī was then horrified to see his people and his nation suffering under the yoke of colonialism. Therefore, he vowed to God that he would offer his whole life in the service and defence of his nation and prayed day and night for his country.<sup>463</sup> Ṭaṇṭāwī began to urge the people towards refusal, freedom and revolution and called for them to resist and reject colonialism. Therefore, he published around sixty articles in *al-Liwa'* (The Standard) newspaper, most of them revolving around these notions. He was telling to his people as he says, "O people, there is nothing more beautiful than hardship in freedom and there is nothing uglier than life with humiliation for there will be no happiness in this life, only ruin".<sup>464</sup> He called for all the people to be trained in the use of weapons so that every family in Egypt was capable of bearing arms and defending their cities and villages.<sup>465</sup>

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<sup>460</sup> *Ibid*, pp.73-74.

<sup>461</sup> *Ibid*, p.80.

<sup>462</sup> Ṭaṇṭāwī, *al-Jawāhir fī Tafsīr al-Qur'ān al-Karīm*, vol.19, p.65.

<sup>463</sup> Ṭaṇṭāwī, *Sawāniḥ al-Jawharī*, p.20

<sup>464</sup> Ṭaṇṭāwī, *Sawāniḥ al-Jawharī*, p.13, p.18, pp.26-27, pp.30-33, pp.41-44, pp.47-49, p.52. Also see: Ṭaṇṭāwī, *Nahḍa al-Umma wa hiātihā*, p.11.

<sup>465</sup> Ṭaṇṭāwī, *al-Jawāhir fī Tafsīr al-Qur'ān al-Karīm*, vol.5, p.159.

Ṭanṭāwī also benefited from his job teaching and raising generations by disseminating fervour in the hearts of his students and teaching them true patriotism. This was the model he taught his students and gave it the title “*Love of the Nation*” of which he says:

The people of your nation are your helpers and your next of kin. They are who raised you and supported you and nursed you in good times and bad. The nation is a body and you are an organ of it. Love your Egyptian nation. Fight with your life to raise it up because *Jihād* for it is commanded by law of God. Hence, Help the people of your country and sacrifice mind, wealth and soul for them if it is what is needed. You are the ears and eyes of the nation. You are a part of it. Please do not refrain from helping them and be sustenance for your homeland for how grievous would it be for our Egyptian nation if their own sons overlooked them. Please do not think to talk about love for your country and feel it in your heart is enough, but please know that one who loves his homeland fights with his tongue, his pen, his work and with all his senses. Your nation Egypt needs your service and asks for you to help the nation. Egypt is heaven on earth and a paradise of life... Egypt is perfect beauty so love it abundantly.<sup>466</sup>

Also, Ṭanṭāwī wrote some patriotic anthems<sup>467</sup> for the young generations which became popular and were sung by the people in the days of Muṣṭapha Kāmil.<sup>468</sup>

Egyptians Muslims believe that Ṭanṭāwī was “one of the most loyal adherents to the Egyptian cause and of those struggling for the independence of Egypt. For them, Ṭanṭāwī has not blemished.”<sup>469</sup> Jawwād seems to agree with the above

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<sup>466</sup> Ṭanṭāwī, *Jawhar al-Taḳwa*, pp.124-125.

<sup>467</sup> An example of the patriotic anthems sung at that time as he says:

O! Egypt, mother of the villages  
Your glory will appear to mankind  
Your good fortune will shine unveiled  
With our youth we benefit.

Our fathers were noble  
Our ancestors the highest of mankind  
Shame on us that we should sleep  
And courage should see us cowards.

For more examples of the patriotic anthems, see: Ṭanṭāwī, *Nahḍat al-Ummaṭ wa hiātihā*, p.263.

<sup>468</sup> Mahmud al-Tanīkhī, article: *Faqīd al-Islām wa al-Salām*, in the Dār al-'Ulūm newspaper, Year 6, Issue 3, January 1940, reprinted: in 1990, p.7.

<sup>469</sup> *Ibid.*

statement by reporting that Ṭaṇṭāwī “remained loyal to the cause from the dawn of the awakening till the time of his death.”<sup>470</sup>

However, when the British observed Ṭaṇṭāwī’s movements, they dismissed him from the Egyptian University before harassing him due to the fact that British worried about his nationalist stances might be affected to the whole nations.<sup>471</sup> Therefore, the British banished him to Alexandria after accusing him from teaching nationalism to his disciples,<sup>472</sup> as mentioned earlier. In the revolution of 1919, his house was search warrant and he was put under great pressure.<sup>473</sup> Indeed, the British did not cease in pursuing him, and his home was besieged several times, and his drafts as well as his manuscripts seized.<sup>474</sup>

Also, there is a group of official bodies of British who envious and slanderous against Ṭaṇṭāwī and he therefore, prays to God by saying “O! God, I am suffering from the injustice and anger of envious people; they are saying that I am a religious fanatic, stirring up the revolutionaries and then to launch raids.”<sup>475</sup>

Based on the above statements, it is clearly state that Ṭaṇṭāwī was a patriot and spent most of his time for defending his country as well as his nation from British colonialism. However, British government attempt to deny Ṭaṇṭāwī’s contributions by seizing all his works and search warrant his house for couple of times until Ṭaṇṭāwī stops from involving any activities which are related to the threat of British colonialism.

#### **3.6.1.4 Ṭaṇṭāwī as a *Ṣūfī***<sup>476</sup>

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<sup>470</sup> Muhammad ‘Abdul Jawwad, *Taqwīm Dār al-‘Ulūm*, p.194.

<sup>471</sup> Anwar al-Jundi, *Tarājim al-A‘lām al-Mu‘āṣirīn* p.182.

<sup>472</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>473</sup> *Ibid*, p.183.

<sup>474</sup> Muhammad Rajab al-Bayyumi, *al-Hajj* magazine, Year 18, issue 1, 13<sup>th</sup> December, 1962, p.33.

<sup>475</sup> Ṭaṇṭāwī, *Sawāniḥ al-Jawharī*, p.111. He likewise prayed to God of those who rejected him and prevented him from working. *Ibid*, p.20.

<sup>476</sup> The term of *Ṣūfī* was applied in Islamic mystics who adopted ascetic practices as a means of achieving union of God. See: A. J. Arberry. (1970). *Sufism*. Also see, L. Lewin, ed. (1972). *The Diffusion of Ṣūfī Ideas in the West*, also see: A. Schimmel. (1975). *Mystical Dimensions of Islam*.

According to Jādo, in the beginning of 19<sup>th</sup> century, some western ideas have been proposed and then start to creep into the Islamic countries. Among of them include; the teaching of spiritualism<sup>477</sup>, and the evocation of spirits. However, Ṭanṭāwī in the beginning disagreed with the ideas and he might think that the ideas would lead to colonialism, but after leaving al-Azhar, Ṭanṭāwī started to think back to the ideas. He then come across Ibn Miskawayh's<sup>478</sup> book entitled; "*Tadhīb al-Akhlāq* (Ethical Instruction)" and found later on the philosophical proofs of the existence of the soul as well as other discussions on the obliteration and translocation of the soul. Indeed, Ṭanṭāwī proceeds to read some English books<sup>479</sup> on the subject of spiritualism before being convinced with the truth of the ideas of spiritualism.<sup>480</sup>

According to Jādo, Ṭanṭāwī became one of the most strongly enthusiastic adherents to the new school of thought and made many attempts to convince people of its veracity, to the point that it was spread in Egypt due to his great work.<sup>481</sup> Hence, in order to propagate the idea of spiritualism, Ṭanṭāwī with his efforts has produced a valuable book entitled; *al-Arwāḥ* (Spirits) in which he

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<sup>477</sup> The Western or Christian notion of Spiritualism is very different to Muslim mysticism. In Islamic tradition, especially Sufism considers communication with spirit is possible and the concept of *Tawaṣṣul* recognises the existence of Good Spirit on a higher Plane of existence closer to God, and thus able to intercede on behalf of humanity. For further details, see: Spiritualism: compared with other religions. Available at: <URL: <http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Spiritualism>, access date: 25<sup>th</sup> January, 2012.

<sup>478</sup> Ibn Miskawayh (932-1030CE) is nickname of Ābū 'Alī Aḥmad ibn Muḥammad ibn Ya'qūb ibn Miskawayh. He was a prominent Persian philosopher and historian from Ray, Iran. He was active during the period of Buwayhid and his influence on Islamic philosophy is primarily in the area of ethics. Ibn Miskawayh had produced a number of books such as; *al-Fawz al-Aṣghar*, *Tajārib al-Umam*, and *Tadhīb al-Akhlāq*. For further details, see: M. Arkoun, 1993, *Miskawayh*, in H. A. R. Gibb (ed.). *The Encyclopaedia of Islām*. 7 (New edition). Leiden: E.J. Brill, pp.143a–144b.

<sup>479</sup> Ṭanṭāwī however does not mention any examples of English books on the subject of spiritualism.

<sup>480</sup> Tantawi, Jawhari, *al-Arwāḥ*, vol.4, pp.322-333.

<sup>481</sup> 'Abdul Aziz Jado, believes that Ṭanṭāwī was "one of the most prominent personalities who held spiritual power in Egypt". See: 'Abdul Aziz Jado. (1970). *Al-Rūh wa al-Kḥulūd bayna al-'Ilm wa al-Falsafa*, Cairo: Dār al-Ma'ārif, p.72. Indeed, Rāḍī 'Abd al-Jalīl also reported that Ṭanṭāwī was "by rights, the first father of Spiritualism in Egypt". See: his article; *Al-Sheikh Ṭanṭāwī al-Jawharī fī Zikrāhu al-thāmina 'ashara* in '*Ālam al-Rūh* magazine, January 1999, p.29. In addition, Muṣṭapha Muḥammad al-Ṭir admits that Egypt would not have known of Spiritualism if not for the efforts of Ṭanṭāwī. See: his article in '*Ālam al-Rūh* magazine, April 1986, p.6.

attempts to present related to the theory and practice of spiritual wayfaring as well as the experiences of Westerners in the concept of spiritualism.

Aḥmad Fahmī Ābū al-Khīr discusses at some length that he and Ṭanṭāwī participated in establishing the Cairo Spiritual Circle in order to convince the people of the veracity of Sufism as he says;

I held many lectures in various halls and auditoriums of the college of science, Cairo University. Ṭanṭāwī was attending to most of them and responded to the objections of those who were against the idea. He later on participated with me in establishing the spiritual circle which was the first of its kind in Egypt and, in fact, the whole of the East. Like the new circles in London, it was founded on the new spiritual science and most of prominent members were learned, and benefited from the circle. Indeed, Ṭanṭāwī remained working with me and attended the sessions until he passed away.<sup>482</sup>

However, Ṭanṭāwī does not limit himself only to theoretical knowledge, but he also moves on to practical application by taking part in spiritualist sessions and trying himself to evoke the spirits of others. For example, in his *al-Arwāḥ*, Ṭanṭāwī reports that he evokes the spirit of Hārūn al-Rashīd and in another session he evokes the spirit of Joan of Arc.<sup>483</sup> In his explanation, Ṭanṭāwī mentions that he evoked caliph's spirit and asked him about some private affairs. The Caliph then answered and they were spoken in the same words in which he used to speak when he was alive.<sup>484</sup>

Earlier we saw the extent of his participation in spiritual gatherings and whenever Muslims asked him on what happened at his hands, he was later answered that he was "Convinced and unconvinced". He then goes on to assert: "What I have is merely a certainty of the existence of spirits and conversation

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<sup>482</sup> Ahmad Fahmi Abu al-Khir, Article: *Ṭanṭāwī Jawharī: al-Ālam al-Rūhī* in *Ālam al-Rūh* magazine, Year 9, Issue 5, March 1996, p.5.

<sup>483</sup> Tantawi. (1977). *al-Arwāḥ*, Cairo: Dār al-Nahḍa al-'Arabiya, 4th edition, pp.322-325.

<sup>484</sup> Tantawi, *al-Arwāḥ*, p.323.

with them. Whether this talk is truth or lies, all I say to you is that I have an observation and valid research."<sup>485</sup>

### 3.6.1.5 Characteristics of Ṭaṇṭāwī's Nature

In Islamic tradition, Ṭaṇṭāwī is known for his admirable intellect and thinking due to his special position of being 'the Sage of Islām' (*Hakīm al-Islām*) and how wonderful that this title was carried out by a man who combines within him the gems of morality and piety.<sup>486</sup> Perhaps the most outstanding characteristics that Ṭaṇṭāwī is known for are piety and humility as follow:

#### a. Piety

In *al-Jawāhir*, Ṭaṇṭāwī presents that as a servant of God, he kept the observance of the day (fasting) and the observance of the night, which he would spend in prayer for the whole night as he says; 'The whole night in prayer and I come to understand the Qur'ān.'<sup>487</sup>

Tantawi told everything he knew about getting close to godliness. His friend; Muṣṭapha Muḥammad al-Ṭīr briefly reports, on the characteristics of Ṭaṇṭāwī and describes him as "a devout, God-fearing man"<sup>488</sup> Jādo generally agrees with al-Ṭīr's reports and then illustrates that Ḥassan Ṣaleḥ Ayyūb testified that Ṭaṇṭāwī "spent most of his time alone with his God"<sup>489</sup> Jādo continues by reporting that Ṭaṇṭāwī had fasted a lot, and maintains it even in his old age which shows us of his excellent examples of the righteous and God-worshipping ancestors.<sup>490</sup>

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<sup>485</sup> *Ibid*, p.327.

<sup>486</sup> 'Abd al-'Aziz Jādo, *Shaykh Ṭaṇṭāwī Jawharī: Dirāsah wa Nuṣūṣ*, p.19.

<sup>487</sup> Tantawi, *al-Jawāhir fī Tafsīr al-Qur'ān al-Karīm*, vol.4, p.170.

<sup>488</sup> Muṣṭapha Muḥammad al-Ṭīr, *Ittijāh al-tafsīr fī al-'Aṣr al-hadīth*, p.75.

<sup>489</sup> 'Abd al-'Aziz Jado, *Sheikh Ṭaṇṭāwī Jawharī: Dirāsah wa al-Nuṣūṣ*, p.78.

<sup>490</sup> *Ibid*, p.79.

According to 'Abd al-Jalīl Rādī, Ṭanṭāwī was using most of his days abstemious and fasting until he passed away<sup>491</sup> as Rādī quotes from prophet's hadith, he says:

My servant continually seeks access to me by means of acts of supererogation until I love him and when I love him, I am his ear and his eye and his hand and his heart and his tongue. Through me he hears and sees and speaks and grasps.<sup>492</sup>

To be precise, Ṭanṭāwī continued fasting for thirty years as Jādo reports on the views of Ḥassan Ṣaleḥ Ayyūb: "His fast lasted thirty years and I was the last one of his life. He only broke it on rare occasions such as holidays and the like."<sup>493</sup> Perhaps if Ṭanṭāwī lived longer, he would have carried out his fasting and worship in God, so he could be a sign of strong will and godliness to righteous people.

Furthermore, Ṭanṭāwī brought to his worship a strange renunciation of this world and its pleasures although he might have been wealthy if he wished. Therefore, Ṭanṭāwī prefers to be humble and believes that his simplicity and asceticism influenced him based on his meals and clothes as Maḥmūd 'Abd al-Ḥaleem says:

Ṭanṭāwī uses to hold a lesson in the public centre on *Naṣaria* Street between sunset and evening prayers. He would ask one of us to go and buy him a dry loaf of bread and one tomato. When the *Āzān* sounded the call for *Maghreb* prayer he would eat the bread and the tomato with a little bit of salt and that would be enough to break his fast.<sup>494</sup>

## b. Humility

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<sup>491</sup> Radi 'Abdul Jalil, article; *Al-Sheikh Ṭanṭāwī al-Jawharī fī Zikrāhu al-thāmina 'ashara* in 'Ālam al-Rūh magazine, January 1999, p.30.

<sup>492</sup> This passage is followed by the well-known hadīth, known as 'the hadīth of supererogatory works' (*hadīth al-nawāfil*), for which it acts as a form of interpretation. For further details, see: Bukhari, *Ṣaḥīḥ, Kitāb al-riqāq*, ch.38 (*al-Tawāḍu'*), no.2, SS6502, and is included in An-Nawāwī's Forty Hadīth: Arabic text and trans. E. Ibrahim and D. Johnson-Davies (5<sup>th</sup> reprinted, Lebanon), p.79. Also see: Ibn Ḥanbal. (1999). *al-Musnad*, Cairo: Dār al-Risala, p.256.

<sup>493</sup> 'Abd al-'Aziz Jado, *Sheikh Ṭanṭāwī Jawharī: Dirāsa wa al-Nuṣūṣ*, p.78.

<sup>494</sup> Maḥmūd 'Abd al-Ḥaleem, *the Muslim Brotherhood*, 1:185. Indeed, Ṭanṭāwī did the same thing in a lecture at the *Dār al-'Ulūm* club, see: *Layla fī al-Nādī*, in Dār al-'Ulūm newspaper, Year 5, Issue 4, April 1939, reprinted 1999, p.144.

In another context, Ṭaṇṭāwī alludes to his characteristics by saying that he does not have importance to greatness or fame.<sup>495</sup> He goes on to say: "There is nothing uglier than a person talking of his writings and books or how clever his sons are or how strong his spirit is, so let a man hold his tongue and to keep his speech far from praise of himself or his money."<sup>496</sup>

With regards to the statement, Ṭaṇṭāwī becomes famous for his humility. Some of the examples have been discussed in the previous points, such as the way he treated, spoke to and walked with his students. Indeed, Ṭaṇṭāwī does not see anything wrong with learning English at the hands of some of his students he taught.

Another example is that his humility and honesty on pledging his loyalty to Hassan al-Bannā as general leader of the Muslim Brotherhood despite the plain difference between them in age, fame and status.<sup>497</sup> He was also happy to be a member of Muslim Youth (*al-Shāban al-Muslimūn*) organisation when it was led by Yahyā al-Dirdeer, one of his young students who he had taught at the Khedivate School.<sup>498</sup>

### 3.7 ṬAṆṬĀWĪ'S INTELLECTUAL LIFE

Ṭaṇṭāwī is known for his intense love, passion and quest for learning, reading and research as well as his adoration of everything new and modern as he says, "I have, in my being, an instinctive love of study and education and passion for wisdom."<sup>499</sup> Indeed, his love of learning accompanied him through all stages of

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<sup>495</sup> Tantawi, *al-Jawāhir fī Tafsīr al-Qur'ān al-Karīm*, vol.22, p.5.

<sup>496</sup> Tantawi, *Sawāniḥ al-Jawharī*, p.36.

<sup>497</sup> Abbas al-Sīsī mentioned that some of them were astonished and had criticised Ṭaṇṭāwī for being satisfied with a position lower than general leader. See: 'Abbas al-Sīsī. (1986). *Fī Qāfila al-Ikhwān al-Muslimūn*, Egypt: Dār al-Risāla, vol.1, p.49.

<sup>498</sup> Tantawi, *al-Jawāhir fī Tafsīr al-Qur'ān al-Karīm*, vol.14, p.164.

<sup>499</sup> *Al-Jawāhir*, vol.26, p.185.



his life, from youth to old age, with vigour that knew neither idleness nor languor as he says, "In my old age, my soul has all the zeal as my youth, in fact it is even more passionate."<sup>500</sup> As Ṭanṭāwī reiterated certain words from his poetry:

*One cries for his life lose without luck or success*

*For what are people learned and others are ignorant.*<sup>501</sup>

In my point of views, the best to describe Ṭanṭāwī's knowledge is "encyclopaedic". It is due to the fact that he is excelled in various arts and sciences, includes; Islamic law, linguistics, natural sciences, and mathematics<sup>502</sup>. However, he yearns to learn more than what he had and then decides to obtain further knowledge in arts and sciences, both classic and modern.<sup>503</sup> Simultaneously, Ṭanṭāwī learnt English and was then be able to read the studies and cultures of the westerners, from which he gained a lot.

Ṭanṭāwī continues by explaining that he put particular effort into studying ancient philosophy from its roots.<sup>504</sup> Hence, Ṭanṭāwī focuses to a great extent on philosophy of thought and gains later an understanding of Greek philosophy to the extent that the Carl Marx states that he was "a scholar of Greek philosophy and mysticism."<sup>505</sup> Ṭanṭāwī also describes that he studies and gains an understanding of modern philosophy, on which he wrote and had his own personal philosophical views.<sup>506</sup>

In his commentary, Ṭanṭāwī often speaks of the concept of mysticism and claims that he was a teacher of mysticism.<sup>507</sup> He also, spent nine continuous years

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<sup>500</sup> *Ibid*, vol.6, p.110.

<sup>501</sup> *Ibid*, vol.14, p.2, and vol.17, p.26.

<sup>502</sup> This statement could be proved via his great works, books published, unpublished and articles in magazines or newspapers. This great works will be discussing in the next point.

<sup>503</sup> *Ibid*, vol.26, p.75.

<sup>504</sup> *Ibid*, p.78.

<sup>505</sup> 'Abd al-'Aziz Jado, *Sheikh Ṭanṭāwī Jawharī: Dirasa wa al-Nuṣūṣ*, p.35.

<sup>506</sup> For an evaluation on Islamic legal system of Ṭanṭāwī's philosophy, see: Fahmi Jad'an's book; *Usus al-taqaddum 'inda mufakkirī al-Islām fī al-Ālam al-'Arabī al-hadīth* (The Foundation of Progress of the Islamic thinkers in the Modern Arab World), p.232.

<sup>507</sup> Tantai, *al-Jawāhir fī Tafsīr al-Qur'ān al-Karīm*, vol.1, p.68.

teaching and interpreting the symbols of the *Qushairia* Letter<sup>508</sup> to the Russian Orientalist, Madame Leibnev.<sup>509</sup>

In another context, Ṭaṇṭāwī explains about knowledge of religious doctrines and beliefs. In his explanation, Ṭaṇṭāwī presents in a number of debates with some of followers of different doctrines, includes Muslims and Christian faith.<sup>510</sup> However, the subject matter which he had studied for most of his time, and which interested him most was modern sciences such as; astronomy, chemistry, mathematics, medicine, etc. as he says: “when I entered the school I heard that it offered natural sciences and chemistry and I started to study them along with arithmetic, engineering, algebra and astronomy.”<sup>511</sup>

In this context, it can be seen that Ṭaṇṭāwī understands of various types of knowledge and becomes an expert on them. It was so great and knowledgably person as his intellectual was excellent due to his outstanding contributions in exploring a new branch of knowledge and producing a number of books, and articles in newspaper, as well as public lectures delivered to the higher institutions as have been previously mentioned.

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<sup>508</sup> *Qushairia* Letter is a book written by Abd al-Karīm ibn Hawāzin Qushayrī (986-1072CE) in Kḥurasān. The book consists of symbols and texts as reminder to the people of his era that Sufis had authentic ancestral tradition as well as defending Sufism against the doubters that rose during that time of his life. There are sections where Qushayrī discusses the creed of the Sufis, mentions important and influential Sufis from the past, and important terminology to Sufism and Qushayrī’s interpretation of these Sufi terms. Qushayrī finally goes through specific practices of Sufism and the techniques of those practices. This text has been used by many Sufi saints in later times as a standard and is shown by the many translations into the numerous Muslim languages. For further details, see: Al- Qushayrī, Abu al-Qasim. (2007). *Al-Risāla al-Qushayriya fī ‘Ilm al-Taṣawwūf (Qushayri’s Epistle on Sufism)*, translated by: Alexander D. Knysh, United Kingdom: Reading, pp.1-5.

<sup>509</sup> Madame Leibnev was an Orientalist and scholar of mysticism who learnt fourteen languages, including Arabic. She came to Egypt in 1906 to interpret the *Qushayria* letter and translated it into French. The translation was then, according to Jādo, the best translation and has been used as a reference by various institutions in France. See: ‘Abdul ‘Aziz Jado, *Sheikh Ṭaṇṭāwī Jawharī: Dirasa wa al-Nuṣūṣ*, p.35 and pp.52-54. Also see: Najeeb al-‘Aqīqi. (1964). *al-Mustashriqūn*, Cairo: Dār al-Ma’ārif, vol.3, p.976.

<sup>510</sup> To see some of the debates which Ṭaṇṭāwī mentioned in his explanations, such as the debate with a female Orientalist about the doctrine of sacrifice and his debate with a Christian missionary regarding Jesus, being the son of God, see: Tantawi, *al-Jawāhir fī Tafsīr al-Qur’ān al-Karīm*, vol.1, p.68, and vol.3, pp.197–198.

<sup>511</sup> Tantawi, *al-Tāj al-Muraṣṣa’*, pp.30-31.

### 3.7.1 Ṭaṇṭāwī's Written Works

In term of his writings and influences, Ṭaṇṭāwī left us -after his death<sup>512</sup>- an abundant legacy of learning of books, letters and articles in newspapers for educating the rest of the generations and for benefits of his thoughts and learning. Due to his diverse education, Ṭaṇṭāwī has written many different subjects including; exegesis, language, philosophy, politics and world peace, contemporary sciences, spiritualism, education, history and other subjects like music and economy as well as articles from newspapers and magazines. To my knowledge, what follows is the most complete bibliography to date.<sup>513</sup>

#### 3.7.1.1 Published Books

Ṭaṇṭāwī has published a number of books as follow:

a. The Qur'ān

1. An interpretation of *al-Jawāhir*. This piece of works will be discussing in the next chapter.
2. An interpretation of *Sūra al-Fātiḥa* (The Opening).<sup>514</sup>

This book consists of sixty-four small pages. The main part consists of fifty pages and the remainder contains European scholars' opinions on Ṭaṇṭāwī. This book, as Ṭaṇṭāwī says, is an unaltered part of *al-Jawāhir* of which he chose *Sūra al-Fātiḥa* to be an example.<sup>515</sup>

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<sup>512</sup> According to 'Umar Kahala, Ṭaṇṭāwī Jawharī passed away on Friday, 12<sup>th</sup> January 1940 and was buried in Cairo. There are many representatives of various Islamic bodies and organisations attended his funeral rites. For further details, see: Omar Kahala, *Ma'ājim al-Muallafin*, vol.5, p.24. Also see: Zaki Mujahid, *al-A'lām al-Sharqīya*, vol.2, p.116 and see: Muhammad 'Abdul Jawwad, *Dār al-'Ulūm magazine*, p.192.

<sup>513</sup> This is based on research carried out in Egyptian National Library, Cairo University Library, and American Open University Library in Alexandria.

<sup>514</sup> First published in Cairo: *Maktaba al-Maḥmūdiyya*, (n.d.). Second published in Cairo: Muṣṭapha al-Bābī al-Ḥalabī Press, 1951.

<sup>515</sup> Tantawī. (1951). *An Interpretation of Sūra al-Fātiḥa*, Cairo: Muṣṭapha al-Bābī al-Ḥalabī Press, p.4.

3. *Al-Qur'ān wa al-'Ulūm al-'Aşriya: Khitāb ilā Jamī'a al-Muslimīn* (The Koran and Contemporary Science: an Address to all Muslims).

This book consists of eighty-eight small pages and has been translated into Chinese and Japan.<sup>516</sup> Ṭantāwī had sent this book and the first copy of its explanatory comments to Muslim kings and all the Islamic nations of the East and the West.<sup>517</sup> This book demonstrates what Muslims lacked and how to remedy this deficiency. It also shows, by using examples and revealing some of the miracles of creation, the relationship between the Qur'ān and contemporary sciences.

4. *al-Tāj al-Muraşsa' bijawāhir al-Qur'ān wa al-'Ulūm* (The Crown Bejewelled with Treasures of the Koran and Sciences)<sup>518</sup>

This book consists of 301 small pages and has been translated into several languages such as; Turkish, Urdu, Persian, Malay, and Chinese.<sup>519</sup> Due to its significance, this work was taught in the Egyptian University.<sup>520</sup> According to Hartmann,<sup>521</sup> he likes to read this book and Ṭantāwī's *Jamāl al-'Ālam* (Beauty of the World) and al-Ghazzālī's *al-Munqidh min al-Ḍalāl* (Rescuer from Error).<sup>522</sup>

Ṭantāwī mentions that the book has been written in 1905 and after it was printed out, it has been sent to the Emperor of Japan (the Mikado) to be presented at one of the conferences that were held there.<sup>523</sup>

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<sup>516</sup> Tantawi. (1971). *Al-Qur'ān wa al-'Ulūm al-'Aşriya*, Cairo: Muşţapha al-Bābī al-Halabī Press, p.38.

<sup>517</sup> Tantawi, *al-Jawāhir fī Tafsīr al-Qur'ān al-Karīm*, vol.2, p.144.

<sup>518</sup> First published in 1906 by *al-Mu'īd* Press, and second published by *al-Rahmania* Press in 1933.

<sup>519</sup> Tantawi, *al-Tāj al-Muraşsa'*, p.3. Also see: 'Abdul 'Aziz Jado: *al-Sheikh Ṭantāwī Jawharī: Dirasa wa Nuşuş*, p.25.

<sup>520</sup> Tantawi, *al-Tāj al-Muraşsa'*, p.17.

<sup>521</sup> Hartmann, Martin (1851-1918) was born in Breslau, Germany. He obtained a doctorate degree in Arabic Language in 1874. He was then studied Syriac and Islamic Studies in Germany. He later on appointed as a dean of Islamic Studies and established the German Eastern Society for Islamic Studies. He was passed away in Berlin, Germany. For further details of his biography, see: Najeeb al-'Aqīqi. (1964). *al-Mustashriqūn*, vol.3, pp.765-767.

<sup>522</sup> Martin Hartmann: *Contributions to knowledge of the Orientalist* (Beitrage Zur Kenntniss des orientis), issue 13, p.55.

<sup>523</sup> Tantawi, *al-Tāj al-Muraşsa'*, p.17.

After reviewing the book, researcher finds that *al-Tāj al-Muraṣṣa'* consists of fifty-two parts, each containing a particular idea. The ideas can be divided into two sections: section one, in which Ṭanṭāwī talks of his life and section two in which he speaks of the Qur'ān and divides it into fundamental subjects whom he then discusses. He also offers an example of interpretation and explanation, briefly, *sūra al-Fātiḥa* and fourteen verses from *sūra al-Baqara*.

## b. Arabic Language

### 1. *Jawhara al-Shi'ir wa al-Ta'rib*

This book comprises of eighty-four small pages and contains poetic verses written by Ṭanṭāwī on the wisdom and beauty of nature and other subjects. In this book, Ṭanṭāwī also translated works of some of the English poets. The poetry was then compiled by two of his students from the Khedivate School.<sup>524</sup>

### 2. *al-Farāid al-Jawhariya fī al-Ṭaraf al-Naḥwiya*<sup>525</sup>

This book comprises of 140 medium-sized pages and was written by Ṭanṭāwī for his students at the *Dār al-'Ulūm* Khedivate School while teaching Arabic language.<sup>526</sup> Indeed, this book is arranged as a concise and easy educational book which contains a number of exercises at the end of each chapter.

### 3. *Jawāhir al-Inshā'*<sup>527</sup>

This book comprises of ninety small pages and was written by Ṭanṭāwī for elementary students at Gazā School. The main part of the book has sixty-eight pages and the remainder is poetry written by Ṭanṭāwī as he says in the contents of the book:

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<sup>524</sup> According to Ṭanṭāwī, the students were; Kḥalīl Sālīm and Muḥammad Aḥmad Kāmīl. See: Tantawi, *Jawhara al-Shi'ir wa al-Ta'rib*, p.1.

<sup>525</sup> First published by Islam Press in 1900, however, the researcher referred a new version of 1996.

<sup>526</sup> Tantawi. (1996). *al-Farāid al-Jawhariya fī al-Ṭaraf al-Naḥwiya*, Cairo: Maṭba'a al-Islām, p.2.

<sup>527</sup> First published by *al-Turqi* Press in 1897. The researcher however, referred a new version of 1989.

These are pieces of poetry and prose and creative writing which I recited to the students on various things, except (*al-I'tizār*) –apology- which was taken from some books. I organised this subject into three chapters: Chapter One: The Correspondence and Comparisons and Elucidation of certain teaching, Chapter Two: The Diverse Wisdom of Great Scholars and Chapter Three: The Ordered Wisdom Produced by the Most Refined Poets.<sup>528</sup>

#### 4. Notes on Arabic Literature<sup>529</sup>

This book has twenty-three medium sized pages and its basis is observations which Ṭantāwī narrated to his students at the Khedivial School to make up for what was lacking from their books. By completing what they read in their lessons, the students compiled and then printed out these notes.<sup>530</sup> This book considers the art of rhetoric and rests on the idea of comparison between the Qur'ān and the Arabs' styles of rhetoric in simile, description, etc. and it demonstrates the superiority of the Qur'ān over everything else. It is a valuable book.

##### c. Islamic Jurisprudence

###### 1. *Al-Sirr al-'Ajīb* (Letter)

This letter has sixty-seven small pages and has been written by Ṭantāwī<sup>531</sup> in 1914 and was then translated into Hind.<sup>532</sup> This piece of works could be found in its entirety in the interpretation of *al-Jawāhir*.<sup>533</sup> According to Ṭantāwī, the letter is based on a conversation between he and his lawyer friend; Maḥmūd Ṭal'at about the subject of the polygamy of the Prophet (PBWH). In the discussions, they have discussed about the questions of why the Prophet (PBWH) had married more than four although Islamic law forbade this and why he had

<sup>528</sup> Tantawi, *Jawāhir al-Inshā'*, p.3.

<sup>529</sup> First published by *al-Shāb* Press in 1912. The researcher however, referred a new version of 1988.

<sup>530</sup> Tantawi. (1988). *Muzakkirāt fi Adabiyāt al-Lughā al-'Arabiya*, Cairo: Dār Qalam, pp.3-4.

<sup>531</sup> First published in 1917, and second published by *al-Jalīa* Press, 1920. The researcher however, referred a new version of 1990.

<sup>532</sup> 'Abd al-'Aziz al-Syaimi, *al-Arwāḥ* appendix to *Ṭantāwī*, Cairo: al-Sa'āda Press, p.11.

<sup>533</sup> Tantawi, *al-Jawāhir fī Tafsīr al-Qur'ān al-Karīm*, vol.16, pp.41-85.

permitted to do so for himself but forbidden it for others.<sup>534</sup> Ṭaṇṭāwī later on responded to his friend's questions in details, convincing him of his views.

## 2. The *Hilāl* Letter<sup>535</sup>

This letter has eighty small pages and has been translated into Turkish and Hindi.<sup>536</sup> It concerns astronomical, legal and geographical questions regarding the Ramadan crescent moon. Indeed, Ṭaṇṭāwī wrote it in response to a question from a gentleman of Qāzān after there had been a dispute between scholars there regarding the ways of confirming the presence of the *Hilāl*.<sup>537</sup> Therefore, this piece of works had response it with a mixture of varying legal, astronomical and geographical views.

## 3. *Al-Qaul al-Ṣawāb fī Masāla al-Hijāb*

There are three articles in the book which are related to women issues, especially about *Hijāb* issue. Ṭaṇṭāwī therefore, published in *encyclopaedia (al-Mawsu'āt)* in response to Qāsim Āmeen's book on the liberation of women. The response is essential to correct Āmeen's certain statements which are contradict with the Islamic point of views.<sup>538</sup>

### d. Philosophy

#### 1. An Introduction to Philosophy

This book discusses sixteen basic philosophical subjects which the Muslims had taken from Greece and then adapted and expanded on.<sup>539</sup>

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<sup>534</sup> Tantawi. (1977). *al-Sirr al-'Ajīb*, Cairo: al-Jamāliya Press, p.5.

<sup>535</sup> First Published in Alexandria: *Georgie Gharzuri* Press in 1915. The researcher however, referred a new version of 1980.

<sup>536</sup> Tantawi. 1980. *The Hilāl Letter*, Alexandria: *Georgie Gharzuri* Press, pp.78-79.

<sup>537</sup> *Ibid*, p.1.

<sup>538</sup> 'Abdul 'Aziz al-Syaimi, *al-Arwāḥ* appendix to *Ṭaṇṭāwī*, p.14. Also see: 'Ali al-Jumblati, *Fī Fikrā Ṭaṇṭāwī Jawharī*, p.36.

<sup>539</sup> 'Ali al-Jumblati, *Fī Fikrā Ṭaṇṭāwī Jawharī*, p.29.

## 2. letters of wisdom and wise men (*Rasāʾil al-Ḥikma wa al-Ḥukamāʾ*)

This piece of works has 112 small pages and the main part of it consists of sixty-two pages. The remainder is an amalgamation of the book which entitled; *Nizām al-ʿĀlam wa al-Umam* and poetry composed by Ṭanṭāwī. In term of the source of the book is based on a lecture delivered by Ṭanṭāwī in the High Schools Club.<sup>540</sup> It covers three subjects: wisdom and wise people, what's the purpose of this world, and the goal of the world is one which is the universal system. The book also presents schools of Greek philosophy of thought and ideas on how to inspire people to study philosophy.

## 3. Philosophical Questions in Natural Geography (*Aṣl al-ʿĀlam*)<sup>541</sup>

This book has thirty-six medium sized pages and was completed in 1916.<sup>542</sup> It has been written in response to questions which are relating to the sphere of the earth and the origins of the universe.<sup>543</sup> Therefore, Ṭanṭāwī answered all the questions with scientific precision and then presented views from Greek philosophy and modern scientific theories on the world's origin.

## 4. *Bahja al-'Ulūm fī al-Falsafa al-'Arabia wa Muwāzinatihā bi al-'Ulūm al-Ḥadītha*<sup>544</sup>

In this book, Ṭanṭāwī discusses about philosophy, its harmony with innate human nature, its relationship with religion and the extent to which the Islamic nation is concerned with it. He also focuses a great deal on Greek and Muslim schools of philosophy of thought.

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<sup>540</sup> Tantawi, *Rasāʾil al-Ḥikmat wa al-Ḥukamāʾ*, p.1.

<sup>541</sup> First published in Alexandria, *al-Funūn al-Jamīla* Press (no date). The researcher however, referred a new version of 1979.

<sup>542</sup> Tantawi. (1979). *Aṣl al-ʿĀlam*, *al-Funūn al-Jamīla* Press, p.35.

<sup>543</sup> Tantawi. *Aṣl al-ʿĀlam*, pp.3-10.

<sup>544</sup> First published in Cairo: *Muṣṭapha al-Bābī al-Halabī* Press, in 1936. The researcher however, referred a new version of 1982. This copy is only available in the Cairo University of Egypt under reference number: AP 3861.



## 5. Letter of the Philosophy of Women (*Risāla Mar'ā al-Falsafa*)

Ṭanṭāwī produces this letter in answering to the intense desire of his students at *Madrasa al-'Ulūm*.<sup>545</sup> This piece of works could be found entirely in the interpretation of *al-Jawāhir* and it has eighty-four large pages.<sup>546</sup> Also, the letter consists of two parts: the first is a definition of philosophy and its different areas and the second presents Ancient Greek and Modern European philosophical doctrines.

## 6. Education Book (*Kitāb al-Tarbiya*) by the German sage Emmanuel Kant<sup>547</sup> (Translation and Commentary)

This book has 123 medium-sized pages. It has been written due to the office of women's magazine *al-Nahḍa* asked Ṭanṭāwī to write them an article and he might think of no other subjects than the upbringing of children in their early years and education in their teenage years. Indeed, Ṭanṭāwī could find no better book on this subject than Kant, which Ṭanṭāwī translates from English.<sup>548</sup> The work of Ṭanṭāwī in the book is represented in the following:

- a. A meaning-based translation of the book.
- b. Elucidation of what is unclear from Kant's philosophy of thought.<sup>549</sup>
- c. An observation of Kant's writing; at times his opinion concurs with and is supported by the Qur'ān and at other times it is at odds with Islam.<sup>550</sup>

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<sup>545</sup> Tantawi Jawhari, *al-Jawāhir fī Tafsīr al-Qur'ān al-Karīm*, vol.21, p.235.

<sup>546</sup> It has two parts: The first part which is an interpretation of *sūra al-Qitāl* and the second part which is an interpretation of *Sūra Luqmān*. See: *Ibid*, vol.15, pp.174-184, and vol.21, pp.235-271.

<sup>547</sup> First Published by *al-Salafiya Press* in 1940. The researcher however, referred a new version of 1991.

<sup>548</sup> Tantawi. (1999). *Kitāb al-Tarbiya Li al-Hakīm al-Almanī Kant*, Cairo: Salafiya Press, p.5.

<sup>549</sup> See: for example, Tantawi. (1999). *Kitāb al-Tarbiya Li al-Hakīm al-Almanī Kant*, p.69, and p.102.

<sup>550</sup> See: for example, Tantawi, *Kitāb al-Tarbiya Li al-Hakīm al-Almanī Kant*, pp.83-85, p.89, p.93, and p.110.

7. There are other pieces of works on Philosophical Compilations written by Ṭantāwī such as:

a. The book *Muḥādirāt bayna al-'Ilm wa al-Siyāsa*<sup>551</sup> by Ṭantāwī and Marcus Bey Hanna of the Lawyers Union. It has forty-two medium sized pages and consists of two lectures, one of which Ṭantāwī delivered in the Muslim Union<sup>552</sup> entitled "The Arabs and Philosophy". This work comprises of twenty pages and two parts: the first defines philosophy and its different parts and the second discusses modern discoveries which in fact originate from ancient Islamic sources. For example; clockwork, the orbit and gravitational pull of the earth.

b. Ṭantāwī wrote a letter concerning Arabic philosophy –but did not mention its name- which he sent to the Egyptian University to convince them of the importance of teaching Arabic philosophy.<sup>553</sup>

c. Ṭantāwī also wrote a letter summarising Ibn Ṭufail's<sup>554</sup> book which entitled; *Hay Bin Yaqqān*<sup>555</sup> and comparing it with the English novel

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<sup>551</sup> First published in Alexandria: *al-Rashadiyā* press, (n.d.). The researcher however, referred a new version of 1982.

<sup>552</sup> Tantawi and Marcus, 1982, *Muḥādirāt bain al-'Ilm wa al-Siyāsa*, Alexandria: *al-Rashadiyāt* press, p.2.

<sup>553</sup> Tantawi, article: *al-Falsafa 'ind al-'Arab*, in the Egyptian economic report, Year Two, Issue 68, 16<sup>th</sup> May 1922, reprinted: 4<sup>th</sup> August 1999, p.419.

<sup>554</sup> Ibn Ṭufail is nickname of Ābū Bakr Muḥammad ibn Ṭufail (ca. 1110-1185) was a Spanish Muslim philosopher and physician. He was born in the town of Guadix near Granada. Ibn Ṭufail was secretary to the governors of Granada, Ceuta, and Tangier. He was then became court physician to the Sultān Ābū Ya'qūb Yūsuf, who ruled in Marrakesh from 1163 to 1184. Ibn Ṭufail was author of the celebrated allegorical tale "*Hay Bin Yaqqān*." For details of his biography, see: Paula K. Byers. (1997). *Encyclopaedia of World Biography*, Thomson Gale, pp.253-254.

<sup>555</sup> *Hay Bin Yaqqān* means Alive, Son of Awake. It is an Arabic philosophical novel and allegorical tale written by Ibn Ṭufail in the early 12<sup>th</sup> century. It was then translated into Latin in 1671, Dutch in 1701, English in 1708, Germany in 2004 and other European languages. See: Riad Kocache. (1982). *The Journey of the Soul: The Story of Hay Bin Yaqqān*, London: Octagon, pp.5-15.

*Robinson Crusoe*<sup>556</sup>. This letter was printed out -as an appendix- in Ṭantāwī's book *Jamāl al-'ālam* under the title *On Philosophy*.<sup>557</sup>

e. Politics and World Peace

1. *Ahlām fī al-Siyāsa wa al-Salām al-'Ām*

This piece of works consists of 102-page written by Ṭantāwī in English before being translated into Arabic.<sup>558</sup> The president of the Muslim Youth society had sent it to twenty-eight universities in Europe, America and Asia.<sup>559</sup> Likewise, the German academician; Christian Gibb summarised this work and then translated it into French.<sup>560</sup>

Ṭantāwī illustrated his thoughts in this book by using a fantasy story in which he was visited, when asleep, by five spirits of light which took him on a heavenly journey. According to Ṭantāwī, during the journey, he saw the kingdoms of heaven and earth. He was then given a test in which the leader of these spirits questioned him to find a solution for the world peace from scientific theories. Ṭantāwī later on succeeded in the test and returned to earth.<sup>561</sup>

2. The foundation of the International System and the Equilibrium between the Views of Scholars of East and West and the opinion of the Modern Egyptian (*Asās al-Nizām al-Duwalī wa al-Muwāzana bayna ārā' hukamā' al-sharq wa al-Garb wa bayna al-rā' al-Miṣri al-ḥadīth*).

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<sup>556</sup> Robinson Crusoe is an English novel written by Daniel Defoe that was first published in 1719. This piece of works is a fictional autobiography of the title character. It is also likely that Defoe was inspired by English translation of *Hay Bin Yaqqān*. See: Ross, Angus, ed. 1965, *Robinson Crusoe*, Penguin, pp.3-10.

<sup>557</sup> Tantawi. (1987). *Jamāl al-'ālam*, Cairo: al-Hidaya Press, pp.157-179.

<sup>558</sup> Tantawi. (1978). *Ahlām fī al-Siyāsat wa kaifa yatahaqqaq al-Salām al-'Ām*, Cairo: Muṣṭapha al-Bābī al-Halabī Press, p.1.

<sup>559</sup> See: A lecture delivered by Ṭantāwī at the Muslim Youth quarters which is filed in Dār al-Kutub al-Miṣriya in Cairo under the reference: A7401, p.22.

<sup>560</sup> Tantawi, *Ahlām fī al-Siyāsa wa kaifa yatahaqqaq al-Salām al-'Ām*, p.46.

<sup>561</sup> *Ibid*, pp.20-23.

This work is written by Ṭaṇṭāwī in 1938 and it is a small eighteen-page booklet which calls for peace for all nations.<sup>562</sup>

### 3. *Aina al-Insān*<sup>563</sup>

This book has 272 medium-sized pages and was submitted by Ṭaṇṭāwī to the International Conference in England in late July of 1911.<sup>564</sup> According to Ṭaṇṭāwī the book gains widespread fame and a female Russian scholar presented it to one of the academic groups in Greece.<sup>565</sup> Christian Gibb, who translated it into Germany<sup>566</sup>, gave it great acclaim.<sup>567</sup> Santillana, however, offers summary of the book before being published in *Eastern Studies* magazine (Rome, Year 4). Muṣṭapha Bey Riyaḍ then translated this article from Italian to Arabic and published it later in a book entitled; *Ṣada Ṣout al-Masriyyīn fī Europa*<sup>568</sup> Baron Carra de Vaux<sup>569</sup> also commended Ṭaṇṭāwī's book and his exertions in writing this piece of works.<sup>570</sup>

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<sup>562</sup> J. Jomier: MIDEO, vol.5, p.131.

<sup>563</sup> First published in Cairo: *Dār al-Ma'arif*, in 1911. The researcher however, referred a new version of 1985.

<sup>564</sup> Tantawi Jawhari, *al-Jawāhir fī Tafsīr al-Qur'ān al-Karīm*, vol.3, p.110.

<sup>565</sup> *Ibid*, vol.24, p.317.

<sup>566</sup> Tantawi, *Ṭaṇṭāwī's Speech to King Farouk*, Cairo: *Dār al-Kutub al-Miṣriya* under reference A7401.

<sup>567</sup> According to Gibb this book "examines the most complicated current problems in a way that Europe has until this day been incapable of". He also says, "I can declare that the best book brought forth to the people in this subject is *Aina al-Insān* which sets out for the world, in profound philosophical ways, the straight path to lasting peace." This statement had been mentioned in a conference in *Dār al-Shabbān al-Muslimīn* which was published in *al-Maqtum* newspaper, 8<sup>th</sup> January 1998, p.9.

<sup>568</sup> First published in Cairo: *Dār al-Ma'arif* (no date). It has thirty-six small pages. Indeed, Santilana praises Ṭaṇṭāwī's book which he considers as a great humanitarian work in the mould of political protest. He also indicates that the sophistication of Ṭaṇṭāwī's thoughts. See: p.11 and p.28 of the book.

<sup>569</sup> Baron Carra de Vaux was a French Orientalist and born in 1868. He was studied Arabic Language and then taught it in the Catholic Institute. He also studied mathematics, philosophy and history before becoming an expert in the fields. See: Najīb al-'Aqīqī. (1964). *The Orientalists*, vol.1, pp.263-264.

<sup>570</sup> According to al-'Aqīqī the book was a book worthy of esteem, filled with learning and education and that it was an honour for the Egyptian nation. He also says, "It is possible to liken this book to our literature which describes ideal nations, such as the work of Thomas Morous, Campanella or Han-ryner. It is similar to al-Farabi in that it pertains to the essence of thought

Ṭanṭāwī presents this book as a counsel to Europe which sought to oppress the nations of Islam.<sup>571</sup> He, however, produces it in the form of a fantasy novel. For example of the novel, Ṭanṭāwī says:

When Halley's Comet was seen in 1910, he was struck by certain thoughts and ideas. He ponders and says: "I wonder what the earth will be like when another comet returns after 75 years, and how the kingdoms and nations will be. Will the face of the earth change and oppressors and brutality and cruelty be eradicated or will there be even more tyrants and oppressors?"<sup>572</sup>

In the novel, Ṭanṭāwī imagines that a strange creature came from the comet and the creature had two names: Truth and Existence. A long dialogue revolved between them about human beings, and then the strange creature took him on a journey between the suns, moons and planets.<sup>573</sup>

It has been previously mentioned that Ṭanṭāwī submitted the preceding three books for the Nobel Peace Prize.

4. Accounting in nation's politic and its system must be as accounting in the creation system (*Al-Hisāb fī Siyāsa al-Umam wa Niḡāmuha yajib an yakūn Kal ḡisāb fī Niḡām al-Khaliqa*).

Ṭanṭāwī had published this work in English and send it to other countries includes, East and West. It was produced in the same way as *Aina al-Insān*<sup>574</sup>.

5. Judgement letter (*Risāla al-Ḥukm*)

Jomier reports that Ṭanṭāwī's family had provided him with a copy of this book.<sup>575</sup>

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and to Ibn Ṭufail in that it pertains to the contributions of learning. See: his book, *Les penseurs de L'Islam*, vol.5, pp.281-284.

<sup>571</sup> Tantawi Jawhari, *al-Jawāhir fī Tafsīr al-Qur'ān al-Karīm*, vol.24, p.318.

<sup>572</sup> Tantawi, *Aina al-Insān*, p.15.

<sup>573</sup> Tantawi, *Aina al-Insān*, p.15.

<sup>574</sup> Tantawi, *al-Taqwā*, p.140.

## 6. Nation's development and its life (*Nahḍa al-Umma wa Ḥayātuhā*).<sup>576</sup>

The book has 230 large pages, eighty of which form the main part of the book. The rest comprises of the *Qazania* Letter, a speech and lesson of Ṭanṭāwī. This work was published by the English Royal Society magazine and *al-Wakīl* newspaper in Lahore.<sup>577</sup> Indeed, it was also used by the Egyptian government in order to develop al-Azhar and Advisory Council in the days of Lord Kitchener.<sup>578</sup>

The book, as previously mentioned, consisted of patriotic articles published by Ṭanṭāwī in *al-Liwā'* (The Standard) newspaper and the request of M. Kāmil. It contains three chapters: the first speaks of the freedom of nations and the organisation of education in al-Azhar University. The second, however, speaks on types of civil and national happiness as well as the election of national counsels. The third chapter speaks of general affairs: intellectual and civil.

### f. Contemporary Sciences

#### 1. Treasures of Sciences (*Jawāhir al-'Ulūm*)

This book has 238 pages. When the Minister of Education in Egypt learnt that ministry officials from the Ministry had been teaching by using this book, he issued an order for it not to be used in teaching as it combined science and religion. It was due to the fact that he had been a pupil of the Orientalists.<sup>579</sup> In this book, Ṭanṭāwī presents a concept of sciences, the wonders of God's creations in plants, insects, animals, etc. The most significant aspect of this book is its attempts to find agreement between the Qur'ān and modern science.<sup>580</sup>

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<sup>575</sup> J. Jomier, MIDEO, vol.5, p.131.

<sup>576</sup> First published by *al-Liwā'* Press, in 1908. Second Published in Cairo: *Muṣṭapha al-Bābī al-Halabī* Press, 1934. The researcher however, referred a new version of 1986.

<sup>577</sup> 'Abdul 'Aziz al-Syaimi, *al-Arwāḥ* appendix to *Ṭanṭāwī*, p.9.

<sup>578</sup> 'Abdul 'Aziz al-Syaimi, *al-Arwāḥ* appendix to *Ṭanṭāwī*, p.9.

<sup>579</sup> Tantawi Jawhari, *al-Jawāhir fī Tafsīr al-Qur'ān al-Karīm*, vol.4, p.200.

<sup>580</sup> *Ibid*, pp.206-220.

2. The balance of treasury in this wonderful world (*Mizān al-Jawāhir fī 'ajāib haṣa al-Kawn al-Bāhir*).<sup>581</sup>

This book comprises of 267 small pages and had been written after *Jawāhir al-'Ulūm*.<sup>582</sup> Ṭanṭāwī compiles this book to encompass the subjects which he examines in his book; *Jawāhir al-'Ulūm*. The scope of discussions in the book based on in-depth matters concerning the wonders of the creations of God most High<sup>583</sup>. The idea of the book was based on Ṭanṭāwī's understanding on some of al-Ghazzali's works<sup>584</sup>. The book also includes a number of scientific and philosophical issues as well as questions of ethics and conduct.

3. The beauty of the world (*Jamāl al-'Ālam*)<sup>585</sup>

The main part of this book consists of 156 pages while the remaining twenty-pages contain a letter entitled "On Philosophy". The idea of the book existed whenever people asked him about various matters such as evidence of the existence of God and the reason for the profusion of evil in the world.<sup>586</sup> Ṭanṭāwī was then answered the questions and spoke at length of the marvels of the universe and all that was in it.

4. Ant's eye letter (*Risāla Ain al-Namla*)

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<sup>581</sup> First published by *al-Mutawassīṭat* Press, in 1902. The researcher however, referred a new version of 1983.

<sup>582</sup> Tantawi Jawhari, *Jawāhir al-'Ulūm*, p.229.

<sup>583</sup> Tantawi Jawhari. (1983). *Mizān al-Jawāhir Fī 'Ajāib Hazā al-Kawn al-Bāhir*, Cairo: *al-Mutawassīṭat* Press, p.9.

<sup>584</sup> Tantawi Jawhari, *al-Jawāhir fī Tafsīr al-Qur'ān al-Karīm*, vol.11, p.198.

<sup>585</sup> First published by *al-Jumhūr* Press, in 1904. Second Published by *al-Hidāya* Press in 1913. The researcher however, referred a new version of 1993.

<sup>586</sup> See: Tantawi, *Jamāl al-'Ālam*, p.2. Indeed, 'Abd al-'Aziz Jādo recalled that the poet of Hafiz Ibrahim was among Ṭanṭāwī's guests and he had listened to Ṭanṭāwī for around two hours. He then said to Ṭanṭāwī, "If these words are written down in a book then the nation will be raised up." Ṭanṭāwī thus recorded his words in this book, See: 'Abd al-'Aziz Jādo, *al-Sheikh Ṭanṭāwī Jawhari: Dirāsaṭ wa Nuṣūṣ*, p.26.

Ṭantāwī composed this letter in 1916<sup>587</sup> and it could be found in its entirety in the interpretation of *al-Jawāhir* of which it comprises seven pages.<sup>588</sup> The reason for writing this letter was that some people had disputed Ṭantāwī's assertion in *Jamāl al-'ālam* and other books that the eye of an ant is made up of over two hundred smaller eyes<sup>589</sup>. Thus, in this letter he wrote about the forms, analysis and amazing features of the ant's eye.

5. The flower in the world system and nations (*Al-Zahra fī Niẓām al-'Ālam wa al-Umam*).<sup>590</sup>

This book has sixty small pages and was published by Ṭantāwī to be a blueprint for the book; he would publish later entitled *Niẓām al-'Ālam wa al-Umam* to attract the reader and to urge public interest as well as to clarify the objectives of the book before its printing.<sup>591</sup> In the beginning of this book, Ṭantāwī finds a balance between the views al-Ghazzālī and those of the political scholar; John Lubbock. He then states the objectives of *Niẓām al-'Ālam wa al-Umam* and then speaks of the organisation, parts, pollen, etc., of flowers. The work takes the form of a dialogue between two people.

6. World and nation system or high Islamic wisdom (*Niẓām al-'Ālam wa al-Umam wa al-Hikma al-Islamiya al-'Ālia*).

This book has two volumes and a total number of 770 pages. It has been translated into the Hindi language and was studied at *Alekra* University in India<sup>592</sup>. It was commended and abridged by the French Asian University<sup>593</sup>.

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<sup>587</sup> Ṭantāwī Jawharī, *al-Jawāhir fī Tafsīr al-Qur'ān al-Karīm*, vol.13, p.157.

<sup>588</sup> *Ibid*, vol.13, pp.151-157. The work is related to the interpretation of *Sūra al-Naml*.

<sup>589</sup> Ṭantāwī Jawharī, *al-Jawāhir fī Tafsīr al-Qur'ān al-Karīm*, vol.13, p.151.

<sup>590</sup> First published by *Madrassa Walida 'Abbās Bāshā*, in 1904. It was then reprinted for the introduction of the book *Niẓām al-'Ālam wa al-'Umam*, p.3.

<sup>591</sup> Tantai Jawhari. (1988). *al-Zahra fī Niẓām al-'Ālam wa al-Umam*, p.3.

<sup>592</sup> 'Abd al-'Aziz Jādo, *al-Sheikh Ṭantāwī Jawharī: Dirāsaṭ wa Nuṣuṣ*, p.22.

<sup>593</sup> In *al-Masmah* magazine, Tantai Jawhari was considered as a Professor of Arabic language at the Khedivial School due to his knowledge of Arabic Language and his great contributions in



Ṭanṭāwī divided his book into an introduction – this is *Al Zahra (flower) book* – which is nine chapters as follows: *The Longing of the Souls for Learning, Astronomy, The Marvels of inanimate and the Laws and Newton and Kippler, The Science of Plants, Animals and Darwin’s Theory, The Science of Human Autopsy, Psychology, Universal Oneness in the World, Islamic Law and Freedom and Happiness*. At the end of the book, there is a table of the arts and sciences the promulgation of which the author saw as essential in his time.

g. Spiritualism

1. Spirits (*Al-Arwāh*)<sup>594</sup>

The fourth edition of this book has 351 large pages. It was written after *Shī’ir Muḥammad*, a Turkish student from *Tashqand*, visited Ṭanṭāwī and asked him a great deal of questions concerning the spirits<sup>595</sup>. His questions were answered later on. It is possible to divide this book into three main subjects: first: guidance regarding the invocation of spirits from the Qur’ān and the Sunna, second: the writings of westerners on spirits, and, finally, Ṭanṭāwī’s personal experiences in invoking and conversing with spirits.

h. Education

1. Jewellery of *Taqwā* (*Jawāhir al-Taqwā*)<sup>596</sup>

This educational book has 160 large pages and was written by Ṭanṭāwī for the purpose of teaching his students at *Dār al-’Ulūm*. In this book, Ṭanṭāwī

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writing various books. See: the magazine’s translation in *Rasāil al-Hikmat wa al-Hukamā’*, pp.62-72.

<sup>594</sup> First published by *al-Maṣriya* Press in 1919, second published by *al-Sa’āda* Press in 1920, third Published by *Rahmania* Press in 1931. Fourth published by the Modern Arabic Press: *al-Maṭba’a al-’Arabiya al-Ḥadītha* in 1977. I have used the latter version and referred only to the appendix written by ‘Abd al-’Aziz al-Syaimi, *al-Arwāh* appendix to *Ṭanṭāwī*, in the fourth publication.

<sup>595</sup> Tantawi, *al-Arwāh*, Fourth Publication, p.8.

<sup>596</sup> First published in Alexandria: *Georgie Ghazouri* Press 1910 and second published by *al-Maktaba al-Tijāriya al-Kubra* Press in 1934. The researcher however, referred a new version of 1984.

included several points that have been mentioned in al-Ghazzālī's book; Revival of Religious Sciences (*Iḥyā' 'Ulūm al-Dīn*) and re-organised by using his own methodology. He was then influenced by some of the writings of *Ibn Miskawayh* in the book of *Tahzīb al-Akhlāq*. This book based on theoretical knowledge and philosophical concept of ethical framework. Ṭanṭāwī however, differentiates it by asserting certain practical methodologies instructions in the final chapters of the book in order for the students to apply what they have read into their way of life. Indeed, each chapter was accompanied by several questions and exercises.

i. Other Subjects

Ṭanṭāwī also compiles other books and letters in different subjects and other branches of knowledge as follow:

1. Arabic Music (*Al-Musica al-'Arabīa*)<sup>597</sup>

This book has forty-seven large pages and consists of three lectures which have been delivered by Ṭanṭāwī at the Egyptian University.<sup>598</sup> Researcher observes that Ṭanṭāwī discusses a great deal more detailed information to assist the Arab people to know about Arabic music, includes; its meanings and importance and its connection with song and poetry. He also demonstrates that everything in existence was balanced and had a special relationship to astronomical movements as well as the coordination of the human body. 'Abd al-'Aziz Syaimī<sup>599</sup> in his comment on the book says that "music for Egyptian people is considered as a modern discovery which

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<sup>597</sup> First published in Alexandria: *Georgie Ghazouri* Press, in 1914. The researcher however, referred a new version of 1983.

<sup>598</sup> Tantai Jawhari, *al-Musica al-'Arabīa*, p.46.

<sup>599</sup> 'Abd al-'Azīz al-Syaimī was a Professor and director of the School of Sciences in far Java in the East Indian peninsula. He had a trusted relationship with Ṭanṭāwī and wrote an appendix at the end of *al-Arwāḥ* in which he mentioned all Ṭanṭāwī's books which had been written but then had not been printed out.

scholars of France and England have been incapable of finding, despite searching for".<sup>600</sup>

## 2. *Sawāniḥ al-Jawharī*

This book of 144 small pages has various subjects; includes Ṭanṭāwī's memoirs, observations, and point of views as he says,

This is a daily in which I have recalled the thoughts and ideas which are important and have occurred to me. It is to be a light and guide for the sons of the coming generation. Indeed, it is thoughts inside me as my life has no meaning if I do not write down what is important to me and to show what I see in God's creations and the learned meanings and pictures of wisdom that inspire my soul.<sup>601</sup>

Also, researcher finds in the book which is related to the contemplations, imaginations, answers to questions posed to him, events he experienced and several nationalist thoughts.

## 3. Islām and the system (*Al-Nizām wa al-Islām*)<sup>602</sup>

This book has 269 medium-sized pages, and 240 pages of which divided into three parts: the first part of the beauty, order and balance of the universe; the second offers a model on how to understand the stories of the Qur'ān and the third: prescribes the general conduct required of the kings, presidents, intellectuals and religious messengers of the nation. This work originates from articles which were published in *al-Mu'īd* newspaper<sup>603</sup> and has been translated into Turkish, Hindi and *Qazania*.<sup>604</sup>

## 4. Qazāni letter (*Al-Risāla al-Qazānia*).

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<sup>600</sup> 'Abd al-'Azīz al-Syaimī, appendix to *al-Arwāḥ*, p.11.

<sup>601</sup> First Published by *al-Ta'ā'if* Press in 1913. The researcher however, referred a new version of 1983.

<sup>602</sup> First published by *al-Jumhūr* Press 1905, and second published by *al-Hindia* Press in 1915. The researcher however, referred a new version of 1989.

<sup>603</sup> 'Abdul 'Aziz Jādo, *al-Sheikh Ṭanṭāwī Jawharī: Dirāsaṭ wa Nuṣūṣ*, p.27.

<sup>604</sup> *Ibid*.

In 1904 Ṭaṇṭāwī wrote this letter in answering to a request from Zākir Effendī<sup>605</sup>. It was sent to the country of Qazān, Iraq and translated and published in the country.<sup>606</sup> In the letter, Ṭaṇṭāwī discusses the development of the sciences and contemplative awareness among Muslims and urges the people of Qazān towards diligence and the acceptance of science and industry as well as progress and social elevation.

5. Letter of Ṭāhir al-Kiālī (*Al-Risāla al-Kiāliyya al-Ṭāhirīya*).

This letter has been mentioned by 'Abd al-'Azīz Jādo in the end part of his book.<sup>607</sup> It was written by Ṭaṇṭāwī for Ṭāhir Malā al-Kiālī al-Rifā'ī<sup>608</sup>, and it responded to Ṭāhir's questioning of several issues on Ṭaṇṭāwī's philosophy of thought, which he thought contradictory. However, it does not mention further details about it.

6. Letter for improving education in Egypt (*Risāla li tarqīa al-Tarbīa wa al-Ta'līm fī al-Quṭur al-Maṣrī*).

At the end of the *Al-Niẓām wa al-Islām*, where Ṭaṇṭāwī briefly sets out his views on the learning stages in Egypt and the curriculums that must be taught within the process of learning.<sup>609</sup> He also addresses the subjects of education for ladies, religious matter, moral education and teaching methodologies.<sup>610</sup>

### 3.7.1.2 Unprinted Books and Letters

Based on researcher's observation, there are unprinted books and letters written by Ṭaṇṭāwī, for reasons which we may never know. 'Abd al-'Aziz Syaimi however,

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<sup>605</sup> Zākir Effendī was a Professor in Qazānia University, Iraq.

<sup>606</sup> Ṭantawi Jawhari, *al-Jawāhir fī Tafsīr al-Qur'ān al-Karīm*, vol.21, p.18, and p.22.

<sup>607</sup> 'Abd al-'Aziz Jādo, *al-Sheikh Ṭaṇṭāwī Jawhari: Dirāsaṭ wa Nuṣūṣ*, pp.190-196.

<sup>608</sup> Ṭāhir Malā al-Kiālī al-Rifā'ī was head of scholars in *Idlib*, a city of north western Syria.

<sup>609</sup> Ṭantawi, Jawhari. (1989). *Al-Niẓām wa al-Islām*, Cairo: Dār al-Ma'ārif, pp.241-260.

<sup>610</sup> *Ibid*, pp.261-269.

suggests that the Unprinted Books need to be compiled in a list before being suggested for printing all of them.<sup>611</sup> The books and letters are as follows:

1. Letter of Practical education in Islām (*Risāla al-Tarbīa al-'Amaliya fī al-Islām*).

This short letter has been written by Ṭantāwī in 1918 and it shows that physical and muscular exercise are considered essential in human lives and supposed to be concerned as human does in his prayer and worship.<sup>612</sup> According to Syaimi, the letter also contains a study of ancient and modern philosophical doctrines.<sup>613</sup>

2. General articles (*Al-Maqālāt al-'Āmma*).
3. Oh young man (*Aiyuhā al-Fata*) - (book).
4. General letters (*Al-Khitābāt al-'Āmma*).
5. Idioms in Kalīla and Dimna in the Qur'ān (*Al-Hikam wa al-Amthāl fī Kalīla wa Dimna fī al-Qur'ān*) - (book).

### 3.7.1.3 Articles in Newspapers and Magazines

In term of newspapers, Ṭantāwī has produced a large number of assorted articles which were published in many of the newspapers and magazines that were circulated in Egypt during his life time. According to Ṭantāwī, the first article he wrote was in 1899 for *Hilāl* magazine, entitled 'Gog and Magog' (*Ya'jūj wa Ma'jūj*)<sup>614</sup> and his last article, according to Bayyūmī, was in 1933 in *al-Risāla* magazine which entitled; *Nizām al- Ālam wa Nizām al-Duwal*.<sup>615</sup>

Indeed, there are a number of the most well-known newspapers and magazine in which Ṭantāwī had articles published and indicate what he wrote in them:

<sup>611</sup> 'Abd al-'Aziz Syaimi, appendix to *al-Arwāḥ*, p.15.

<sup>612</sup> Tantawi Jawhari, *al-Jawāhir fī Tafsīr al-Qur'ān al-Karīm*, vol.24, p.23. Indeed, Ṭantāwī mentions in *al-Jawāhir* that the letter was not printed out yet.

<sup>613</sup> 'Abd al-'Aziz Syaimi, appendix to *al-Arwāḥ*, p.18.

<sup>614</sup> Tantawi Jawhari, *al-Jawāhir fī Tafsīr al-Qur'ān al-Karīm*, vol.9, p.202.

<sup>615</sup> Muḥammad Rajab al-Bayyumi: '*Ālim al-'Arabī al-Mu'āṣir yaṣna' Nazariya Li al-Salām* in *al-Azhār* magazine, Year 40, part 10, issue February 1969, p.707. See also: Ṭantāwī's article in *al-Risāla* magazine Year 7, issue 298, 20<sup>th</sup> March 1989.

1. The Muslim Brotherhood Newspaper.<sup>616</sup>
2. *Al-Liwā'* newspaper<sup>617</sup>
3. *Al-Mu'īd* newspaper.<sup>618</sup>
4. *Al -Falāḥ* newspaper.<sup>619</sup>
5. *Kawkab al-Sharq* newspaper.<sup>620</sup>
6. *Al-Wādi* newspaper<sup>621</sup>
7. *Al-Maqṭum* newspaper<sup>622</sup>
8. *Al-Akḥbār* newspaper.<sup>623</sup>
9. *Al-Ahrām* newspaper.<sup>624</sup>
10. *Miṣr al-Fatā* newspaper.<sup>625</sup>

#### Magazines:

1. *Al-Faḥ* magazine.<sup>626</sup>

<sup>616</sup> The Muslim Brotherhood Newspaper mentions that Ṭanṭāwī has written on 48 subjects in year: Two, Three and Four. These include: Year Two: *al-Mu'tamar al-Islāmī ba'd miatain Sana* (The Islamic Conference after Two Hundred Years), Issue 17, pp.502-503, *Mithl min al-Yābān*, (A proverb from the Japan), Issue 29, pp.1294-1295.

Year Three: *al-Haqīqa al-Tārikhiya Li al-Injīl* (The Historical Truth of The Gospels), Issue 8, pp.282-283, *Yā Shabāb Miṣr* (O Youth of Egypt), Issue 26, pp.849-851.

Year Four: *al-Jamāl fī Fatīḥa al-Qur'ān* (The Beauty in the Opening Verse of the Qur'ān), Issue 2, pp.31-33, *Uṣūl al-Ḥukm fī maḏhab Socrāt* (Origin of Government in Socrates' Doctrine), Issue 30, p.697.

<sup>617</sup> We have already seen that he published around sixty articles in this newspaper, most of which are in the book *Nahḍa al-Umma wa Hiātihā*.

<sup>618</sup> As previously mentioned, all of his articles which we published in this newspaper can be found in *Al-Nizām wa al-Islām*.

<sup>619</sup> The articles include: *Ma al-Maqsūd min ḥaḏa al-'Ālam* (what the Meaning of this World), *Wajha al-'Ālam Wāhida* (The Face of the World is One). See: Tantawi, *Rasā'il al-Ḥikma wa al-Ḥukamā'*, pp.74-100.

<sup>620</sup> The articles include: *Hadīthī ma'a Fallāḥi Maṣrī* (My conversation with an Egyptian peasant), 5<sup>th</sup> September 1925, *Man hum al-Awlā an yusammū 'Ūlamā' al-Islām* (who are they the First People to be called the Scholars of Islām), 16<sup>th</sup> November, 1927. According to Ṭanṭāwī, he had published ten articles in this newspaper under the title: *Khiṭāb ilā al-Umma al-Islāmiya* (An Address to the Islamic nation). See: Ṭanṭāwī Jawharī, *al-Jawāhir fī Tafsīr al-Qur'ān al-Karīm*, vol.5, p.188. Ṭanṭāwī also issues six further articles in which he wrote about his interpretations. See: *Ibid*, vol.5, pp.185-186.

<sup>621</sup> The articles include: *Al-'Ilm wa al-Dīn*, 24<sup>th</sup> September, 1934.

<sup>622</sup> The articles include: *Al-Khilāfa fī Islām*, 18<sup>th</sup> March, 1924.

<sup>623</sup> The articles include: *Al-'Ilm wa al-Bid'a wa Wājib al-'Ulamā'*, 7<sup>th</sup> August 1918.

<sup>624</sup> The articles include: *Al-Iqtirāḥ li Takḥfīf al-Azma al-Mālīya*, 11<sup>th</sup> October 1933.

<sup>625</sup> The articles include: *Mazhab Darwin Ind al-'Arab*, 15<sup>th</sup> November, 1909.

2. *Al-Malāji' al-'Abbāsia* magazine.<sup>627</sup>
3. *Al-Ma'rifa* magazine.<sup>628</sup>
4. *Al-Muqtaṭif* magazine.<sup>629</sup>

Other magazines include *Nūr al-Islām*<sup>630</sup>, *Hadyī al-Islām*<sup>631</sup>, *al-Mawsū'āt*<sup>632</sup>, *al-Nahḍa al-Nisā'iya*<sup>633</sup>, *al-Hidāya*<sup>634</sup>, *al-Risāla*<sup>635</sup>, *al-Nashra al-Iqtisādiya al-Miṣriya*<sup>636</sup>, and *al-Manār*<sup>637</sup>

Therefore, the intellectual life via writings are the most significant contribution which led Ṭantāwī to persist with writing despite difficulties such as illness and time pressures; occasionally his doctor forbade him from writing because of illness but he did not comply with that.<sup>638</sup> When free time was scarce, he set

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<sup>626</sup> The articles include: *Lughā al-'Arab wa Lughā al-Maṣrīyīn al-Qudamā'*, Year 8, Issue 369, 13<sup>th</sup> October, 1924, pp.17-20. *Shahāda al-Cinēmā fī al-Maḥākīm Mu'jiza al-Islāmiya*, Year 8, Issue 375, 26 July 1930, p.15. *Shahāda khuṭūṭ al-Aidī wa al-Arjīl Mu'jiza Qur'āniya*, Year 8, Issue 378, 18<sup>th</sup> December 1933, pp.14-15.

<sup>627</sup> There are various subjects have been published by Ṭantāwī in the magazine which are related to the interpretation of the Qur'ān.

<sup>628</sup> Among the articles that have been published in the magazine are; *Mazhab al-Sūfaṣṭā'iya*, Issue January 1931, *Ṣaut Ṣārikh min al-Sharq ilā al-Gharb*, Issue August 1931, *al-Qaḍā' wa al-Qadr*, Issue November 1931, *Ārā' Khaṭīra fī al-Khilāfa al-Islāmiya*, Issue January 1932, *al-'Ulūm al-Riyāḍiyya ind al-Qudamā' al-Maṣrīyīn*, Issue July 1932.

<sup>629</sup> Among the articles that have been published in the magazine are; *al-Muktashafāt al-Hadītha wa hiya 'Arabia Qadīma*, volume 12, Issue August 1922, *Maktaba sharqiya Nādīra*, volume 73, October 1928.

<sup>630</sup> Among the articles that have been published in the magazine are; *al-Hiāt ba'd al-Maut*, *Sharah Hadīth: "bada' al-Islām Gharīban"*. See: Ṭantāwī Jawharī, *al-Jawāhir fī Tafsīr al-Qur'ān al-Karīm*, vol.9, p.108, and vol.10, p.247.

<sup>631</sup> One of articles has been published in the magazine is *Hadīth: "fī Asrār al-Qur'ān"*. See: Ṭantāwī Jawharī, *al-Jawāhir fī Tafsīr al-Qur'ān al-Karīm*, vol.26, p.118.

<sup>632</sup> One of articles has been published in the magazine is "*Al-Qaul al-Ṣawāb fī Mas'ala al-Hijāb*".

<sup>633</sup> One of articles has been published in the magazine is "*Khitāb Maftūḥ ilā Jama'a Nahḍa al-Sayyidāt*", Issue May 1928, translation of Emmanuel Kant's book on child-rearing.

<sup>634</sup> One of articles has been published in the magazine is *Nazāria Darwīn*, Issue October 1910.

<sup>635</sup> One of articles has been published in the magazine is *Nizām al-'Ālam wa Nizām al-Duwal*, Issue 298, 20<sup>th</sup> March 1939.

<sup>636</sup> Among the articles that have been published in the magazine are; *Amrādunā al-Ijtimā'iya*, Year 2, Issue 64, 18<sup>th</sup> April 1922, *al-Falsafa 'ind al-'Arab*, Year 2, Issue 68, 16<sup>th</sup> May 1922, pp.419-422.

<sup>637</sup> One of articles has been published in the magazine is *Taqriḥ Tafsīr al-Manār*, volume 29, part 10, 10<sup>th</sup> April 1929, pp.857-859.

<sup>638</sup> *Ibid*, vol.26, p.182.

aside his day of rest – Friday- to write.<sup>639</sup> Based on my observation, there are a number of points which are worth noting and could be concluded as follows:

Most of Ṭanṭāwī's books are short<sup>640</sup> and might be considered as "booklets" or "letters". Indeed, Ṭanṭāwī was not restricted to writing in Arabic; some of his books were written in English or translated into English. Besides that there are two different kinds of target audience in his writings: one was for ordinary people and another one was of an educational purpose for students. There are also four of his books achieved widespread fame and have been praised by the western writers; *al-Jawāhir fī Tafsīr al-Qur'ān al-Karīm*, *Aina al-Insān*, *Aḥlām fī al-Siyāsa*, and *Al-Tāj al-Muraṣṣā'*. Before sending any works to the publisher, Ṭanṭāwī would show it to his fellow colleagues to make helpful comments and feedbacks on the books.<sup>641</sup> Finally, most of Ṭanṭāwī's books lacked an objective focus and sometimes it is difficult to find a clear link between the book's titles and their subjects. It is also probably researcher's weaknesses in understanding certain philosophical terms in his works.

### 3.8 CONCLUSION

This chapter has set out to introduce an important but little-known figure in Egypt, the twenty-century theologian, philosopher, exegete and prominent scholar, Ṭanṭāwī Jawharī. It has explored the whole biographical studies of Ṭanṭāwī Jawharī which started from his family background, educational life, working life and employment, political life, and intellectual life.

In term of Ṭanṭāwī's family background, it has been mentioned that his family had a close connection with al-Azhar scholars, and had a good standing in the

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<sup>639</sup> *Ibid*, vol.21, p.101.

<sup>640</sup> All of Ṭanṭāwī's books consist of one part, with the exception of the following: an interpretation of *al-Jawāhir fī Tafsīr al-Qur'ān al-Karīm*, which consists of 26 volumes and *Niẓām al-'Ālam wa al-'Umam* which consists of two volumes.

<sup>641</sup> Tantai, *al-Jawāhir fī Tafsīr al-Qur'ān al-Karīm*, vol.20, p.202.



Egyptian society as the name of the village was taken from his grandfather's name; 'Awadallah Hijāzī. Ṭanṭāwī grow up in the village of *Kafr 'Awad Allah Hijāzī* and worked on the agricultural with his family before being started his educational life.

In discussing his educational life, Ṭanṭāwī presents in a number of stages during his life as a student, beginning with the Elementary Qur'ān School (*Kuttāb*) and ending with his graduation from the College of Sciences.

In different context, Ṭanṭāwī describes that as soon as after completing his studies, he started his official employment in education and had been teaching in the Elementary school, the Khedivial Preparatory School, Secondary School, The College of Sciences, Cairo University and other higher institutions until he retired.

Simultaneously, Ṭanṭāwī had the most significant distinction of political life, his association with The National Party and with the Muslim Brotherhood organisation (*Jamā'at al-Ikhwān al-Muslimīn*). Due to his great contributions in the organisation, Ṭanṭāwī had been given the title of '*Ḥakīm al-Islām*'. Indeed, he was one of the first to meet the founder of the organisation; Ḥassan al-Bannā and was then pledged his allegiance and loyalty to al-Bannā.

By looking at the influence of Ṭanṭāwī and his intellectual life via writings, Ṭanṭāwī believes that the reason for the backwardness and weakness of the nations was ignorance. Accordingly, he wrote a number of books in order to reform of the Islamic Nation, to educate them and make them aware of the importance of knowledge as Ṭanṭāwī says that one of the objectives of most of his writings was to educate and elevate Muslims over the world.<sup>642</sup>

Therefore, the writings of Ṭanṭāwī spread out around the Islamic world with amazing speed, and became later on famous and have been translated into several languages. According to Hartmann, as he says;

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<sup>642</sup> Tantawi, *al-Jawāhir fī Tafsīr al-Qur'ān al-Karīm*, vol.17, p.182.

The works and writings of Ṭantāwī had a clear impact on the Islamic nations. It awakened in them a movement towards learning, and taught them of civilisation and Western sciences. It played a part in breaking down the blockades around those whose minds had been closed.<sup>643</sup>

In supporting Hartmann's statement, Mansūr Kḥān<sup>644</sup> notes that the influence of Ṭantāwī's writings on the Islamic nations was similar to that of the reformer Martin Luther King on the Christian religion.<sup>645</sup> There is another example of Ṭantāwī's influence in Chinese Turkestan and could be seen in Mansūr Kḥān's explanations, as he says;

The valuable remnants affected the mentality of the youth of Chinese Turkestan who were lost and confused in the wilderness of Middle Asia without any guides or directions. They were isolated from the civilised countries and whenever they found Ṭantāwī's work, they liked it and therefore, planted in their hearts as a love of modern learning. After that they looked for its source in the universities of the civilised European and Islamic kingdoms. Ṭantāwī was then sent these books to Western and Eastern countries for the study of sciences and I am of the group who first travelled from the country. All this was because of the influence of the esteemed philosopher.<sup>646</sup>

In conversation with Ṭantāwī, Mansūr Kḥān also says;

You opened schools in our country of Chinese Turkestan in which we studied modern sciences. I have studied in the subjects and due to new approach in learning, your two books have been spread out; *Niḏām al-'Ālam wa al-Umam* and *al-Tāj al-Muraṣṣā'*. The countries of China are like our countries - they have almost 70 Million Muslims. Some people of Japan have embraced Islām and have contacted their brothers in Chinese

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<sup>643</sup> Martin Hartmann, Article, entitled: (Schaich Tantawi Dschauhari, Ein Moderner Egyptischer Theology and Naturfreund) translated into English: *Sheikh Tantawi Jawhari: a Modern Egypt Theology and Nature Lover*, in the *Contributions to knowledge of the Orientalist* (Beitrage Zur Kenntniss des orientis), issue 13, p.82.

<sup>644</sup> Mansūr Kḥān was a young Turkestan man who came to Egypt in 1931, and was then visited Ṭantāwī. Mansūr had published an article in *Al-Maqtām* newspaper which entitled; New Information on the Countries of Chinese Turkestan (*Ma'lūmāt Jadīda 'an bilād Turkistan al-Sīniya*).

<sup>645</sup> Mansūr Kḥān, Article, entitled: New Information on the Countries of Chinese Turkestan in *Al-Maqtām* newspaper, 29 December, 1991, p.3.

<sup>646</sup> Indeed, in the article, Mansūr mentioned that Ṭantāwī's books had eradicated ignorance and backwardness in several countries and created a new century of Islamic life. See: *Ibid*.

Turkestan. The Japanese embraced Islām due to a Tartar man who brought them a translation of *al-Tāj al-Muraṣṣā*.<sup>647</sup>

By having various types of writings, Ṭanṭāwī almost certainly intended to reach a broad audience with varied levels of scholarly and indeed he has never feted as a great influential philosopher and Muslim thinker. However, in the modern history of scientific exegesis his name was almost completely deserved. Indeed, Ṭanṭāwī has made an invaluable contribution in contemporary Muslim world. This is acknowledged by the number of times Ṭanṭāwī's works have been translated into different languages and have been copied over the centuries.

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<sup>647</sup> Tantawi, *al-Jawāhir fī Tafsīr al-Qur'ān al-Karīm*, vol.22, p.131.

## **CHAPTER FOUR**

### **ANALYTICAL STUDIES OF THE *AL-JAWĀHIR***

#### **EXEGESIS**

#### **4.1 INTRODUCTION**

This chapter aims to explain some of the significant matters which relate to Ṭanṭāwī's exegesis and which should be acknowledged before commencing study of his works in dealing with the scientific exegesis. It will be divided into the following sections:

Section One: The researcher will trace Ṭanṭāwī's connection with the Qur'ān from childhood to the writing of his exegeses in the *al-Jawāhir*. It will also show Ṭanṭāwī's thoughts on the function of the Qur'ān and its contents.

Section Two: Introducing the *al-Jawāhir* Exegesis.

This section illustrates the basic primary information which defines the *al-Jawāhir*. It revolves around the following: the name of the exegesis, the reasons for writing the *al-Jawāhir*, its objectives, the stages of the writing and printing of it, and its proliferation throughout the Islamic world.

Section Three: Sources of the *al-Jawāhir*

In this part, the researcher will be discussing the *al-Jawāhir* encyclopedia and then discussion on the numerous and diverse sources materials which Ṭanṭāwī depended on when writing his exegesis, materials from the fields of language, jurisprudence, contemporary science and others.

## 4.2 SECTION ONE: ṬAṆṬĀWĪ JAWHARĪ AND THE QUR'ĀN

Ṭaṇṭāwī Jawharī's link with the Qur'ān began in the days when he was a student at the *Kuttāb* (Islamic elementary school) where he memorised it without evaluating or understanding the meaning. He wished to go further than merely learning by rote and was eventually able to enter the Azhar University. However, he did not realize his goals there, in fact he found it to be a larger version of the *Kuttāb*. Here he was obliged to memorise Qur'ānic interpretations by heart. His teachers used to say to him and other students: "Students of knowledge are forbidden to interpret except by meeting with the teachers who only interpret by what was compiled by the forbearers".<sup>648</sup>

When Ṭaṇṭāwī left his studies at Azhar University and returned to his village, he deepened his connection with the Qur'ān. Indeed, he read four parts of the Jalālayn exegesis and learnt them by heart.<sup>649</sup> For the first time, Ṭaṇṭāwī attempted to contravene the rulings of his teachers by trying to understand the meanings of the verses with his intellect first and then comparing his understanding with what appeared in the books of exegesis as he says;

One day I would be turning the river water pump and I would find myself starting to think about the interpretation of one of the parts of the Qur'ān. I may have spent no small amount of time drawing out water with this machine and I didn't feel tired from my labour. After finishing work, I would put the thoughts that came into my mind next to what was written in the interpretations and I found a complete agreement – for the most part. This gave me great joy and inner peace.<sup>650</sup>

While studying the Qur'ān, Ṭaṇṭāwī encountered verses which had a special, potent effect on him. These were the verses which are related to creation of the universe as Qur'ān, 2:164 says;

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<sup>648</sup> Tantawi, *al-Tāj al-Muraṣṣa'*, p.26. Also see: *al-Jawāhir fī Tafsīr al-Qur'ān al-Karīm*, 11:27.

<sup>649</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>650</sup> *Ibid*, 10:126.

Surely in the creation of the heavens and the earth and the alternation of night and day and the ship that runs in the sea with profit to men, and the water God sends down from heaven therewith reviving the earth after it is dead and his scattering abroad in it all manner of crawling thing, and the turning about of the winds and the clouds compelled between heaven and earth-surely there are signs for a people having understanding.

Of the extent of this verse's effect on him, Ṭaṇṭāwī says;

I know that this verse was the reason for my love of studying nature and I turned towards it at the beginning of my education and if I had not I would not have continued to turn towards it throughout my youth.<sup>651</sup>

Ṭaṇṭāwī then began and comprehensive study of the Qur'ān and there discovered many verses which urge contemplation of God's creation. He held these verses in his mind and compared them with the creations around him<sup>652</sup> and in doing so came to what was for him the indisputable conclusion that the Qur'ān was the word of God and nature was the work of God and that His word and work were parallel and that there was no contradiction or difference between the two.<sup>653</sup> He has told us that before becoming convinced of this he had thought poorly of those who said that the Qur'ān called people to look to the sciences and had pronounced such people as "liars and deceivers". However, after study and observation he became certain that the Qur'ān did indeed call all people to the all the various sciences and increased their yearning to know them.<sup>654</sup>

Ṭaṇṭāwī's desire to deepen his understanding of the Qur'ān and its exegeses intensified and researcher finds him on his return to al-Azhar showing a clear and distinctive interest in this field in which he excelled.<sup>655</sup> When Ṭaṇṭāwī progressed to Dār al-'Ulūm, he was there able to study modern and contemporary sciences

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<sup>651</sup> *Al-Jawāhir*, 1:36.

<sup>652</sup> Tantaṭawī, *al-Tāj al-Muraṣṣa'*, p.30.

<sup>653</sup> *Al-Jawāhir*, 2:51.

<sup>654</sup> *Ibid*, 2:110.

<sup>655</sup> Elias Zakhura, *Mar'āt al-'Aṣr*, 2:226.

and to find many links connections between contemporary sciences and the Qur'ān. Indeed, Ṭanṭāwī immersed himself in finding agreement between the learning of the era and the Qur'ān. It may be noted that Ṭanṭāwī's phase of studying in Dār al-'Ulūm gave him a kind of freedom of thought when contemplating the Qur'ān and its exegeses, a freedom which nowadays does not exist among the Azharian scholars who are very austere in their interpretation of the Qur'ān. The situation was then completely different where strictness gave way to allowing the mind to freely ponder on the meanings of the Qur'ān and we can see the practical application of this in the *al-Jawāhir* exegeses. It will be explained further when the researcher discusses on the *al-Jawāhir*.

#### **4.2.1 Comprehending the Qur'ān: Ṭanṭāwī's views**

Ṭanṭāwī had a particular view regarding understanding the Qur'ān as he believes that the Qur'ān is a holy book which requires profound understanding and thorough and steady study. For this reason he rejected many methods of dealing with the Qur'ān. Likewise he rejected the idea that its purpose was limited to being read at gravesides as the Qur'ān was revealed to be a reminder for the living as well as teaching and advancing them and redeeming their affairs.<sup>656</sup> Ṭanṭāwī also refused the reading of the Qur'ān at meetings and in the streets for the purpose of merely bringing livelihood, profession or blessings.<sup>657</sup> Overall, Ṭanṭāwī rejected the misuse and incorrect treatment of the Qur'ān because the purpose and objectives of the Qur'ān are more profound and far reaching than that.

Ṭanṭāwī observed that there were two things preventing people from understanding the Qur'ān; firstly, people were content to do with the words of preceding jurists and not to challenge their views and secondly, they were content to recite and repeat the Qur'ān without comprehending its meaning or

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<sup>656</sup> *Al-Jawāhir*, 23:249.

<sup>657</sup> See: Tantawi, *Niẓām al-'Ālam wa al-'Umam*, vol. 2, p.203, p.283, *al-Jawāhir*, vol. 23, p.248.

understanding its objectives.<sup>658</sup> He confirms this by saying, "The study of the Qur'ān in the past was superficial, a surface reading and the study of pronunciation."<sup>659</sup>

Moreover, Ṭantāwī believed that the widespread abandoning of the Qur'ān by Muslims began with the introduction of Greek philosophy to Islamic lands; people became preoccupied with this and split into two factions: those who championed philosophy and those who opposed it. The former were philosophers of the nature of being who abandoned the Qur'ān to apply themselves to complex and protracted philosophical concepts. The latter were jurists that, content with the conclusions the scholars before them had arrived at, had ceased to study the Qur'ān.<sup>660</sup> As for the scholars who addressed the issue of making clear the meanings of the Qur'ān and its exegeses, Ṭantāwī divided these into three groups:

Group one: Linguists: this common class scholar makes interpretations on a simple, lexical level, understanding each word as he saw fit.

Group two: The scholar of rhetoric: obsessed with understanding the meaning of what is said, this scholar is more distinguished than the former and moderately well educated.

Group three: Superior to the others, this scholar has studied all the sciences and disciplines and has come to have an asset which he can use to analyse and order information. This is a true scholar and he alone is capable of interpreting the Qur'ān correctly.<sup>661</sup>

As far as Ṭantāwī's thoughts on the matter of Qur'ān, the researcher would say that Ṭantāwī understands that the Qur'ān is the constitution of life and

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<sup>658</sup> *Al-Jawāhir*, 3:28.

<sup>659</sup> *Ibid*, 2:203.

<sup>660</sup> Tantawī, *al-Tāj al-Muraṣṣa'*, pp.25-26.

<sup>661</sup> *Al-Jawāhir*, 6:14.



curriculum of thought and belief and knows its objectives and meanings and its universal concept of all existence.

#### **4.2.2 The Contents of the Qur'ān: Ṭantāwī's views**

Ṭantāwī took a comprehensive, complete view of the Qur'ān and this is illustrated in his ideas regarding the subjects of the Qur'ān. Indeed, he presented us with an overall structure of its contents, showing the number of verses which spoke of each particular topic. Therefore, Ṭantāwī believed that the Qur'ān comprised of six parts:

Part one: Creational sciences - herein is the unity of God and the number of verses in this section is 750. This is the most important of the sections.

Part two: Verses calling man to reason and to renounce falsehoods. These verses number around one thousand.

Part three: Behaviors and morals – around 800 verses.

Part four: Expansion and observation of the state of the nations. Most of the Qur'ans stories serve this purpose.

Part five: Worship - this completes the previous parts in the temporal world and raises the worshipper to his Lord in the Hereafter.

Part six: Rulings, sentences and punishments.

These two latter sections appear least frequently in the Qur'ān and cause the most concern for scholars. There are approximately five hundred of these verses.<sup>662</sup> The researcher had expected to find this comprehensive envision of the contents of the Qur'ān in the *al-Jawāhir* exegesis but Ṭantāwī devoted all his attention to the first part only.

#### **4.3 SECTION TWO: INTRODUCING THE *AL-JAWĀHIR***

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<sup>662</sup> Tantawi, *al-Tāj al-Muraṣṣa'*, p.101 and onwards.

The Qur'ānic exegesis authored by Ṭaṇṭāwī became known among the people as the "*al-Jawāhir* (The Jewels). However, its full title was the "*al-Jawāhir fī Tafsīr al-Qur'ān al-Karīm* (The Jewels of Exegesis of the Qur'ān), including the wonders and marvel of creation and phenomena of the wondrous verses.

We can note that the word *Jawāhir* and its conjugations led Ṭaṇṭāwī to use it in the titles of previous books, for example; *Jawāhir al-'Ulūm* (The Jewels of Science)<sup>663</sup>, *Mīzān al-Jawāhir* (Balance of Jewels)<sup>664</sup>, *Jawāhir al-Inshā'* (Jewels of Creation)<sup>665</sup>, *Jawāhir al-Taqwā* (Jewels of Righteousness)<sup>666</sup> and *Jawāhir al-Shi'ir wa al-Ta'rib* (Jewels of Poetry and Grammar)<sup>667</sup>. Recalling for us the reason for expressing himself with "*jawhar*" (Jewel) in his exegesis -*Jawāhir* is the plural of *jawhar* - he relates:

Jewels are what are made in shells lying on the seabed and they are the most precious of all that is in the sea, because in the sea there are animals and there are coral. These Jewels are more beautiful and more precious than coral and more precious than everything in the sea. Likewise, the meanings shown in this book nourish mind after mind and these minds become brighter than all of the other minds in the world, as the jewel in its shell is to everything else in the seas and in the world of marine sciences.<sup>668</sup>

These statements refer to his book and what he offers us therein consists of three matters: value, beauty and being concerned with the core of the Qur'ān rather than merely its shell and superficial meanings.

In addition to the statements of Ṭaṇṭāwī, the researcher will adjoin that perhaps, on choosing the name for his exegesis, he followed Ghazzālī in his book; *Jawāhir al-Qur'ān* for Ṭaṇṭāwī was greatly influenced by Ghazzālī and his writings, especially this book. This is confirmed when he learnt that the word *al-Jawāhir*

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<sup>663</sup> Tantawi. (1913). *Jawāhir al-'Ulūm*, Cairo: Matba'a Hindiya, second edition.

<sup>664</sup> Tantawi. (1318H). *Mīzān al-Jawāhir fī 'Ajāib hazā al-Kawn al-Bāhir*, Cairo: Matba'a al-Mutawassita, first edition.

<sup>665</sup> Tantawi. (1313H). *Jawāhir al-Inshā'*, Cairo: Matba'a al-Turki, first edition.

<sup>666</sup> Tantawi. (1934). *Jawāhir al-Taqwā*, Cairo: al-Maktaba al-Tijariya al-Kubra, second edition.

<sup>667</sup> Tantawi. (1921). *Jawāhir al-Shi'ir wa al-Ta'rib*, Cairo: Matba'a al-Sa'ada, second edition.

<sup>668</sup> *Al-Jawāhir*, 26:17.

was used by Ghazzālī as a term to describe the scientific verses in the Qurʾān.<sup>669</sup> Moreover, perhaps the agreement between the word *al-Jawāhir* and its conjugations with the Ṭanṭāwī's name, Ṭanṭāwī al-Jawharī, made him delight in using this word.

#### **4.3.1 Reasons for the Writing of the *al-Jawāhir***

The reasons for writing a book are sometimes obvious, but in some cases are less so. Trying to identify an author's reason for writing any particular book is essential to help the reader understand the ideas and arguments proposed by the author. However, there can be no doubt that behind the writing of this large work were many strong and assured motivations, which guided Ṭanṭāwī in carrying out this huge endeavour which demanded of him years of continuous work and long nights without losing strength or will.

The writing of *al-Jawāhir* filled Ṭanṭāwī's whole life as he says: "I have no concern in this life greater than this. I believe it is my soul's wish and the greatest of my goals. It has possessed my sensations and has become the greatest of pleasures."<sup>670</sup> In fact, he continued writing his exegesis in spite of the doctors who advised him to stop.<sup>671</sup> When he felt that he was nearing the end of his days due to severe illness and was gripped by pain he grieved over nothing in this life part from two things, one of which was not completing the printing of his exegesis.<sup>672</sup> Moreover, for around ten years he never left Cairo because of his preoccupation with correcting his print. Indeed, he did not complete the duty of pilgrimage until after the printing was completed.<sup>673</sup>

Thoughts of the exegesis accompanied him for most of the time and barely left him for a single moment as he says;

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<sup>669</sup> Al-Ghazzali, *Jawāhir al-Qurʾān*, p.52.

<sup>670</sup> *Al-Jawāhir*, 13:84.

<sup>671</sup> *Ibid*, 26:182.

<sup>672</sup> *Ibid*, 8:117.

<sup>673</sup> *Ibid*, 26:185.

It never left me in the morning or the evening, in solitude or in company, in evenings with friends and in health, in sleeping and waking. There was no refuge for me from these thoughts except by writing. When I wrote down the lines it soothed my soul and I was calmed and I welcomed other thoughts."<sup>674</sup>

Likewise, many of these thoughts assailed him at different times throughout the night and day, even during his prayers.<sup>675</sup>

In addition, we can extract Ṭaṇṭāwī's motivations for writing his exegesis from his book itself as the following:

First: Ṭaṇṭāwī was convinced that previous exegeses had not said everything and that the Qur'ān, with its meanings and connotations, was a wealth which had not been exhausted. He felt the presence of an educational void which necessitated the writing of an exegesis which was in harmony with the spirit of the modern era. He went as far as to believe that the Qur'ān –even in his time– “had not been interpreted properly”<sup>676</sup>. He then commenced this educational and scholarly task which was the *al-Jawāhir*.

It is in this context that we wish to assert that Ṭaṇṭāwī, in his criticisms of previous exegeses, was not attempting to disparage or reject them. On the contrary, he acknowledged the efforts of the exegetes who had paved the way for his studies and considered them taught scholars without whom he would have learnt nothing.<sup>677</sup> Ṭaṇṭāwī believed that each exegesis has its own special beauty and character and these exegetes were like men looking at fields of paradise, each of them speaking of something which delighted him.<sup>678</sup>

Second: Ṭaṇṭāwī's belief in a duty to spread the special understanding he had reached of the Qur'ān. Ṭaṇṭāwī's connection with the Qur'ān formed his

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<sup>674</sup> *Al-Jawāhir*, 6:106. See also: 17:107 and 14:100.

<sup>675</sup> *Ibid*, 14:100.

<sup>676</sup> *Ibid*, 24:59.

<sup>677</sup> *Ibid*, 14:156.

<sup>678</sup> See: Tantawi al-Jawhari, *Taqrīth li tafsīr al-Manār*, in *al-Manār* magazine, vol.29, part 10, p.756.

particular opinions and point of views and he saw it as his duty to tell people of them. He considered himself "responsible for making these views known"<sup>679</sup> and believed that he would be held accountable for "hiding these truths."<sup>680</sup> His conviction of this rested upon the Qur'ān, 2:159 says;

Those who conceal the clear signs and the guidance that We have sent down after we have shown them clearly in the Book – they shall be cursed by God and the cursers.

According to Ṭanṭāwī, this verse obligates us to show what is assured in our souls of the wondrous parallels and harmonies between the Qur'ān and the sciences so that it is clear that it is the truth.<sup>681</sup>

Ṭanṭāwī added by saying, "The greatest of my desires in this life is to complete and publish this exegesis. In doing so, I believe that I will have done my duty to religion and morality."<sup>682</sup>

Ṭanṭāwī had noted all the pain and problems suffered by the Islamic nations and saw in the Qur'ān a clear solution to the ailments of all the nations and a deliverance from their situations. These concerns are reflected by Ṭanṭāwī's dreams and visions.

Ṭanṭāwī recalled that his visions were many and began when he was around twenty-five and the most important of them occurred when he was between thirty-five and forty-five.<sup>683</sup> He recalled that the origin of the writing of his exegesis was a vision of the Prophet (PBWH). In this instance he saw him in a dream and the Prophet began to teach him to interpret the Qur'ān and expended his knowledge of it. The prophet (PBWH) gave him the good tidings that he would become like one of his Companions and that the smallest of verses had

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<sup>679</sup> *Al-Jawāhir*, 4: 171.

<sup>680</sup> *Ibid.* See also: 24:158.

<sup>681</sup> Tantawi, *Nizām al-'Ālam wa al-Umam*, 1:62. See also his words on the concealing of science in *al-Nizām wa al-Islām*, p.244.

<sup>682</sup> *Al-Jawāhir*, 11:73.

<sup>683</sup> *Al-Jawāhir*, 7:68.

the biggest of meanings.<sup>684</sup> More visions of the Prophet (PBWH), followed and in many of them the Prophet “ordered him” time and time again to write the exegesis.<sup>685</sup>

Ṭanṭāwī considered these visions the foremost reason for writing his exegesis and that without them “it would not exist”<sup>686</sup> and “not one line or letter of it would have been written”.<sup>687</sup> Ṭanṭāwī considered it as a promise and good tidings to him from God.<sup>688</sup>

Speaking of the end of these series of continuous visions, Ṭanṭāwī tells us:

When I reached the age of fifty-nine, I saw the morning time as if I said, “Lord, I am doing all I must without lessening my work, where is what you said you would grant me?” And I heard him say: “You lie. You do not focus with your heart in prayers. And when I woke, began to be present with my heart in prayers as much as possible and then door was opened for this exegesis.”<sup>689</sup>

With regards to this statements, Aḥmad `Aṭīya referred to a particular reason for the writing of the exegesis, a reason which demonstrates the extent of Ṭanṭāwī’s concern for the Muslims and their problems wherever they may be and his attempts to reach them with his voice of reason. According to Aḥmad `Aṭīya;

It was the policy of the Indian government in particular to ban Arabic books with the exception of religious books. It was therefore essential to export this modern learning and to ensure that non- proscribed books entered Java and Sumatra and other Asian colonies. Thus came about the expanding of *al-Jawāhir* from reflections on creation to the assimilation of the whole book into the heart of the exegesis. This included all of the contemporary natural and social sciences alongside elucidation in the form of maps, diagrams and photographs.<sup>690</sup>

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<sup>684</sup> *Ibid*, 4:17.

<sup>685</sup> *Ibid*.

<sup>686</sup> *Ibid*, 7:68.

<sup>687</sup> *Ibid*, 4:17.

<sup>688</sup> *Ibid*, 11:42.

<sup>689</sup> *Ibid*, 14:100.

<sup>690</sup> Ahmad `Atiya Allah. (1972). *Al-Muṣawwar* magazine, Issue 24<sup>th</sup> November, p.30.

After Ṭaṇṭāwī published an exegesis of some of the verses in newspapers and magazines, people were impressed by what he wrote. A famous Cairo publisher - the late Muṣṭapha al-Bābī al-Halabī- spoke to him about writing an exegesis of the whole Qur'ān. The publisher urged him to do this and so he responded to the request.<sup>691</sup>

According to Ṭaṇṭāwī, he managed to achieve his reasons of writing by sending the first volume of his exegesis along with his book; *al-Qur'ān wa al-'Ulūm al-'Aṣriya* to various Muslim rulers and to all the Muslim nations east and west in order to complete what he believed was his duty before death.<sup>692</sup>

#### **4.3.2 Objectives of writing the *al-Jawāhir***

Before he began writing his exegesis, Ṭaṇṭāwī had in mind a number of significant objectives which he devoted every line and paragraph to realising the existence of the *al-Jawāhir*.

We can define the four objectives which Ṭaṇṭāwī aspired to as follows:

First objective: Remedying the causes of backwardness in the Islamic world and calling for reform.

This was the intimate and greatest goal which stove with all his thought and learning to achieve. Ṭaṇṭāwī was a Muslim campaigner who had lived through the problems of his nation and clearly realised the illnesses from which it suffered in the form of disunion, and ignorance. Therefore, he wanted to treat these ailments and fill the voids in many ways, one of which was elucidating the Qur'ān.

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<sup>691</sup> Tantawī, *al-Tāj al-Muraṣṣa'*, p.286.

<sup>692</sup> *Al-Jawāhir*, 2:144.

In his book; *al-Qur'ān wa al-'Ulūm al-'Aşriya*, Ṭanṭāwī explained that the Muslims merely lacked two things which were unity and learning.<sup>693</sup> Anyone who reads and ponders on *al-Jawāhir* can note that Ṭanṭāwī was aiming to fill this absence in these two areas.

First area: Ṭanṭāwī discerned what the division and dispersion suffered by the Islamic community and believed that the ideological disunity which divided Sunnī, Shī'a and Ṣūfī was one of the main causes of the weakness of the Muslims. He wanted to set out in his exegesis a base on which Muslims could meet and be united and not dispute. This was to be a scientific elucidation of the Qur'ān which would be linked to the Muslims' material advancement and authority in learning. He believed that if the Muslims came together on this basis they would forget their internal and ideological divisions.

Ṭanṭāwī therefore announced that his exegesis was for "Muslims of all doctrines, not just for the Sunnī or the Shī'a or the Imāmis or the Zaidis."<sup>694</sup> He clarified that he would reveal the idea that the Qur'ān and science were undistinguishable and that all doctrines can come together over the Qur'ān and the sciences which could not be contradicted by doctrine, law or belief; when this occurred they would see that the disagreements between them in Sharī'a were very simple in the context of what they had agreed on.<sup>695</sup>

Ṭanṭāwī also realised that there was a division of another kind driving the Islamic community, the basis of which was a disagreement over the relationship between science and religion. The opinions of the people and the intellectuals varied in their definition of this relationship; some believed there was complete separation between religion and science. In the end each party became averse to the other and conflict broke out. Ṭanṭāwī had suffered at the hands of scholars who had declared that studying science was forbidden; based on the belief that

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<sup>693</sup> Tantai, *al-Qur'ān wa al-'Ulūm al-'Aşriya*, p.10.

<sup>694</sup> *Al-Jawāhir*, 6:126. Also see: 15:218.

<sup>695</sup> See the details of this idea in: *al-Jawāhir*, 1:8, 11:142-143, 15:253, 26:199.



religion contradicted science and forbade it.<sup>696</sup> He thus tried to explain the relationship between the two and to show all the people that there was no conflict between them and that the Qur'ān urged and called for the study of sciences.<sup>697</sup>

According to Raja al-Naqash, as he says;

The principle justification behind Ṭaṭṭāwī Jawharī's method was that his goal was to rouse passion for contemporary sciences among Muslims and to get rid of the illusion of contradiction between the Qur'ān and science. He wanted to show that the science posed hold no fear for faith in God and that scientific theories, whatever they discover and whatever their outcomes are, hold no fear for religious conviction. In fact, all this was, in the view of the great and brilliant Ṭaṭṭāwī Jawharī, one of the means of strengthening faith, not doubt and non-belief.<sup>698</sup>

Second area: Ṭaṭṭāwī likewise observed the vast educational backwardness endured by Islamic society in general and Egypt in particular. He knew that this backwardness would devastate the Muslim Nation and make it trail behind so he wrote for it an exegesis in order to achieve the important goals:

First goal: Rousing a passion for science among Muslims<sup>699</sup>

In his exegesis, Ṭaṭṭāwī focused on driving his determination and directing it towards learning, reading and studying sources of knowledge and every science

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<sup>696</sup> It would not be out of place here to refer to some examples and incidents in order to comprehend how deeply Ṭaṭṭāwī was affected by this issue: on one occasion he was visited by Prince Jamāl al-Dīn of India who came to him seeking a legal ruling. Jamal al-Din told him that the religious scholars in India had ruled that that the scientific teaching of history and geography was forbidden (see: *al-Jawāhir* 1:45). Likewise, the Chinese scholar Wan Won Keen told him that the religious scholars of China had forbidden Muslims to study all sciences. (See: *Al-Jawāhir*, 4:151). He was also informed by a friend who was one of the Tunisians scholars that some of his counterparts said that there was no need to study any science other than that of Islamic jurisprudence. (See: *ibid*, 5:184).

<sup>697</sup> For details of the relationship between Qur'ān and science, see: chapter 1.4 of this study.

<sup>698</sup> Raja al-Naqash, *Tafsīr al-Qur'ān bi kharāiṭ wa Ṣuwar*, in *al-Muṣawwar* magazine, 3<sup>rd</sup> November, 1972.

<sup>699</sup> Tantawi considered this objective a central characteristic of his exegesis. See: *al-Jawāhir*, 14:201.

and industry that could benefit the Islamic Nation and even help establish a civilisation and build for it a better future.

The researcher sees this clearly among the pages of the *al-Jawāhir*, Ṭanṭāwī barely turns a few pages before he finds wise quiet words have roused his passion for the sciences and prompted his interest in studying them. The researcher also finds indirect encouragement in the interesting way that some of the sciences are presented, for example, there is strange and thought for provoking information, the minutiae of God's industry, the use of attractive pictures and drawings.

Second goal: Equipping the Muslim reader of the exegesis with a good scientific product

Ṭanṭāwī recalled that one of the great aims of *al-Jawāhir* was to rise up the Islamic Nation by way of the sciences.<sup>700</sup> He believed that studying them in their entirety was the healing medicine for the ailments of the Islamic community and that it was essential to participate in and propagate and education among it and, by way of treatment contribute to it in the performance of duty.<sup>701</sup> He delivered his encyclopedic exegesis in order for it to be -as one of its many aspects- a book of learning and culture which comprised a principle part of the learning which every Muslim must have knowledge of as he said, "Even if one had not studied the sciences of creation in nature and astronomy he can read an outline of it in this exegesis."<sup>702</sup>

Indeed, Ṭanṭāwī believed that if the educational influence of his exegesis managed to raise up the Islamic Nation by degrees it would open wide the door to civilization and bring back the nation some of its past glory.

Second objective: Reconciling Western and Islamic Civilisation

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<sup>700</sup> *Ibid*, 7:68.

<sup>701</sup> *Ibid*, 19:74.

<sup>702</sup> Tantawi, *Tafsīr sūra al-Fātiha* –the introduction– p.3.

While the Islamic world was living through a period of weakness and stagnation, Europe was experiencing a revolution of learning in all areas. When the flood of new discoveries and inventions began to appear it was as sharp shock for the Islamic world to see this huge scientific advance in the western world. In fact, many people were stunned by it.

Muslim scholars had to take a specific stance towards the approaching civilization. While one party attacked the "infidel Western civilization" and prohibited Muslims from having dealings with it, another party was impressed and tried to benefit from it and find agreement with the Islamic civilization and proof that what the 21<sup>st</sup> Century brought forth did not clash with religion but in fact was linked to it and proclaimed it.

Ṭanṭāwī tried to bring together the ideas of western civilization and the Qur'ān and to show people that the Qur'ān already contained many of these ideas and that it had preceded western civilizations by several centuries as it referred to contemporary ideas, discoveries and theories before they occurred.

Third objective: Revealing the scientific miracles of the Qur'ān.

According to Ṭanṭāwī the Qur'ān is a miraculous book; its miracles are ceaseless. In it there are many types of phenomenon, linguistic, legislative and scientific. Ṭanṭāwī found when he looked at it that it contained among its scientific references -sometimes as elucidation and at other times as allusion- demonstrating its miracles. It was his desire to reveal to the people these wonders in order to increase their faith in it as he says,

In this exegesis I have shown dozens of wonders that were unknown before our time. These are the Qur'ānic miracles that not appear in this our time and for which I have wrote this elucidation.<sup>703</sup>

Fourth objective: A modern, straight forward elucidation of the Qur'ān.

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<sup>703</sup> Tantai, *al-Ijāba 'Alā al-Sūāl al-'Ulamā al-Shaykh al-Hamāmī*, in *al-Fatāḥ* magazine, Year 8, issue 370, 20 Rajab, 1352 Hijri, p.7.

Those of previous generation wrote many exegeses but these were appropriate to particular ages and cultures. With the beginning of a new era, an age of science and technology and the spread of knowledge and culture, the Muslim feels the need for a contemporary exegesis which addresses his reality, treats his concerns and speaks to his intellect with the language of the age.

Ṭanṭāwī was alert to this matter and indicated that previous exegetes had analyzed and interpreted the Qur'ān according to their time and understanding and that now we must analyze the verses of the Qur'ān and interpret it according to the time in which we live now.<sup>704</sup>

These were the objectives which Ṭanṭāwī was aiming from his exegesis. They were without doubt great objectives which necessitated huge effort to realize.

Based on my analytical study on the above objectives, there are a number of points which are worth noting and could be concluded as follows:

First: Ṭanṭāwī had attached a great deal of hope to his exegesis and believed it would realize the objectives mentioned. He thought it would have a big effect on people's minds and the running of their lives and would be the key to changing the Muslim world.

Ṭanṭāwī considered his exegesis the healing medicine for the Islamic Nation<sup>705</sup> and that it would be a cause of lift out of its rut and would bring back its unity.<sup>706</sup> It was, he said, "One of the good tidings of this renaissance and the steps to coming glory."<sup>707</sup> He added "This exegesis and those like it will make Muslims alert and insightful. My great hope is that God will guide the nations through this

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<sup>704</sup> *Al-Jawāhir*, 23:24.

<sup>705</sup> *Al-Jawāhir*, 11:181.

<sup>706</sup> *Ibid*, 2:121.

<sup>707</sup> *Ibid*, 2:114.

exegesis and bring people's hearts to life, fill them with joy and make the nations glad<sup>708</sup> as well as he had many more hopes for the legacy of his work.<sup>709</sup>

Second: *al-Jawāhir* had a role in the change and influenced the public but not to the degree which Ṭanṭāwī hoped and expected; it would be difficult for these big hopes and expectations to be fulfilled by an exegesis or any other books.

However, it is only fair to say that this exegesis had good results outside of Egypt; as its influence was prominent in those distant, colonised Islamic lands which were suffering from an obvious under development in the field of thought and science.

Third: It was within his abilities for Ṭanṭāwī to realise of the objectives we have mentioned without involving the Qur'ān. It would have possible to educate the Muslims and stir up their passion for contemporary science by writing special books which included this information. Adapting verses of the Qur'ān is a dangerous course and a very slippery slope.

By producing this kind of exegesis, Ṭanṭāwī might be able to educate Muslims with new approach in dealing with the scientific exegesis. Simultaneously, Ṭanṭāwī might expose them with a concept of integration between contemporary science and Qur'ān as classical art. Indeed, this effort is essential even though it is dangerous in contemporary Muslim world as it would combine between two branches of knowledge.

#### **4.3.3 The Stages of Writing and Printing of the *al-Jawāhir***

Ṭanṭāwī longed to interpret the Qur'ān and reveal what he believed were the marvels and wisdom within it. He did this by way of his extraordinary effort and independent thought and tried to bring these viewpoints to the people with his

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<sup>708</sup> *Ibid*, 8:120.

<sup>709</sup> See: for example, *ibid*, 5:130, 6:13, and 7:61.

books and writings. It could be proved via his book; *Jawāhir al-'Ulūm* which was published in 1901. This work elucidates a number of verses and reconciles them with contemporary science.<sup>710</sup>

Following this was his book; *al-Tāj al-Muraṣṣa'*, published in 1906, wherein he methodically exegetes the *al-Fātiha* (The Opening) Chapter and the fourteen verses relating to science in the Chapter of the Cow (*sūra al-Baqara*)<sup>711</sup> God then called him to exegete the entire Qur'ān in the same manner as that of al-Ghazzālī and speak of the verses which refer to science.<sup>712</sup>

In 1908, Ṭanṭāwī gave a speech to a group of high school graduates in which he spoke of his firm desire and determination to begin interpreting verses of the Qur'ān in an organized and methodical manner as he says;

I will bring together the verses which speak longingly of the natural sciences and explain them with learning and wisdom in order for them to become captivating and enchanting to the uninitiated so they will study the sciences in their entirety and read them for pleasure. We will then bring together all the verses concerning morality until they are heard over and over again and become seen as beautiful. We will elucidate them in order to nurture a wealth of passion for science and virtues in the Nation.<sup>713</sup>

Ṭanṭāwī was able to realize his ambition when he wrote his book over intermittent periods of time, beginning 1911 and ending in 1935.

The stages of the writing of *al-Jawāhir* could be summarised as follows:

### **Stage One:**

The first line began with the writing of an elucidation of some of the chapters and verses of the Qur'ān with the aim of teaching them to the students of Dār al-'Ulūm as part of the subject of exegesis. Ṭanṭāwī also published some of what he

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<sup>710</sup> Tantawi, *Jawāhir al-'Ulūm*, pp.206-220.

<sup>711</sup> Tantawi, *al-Tāj al-Muraṣṣa'*, pp.176-198.

<sup>712</sup> *Ibid*, p.195.

<sup>713</sup> Tantawi, *Nahḍa al-Umma wa Haiātihā*, p.272.

wrote in *al-Malāji' al-'Abbāsia* magazine for the first time in 1911.<sup>714</sup> The researcher had reviewed critically and analysed at the sections of what he wrote in the magazine<sup>715</sup> and the following notes could be summarized to what he published in it:

First: Ṭanṭāwī did not write a complete exegesis of the Qur'ān in this magazine. He first published here an interpretation (Verses of Science) in some of the advanced chapters but without putting them in order.<sup>716</sup>

Second: After that he wrote it again taking care to order the chapters and classify their sections and to show and explain their meanings. Then Ṭanṭāwī interpreted the scientific verses therein, beginning with the Chapter of the Cow (*Sūra al-Baqara*).<sup>717</sup>

Third: The researcher does not get any information on how far he got with his writing as the final issues of the magazine were lost but it is certain that it did not continue for long. Ṭanṭāwī recalled that he did stopped writing for the magazine in 1914 because of harassment for the English and his departure from *Dār al-'Ulūm*.<sup>718</sup> What he wrote in the magazine is preserved along with what he taught the students of *Dār al-'Ulūm* until his retirement from government work.<sup>719</sup> Ṭanṭāwī had thanked God for the ending of this work because, he said, in this

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<sup>714</sup> See: *Al-Jawāhir*, 1:97 and 271, 7:2, 19:25.

<sup>715</sup> Researcher defines this magazine is what appears on its cover: *The al-Malāji' al-'Abbāsia wa Makārim al-Akhlāq al-Islāmiya* which belonged to the charitable *al-'Urwa al-Wuthqā* organisation. It was a historical modern educational religious magazine on the subject of health and science. It was published on the first of every Arabic month. The founder of this magazine was Khalīl Hamdī Hamāda and Ṭanṭāwī edited the Religion and Society section.

<sup>716</sup> See: for example, the exegesis of the verses on science in *Sūra al-Nisā'*, *al-Malāji' al-'Abbāsia* magazine, volume 11, part 7, Rajab 1329 Hijri, pp.338-343; Volume 11, part 8, Sha'ban 1329, pp.395- 400.

<sup>717</sup> This was announced in the margin: *al-Malāji' al-'Abbāsia* magazine, volume 11, part 7, Jamādī al-Awwal, 1330Hijri, pp.176. Ṭanṭāwī mentioned that he had begun this method in previous editions. See: his exegesis of the Chapter of the Cow in volume 12, part 3, Rābī' al-Awwal, 1330Hijri, pp.118-123. Also see: volume 12, part 4, Jamādī al-Awwal, 1330Hijri, and pp.176-190.

<sup>718</sup> *Al-Jawāhir*, 19:25.

<sup>719</sup> *Ibid*, 19:25.

period he was able to read the modern authoritative examination of the Qur'ān.<sup>720</sup>

Fourth: When writings his exegesis *al-Jawāhir*, Ṭanṭāwī placed what was published in *al-Malāji' al-'Abbāsia* magazine, sometimes with clarification, sometimes without.<sup>721</sup>

## Stage Two

This stage is called the General Writing of the Exegesis. During this phase, which was after his retirement, Ṭanṭāwī began putting together the exegesis of the Qur'ān in an organized manner as he said;

After my days of youth were over and I had become an old man of sixty years, while following the profession of teaching in schools and writing books, the love and quest for learning was still fresh and strong. So, I began to write this exegesis and spent on it two years or more. I would write around forty or fifty pages a day<sup>722</sup> and when I wrote the amount that I had decided on, I did exercise in the fields around Cairo, walking around six kilometers. After doing this I felt extremely weak and depleted in strength and fragile in my nerves but very, very happy and glad as I believed I had completed my duty.<sup>723</sup>

As for the size of the exegesis he wrote, it was no more than eleven volumes.<sup>724</sup> Ṭanṭāwī then submitted it for printing. In term of time period, Ṭanṭāwī began this phase in 1922 or 1923 and concluded it, as he recalled, on "Tuesday morning, 21<sup>st</sup> Muharram, 1344 Hijrī or 11<sup>th</sup> August 1925, in the Gregorian calendar, in Zain al-'Ābidīn, Sayyida Zainab district, in al-Mahrousa, Egypt."<sup>725</sup>

## Stage Three

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<sup>720</sup> *Ibid*, 16:172.

<sup>721</sup> See: for example, *al-Jawāhir (al-Baqara)* 1:26-83, (*al-Nisā'*) 3:118-122, (*Yūsuf*) 7:2-11, (*Sabā*) 16:122-126, (*Fāṭir*) 17:20-23, (*Yā Sin*) 17:148-154.

<sup>722</sup> Because of this speed in writing it was very difficult to read his hand-writing. See: *al-Jawāhir*, 25:221.

<sup>723</sup> *Ibid*, 17:185.

<sup>724</sup> *Ibid*, 17:186.

<sup>725</sup> *Ibid*, 25:295.



Ṭaṇṭāwī spoke of this stage by describing the favors granted by God during printing. This was the most important stage in the production as it gave the *al-Jawāhir* exegesis its final form.

Ṭaṇṭāwī recalled that one day while walking along a road he heard a song on the gramophone. His soul was moved towards beauty and wisdom and he spent days and days waiting to attain this until something appeared to him afterwards that he had “never before dreamed of” as he says;

The workers at the print shop had almost begun printing it when I was filled with new ideas and conventions that had never occurred to me before. From them came all the scientific questions, adorned with photographs. The book was doubled in size by what I added to it of these adorned wonders.<sup>726</sup>

Ṭaṇṭāwī still added to what he had written and submitted it to the printers until it was printed on “12<sup>th</sup> Rabi’ al-Awwal, 1352 Hijrī, in twenty-five volumes.”<sup>727</sup> This corresponds with the date of 5<sup>th</sup> July 1933. During this time, Ṭaṇṭāwī remained in Cairo in order to correct what had been printed of the exegesis.<sup>728</sup>

Indeed, this phase doubled and greatly enlarged the size of the exegesis; instead of being eleven volumes in size it became twenty-five<sup>729</sup> and the scientific direction appears more clearly in it than previously.

#### **Stage Four: Writing the Appendix of the Exegesis**

The appendix of the *al-Jawāhir* is found in Part One<sup>730</sup> and was printed with the exegesis as its twenty-seventh part. It consists of 272 pages. After completing

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<sup>726</sup> *Ibid*, 17:186.

<sup>727</sup> *Ibid*, 26:184.

<sup>728</sup> *Al-Jawāhir*, 26:185.

<sup>729</sup> Evidencing the scale of this increase, the exegesis of the chapter of the Opening (*Sūra al-Faḥ*) was 19 pages and the additions to its numbered 110 (see: *ibid*, 22:4-23, 23-133) and the exegesis of the chapter of the Stones (*Sūra al-Hujurāt*) was 12 pages whereas the additions numbered 108. (See: *ibid*, 22:135-147, 147-255). However, there is a notable scarcity of additions in the final parts of the exegesis.

<sup>730</sup> In all printings there is only a volume one and it is strange that Mahmoud ‘Abd al-Haleem mentioned in his book, *al-Ikhwān al-Muslimūn, Ahdāth sanāt al-Tārikh* (The Muslim Brotherhood,

the exegesis Ṭaṇṭāwī performed the duty of Hajj and then the appendix was published in 1935.

Ṭaṇṭāwī had mentioned in the beginning of his exegesis that it would be followed by an appendix which would “go into detail about the parts of the creation, sciences, legal rulings and various doctrines.”<sup>731</sup> When he decided to begin it he came across many obstacles and his illnesses increased. However, God healed him.<sup>732</sup>

In term of nature of the appendix he says, “We will discuss the expanded knowledge which we will see in the Islamic nations. We will begin with *sūra al-Fātiha*, from the first line, “In the name of God. Then we will likewise study verse after verse.”<sup>733</sup> In reality, however, the appendix only contains exegeses of two verses from *sūra al-Fātiha*: the one beginning “In the name of God”<sup>734</sup> and “Praise be to the Lord of all beings”.<sup>735</sup> This was repeated as part of a discussion of the scientific verses in the chapters of *al-Baqara*, *al-Imrān*, *al-Nisā*, *al-Mā’ida*, and *al-An’ām*.<sup>736</sup> The researcher believes that if he had continued in this way, the appendix would have doubled the size of his exegesis.

It could be noted that the appendix is dominated by two matters: natural sciences, particularly astronomy, and memories of the past and days of youth.

These are the long, arduous stages of writing and printing of this weighty exegesis and they required a great deal of effort from Ṭaṇṭāwī, despite his

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Events that Shaped History), 1:184, that Ṭaṇṭāwī had told him that he had printed his exegesis in six attached volumes. In my point of views, the author of the book was mistaken in this number and that Ṭaṇṭāwī had told him that he would print his work in six volumes. Perhaps, the books of Ṭaṇṭāwī were not published apart form on part. All these suppositions are unlikely; the researcher has carried out research and has found no trace of it but it is certain that only one volume was published. The library of *Muṣṭapha al-Bābī al-Halabī* which published the exegesis recalled that it had twenty-six volumes. See: the exegesis of *sūra al-Fātiha* (The Opening), p.4.

<sup>731</sup> *Al-Jawāhir*, 1:1.

<sup>732</sup> *Ibid*, 26:2.

<sup>733</sup> *Al-Jawāhir*, 26:2.

<sup>734</sup> *Ibid*, 26:1-158.

<sup>735</sup> *Ibid*, 26:158-260.

<sup>736</sup> *Ibid*, 26:118-158.

advanced age and many illnesses. He documented his feelings for us after this long endeavor by saying;

I feel that which a military leader does who is surrounded by enemies from all sides and gathers his armies and gives his promise and begins to fight for ten years. He is pained with age but his strength does not waver his resolve is not weakened. Age only advances him. The life of this leader ends in clear victory and triumph over the enemy. This is what I feel now: I feel triumph and happiness, and peace and relaxation, gladness of heart and clear victory.<sup>737</sup>

## Printings

Ṭanṭāwī began printing his exegesis in 1341 Hijrī, which corresponds with 1923 in the Gregorian calendar, when the first volume was published in *Muṣṭapha al-Bābī al-Ḥalabī's* printing press in Cairo.

When it occurred to him to add the additional parts to the exegesis he began a revised edition. The first printing of this was published in the aforementioned press and had twenty-five volumes. This printing took place between 1343 Hijrī, which corresponds with 1925 in the Gregorian calendar, and 1352 Hijrī (1933). During this period some volumes were printed more than once.

Before the press had completed the first printing it began publishing the second which commenced in 1350/1932 and ended in 1357/1939. The previous two printings were proof read by a body of scholars headed by Shaykh Aḥmad Sa'ad `Alī.

The third printing was then published in 1394/1974 and distributed by *al-Maktaba al-Islāmiya*, for its owner Hājj Riyāḍ al-Shaykh in Cairo. This printing was a copy of the second printing and consisted of around 6,870 large pages and 26 parts in 13 volumes.

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<sup>737</sup> *Ibid*, 26:186.

There was another printing of the exegesis which had 25 volumes and was published in Tehran and which Fahd al-Rūmī<sup>738</sup> had depended on in his studies.<sup>739</sup>

### **The Spread of the *al-Jawāhir***

The *al-Jawāhir* exegesis spread widely throughout the Islamic world and Muslims benefited from this exegesis. It was widespread in many Islamic countries, especially those that were colonies and in which the people did not speak Arabic. Only one Islamic country opposed this type of exegeses; the Saudi government prohibited it from being brought into and disseminated in the country as they claimed that it to be far removed from the origins of exegesis, laws and differing from the established exegeses.<sup>740</sup>

An indication of the wide diffusion of the exegesis is the fact that it was translated into other languages, albeit partial rather than full translations. Ṭaṇṭāwī himself had a copy of the Turkish translation.<sup>741</sup> Maulavī `Abd al-Rahman translated it into Hindi and Urdu and it was then published in the Indian newspapers.<sup>742</sup> Likewise Kiyai Hājj Muḥammad Ibrāhīm, secretary of the *Dār al-Salām* University translated the first volume and Sulaimān al-Nadwī<sup>743</sup> wrote an introduction for this translation.<sup>744</sup> Also in India, the exegesis was brought into

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<sup>738</sup> His full name is Fahd bin `Abd al-Rahman bin Sulaimān al-Rūmī. He is an academician and had published a number of works on exegesis such as; *Ittijāhāt al-Tafsīr fī Qarn al-Rābi` Asyar, Manhaj al-Madrasa al-'Aqliya al-hadītha fī al-tafsīr* and *Uṣūl al-Tafsīr wa manāhijuhu*.

<sup>739</sup> Al-Rumi, Fahd. (1998). *Manhaj al-Madrasa al-'Aqliya al-hadītha fī al-tafsīr*, Tehran: Intishāra Ifatab, vol.2, p.864.

<sup>740</sup> Ṭaṇṭāwī wrote a formal letter and sent it to King `Abd al-`Azīz ibn Sa`ūd for asking further details on the reasons of prohibition from being brought *al-Jawāhir* into Saudi `Arabia. In the letter, Ṭaṇṭāwī had mentioned the significant of *al-Jawāhir* in contemporary Muslims world. At the end of the letter, Ṭaṇṭāwī requested to assemble all Saudi's scholars in order to discuss together and solve the problem. See: *al-Jawāhir*, 25:244-246.

<sup>741</sup> *Ibid*, 22:7

<sup>742</sup> Muhammad Hassan al-A'zami, *al-'Allāma al-Shaykh Ṭaṇṭāwī Jawharī* in *Fata al-Nile* newspaper, 12<sup>th</sup> March, 1935, p.5.

<sup>743</sup> Sulaimān al-Nadwī was a professor in the *Dār al-Salām* University, Madras, India.

<sup>744</sup> See: the speech by Kiyai Hājj Muhammad Ibrāhīm in the Muslim Brotherhood newspaper, Year 4, Issue 40, 12<sup>th</sup> January, 1938, p.960. In this speech he asked his permission to complete the translation.

more than one university including Dār al-Salām in Madras.<sup>745</sup> In Iran, the exegesis has been translated into Persian and completed *al-Fatiḥa* and set out to translate the remainder.<sup>746</sup> Indeed, the people of Bosnia and Herzegovina<sup>747</sup> in what is now Yugoslavia were given permission to translate it and it was translated and circulated from Java, Sumatra, Iraq and Marrakesh to Tripoli.<sup>748</sup>

According to Muḥammad Ṣādiq al-Arjūn, the spread of this work as a result of the conditions of the Islamic nations, who find in the *al-Jawāhir* as a consolation for what befell them, a calm for the pains, a rebirth of their hopes and something to return their trust in themselves.<sup>749</sup> Bint al-Shāṭi' believes that the Islamic world was suffering from the shock of disappointment on seeing the amazing material superiority of the western civilization as opposed to the cultural stagnation which prevailed in Islamic world.<sup>750</sup> She adds that the *al-Jawāhir* a comfort and a lessening of the heaviness they felt; it reassured them that, in previous times, Muslim world preceded the West in what it now excels in regarding modern sciences.<sup>751</sup>

In addition, Arjūn added another reason by saying that "there was a dearth of correct exegeses which could give yield and satisfy the reader's desire."<sup>752</sup>

There is no doubt that the intellectual and spiritual void which the Islamic world was experiencing made the masses readily accept the exegesis as an outlet for its pain was found. The *al-Jawāhir* carried with it the spirit of optimism and brought the Muslims herald of change for the better and sent them hope and pride. It raised their spirits and morale as Ṭaṇṭāwī says;

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<sup>745</sup> The speech by Kiyai Hājj Muḥammad Ibrāhīm in the Muslim Brotherhood newspaper, Year 4, Issue 40, 12<sup>th</sup> January, 1938, p.960

<sup>746</sup> See: the speech of Hāshīm Maṣṣūr Taqī Zādeh – Iranian – in *al-Jawāhir*, 25:298.

<sup>747</sup> *Ibid*, 25:244

<sup>748</sup> *Ibid*.

<sup>749</sup> Muḥammad Sadiq al-Arjun. (1999). *al-Qur'ān al-'Azīm: Hidāyatuhu wa I'jāzihī*, p.231.

<sup>750</sup> Bint al-Shati', *al-Qur'ān wa Qadāyā al-Insān*, p.309.

<sup>751</sup> *Ibid*, p.310. Also, see: Malik Bin Nabi, *Intāj al-Mustashriqūn*, pp.28-30.

<sup>752</sup> Muhammad Sadiq al-Arjun, *al-Qur'ān al-'Azīm: Hidāyatuhu wa I'jāzihī*, p.231.

I merely am proud of my nation and take joy in my people. I declare to the people that happiness is coming to them and education and self-improvement will spread among them. Reform has begun and it which reach its goals and be completed. Despite what appears from the vain and evil ones, these people will be torn down and the nation will be returned to health and happiness.<sup>753</sup>

This spirit pertains to the whole book and pours and good tidings and peace into the heart of the reader.

There were perhaps other factors which assisted in peoples' acceptance of the book and its spread among them. In my point of views, the exegesis itself had its own characteristics and features which made people warm to it; it contained a great deal of information and compelling findings which the people needed to read about. It was –for them – a window onto everything which was new and modern. Furthermore, its easy style found favour with the people especially those of the less well-educated classes.

The researcher believes that Ṭaṇṭāwī's preceding academic renown had an influence on the widespread approval of his exegesis as his writings were well received by many people and his name was famous in various Islamic countries. There is no doubt that the appearance of an exegesis of the Qur'ān in his name would have made people eager to read it.

#### **4.4 SECTION THREE: SOURCES OF THE *AL-JAWĀHIR***

In his exegesis, Ṭaṇṭāwī depended on a large collection of books and sources. These included old books and new books, mostly written in Arabic with most of them by foreign writers which Ṭaṇṭāwī translated from when needed. His sources were distinguished by the fact that they included different areas of knowledge and sciences, including religion, philosophy, history, geography, and astronomy.

The sources of the *al-Jawāhir* might be divided into the following five types:

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<sup>753</sup> *Al-Jawāhir*, 1:96.

5.4.1 Books of exegesis.

5.4.2 Books on Qur'ānic Sciences

5.4.3 Various books on science, religious and non-religious.

5.4.4 Books and writings of Ṭantāwī Jawharī.

5.4.5 Newspapers and magazines (periodicals).

#### 4.4.1 Books of Exegesis

Ṭantāwī depended on a number of previous exegeses. According to my studies of the *al-Jawāhir*, the sources Ṭantāwī used and referred to - in the field of exegesis - can be classified as follows:

1. The *Anwār al-Tanzīl* exegesis by al-Bayḍāwī.<sup>754</sup>

In returning to al-Bayḍāwī's exegesis, Ṭantāwī clarifies five subjects in Bayḍāwī's work.<sup>755</sup> An example of this occurs can be found in what he said of the Qur'ānic verse: "He shall speak to men in the cradle and of age and righteous he shall be."<sup>756</sup> Ṭantāwī said; "Bayḍāwī said: It is said that it was raised young; what's mean by '*keherf*' is after was received."<sup>757</sup>

However, Ṭantāwī's dependence on Bayḍāwī went beyond these subjects. He depended on him to a large extent in the demonstration of the meaning of verses, their words, followed his method in dividing the verse into sentences and

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<sup>754</sup> 'Abdullah Bin 'Umar Bin Muhammad al-Bayḍāwī al-Shīrāzī, Abū Sa'īd was a judge and exigent, an ascetic, from A'yān al-Shāfi'īya. He was born in the city of Baiḍā' near Shīrāz and was the judge of Shīrāz for a time. He died in 685 Hijrī. For details, see: Al-Daudī, *Ṭabaqāt al-Mufasssīrīn*, 1:248-249, 'Adil Nuwehdh, *Ma'ājim al-Mufasssīrīn*, Kahala, *Ma'ājim al-Muallifīn*, 6:98, and al-Zarkali, *al-A'lām*, 4:110.

<sup>755</sup> See: Tantawi, *al-Jawāhir*, 2:105 and al-Baydawi, *Anwār al-Tanzīl*, 2:19. Tantawi, *al-Jawāhir*, 3:217, al-Baydawi, *Anwār al-Tanzīl*, 2:176, Tantawi, *al-Jawāhir*, 4:7, al-Baydawi, *Anwār al-Tanzīl*, 2:179, Tantawi, *al-Jawāhir*, 8:14, al-Baydawi, *Anwār al-Tanzīl*, 5:141, Tantawi, *al-Jawāhir*, 12:15, al-Baydawi, *Anwār al-Tanzīl*, 4:78.

<sup>756</sup> Qur'ān, 3:46.

<sup>757</sup> *Al-Jawāhir*, 2:105. See also: Baydawi, *Anwār al-Tanzīl*, 2:19.

paragraphs when analysing and elucidating it. He repeated it word for word - for the most part without mentioning it.

This appeared when comparing the exegesis of *al-Jawāhir* and the texts of al-Bayḍāwī's exegesis. An example from *Sūra Qāf* to confirm and clarify that Ṭanṭāwī had referred to *Anwār al-Tanzīl* of Bayḍāwī and could be found the correlation between them is almost total as Ṭanṭāwī says;

Al-Bayḍāwī: (And we sent down out of heaven water blessed) very beneficial (and we caused to grow gardens) trees and fruit ("and grains of harvest") and grains of corn which is harvested such as wheat and barley and rice and lentils and others ("and tall palm trees") tall or laden with fruit. It is said that palm trees are tall when they are laden with fruit ("with spathes compact") spathes of all that is brought forth from the palm trees and they are compacted one on top of the other so the dates are stacked up and multiplied.<sup>758</sup>

The exegesis also appears from other comparisons that for the most part Ṭanṭāwī omitted some subjects from Bayḍāwī's exegesis. These were: readings, linguistic matters, opinions and divergences of opinions of exegetes.

Sometimes Ṭanṭāwī would, where he saw fit, expand on Bayḍāwī's words. This could be seen in his exegesis of the Qur'ān, 57:22 ("No affliction befalls in the earth"). On his commentary, Ṭanṭāwī says, "Like drought and poverty and the occupation by oppressive foreigners and the seizure of power by immoral Muslims"<sup>759</sup> whereas al-Bayḍāwī only mentioned drought and poverty.<sup>760</sup>

Sometimes Ṭanṭāwī added his own notes and something of a scientific nature to Bayḍāwī's words - via a verbal translation – although Ṭanṭāwī strived to keep his words and scientific matters separate from verbal translation.

## 2. The *Mafātīḥ al-Ghayb* Exegesis by al-Rāzī.

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<sup>758</sup> *Al-Jawāhir*, 23:7.

<sup>759</sup> *Ibid*, 24:99-100.

<sup>760</sup> See: Baydawi, *Anwār al-Tanzīl*, 5:119. For more examples, see: *al-Jawāhir*, 31:251, and Baydawi, *Anwar al-Tanzil*, 4:123.



The researcher noted that Ṭaṇṭāwī repeatedly referred to al-Rāzī's exegesis for clarification in seven matters. He repeated his words on the possibility of meeting spirits in dreams<sup>761</sup> and on the possibility of meeting the spirit after the death of its owner in the body of another man.<sup>762</sup> He also reported his opinion in the Qur'ān, 8:66:

If there are twenty of you patient men, they will overcome two hundred.<sup>763</sup>

Indeed, Ṭaṇṭāwī quoted his legal ruling on the apportioning of shares given in inheritance. This came in his exegesis as the Qur'ān says; "and when the division is attended by kinsmen and orphans and the poor make provision for them out of it."<sup>764</sup> Ṭaṇṭāwī also quoted some of his legal rulings on the obligations for ritual cleanliness.<sup>765</sup>

There are other evidences that Ṭaṇṭāwī repeated many other things from al-Rāzī's exegesis without citing it as many of the jurisprudential matters in the *al-Jawāhir* are grounded on al-Rāzī. For example; Ṭaṇṭāwī quoted seven sayings of the scholars regarding the tanning of the skin of the dead. He then numbered them while reporting who said what. This is the same wording and structure as is to be found in al-Rāzī.<sup>766</sup>

Similarly, there are words in *al-Jawāhir* which elucidate the meaning of the ruler and the arbitrator and they are written as if they are Ṭaṇṭāwī's words when in

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<sup>761</sup> *Al-Jawāhir*, 4:16. This was repeated a number of other times: 16:34, 19:12, 20:118, and 25:31-32. See also: Al-Razi, *Mafātīh al-Ghayb*, 31:31.

<sup>762</sup> *Ibid*, 2:109. This writing had been mentioned twice; see: *ibid*, 2:169, and 3:88. See also: Al-Razi, *Mafātīh al-Ghayb*, 19:13.

<sup>763</sup> See: *al-Jawāhir*, 5:76, al-Razi, *Mafātīh al-Ghayb*, 15:195.

<sup>764</sup> Qur'ān, 4:8. See also: *Al-Jawāhir*, 3:16 and al-Razi, *Mafātīh al-Ghayb*, 9:196-197.

<sup>765</sup> *Al-Jawāhir*, 3:129 and al-Razi, *Mafātīh al-Ghayb*, 11:158.

<sup>766</sup> *Al-Jawāhir*, 1:167 and al-Razi, *Mafātīh al-Ghayb*, 5:17. There are many other examples such as; *Al-Jawāhir*, 1:166 (the dead fish ruling). See also: Al-Razi, *Mafātīh al-Ghayb*, 5:18, *al-Jawāhir*, 1:178 (rulings on *al-I'tikaf*), al-Razi, *Mafātīh al-Ghayb*, 5:124-126, *al-Jawāhir*, 1:209 (period of divorce) and al-Razi, *Mafātīh al-Ghayb*, 6:94.

fact they are those of al-Rāzī in his exegesis.<sup>767</sup> It is worth noting the lack of precision in 'Alī Jumblāṭī's claim that "Ṭanṭāwī was influenced by al-Rāzī's great book of scientific Qur'ānic exegesis in many of his subjects."<sup>768</sup> Based on this statement, it clearly mentioned that Jumblāṭī meant that Ṭanṭāwī was influenced by its scientific endeavour.

### 3. The *Jāmi' al-Bayān* exegesis by al-Ṭabarī.<sup>769</sup>

Based on analytical study of *al-Jawāhir*, researcher found that Ṭanṭāwī quoted *Jāmi' al-Bayān* of al-Ṭabarī on two verses:

First: His exegesis of the Qur'ān, 2:255: "Slumber seize him not neither sleep)". Ṭanṭāwī quoted a story of Ibn 'Abbās in which Moses (PBWH) asked the angel: "Does God sleep?"<sup>770</sup>

Second: His exegesis of the Qur'ān, 6:159: "Those who have made divisions in their religion and became sects you are not of them in anything." wherein Ṭanṭāwī quotes the Prophet's (PBWH) interpretation of this verse.<sup>771</sup>

### 4. The *Lubāb al-Ta'wīl* exegesis by al-Khāzīn<sup>772</sup>

As far as researcher's study is concerned, Ṭanṭāwī quoted *Lubāb al-Ta'wīl* of al-Khāzīn on one verse: the numerous stories about the false Messiah.<sup>773</sup>

<sup>767</sup> See: *al-Jawāhir*, 2:42 and al-Razi, *Mafātīh al-Ghayb*, 7:180.

<sup>768</sup> 'Alī Jumblāṭī, *Fī Zikrā Ṭanṭāwī Jawharī*, p.68.

<sup>769</sup> Muḥammad bin Jarīr bin Yazīd al-Ṭabarī, born in Amal Ṭabaristān in 224 Hijri and settled in Baghdad where he died in 310 Hijri. Al-Ṭabarī was considered as the chief of all exegetes, and he used sciences which no one of his era participated in. He also was a scholar of the Qur'ān, Hadith and history; he has many compilations of writings and books such as; *Jāmi' al-Bayān 'an Ta'wīl al-Qur'ān*, and *Tārīkh al-Umam wa al-Mulūk*. For details, see: al-Suyūṭī, *Ṭabaqāt al-Mufasssīrīn*, 2:110-118, Zarkali, *al-A'lām*, 6:69, Kahala, *Mu'jam al-Muallifīn*, 9:147-148.

<sup>770</sup> *Al-Jawāhir*, 1:235 and al-Tabari, *Jāmi' al-Bayān*, 3:6.

<sup>771</sup> *Al-Jawāhir*, 4:128 and al-Tabari, *Jāmi' al-Bayān*, 8:78.

<sup>772</sup> 'Alī bin Muḥammad bin Ibrahīm al-Shaykhī, the Baghdād Sūfī, known as al-Khāzīn. He stored the books for the *al-Sama'at* in School. He was born in Baghdād in 678 Hijri and died in Aleppo in 741 Hijri. He was a scholar of Qur'ān and Hadith as well as Shāfī'ī school of thought and jurisprudence. For further details, see: Al-Dawudi, *Ṭabaqāt al-Mufasssīrīn*, 1:426-427, 'Adil Nuwehdh, *Mu'jam al-Mufasssīrīn*, 1:379, Zarkali, *al-A'lām*, 5:5, Kahala, *Mu'jam al-Muallifīn*, 7:177-178.

#### 5. The *al-Kashāf* exegesis by Zamakhsharī<sup>774</sup>

According to my analytical studies on *al-Jawāhir*, Ṭanṭāwī quoted *al-Kashāf* of Zamakhsharī on the meaning of sadness and joy which he addressed in his *al-Jawāhir* from Qur'ān, 57:23, he says: "Do not be sad for what you have lost or joyful for what you have gained."<sup>775</sup>

#### 6. General unidentified Quotations

Ṭanṭāwī also mentioned some sayings without identifying the names of their originators or the exegesis from which they were taken. For example, he would say, "Some exegetes said...", "The exegetes, God have mercy on them, said...", "There are two pieces by the exegetes on this subject..." and other generalizations.<sup>776</sup>

### 4.4.2 Books on Qur'ānic Sciences

In term of books on Qur'ānic Sciences, the researcher found that Ṭanṭāwī used the following three books in his *al-Jawāhir*:

#### 1. Proficiency in the Sciences of the Qur'ān (*al-Itqān fī 'Ulūm al-Qur'ān*) by al-Suyūṭī

In *al-Jawāhir*, Ṭanṭāwī had quoted: the replicated and replicating verses<sup>777</sup>, some stories which demonstrate the circumstances of the prophetic sayings about the virtues of the Qur'ān,<sup>778</sup> the words in the Qur'ān which are said not to be

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<sup>773</sup> See: *al-Jawāhir*, 16:211, and al-Khazīn, *Lubāb al-Ta'wīl*, 6:98-100.

<sup>774</sup> Muḥammad bin 'Umar bin Muḥammad, Abū Qāsim al-Zamakhsharī. Born in Zamkhasher (near Khawārizm) in 468 Hijrī and died in 538 in Jarjania. He was a grammarian, linguist, orator and a Mu'tazilite Hanafī sect. He was famous in the field of literature and extremely intelligent. He spent a long time in Mecca. For details of his biography, see: Al-Suyuti, *Ṭabaqāt al-Mufasssīrīn*, p.104-105, al-Dawudi, *Ṭabaqāt al-Mufasssīrīn*, 1:314-316, Zarkali, *al-A'lām*, 7:178, *Mu'jam al-Muallifīn*, 12:186-187.

<sup>775</sup> See: *al-Jawāhir*, 24:100 and see: al-Zamakhshari, *al-Kashāf*, 4:66.

<sup>776</sup> See: for examples, *al-Jawāhir*, 2:133-134, 5:97, 12:118, and 23:219.

<sup>777</sup> *Al-Jawāhir*, 1:109-110 and al-Suyuti, *al-Itqān fī 'Ulūm al-Qur'ān*, 2:155-156.

<sup>778</sup> *Al-Jawāhir*, 6:131 and al-Suyuti, *al-Itqān fī 'Ulūm al-Qur'ān*, 2:155-156.

Arabic<sup>779</sup>, the unfamiliar terms in the Qur'ān and their meanings,<sup>780</sup> the exegesis movement in the time of the Companions and the followers<sup>781</sup> and the conditions for the Qur'ānic exegete.<sup>782</sup>

## 2. *Muqaddima al-Tafsīr* by Rāghib al-Asfahānī<sup>783</sup>

Ṭanṭāwī also quoted *Muqaddima al-Tafsīr* by Rāghib al-Asfahānī regarding the various rulings in the Qur'ān and the proofs and evidences it contains.<sup>784</sup>

## 3. *Jawāhir al-Qur'ān* by al-Ghazzālī

Researcher also found that Ṭanṭāwī quoted *Jawāhir al-Qur'ān* by al-Ghazzālī in his works regarding two subject matters: first: knowledge in *Sūra al-Fātiha*<sup>785</sup> and second: the idea of the Qur'ān containing scientific and ethical verses.<sup>786</sup>

Indeed, Ṭanṭāwī's profit from this book went beyond these two subjects; he absorbed it intellectually and practically without referring to it. The comparison reveals Ṭanṭāwī's source of identifying the verses of science and verses of ethics in every chapter of the Qur'ān; it was the book of al-Ghazzālī.<sup>787</sup>

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<sup>779</sup> *Al-Jawāhir*, 19:131-137 and al-Suyuti, *al-Itqān fī 'Ulūm al-Qur'ān*, 1:137-140.

<sup>780</sup> *Al-Jawāhir*, 20:184-188 and al-Suyuti, *al-Itqān fī 'Ulūm al-Qur'ān*, 1:114-133.

<sup>781</sup> *Al-Jawāhir*, 22:169-170 and al-Suyuti, *al-Itqān fī 'Ulūm al-Qur'ān*, 2:179-180.

<sup>782</sup> *Al-Jawāhir*, 23:23-24, and al-Suyuti, *al-Itqān fī 'Ulūm al-Qur'ān*, 2:180-181.

<sup>783</sup> Hussein bin Muhammad bin al-Mufaḍḍal, Abū al-Qāsim, known as Rāghib al-Asfahānī. He was a scholar and Imam of the rulers and wise men. He also was renowned from exegesis and language. He was originally from Isfahan, Iran but then lived in Baghdād and died in 502H. For details of his biography, see: 'Adil Nuwaihīd, *Mu'jam al-Mufasssīrīn*, 1:158-159, al-Zarkalī, *al-A'lām*, 2:255, Kahala, *Mu'jam al-Muallifīn*, 4:59.

<sup>784</sup> For example, see: *Al-Jawāhir*, 10:151 and Raghīb al-Asfahānī, *Muqaddima al-Tafsīr*. This is printed at the end of the book *Tanzīa al-Qur'ān and al-Muta'ān* by Qādī 'Abd al-Jabbār, pp.413-415.

<sup>785</sup> See: *Al-Jawāhir*, 1:21, and al-Ghazzālī, *Jawāhir al-Qur'ān*, pp.38-43.

<sup>786</sup> See: *Al-Jawāhir*, 5:187 and al-Ghazzālī, *Jawāhir al-Qur'ān*, p.25.

<sup>787</sup> For examples; verses of Science in *Sūra Hūd*, see: *al-Jawāhir*, 6:120 and al-Ghazzālī, *Jawāhir al-Qur'ān*, p.46.

Verses of ethics in *Sūra Hūd*, see: *al-Jawāhir*, 6:121 and al-Ghazzālī, *Jawāhir al-Qur'ān*, p.130.

Verses of science in *Sūra al-Fāṭir*, see: *al-Jawāhir*, 17:23 and al-Ghazzālī, *Jawāhir al-Qur'ān*, p.88

Verses of ethics in *Sūra al-Fāṭir*, see: *al-Jawāhir*, 17:23 and al-Ghazzālī, *Jawāhir al-Qur'ān*, p.151.

Verses of science in *Sūra Yāsīn*, see: *al-Jawāhir*, 17:153 and al-Ghazzālī, *Jawāhir al-Qur'ān*, p.90.

Verses of ethics in *Sūra Yāsīn*, see: *al-Jawāhir*, 17:153 and al-Ghazzālī, *Jawāhir al-Qur'ān*, p.152.

To close the discussion on the sources used by Ṭanṭāwī in his exegesis, researcher refers to the lack of precision in the words of `Abd al-`Azīz Jādo who said that “perhaps” Ṭanṭāwī was influenced by former exegetes such as; Niẓām al-Dīn al-Qāmī al-Nisābūrī who wrote *Gharāib al-Qur`ān wa raghāib al-Furqān* and al-Zarkashī of *al-Burhān fī `Ulūm al-Qur`ān* and Jalāl al-Dīn al-Suyūṭī in his two books; *al-Iklīl fī Istīnbāṭ al-Tanzīl* and *Mustarak al-Aqrān fī I`jāz al-Qur`ān* and Abū Bakr bin `Arabī in his *Ahkām al-Qur`ān*.<sup>788</sup> The above identification of sources shows that Ṭanṭāwī did not reference these books which Jādo mentioned. Researcher has not found anything in *al-Jawāhir* to support this conjecture.

#### 4.4.3 Various Scientific Books, religious and non-religious

There are various scientific books, religious and non-religious materials which have been referred by Ṭanṭāwī in order to complete the *al-Jawāhir* and they are in different subjects as follows:

##### a. The Books of Hadīth

With regards to the books of Hadīth, the researcher found that Ṭanṭāwī referred to the six books (*Sunan Sitta*)<sup>789</sup> and some others including *Mustadrak al-Hākīm*, *Muwattā` Mālik* and *Musnad Aḥmad Ibn Ḥanbal*.<sup>790</sup>

Ṭanṭāwī likewise employed some annotations of books of prophetic traditions such as; *Fath al-Bārī Sharḥ Ṣaḥīḥ al-Bukḥārī* by Ibn Ḥajar<sup>791</sup> and *Sharḥ Muslim* by al-Nawāwī.<sup>792</sup> He also benefited from some of the *al-Jawāmi`* such as; *Riyāḍ al-Ṣāliḥīn* by al-Nawāwī<sup>793</sup> and *Taysīr al-Wūṣūl ila Jamī` al-Ūṣūl* by al-Shaybānī from which he quoted entire chapters.<sup>794</sup>

<sup>788</sup> `Abd al-`Aziz Jado, *Shaykh Ṭanṭāwī Jawharī*, pp.55-56.

<sup>789</sup> *Al-Jawāhir*, 1:223, 224, 4:139, 5:62,65,78,88,100.

<sup>790</sup> *Ibid*, 3:124,146, 4:168, 5:102, 25:83,293.

<sup>791</sup> *Ibid*, 9:196.

<sup>792</sup> *Ibid*, 6:183, 21:227.

<sup>793</sup> *Ibid*, 15:103, 18:104-108.

<sup>794</sup> *Ibid*, 6:124-125, 16:13-15, 18:148-150, and 220-223.

## b. Prophetical Biographies

Indeed, Ṭantāwī cited the previously mentioned books of prophetic traditions in addition to the book of *al-Sīra al-Nabawiya wa al-Athār al-Muḥammadia* by Aḥmad Zainī Dahlān.<sup>795</sup>

## c. Jurisprudential Sources

Ṭantāwī also quoted jurisprudential sources from the four *Fiqh* scholars: Abū Ḥanīfa, Mālik, al-Shāfiʿī, and Aḥmad ibn Ḥanbal.<sup>796</sup> Simultaneously, he cited famous jurists such as; al-Zuhrī, al-Auzāʿī, Abū Dāwūd, Abū Thūr, al-Nakḥaʿī, and Ṭāūs.<sup>797</sup>

Indeed, Ṭantāwī cited some books which specialise in matters of jurisprudence such as; Ibn al-Ḥāim's book on statutes and *al-Ḥisba fī Islām* by Ibn Taymiya and a missive about writing laws on marriage and divorce by Muḥammad Muṣṭapha al-Marāghī.<sup>798</sup>

## d. Sources from doctrine and religions

In the *al-Jawāhir*, the researcher found that Ṭantāwī quoted from Muslim scholars' point of views. For examples; *al-Farq bayna al-Firaq* by al-Baghdādī, *al-Mawāqif* by al-Ijī, *al-Asmā' wa al-Ṣifāt* by al-Baihaqī, *al-Milal wa al-Nihal* by Sharastānī, and *al-Maqṣad al-Asmā'* by al-Ghazzālī.<sup>799</sup>

Ṭantāwī also referred from other religious books and from other faiths such as; the Gospel of Barnabas, the Talmud, the Torah and the Hindu Veda.<sup>800</sup> He also used contemporary books on religions such as; *Pagan Beliefs in the Christian*

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<sup>795</sup> *Ibid*, 26:151-152.

<sup>796</sup> *Ibid*, 1:207, 3:30,127,129, 12:13-14, 24:136, and 146.

<sup>797</sup> *Al-Jawāhir*, 1:167,172, 3:30,31, and 70, 4:256, 5:155.

<sup>798</sup> *Ibid*, 3:20, 7:240, and 9:194.

<sup>799</sup> *Ibid*, 3:220, 6:25,141, 9:182, and 15:113.

<sup>800</sup> *Ibid*, 1:36, 2:36, 4:217, and 6:156.

*faith and God and Myths in Ancient Egypt* by M. Barnett, and *customs and religions of the ancient Egyptians* by John Gardner Wilkinson.<sup>801</sup>

#### e. Sources from Philosophy

In term of sources from philosophy, researcher found that Ṭantāwī quoted from ancient Greek philosophers such as; Plato, Aristotle and Socrates.<sup>802</sup> He also cited Islamic philosophy references such as; *Hi bin Yaqaḏān* by Ibn Ṭufail, *Ārā' Ahl al-Madīna al-Faḏīla* by al-Farabī, *Kīmiyā' al-Sa'āda* by al-Ghazzālī and *al-Ishārāt* by Ibn Sīnā, *al-Aṣfar* by al-Shīrāzī, *Rasāil Ikhwān al-Ṣafā*<sup>803</sup> and other philosophical books.<sup>804</sup>

#### f. Sources from Sufism

At the forefront of these sources is the book *Iḥyā' Ulūm al-Dīn* by al-Ghazzālī which Ṭantāwī as greatly influenced by and from which he cited good words.<sup>805</sup>

Ṭantāwī likewise quoted from other books such as; *Mashāriq al-Anwār*, *al-Munūn al-Kubra*, *Ḍarar al-Ghawwās* and *al-Jawāhir wa al-Ḍarār* which were written by al-Sha'rānī. He also used *al-Ibrīz* by Aḥmad ibn Mubārak, *al-Risāla al-Qushairiya* by al-Qushairī, *al-Futūḥāt al-Makkiya* by Ibn 'Arabī, *'Awārif al-'Awārif* by al-Shahrūdī<sup>806</sup> and other Sufism books.<sup>807</sup>

#### g. Sources from Arabic Language and Literature

Ṭantāwī also quoted sources from Arabic language and literature in the *al-Jawāhir*, such as; Abū 'Ubaida and al-Zujāj<sup>808</sup> and some books on linguistic such as; *al-Qāmūs al-Muḥīṭ* by Fairūz Abādī, *Subḥ al-In'shā* by al-Qalqashandī, *al-'Aqd*

<sup>801</sup> *Ibid*, 3:225, 10:34, and 13:104.

<sup>802</sup> *Ibid*, 7:39,87, 8:193, and 11:168.

<sup>803</sup> *Al-Jawāhir*, 1:255, 3:110, 5:48, 7:50, 9:55, and 26:135.

<sup>804</sup> See: for examples, *ibid*, 1:50, 2:108, 5:206, 6:198, 8:183, and 17:186.

<sup>805</sup> *Ibid*, 1:43, and 66, 3:178, 5:182, 6:130, and 9:45.

<sup>806</sup> *Ibid*, 66:1, 2:116, 6:146, 9:46,50,66,67,70,140, 11:47,124, 19:171, and 26:258.

<sup>807</sup> See: for examples, *ibid*, 1:254,286, and 8:183.

<sup>808</sup> *Ibid*, 2:132, and 23:116.

*al-Farīd* by Ibn 'Abd Rabīḥ and *Tārīkh Adab al-Lugha al-'Arabia* by Georgi Zaidān.<sup>809</sup>

h. Sources from Other Subjects such as History, Geography, Astronomy, Medicine, Natural Sciences, etc.

There are dozens of sources of this type. Owing to their large number, the researcher will briefly mention some sources from each area:

#### Medicine

*Kunūz al-Ṣiḥāḥ* and *al-Qānūn* by Ibn Sīnā, *Qānūn al-Ṣiḥāḥ*, *al-Tadbīrāt al-Ṣiḥḥiya*, *Dustūr al-Ṭib*, *al-Ghazā' fī al-Amrāq*<sup>810</sup> and others.<sup>811</sup>

#### Geography

*Waṣf al-Jazīra al-'Arab* by Ḥamadānī, *Muruḥ al-Zahab* by al-Mas'ūdī, practical and historical geography.<sup>812</sup>

#### History

*Al-Ḥaḍāra al-Qadīma* by Aḥmad Bek Naguīb, *al-Aṭḥār al-Bāqia* by Abū al-Raiḥān, Batnūnī's *Riḥla Andālusia* and *Riḥla Hijāziya*, Sidio's summary of Arab history, al-Ṭabarī's *al-Tārīkh*, *Tārīkh al-'Arab fī al-Andalus* by Ḥassan Effendī Murād, *Fakīha al-Kḥulafā'* and *al-Kḥarīda al-Nafīsa fī Tārīkh al-Kanīsa* and others.<sup>813</sup>

#### Astronomy

*'Ilm al-Ḥai'a* by Sa'ad Mukḥtār Pāshā, *al-Nujūm fī Masālikihā* by Ahmad 'Abd al-Salām al-Karadānī and *'Ilm al-Falak al-Yaum* by al-Maria.<sup>814</sup>

#### Spiritual Studies

<sup>809</sup> *Ibid*, 8:57, 16:108, 18:41-44,89-95, and 193-203.

<sup>810</sup> *Al-Jawāhir*, 11:33,169, 13:64, 15:70, 18:114, and 19:235.

<sup>811</sup> See: for example, *ibid*, 1:197, 10:104, and 13:51.

<sup>812</sup> *Ibid*, 16:149,177, 19:53, and 21:172.

<sup>813</sup> See: for examples, *ibid*, 9:54, 16:186,194, 21:141, and 25:225.

<sup>814</sup> *Ibid*, 9:166, 16:140, and 26:218.



*Either and Reality* by Oliver Lodge, *Bahja al-Arwāḥ fī Munājāt al-Arwāḥ*, and *al-Mazhab al-Rūḥānī*.<sup>815</sup>

#### Psychology, Education and Sociology

*Education* by Spencer, *Rūḥ al-Mujtama'* by Gustave Le Bon, *Muqaddima* by Ibn Kḥaldūn and *Uṣūl 'Ilm al-Nafs* by Qandil Amīn Mursī.<sup>816</sup>

#### Natural Sciences

In natural sciences, Ṭanṭāwī referred *Encyclopaedia of Science* by Robert Brown.<sup>817</sup> This book is at the forefront of the scientific books used by Ṭanṭāwī and it is followed by *The Beauty of Nature* by Lord Avebury<sup>818</sup> and many other books:

*Encyclopedia* by Aḥmad Bey Naguīb, *Kingdom of Shadows* by Maurice Matralnak, *Natural Sciences* by Paul Beart, *'Ajāib al-Khalq fī al-Hayawān* by Georgi Zaidān, *Geology* by Ḥassan Ṣādiq, *al-Ayāt al-Baiyina fī 'Ilm al-Nabātāt* by Aḥmad Effendī Nidā, *The Beauty of Nature* by Lord Avebury, *Birds of India* and all sciences.<sup>819</sup>

In addition to the academic, cultural and scientific books, Ṭanṭāwī's references include *Kḥawāṭir wa Sawāniḥ fī Islām* by Henry de Casteri, *Uṣūl al-Sharāi'* by Bintām, *The Secret of Europe's Progress* by John William, *Kḥawās al-A'dad* by 'Alī Pāshā Mubārak, *al-Taḥqīq al-Jināi'* by Muḥammad Sha'ir Bek, *Ash'a Kḥasa bi Nūr al-Islām* by Missio Ethan, *God and Science* and *Life in America*<sup>820</sup> and others.<sup>821</sup>

#### 4.4.4 Books and Writings by Ṭanṭāwī

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<sup>815</sup> *Ibid*, 9:34,489, and 11:145.

<sup>816</sup> See: *ibid*, 1:34, 2:115, 9:119, and 25:183.

<sup>817</sup> See: for examples, *Al-Jawāhir*, 6:162,168, 7:100, 17:8, and 11:144.

<sup>818</sup> See: for examples, *ibid*, 1:117,150,268, 2:34.

<sup>819</sup> *Ibid*, 6:38,206, 7:124, 8:153, 11:76, 15:46, 19:115, 23:59 and 25:51.

<sup>820</sup> *Ibid*, 1:117,194, 3:98, 6:11, 7:55, 10:109, 16:98, and 19:160.

<sup>821</sup> See: for examples, *ibid*, 5:117,206, 6:136, 10:18,23, 21:232, and 22:148.

The *al-Jawāhir* exegesis was one of the last books written by Ṭanṭāwī and it contains many parts of his previous books. If we were to extract these parts from the pages and put them together we would have an almost complete set of some of his books. Moreover, there are some of his complete letters such as; *Mirror on Philosophy, the Qazānia Letter, the Eye of the Ant Letter,* and the *Wondrous Secret* letter. According to Ṭanṭāwī as he says; "God had inspired me to write these books so they could be a reference for the exegesis now."<sup>822</sup> The researcher also could note that Ṭanṭāwī refers to the fact that the *al-Jawāhir* comprises many of the subjects and articles which he wrote and published in a number of magazines and newspapers.

#### 4.4.5 Magazines and Newspapers (periodicals)

The researcher also found that Ṭanṭāwī used many of the magazines, newspapers and periodicals which were published in his era, either scientific magazine, religious, political, or literary.

Some of the most significant newspapers which he used included *al-Akḥbār, al-Maqṭam,* the French *al-Martin, al-Ahrām, al-Balagh* and *al-Jihād*.<sup>823</sup>

The magazines he referred to include the university magazine of the Indian league, *al-Murshīd, al-Hilāl, al-Siyāsa al-Uṣbū'īya,* the *everything* magazine, *al-Muqtaṭif, Miṣr al-Hadītha, al-Jadīd, al-Dunyā al-Muṣawwira, Women Development, al-Laṭā'if al-Muṣawwira, Kawkib al-Sharq,* the Muslim Youth Magazine, and the Egyptian *Hādī al-Islām*.<sup>824</sup>

These magazines show the large amount and variety of sources used by Ṭanṭāwī and validation for those who describe the *al-Jawāhir* as encyclopedic. They comprise everything and show the extent of the effort exerted by Ṭanṭāwī in his

<sup>822</sup> *Ibid*, 8:149.

<sup>823</sup> *Al-Jawāhir*, 1:257, 3:56, 4:15, 13:97, and 24:96,111.

<sup>824</sup> *Ibid*, 2:199, 5:70, 9:202, 13:94, 17:68,102,109,217, 18:55, 19:139,147, 20:221, 21:90, and 26:118.

study of the sources and how he kept abreast with the magazines and newspapers published the time at and all that was new in modern science and likewise with the English translations.

It is worth referring to the exactitude of Ṭanṭāwī's method in citing his sources here; he adhered a great deal to secure scientific process when quoting and if he took an idea or paragraph another he referred to its originator -although as we have seen sometimes he was silent about some of the sources of his exegesis- the name of the writer, the book and sometimes the section and page and where the book was printed.<sup>825</sup>

#### **4.5 CONCLUSION**

Following this examination of the overall analytical studies of the *al-Jawāhir*, it could be said in summary that Ṭanṭāwī intended his exegesis to be a scientific work, which would provide those who studied it with everything they needed to know for examples; the plant, animals, human beings, earth, including what he believed were the wonders and marvel of creation and phenomena of the wondrous verses. As was stated earlier, this chapter comprises of the reasons of writing the *al-Jawāhir*, purposes and objectives behind it, steps of writing and publication, references which have been used in the *al-Jawāhir*, as well as the influence of scholars and exegetes on the *al-Jawāhir* or vice versa. All the above discussions are essential to examine Ṭanṭāwī's great works which are related to the integration of two branches of knowledge; Qur'ān and science. We might infer, therefore, that the *al-Jawāhir* of Ṭanṭāwī is universally accessible by all doctrines as Ṭanṭāwī mentions that his exegesis is for "Muslims of all doctrines, not just for the *Sunnī* or the *Shī'a* or the *Imāmis* or the *Zaidis*."<sup>826</sup> The *Al-Jawāhir* had distinct Ṭanṭāwī's work advantages, for it provided Ṭanṭāwī with an 'encyclopedia' to develop a distinct methodology to Qur'ānic exegesis. In the

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<sup>825</sup> See: for examples, *Al-Jawāhir*, 11:33,34,76, 17:110, 19:131, and 20:248.

<sup>826</sup> *Ibid*, 6:126. Also see: 15:218.

following chapter, we shall see the general methodology of Ṭanṭāwī in dealing with the scientific exegesis, incorporated into discussions of the *al-Jawāhir* in the eyes of other prominent scholars, assessment on its strength and weaknesses.

## CHAPTER FIVE

# ASSESSMENT OF ṬANṬĀWĪ'S WORK; THE *AL-JAWĀHIR*

### 5.1 INTRODUCTION

Having shown the extent of Ṭanṭāwī's efforts in producing a great work, the *al-Jawāhir* in the previous chapter, this chapter therefore, will carry out an overall assessment of his exegesis, attempting to firstly discover the methodology of Ṭanṭāwī Jawharī in dealing with his scientific exegesis, and show the basic observable tenets of this method. Secondly, the researcher will present in it the main strengths and weaknesses therein. Thirdly, the influence of scholars and exegetes on the *al-Jawāhir* and his influence on later exegetes and writers. In this part, the researcher attempts to answer the question of how significant has the *al-Jawāhir* been to Muslim exegetes as well as other scholars afterwards.

Therefore, this part includes a study of the impact of other scholars and exegetes on the *al-Jawāhir* as no exegete can do without the efforts of those who have gone before him and begin anew. It also shows the extent of *al-Jawāhir's* influence on scholarly exegesis in general and on the exegeses and writings which appeared after him in particular.

By doing so, the researcher will make a further key step towards the verification on the hypothesis of the present thesis. With regards to this chapter, the researcher certainly does not claim that he will conduct a full examination of Ṭanṭāwī's scientific exegesis. The selection of criteria, however, shall fulfill the present chapter.

## 5.2 ṬANṬĀWĪ'S GENERAL METHOD OF SCIENTIFIC EXEGESIS

Ṭanṭāwī devoted his thoughts and effort to revealing the connection between the Qur'ān and science by bringing the two together. The *al-Jawāhir* became a scientific exegesis of the Qur'ān which treated the sciences of east and the west, old and new, of human and creation as Ṭanṭāwī described his exegesis as "a composite mixture of ancient Eastern sciences and contemporary European sciences with Qur'ānic verses."<sup>827</sup>

There are four methods which Ṭanṭāwī resorted to in order to discuss his scientific exegeses which are consisting of:

First: Use of the scientific words of the Qur'ān

In the *al-Jawāhir*, Ṭanṭāwī relied on verses of the Qur'ān and chose words and phrases of a scientific character, Ṭanṭāwī was then spoken at length about the words and the phrases, whether the information he imparted served to help understand the verse or not. For example, when coming across the Qur'ān, 27:18

Till, when we came on the Valley of Ants, an ant said, "Ants enter your dwelling places.

Referring to the verse, Ṭanṭāwī spoke of the different types of ant, their work, their physiology, their features of marvel and other subjects relating to the ant and its life.<sup>828</sup> At the end of his discussion on ant, Ṭanṭāwī says that there is harmony between this verse and scientific wonders and had become "an innate instinct" which could not be repelled or ignored.<sup>829</sup>

Another example as the Qur'ān, 24:45 says;

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<sup>827</sup> *Al-Jawāhir*, 11:181

<sup>828</sup> *Ibid*, 23:37-165.

<sup>829</sup> *Ibid*, p.165.

And God has created every animal from water: of them there are some that creep on their bellies, some that walk on two legs; and some that walk on four.

In the *al-Jawāhir*, Ṭantāwī went into detail about the different types of animals, the places in which they are found, their characteristics and species and other things which are related to zoology.<sup>830</sup> Ṭantāwī also went on to justify his many words on these subjects by saying:

God said 'walk' and does an animal walk on air or ether? No indeed, it walks on the earth and if we draw something walking we draw the earth with it. And if we draw a part of a continent it is not better than any other and if we draw a continent we will be asked, 'Why did you not draw the others? So it is better for us to draw them all.'<sup>831</sup>

Indeed, we can also see other examples in his lengthy treatment of birds<sup>832</sup> on the occasion of the Qur'ān, 67:19

Do they not observe the birds above them, spreading their wings and folding them in? None can uphold them except ((Allah)) Most Gracious: Truly ((Allah)) Most Gracious: Truly it is He that watches over all things.

According to Ṭantāwī, as he says;

Have they not regarded the birds above them spreading their wings and closing them? And in the same way the rest of the animals and insects such as; the elephant and the ant and land animals.<sup>833</sup>

Regarding botany, the researcher finds the Qur'ān, 78: 15-26 says:

That we may produce therewith corn and vegetables, and gardens of luxurious growth? Verily the Day of Sorting out is a thing appointed, The Day that the Trumpet shall be sounded, and ye shall come forth in crowds; and the heavens shall be opened as if there were doors, and the mountains shall vanish, as if they were a mirage. Truly Hell is as a place of ambush, for the transgressors a place of destination: They will dwell therein for ages. Nothing cool shall they taste therein, nor any drink,

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<sup>830</sup> *Al-Jawāhir*, 12:59-75.

<sup>831</sup> *Ibid*, 12:69.

<sup>832</sup> *Ibid*, 24:233-241.

<sup>833</sup> Ṭantāwī had mentioned about animals in the *al-Jawāhir* in different occasions such as; 8:147-155, 16:156-164, and 25:270-271.

save a boiling fluid and a fluid, dark, murky, intensely cold, a fitting recompense (for them).

With regards to the above verses, Ṭanṭāwī discussed in detail on the parts of plants, roots and branches, the anatomy of the stem, the growth of stems, types of leaves and blossoms, unstructured blossom, seeds, the structure of the palm tree, annual plants, broom trees and friendly species. All this was accompanied with diagrams, drawings and pictures.<sup>834</sup>

He also cites several symbols from mathematics and the peculiarities of numbers when interpreting the Qur'ān, 55:5:

The sun and the moon follow courses (exactly) computed

With regard to the verse, Ṭanṭāwī says:

The moon orbits around the earth. Since its size does not appear to change, its distance stays about the same, and hence its orbit must be close to a circle. To keep the moon moving in that circle rather than wandering off the earth must exert a pull on the moon, and Newton named that pulling force gravity... an acre is a symbolic of solar circle. The acre is like  $100 \times 100 = 10000$  *Hindāsa*<sup>835</sup>, its length 100 and its width 100. This is considered as a decimal percentage.<sup>836</sup>

Ṭanṭāwī also presents many topics such as the formation of plants, the types of food for humans, and the marvels of marine creatures and plants.<sup>837</sup> Much of the scientific facts can be found in volume 26 where he speaks of science and only two verses of exegesis. These are just some of the examples<sup>838</sup> which abound in the *al-Jawāhir* and evidence Ṭanṭāwī's passion for science and how he took

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<sup>834</sup> *Al-Jawāhir*, 25:16-27.

<sup>835</sup> The researcher does not find the term of *Hindāsa* even in the Arabic-English dictionaries. It is a very classical Arabic term which means, a unit for measurement and it was used before meter. 1 *Hindāsa* = 92 yards. For details, see: forum makkawī, Available at: <URL>: <http://forum.makkawī.com/archive/index.php/t-61712.html> access date: 3rd January 2013.

<sup>836</sup> *Al-Jawāhir*, 24:28.

<sup>837</sup> *Ibid*, 2:68-73.

<sup>838</sup> There are many other examples of scientific terms in the *al-Jawāhir*. For examples, nitrogen, oxygen, and thermometer in the *al-Jawāhir*, 17:24-26, anthropology, biology, and psychology in the *al-Jawāhir*, 11:129, thunderbolts and how they occur in the *al-Jawāhir*, 7:134-138, different types of illnesses and how they are treated in the *al-Jawāhir*, 13:67-84, different types of spiders, its life, its tissue, and the products it produces in the *al-Jawāhir*, 14:144-145.



advantage of suitable verses to talk about it, even though by doing this he depended on words alone and indirect reference.

## Second: Using Metaphorical Interpretation

In the method of the *al-Jawāhir*, Ṭanṭāwī relies on metaphor when interpreting the Qurʾān and this is established by his opinions on the Unseen and the signs of the hereafter. To illustrate this characteristic, the researcher shall clarify a number of aspects of the metaphorical interpretation of the *al-Jawāhir* supported by representative examples:

### a. The Creation of Adam

Ṭanṭāwī believed that the stages of Adam's creation found in the Qurʾān were in the way of symbolism in order for human minds to comprehend it as humans make shapes with clay and then put them in the fire to become pottery. For example, Ṭanṭāwī says:

What take the place of clay in pottery making are your appetites. This appetite makes you obtain the plant stuff which you eat and fills all your body after you digest it. This appetite shapes your bodies with care and wisdom. What takes the place of the fire which fires the clay is what you have of the force of anger with which you preserve your bodies, cities, forts and land from attack. This force of anger within you corresponds with the fire which fires the pottery so that it becomes strong. This heat earns its survival, even if it breaks. This force of anger likewise makes you defend yourself from the harm of enemies.<sup>839</sup>

He then turns to the verses which say that man is made from clay and eats plants which are nourished from the earth, saying that if clay ate them it would take the shape of a human body and the fields would also be nourished by him.<sup>840</sup>

### b. The Angels Prostration to Adam

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<sup>839</sup> *Al-Jawāhir*, 8:33.

<sup>840</sup> *Ibid*, 8:33.

Ṭanṭāwī interprets the angel's prostration to Prophet Adam (PBWH), as an offering of assistance and serve to humanity.<sup>841</sup>

c. The Dialogue between the Lord of Glory and Satan

On his interpretation of the Qur'ān, 15:32-33:

((God)) said: "O *Iblīs!* What is your reason for not being among those who prostrated themselves?" (*Iblīs*) said: "I am not one to prostrate myself to man, whom Thou didst create from sounding clay, from mud moulded into shape."

According to Ṭanṭāwī this dialogue revealed by the noble verses was not real as he says:

This exchange resembles the words of this spiritual, physical world, the material and the mystical. God revealed it so the Muslims would know how their creation and the forming of their character began. He brought it forth in the form of a conversation between Him and the angels so those who are ignorant can read it and come to worship and the scholars can understand it and contemplate on it.<sup>842</sup>

d. The Transformation of the Jews into Apes

On his interpretation of the Qur'ān, 2:65:

We said to them: "Be ye apes, despised and rejected."

With regard to the verse, Ṭanṭāwī mentions that Jews were turned into apes in their actions; they had human form but the souls of apes.<sup>843</sup> He clarifies his opinion when interpreting the same verse in *sūra al-A'rāf*, stating that the Jews had abandoned the fundamental characteristic which differentiates them from all animals; they had misused and manipulated their intellectual abilities and sank to the level of beasts and become closer to apes than to humans.<sup>844</sup>

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<sup>841</sup> *Al-Jawāhir*, 8:34.

<sup>842</sup> *Ibid*, 8:34-35.

<sup>843</sup> *Ibid*, 1:76.

<sup>844</sup> *Ibid*.

#### e. The Story of the Sons of Adam.

When presenting his exegesis of the verses which reveal the story of Prophet Adam's (PBWH) two sons, Ṭaṇṭāwī claims that the story was not true but in fact a symbol as the metaphor expressed the truth as he says;

What is the crow except a similitude and what is the tale except symbol; the meaning is not literal. Likewise books such as; *Leila wa Dumna* and *al-Wazīr al-Fārisī* writers such as; *Ibn al-Muqaffa'* have folktales which are entertainment in general and science, wisdom, politics and philosophy in particular. Is not the book of God Almighty more important than this? If the books of folk tales make symbols to express wisdom and philosophy then what of the book of God which said it would reveal the whole religion?<sup>845</sup>

Further evidence of his assertion that the story is not factual is his pondering of God's wisdom in choosing the crow in the "illustration".<sup>846</sup>

The researcher brought fifth these examples to show how far Ṭaṇṭāwī relies on metaphor to attract the readers on his method. Ṭaṇṭāwī went as far as viewing some of the Qur'ānic stories as resembling the tales of books of literature.

#### Third: Illustrations in Exegesis

Ṭaṇṭāwī does not, like other exegetes, precede his commentary with illustrations and sets out his scientific exegesis with pictures<sup>847</sup> of different animals and humans, drawings<sup>848</sup>, tables<sup>849</sup>, and geographical maps<sup>850</sup>. As an example, when commenting on the Qur'ān, 55:8: "He set the balance", Ṭaṇṭāwī ushers in diverse

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<sup>845</sup> *Al-Jawāhir*, 3:160.

<sup>846</sup> *Ibid*.

<sup>847</sup> There are many pictures in the *al-Jawāhir*. For examples, see: *Ibid*, 2:31, and 34, 4:74-75, 6:36-39, 9:144-145, and 149-150, 10:115-117, 124 and 155, 11:104, 106, 116-118, 123 and 154, 12:139-242, 13:173-181, 15:36-39, 41, 207-211, 222-223, 17:74-75, 104, 105, 199-201, 211, 234-235, 19:122-126, 154-160, 21:104-113, 23:30, 24:35-38, 39-53, 235-240, 25:70-71, 131-136, 137 26:4-5, and 206-218.

<sup>848</sup> There are many drawings in the *al-Jawāhir*. For examples, see: *Ibid*, 17:53, 57, 59, 60, 61, 64, 73, and 74-84.

<sup>849</sup> There are many tables in the *al-Jawāhir*. For examples, see: *Ibid*, 1:243, 12:239, 14:131, 17:203-205, 18:195-197, 235-237, and 23:137-142.

<sup>850</sup> There are many geographical maps in the *al-Jawāhir*. For examples, see: *Ibid*, 12:61-68, 10:251, 16:181, and 17:173.

scientific subjects complete with pictures and necessary diagrams. These included; precious stones, sea plants and animals, amphibians, the marvels of spiders and ants, the degrees of perception in animals and humans, space rockets and etc.<sup>851</sup>

In the *al-Jawāhir*, Ṭanṭāwī attempts to convince the readers that his exegesis is consists of illustrations to show something scientific and demonstrates that even though photography is prohibited to be put in the Qur'ān but indeed merely a copy of the image like a person seeing himself in the mirror.<sup>852</sup> Ṭanṭāwī also argues that photographs were not drawn by hand and that looking at them was like looking at shade as they are made by capturing shadows.<sup>853</sup>

Ṭanṭāwī proceeds to attract the readers by mentioning that photographing some things was legally obligatory rather than merely permissible as in areas such as medicine it could act to preserve human life. Therefore, Ṭanṭāwī believes that photography did not fall under the prohibition and that photographs were a creation of God, not the work of humans.<sup>854</sup> In his view, there is no objection to using photographs in exegesis because there is a need for photographs to clarify the scientific subjects which the Qur'ān refers to and enjoins on people.<sup>855</sup>

#### Fourth: The agreement between the Qur'ān and Contemporary Science

Ṭanṭāwī focused for a great part on the idea of harmony between the Qur'ān and contemporary science and the belief that the Qur'ān comprises and refers to these matters and that there cannot be a conflict between the two.

It is possible to illustrate Ṭanṭāwī's view of the relationship between the Qur'ān and science with the following points:

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<sup>851</sup> *Al-Jawāhir*, 24:23-59.

<sup>852</sup> *Ibid*, 6:97.

<sup>853</sup> *Ibid*, 6:98.

<sup>854</sup> *Ibid*.

<sup>855</sup> *Ibid*, 6:99.

First: The Qur'ān is the book of God which can be heard and the universe is the creation of God which can be seen and they are both from Him. It is not logical for there to be any conflict between the two<sup>856</sup> as Ṭanṭāwī says:

God Almighty has two books: the book He wrote by His hand and the book he recited to us by revelation. The first we see with our vision and the second we hear. The first book does not contradict the second. Indeed it is necessary in order to understand it and reveal its truth.<sup>857</sup>

Second: Contemporary science serves as an aid to understanding and interpreting the Qur'ān; modern knowledge is "practical exegesis" of the Qur'ān and is able to uncover its secrets and reveal its miracles<sup>858</sup> as Ṭanṭāwī states that "the science of the east and the science of the west both reveal the Qur'ān."<sup>859</sup>

Third: The Qur'ān orders Muslims to study the various sciences. In this regards, Ṭanṭāwī says: "If a verse refers to the sciences then that only means that they must be studied. If astronomy is mentioned then it must be studied; if an animal is mentioned then it must be studied, and so on."<sup>860</sup>

Fourth: The Qur'ān contains all sciences.

Ṭanṭāwī believes that all the sciences are mentioned in the Qur'ān both plainly and by allusion as the Qur'ān, 2:164 says:

Behold! in the creation of the heavens and the earth; in the alternation of the night and the day; in the sailing of the ships through the ocean for the profit of mankind; in the rain which Allah Sends down from the skies, and the life which He gives therewith to an earth that is dead; in the beasts of all kinds that He scatters through the earth; in the change of the winds, and the clouds which they Trail like their slaves between the sky and the earth; (Here) indeed are Signs for a people that are wise.

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<sup>856</sup> *Al-Jawāhir*, 5:14, 12:152.

<sup>857</sup> *Ibid*, 5:14, 12:152.

<sup>858</sup> *Ibid*, 15:100

<sup>859</sup> *Ibid*, 4:90, 103, 8:14.

<sup>860</sup> *Ibid*, 26:27 and 26:29.

According to Ṭanṭāwī, the Qur'ān contains these sciences in definite detail, from medicine to astronomy to steam and air and geography and more. The scientific verses number seven hundred and fifty.<sup>861</sup>

The above demonstrates that Ṭanṭāwī saw complete agreement between science and everything the word signifies all the various specialisms, ancient and modern science and the Qur'ān. In the *al-Jawāhir*, Ṭanṭāwī attempted to show the people the various sciences in the Qur'ān by interpreting the previously mentioned 750 scientific verses. It was his method to pick out the scientific verses of each *sura* and then extract from them the learning science they contain by referring to them directly or indirectly.

In the *al-Jawāhir*, Ṭanṭāwī concentrates on the verses which showed the wonder of God's creations and directed the Muslims towards contemplating His ordered, masterly and interconnected creation whether in the souls of men or on the earth or in the sky. He had attempted to make clear to the Islamic nation what God demanded as a 'partially compulsory (*Fard al-Kifāya*) them to study and inspire them to achieve it.

Ṭanṭāwī also identifies the demanded sciences the same way the verses referred to them. He then offered an idea of these sciences, explaining the subject matter, clarifying some specialist terms and revealing the importance of studying them, their benefits and their influence on life. He then sought to increase interest by offering the reader some examples of where these wonders appear. In this way, Ṭanṭāwī gave the reader a general suggestion of these subjects. He believes that every Muslim must care about this and he generated this desire in the hearts of some Muslims who devoted themselves to studying different types of science, depending on the capacity and inclination.

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<sup>861</sup> *Al-Jawāhir*, 1:3.

### 5.3 CRITIQUES OF THE *AL-JAWĀHIR*

After carrying out the study of the *al-Jawāhir*, this chapter aims to assess the overall work of Ṭanṭāwī and it would be set out as follows:

5.3.1 Strengths of the *al-Jawāhir*

5.3.2 Weaknesses of the *al-Jawāhir*

#### 5.3.1 Strengths of the *al-Jawāhir*

After thorough observation on Ṭanṭāwī's work, there are strengths, merits and advantages of the *al-Jawāhir*. The following are the strengths and merits which researcher has found in the *al-Jawāhir*:

#### **First: The Contribution to Highlighting the Scientific Wonders of the Qur'ān**

Ṭanṭāwī's attempts to reveal the scientific marvels in the Qur'ān swayed between success and failure. However, when he was successful he helped strengthen the idea of the Qur'ānic miracles of science and contributed many examples<sup>862</sup> of this which turned the wheel of progress in this area. Among the good examples he offered was his interpretation of the Qur'ān, 55:20;

Between them is a barrier which they do not transgress.

With regards to the verse, Ṭanṭāwī mentioned that if salt and fresh water come together they cannot mix. When rivers enter the sea the fresh water remains fresh and the salt water remains salty as they are divided and cannot be combined.<sup>863</sup>

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<sup>862</sup> There are many examples of scientific wonders of the Qur'ān such as; Qur'ān, 2:62, 3:190-191, 33:72, 36:39-41, 50:15, 55:34, 75:16-17, and 82:1-2.

<sup>863</sup> *Al-Jawāhir*, 24:18.

As have been mentioned in his method of scientific exegesis, Ṭaṇṭāwī's style of presentation attracted the reader to the works of scientific exegesis as Jādo says;

It is a truly wondrous work in which he conveys art and science and knowledge together and surprises the reader with the variances between them. Indeed, it was a wonderful work the like of which Islamic history has not seen for centuries. Owing to the fact that the method he used in the *al-Jawāhir*, it will not be achieved again except by the greatest scholars of science and the brightest.<sup>864</sup>

Muḥammad Rajab al-Bayyumi agreed the above statement and supported Ṭaṇṭāwī's efforts in producing the *al-Jawāhir* as he says;

The only benefit of the scientific exegesis of *al-Jawāhir* is to compel thousands of readers to learn the scientific facts carried within these twenty-six volumes as well as the wonders of creation, the innovations of nature and the marvels of light, sound and heat. All this is set in a wonderful and clear and insightful framework. In my opinion, if there is nothing in this exegesis which is famous in all the countries of Islam other than this knowledge then it is a great success.<sup>865</sup>

In the *al-Qur'ān wa Fikr al-Jadīd*, Rajā' al-Naqqāsh praised the *al-Jawāhir* by saying;

The most important asset of the *al-Jawāhir* was that it helped the devout develop a passion for science, innovation and knowledge and likewise helped those of material scientific theory to develop deep religious feeling. It is an exegesis which draws out the scientific spirit of religion and which draws out the religious spirit from science. It also ensures in the minds and souls of Muslims a respect and deep appreciation for the scientific spirit.<sup>866</sup>

With regard to the above statement, it could be seen that al-Naqqāsh considered *al-Jawāhir* to be the most impressive Qur'ānic exegesis as he believes that *al-*

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<sup>864</sup> Jado, 'Abdul 'Aziz, *al-Sheikh Ṭaṇṭāwī Jawharī: Dirāsaṭ wa Nuṣuṣ*, p.56.

<sup>865</sup> Al-Bayyumi, Muhammad Rajab. (1960). *Arā' Mu'āsira ḥawla al-Tafsīr al-'Ilmī li al-Qur'ān*, Majalla al-Azhar, year 17, volume 32, p.465.

<sup>866</sup> Naqqash, Raja'. (1972). *al-Qur'ān wa Fikr al-Jadīd*, *Majalla al-Muṣawwar*, series 2508, pp.9-10.



*Jawāhir* shows broad scientific wonders and reflection on the inspiration of the Qur'ān, so than a direct exegesis of its verses and chapters.<sup>867</sup>

## **Second: Educating Readers on Scientific Matters**

There is fact that the encyclopedic work which is the *al-Jawāhir* benefits readers in by teaching them about sciences and many other topics in a way other books cannot as Muḥammad Muḥammad Ḥussein<sup>868</sup> says;

In this marvellous exegesis, Ṭanṭāwī moves from arts to science and knowledge, impressing and educating readers with his familiarity with the disparity among them. He provided pictures, maps and tables to clarify what he presents on the entirety of sciences such as; botany, zoology, astronomy, geology and history and more of these human studies which take exegesis from the traditional understanding of this discipline.<sup>869</sup>

In fact, in the *al-Jawāhir*, the researcher found that Ṭanṭāwī presents contemporary sciences in an exciting and pleasant manner as he says;

In order to encourage of science and learning, I presents contemporary sciences in an exciting and pleasant manner. I tried to choose the marvels of science and creation which would be attractive and interesting to readers and lead them to read more about these subjects.<sup>870</sup>

According to Baron Carra de Vaux, *al-Jawāhir* could be considered to be as a great contemporary achievement of the highest eminence. He praised its mix of ancient and modern elements and its distinctive character which marked it from other works. He therefore, commended Ṭanṭāwī's style of presentation which he

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<sup>867</sup> Naqqash, Raja', *al-Qur'ān wa Fikr al-Jadīd, Majalla al-Muṣawwar*, p.10.

<sup>868</sup> Muḥammad Muḥammad Ḥussein was a Professor of Modern Arabic Literature at the University of Alexandria, Egypt. He had published a numerous articles in journals and conferences as well as academic books on modern Arabic, linguistics, and rhetoric. See: *al-Ittijāhāt al-Waṭaniya fī al-Adab al-Mu'āṣir*, cover page.

<sup>869</sup> *Ibid*, 2:340.

<sup>870</sup> *Al-Jawāhir*, 5:177.

said educated readers on the scientific matters and attracted the readers to the works of exegesis.<sup>871</sup>

Muḥammad Ḥusain aṭ-Ṭabāṭabā'ī<sup>872</sup> also supports the *al-Jawāhir* by reporting that the Qur'ān calls people to study of the natural sciences as he says;

The Qur'ān calls man to a study of the natural sciences, mathematics, philosophy, the arts and all sciences available to man and to study them for the benefit of man on the condition that it leads to truth and verity, that it produces a correct view of the world based on an understanding of God.<sup>873</sup>

Indeed, Ṭanṭāwī evidenced in the *al-Jawāhir*, some of the letters from Muslim scholars praising the exegesis and thanking its author. Among these scholars were Ābū al-Qāsim al-Kashānī (Muftī of Iran), 'Abd al-Ḥussein Zīn al-Dīn al-Qummī (a professor of the Scientific University of Qom), Hāshem Manṣūr Tāqī Zādo, Muḥammed 'Alī al-Azūwī al-Uwridbārī and Murtaḍa al-Ḥusseinī al-Faḍhīly al-Ḥamzānī (scholars from Iran) and Muḥammed Ibrāhīm Shāh Kujein (President of the Chinese delegations in al-Azhar).<sup>874</sup>

Also, Ṭanṭāwī received letters of thanks, gratitude and appreciation from King Ghāzī of Iraq, another from Riḍā Shāh Pahlavī, the Shāh of Iran, and yet another from Nurī Afnasnadiarī, the President of Iran's deputy council.<sup>875</sup>

### **Third: Strengthening of Faith in God**

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<sup>871</sup> Carra de Vaux, *Les Penseurs de l'Islam*, 5:275, 276, and 280.

<sup>872</sup> Muḥammad Ḥusain aṭ-Ṭabāṭabā'ī was a famous scholar, thinker, and the most celebrated contemporary Islamic philosopher. He is well-known for a number of his works of which the most important is his great exegesis; *al-Mizān fī Tafsīr al-Qur'ān* which is rightly counted as the fundamental pillar of scholarly work which aṭ-Ṭabāṭabā'ī has achieved in the Islamic world. Indeed, his exegesis was written in Arabic and has been translated into English and Persian. For details of his biography, see: Aṭ-Ṭabāṭabā'ī, Muḥammad Ḥusayn. (1973). *Al-Mizān: An Exegesis of the Qur'ān*, translated by Sayyid Saeed Akhtar Rizvi, Iran: Tehran, pp.xv-xvi.

<sup>873</sup> Aṭ-Ṭabāṭabā'ī, Muḥammad Ḥusain. (1987). *The Qur'ān in Islam, Its Impact and Influence on the Life of Muslims*, translated by Assadullah, London: Zahra Publication, 1st edition, p.84.

<sup>874</sup> *Al-Jawāhir*, 19:276-277, 25:297-299, 26:269-272.

<sup>875</sup> See a copy of these letters in the file in the Egyptian Library (*Dār al-Kutub*) under reference A7401, pp.1-2.

'Abd al-Mun'im al-Nimr, via his book, *'Ilm al-Tafsir* mentioned that one of the positive aspects of Ṭanṭāwī's exegesis was its statements on the symmetry and order of the universe and how it showed the wondrousness of God's creatures as well as the precision in their making.<sup>876</sup> He adds by saying;

This strengthens the reader's faith in God's power and His wisdom in creation. We can consider his words on these subjects to be evidence of causation and perfection which is discussed by the scholars of the doctrine of proving the presence of God, Glory to Him. By producing the *al-Jawāhir*, Ṭanṭāwī brings a great help in the deepening of faith and every exegete offers his service to the understanding of the Qur'an in his own way.<sup>877</sup>

#### **Fourth: Advice and Guidance for the Islamic Nation**

In the *al-Jawāhir*, Ṭanṭāwī sets out his views on the advice and guidance for reforming the Islamic nation. We can see there are many instructions and direct advice he gave to the Muslims when commenting his *al-Jawāhir*. For example, Ṭanṭāwī says;

The people of your nation are your helpers and your next of kin. They are who raised you and supported you and nursed you in good times and bad. The nation is a body and you are an organ of it. Love your nation. Fight with your life to raise it up because *Jihād* for it is commanded by law of God. Hence, Help the people of your country and sacrifice mind, wealth and soul for them if it is what is needed. You are the ears and eyes of the nation. You are a part of it. Please do not refrain from helping them and be sustenance for your homeland for how grievous would it be for our nation if their own sons overlooked them.<sup>878</sup>

Ṭanṭāwī proceeds to explain that by achieving the higher position as a believer, it would bring triumph in his life, and if they died for their religion it would also bring triumph in their religion, and that scarifying time and spirit was a joy for believers.<sup>879</sup>

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<sup>876</sup> Al-Nimr, 'Abd al-Mun'im, *'Ilm al-Tafsir*, pp.146-147.

<sup>877</sup> *Ibid*, p.147.

<sup>878</sup> *Al-Jawāhir*, 10:228.

<sup>879</sup> *Ibid*, 10:230.

Indeed, Ṭantāwī analyzed the problems of society and then offered practical suggestions for reform and change. It can be noted that the Ṭantāwī's suggestions were modern and wide-ranging which are related to education, health and economics. For example, Ṭantāwī proposed to the Egyptian parliament and the Ministry of Education for the reform of secondary education in Egyptian schools.<sup>880</sup> He also proposed to the Egyptian government on the prohibition of hunting twelve types of birds because of their importance to agriculture and farmers. The government was then agreed and issued a resolution on it.<sup>881</sup>

With regards to the above examples, we may be able to note here that the goal of producing the *al-Jawāhir* was to make people envious of Islam and for Muslims to be guided and benefited by the science of creation which would lead to the renaissance of the Islamic nations as Muḥammad Rashīd Riḍā<sup>882</sup> says:

...By producing this exegesis [*al-Jawāhir*] which tries to attract students of the Qur'ān to science and lovers of science to the guidance of the Qur'ān. It does this by showing that the Qur'ān urges the reader to look into the sciences and does not forbid them as the traditionalists claim.<sup>883</sup>

<sup>880</sup> Tantawi Jawhari, *al-Jawāhir fī Tafsīr al-Qur'ān al-Karīm*, vol.2, pp.31-33. The researcher also finds that Ṭantāwī compiled a comprehensive letters on Education, curriculum and teaching methods in Egypt. See his book entitled; *al-Nizām wa al-Islām*, pp.242-267.

<sup>881</sup> Ṭantāwī Jawharī, *al-Jawāhir fī Tafsīr al-Qur'ān al-Karīm*, vol.3, p.139, and vol.7, p.2.

<sup>882</sup> The Syro-Egyptian Islamic thinker Muḥammad Rashīd Riḍā (1865-1935) combined elements of the conservative revivalist and the rationalist reformer in the course of his intellectual career. He admired both the fundamentalist *Wahhabis* and the heterodox radical Jamāl al-Dīn al-Afghānī. Riḍā was born in a village near Tripoli in Ottoman Syria. His family was rural landholders of some local importance. He studied at the National Islamic School in Tripoli, founded by Shaykh Ḥusayn al-Jisr (1845-1909). He was the most eminent disciple of 'Abduh and closed to him. Indeed, he often attended the exegesis class conducted by 'Abduh in the al-Azhār Mosque. In fact, he even wrote a portion of the exegesis and published them in the *al-Manār* magazine which he gained approval first from his teacher of its contents. After the death of 'Abduh in 1905, Riḍā continued *Tafsīr al-Manār*, from Q. 4:125 to Q. 12:107, indicating those parts in these posthumous portions which were the result of 'Abduh lectures and his own additions. For further biography of Riḍā, see: al-Dhahabī, *al-Tafsīr wa al-Mufasssirūn*, vol.2, p.550. Also see: Kerr, Malcolm H. (1966). *Islamic Reform: The Political and Legal Theories of Muḥammad 'Abdu and Rashīd Riḍā*, Berkeley and Los Angeles: University of California Press. See also: Hourani, Albert. (1970). *Arabic Thought in the Liberal Age, 1798-1939*, London: Oxford University Press, Chapter IX.

<sup>883</sup> Rashīd Riḍā, (n.d), *Tafsīr al-Manār*, Egypt: Maktaba Qāhera, vol.7, p.515.

## Fifth: Deepness

Deepness is one of strength of the *al-Jawāhir*. It could be proved by the Royal Asiatic Society magazine which has been published an article for discussing the *al-Jawāhir* and *Niẓām al-Ālam*. According to the article, Ṭanṭāwī is described as “a wise man of philosophy and a religious scholar.”<sup>884</sup> It later went on to say: “We can only acknowledge that Shaykh Ṭanṭāwī has great insight, deepness and extensive study along with a formidable intellect, wisdom and intelligence.”<sup>885</sup>

Besides that Maḥmūd `Abd al-Ḥaleem described Ṭanṭāwī’s work as deepness and he believes that many scholars from Eastern countries often went to him, as well as those from the West, America, England and France and they learnt certain subjects at his hands.<sup>886</sup> Also, due to deepness in the *al-Jawāhir*, `Abd al-Jalīl Rāḍī respects Ṭanṭāwī and claims that Ṭanṭāwī has a wealth of information as he says;

Ṭanṭāwī was the finest of all those like him in intelligence, purity of the spirit. The deepness led him to be known as an honourable and moral man and a wealth of information –these were his finest qualities. The most prominent characteristics of Ṭanṭāwī were those of rational liberation and not blind fanaticism, openness to understanding other religions and nationalities and extending a helping hand to the unfortunate with gentleness and kind words.<sup>887</sup>

The researcher had particularly noticed the deepness of the *al-Jawāhir* in dealing with the scientific exegesis, which reflects a deep scrutiny of the different types of animals, the places in which they are found, their characteristics and species and other things which are related to zoology. The depth discussion also could be found in the *al-Jawāhir* on the parts of plants, roots and branches, the

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<sup>884</sup> Mashita, Hiroyuki. (2003). *Theology, Ethics and Metaphysics: Royal Asiatic Society Classics of Islam*, Routledge Publishing. Also, see: Jawharī, Ṭanṭāwī. “*Niẓām al-Ālam* (The Order of the World)” in *The Message Magazine*, Year 7<sup>th</sup>, Issue 298. Reprinted: 20<sup>th</sup> March 1989, pp.k–d.

<sup>885</sup> *Ibid*.

<sup>886</sup> `Abd al-Ḥaleem, Maḥmūd. (1983). *The Muslim Brotherhood – Events that made History*, Alexandria: Dār al-Da’wa, 1:184.

<sup>887</sup> `Abd al-Jalīl, Rāḍī. (1999, January). *Al-Shaykh Ṭanṭāwī al-Jawharī fī Zikrāhu al-Thāmina 'ashara* in *Ālam al-Rūḥ* magazine, p.29.

anatomy of the stem, the growth of stems, types of leaves and blossoms, unstructured blossom, seeds, the structure of the palm tree, annual plants, broom trees and friendly species.

What adds to the *al-Jawāhir's* deepness is its insightful analysis. A good illustration, extra clarification, explanation with drawing, examples and figures are essential to ensure that it is valuable for readers.

### **Sixth: The *al-Jawāhir* as an Encyclopaedia**

According to Muḥammad Ḥassan al-A'zamī, Egyptian Muslims called the *al-Jawāhir* as "the great fourteenth century exegesis", comparing it to *Mafātīḥ al-Ghayb* of al-Rāzī.<sup>888</sup> It is known that Rāzī's great encyclopaedic exegesis contained the knowledge of the era and the sciences of that time and more than one person as he said that the encyclopaedia of exegesis in the *al-Jawāhir* is bigger than that of al-Rāzī. In fact, Rāzī's can be described as "having everything in it except exegesis."<sup>889</sup>

In term of nature of his work, Ṭanṭāwī says;

I achieved more than what I was aiming for; I demonstrated the beauty of these sciences of astronomy and plants and animals and minerals and their minute wondrous calculations in the interpretation of the Qur'ān. I used pictures and shape to show and clarify. I did not leave a single fruit or progenitor or star or tree or planet or moon or sun or plate of earth without illustrating it and I explained it by a full and faithful interpretation of the Qur'ān. I did not leave wind nor water nor magnetism nor electricity nor metallic nor non-metallic minerals without adequately explaining them. The same is true even of the leaves of trees, their thorns, the relation between them, their

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<sup>888</sup> Muḥammad Ḥassan al-A'zamī, *al-'Allāma al-Shaykh Ṭanṭāwī Jawharī* in *Fata al-Nile* newspaper, 12<sup>th</sup> March, 1939, p.5.

<sup>889</sup> Rashīd Riḍā agreed with the above statement and according to him, *Mafātīḥ al-Ghayb* of al-Rāzī is considered as wrong methodology with some extent and the existence of the *al-Jawāhir* is acceptable as a part of knowledge in modern era due to its huge discussions on earth, sky, astronomy, plants and animals. See: Rashid Rida, *al-Manār*, 1:7. Also see: *al-Manār* magazine, vol.29, chapter 2, p.146.

calculation, structure, the tubes of their capillaries, the angles between them, the branches and the angles between the veins."<sup>890</sup>

He adds by saying;

This exegesis is an outline of the sciences and their beauty, wonder and wisdom. You will not see them all in a book. It is an outline of the sciences of this earth and its riches because in it is every art, every science and wisdom.<sup>891</sup> He also said: Even one who has not studied of the sciences of creation, nature or astronomy can read a summary of them in this exegesis.<sup>892</sup>

With regards to the statements, everyone who studies the *al-Jawāhir* finds themselves is moving between all types of science and arts, old and new. Without meaning to, they find in it a history of the events and news which occurred in Ṭanṭāwī's time is they social, political or economic as Jomier eloquently says;

If a catastrophe afflicted the world and after thousands of years the scholars found no trace of it except in Ṭanṭāwī's exegesis, they would have a useful reference to show them the existence of a complex civilization at the beginning of the twentieth century.<sup>893</sup>

Ṭanṭāwī had wanted his exegesis to be encyclopedic as this method fully agrees with and serves the goals of writing the exegesis, in particular the goal of educating the Muslims and providing them with a sufficient amount of basic information. In addition to this, the nature of the *al-Jawāhir* is that of a scientific exegesis of the Qur'ān which demands a direct connection with the sciences of the age and modern theories as well as discoveries.

This was confirmed by Ṭanṭāwī's scientific bent, extensive education and renewed study of the sciences of his age and the differences between these and the many branches. The researcher believes that Ṭanṭāwī's free time and his mastery of the English language helped him study this widely with ease.

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<sup>890</sup> *Al-Jawāhir*, 26:186.

<sup>891</sup> *Ibid*, 19:102. See also: 6:186, and 9:25.

<sup>892</sup> Tantawi, *Tafsīr al-Fātiha* -the introduction- p.3.

<sup>893</sup> J. Jomier also describes that the reader feels as though he is front of a strong, violent river uprooting everything in its path and sweeping along with it. See: J. Jomier, MIDEO, 5:135-136.

Contemplating the sources of the exegesis throws light on its encyclopaedic nature.

Following this examination of the overall strength of the *al-Jawāhir*, it could be said in summary that the information cited by Ṭanṭāwī has benefits and there is still a need for it. Despite the fact that there are some merits and strengths to Ṭanṭāwī's work, this does not mean that there are no weaknesses and disadvantages of the *al-Jawāhir* which we are compelled to mention in the next section.

### **5.3.2 Weaknesses of the *al-Jawāhir***

After accessing the *al-Jawāhir*, the researcher found all the previously mentioned methods suffer from some serious weaknesses and criticisms have been made in order to encourage and enhance the quality of writing the *al-Jawāhir*. In this part the researcher will be discussing some main ideas which Ṭanṭāwī relied on while writing his exegesis. They were pivotal to his interest and thoughts; in fact, they make up the spirit which permeates his book.

#### **First: The Link between Science and the Qur'ān**

It is perhaps useful to state that according to Sayyid Quṭb<sup>894</sup> the Qur'ān is a book which urges and calls for the study of science for the sake of building society and ensuring succession on the earth. It is not, however, a scientific book although it contains some references to science as he says;

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<sup>894</sup> Al-Shahīd Sayyid Quṭb was born in 1906 in Egypt. In 1929, he enrolled in *Dār 'Ulūm* and obtained a bachelor degree in education in 1933. He was appointed as a lecturer in the same university and later a principal to the schools in Egypt. He later furthered his studies in the United States. Upon his arrival back to Egypt, he joined the *Ikhwān al-Muslimīn Movement* that was banned in Egypt. In August of 1996, together with his two friends were sentenced to death. He underwent the sentence on a Monday morning 29<sup>th</sup> August 1966. Quṭb managed to write more than twenty two books during his life time. Among the books were *Fī Zilāl al-Qur'ān*, *al-'Adāla al-Ijtimā'iya fī al-Islām*, *Mashāhid al-Qiyāma fī al-Qur'ān*, *al-Taṣwīr al-Fanni fī al-Qur'ān* and many more. For further details, see: Sayyid Quṭb. (1983). *Miracle of al-Qur'ān*, Malaysia: Dewan Bahasa Fajar, pp.5-10.



Qur'ān also teaches how to build a society that is able to spur power accordingly. With all these factors existed, it allows for more trial and error, and researches to find the answers based on the Qur'ān. However, Muslims could not depend entirely on mere assumptions on certain verses occasionally mentioned in the Qur'ān such as the knowledge on the universe before thorough experiments and studies done on them.<sup>895</sup>

Muslims believe that whenever they scrutinise the Qur'ān, they find within it verses which call the believers to think and process and to search for, explore and obtain knowledge. It is sufficient to say that Muslims believe the first Qur'ānic verse began with "Recite in the name of your Lord who created"<sup>896</sup>. This is emblematic of reading, studying and learning.

In Quṭb's point of views, the revelations of the laws of nature are left to the human intellect which God bestowed for the purpose of observing, experimentation and understanding.<sup>897</sup> However, in his criticism towards the *al-Jawāhir*, Quṭb objects to believe that the Qur'ān was revealed to explain the laws of science and the structure of the universe.<sup>898</sup> He argues that it is not the mission of the Qur'ān and thinking in this way restricts the human mind as he says:

The material the Qur'ān works with its mankind itself, its thinking, beliefs, emotions, understandings, behaviour, actions, attachments and relationships. Mankind is its successor on earth. The Qur'ān corrects humanity's instinct so it is not perverted or corrupted and also corrects the system in which they live to allow them to use the vitality bestowed on them. It provides a general conception of the nature of the universe and links this with its creator, the symmetry of its formation and the nature of the relationship between its different parts. It then allows mankind to recognise all its different components. It does not, however, provide him with the details as to know all these facets are part of man's own work.<sup>899</sup>

However, all this does not mean that we deny the presence of some references to science in the Qur'ān. These have been used by some scholars in establishing

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<sup>895</sup> Quṭb, Sayyid. (1994). *Fī Zīlāl al-Qur'ān*, Cairo: Dār al-Shurūq, vol. 3, p.199.

<sup>896</sup> Qur'ān, 96:1.

<sup>897</sup> Quṭb, *Fī Zīlāl al-Qur'ān*, p.201.

<sup>898</sup> *Ibid*, pp.204-205.

<sup>899</sup> Quṭb, *Fī Zīlāl al-Qur'ān*, pp.205-206.

the idea of the Qur'ānic scientific marvel. As long as we speak of "some" scientific references we must be very hesitant in accepting the idea that the Qur'ān contains "all" the sciences.

The *al-Jawāhir* also has been criticized by a number of scholars. Al-Tūnisī<sup>900</sup>, for example, criticised and rejected the *al-Jawāhir* and accused its author of lying, heresy and calls for his punishment. For example, Ṭanṭāwī says:

The sciences of mathematics, weather and winds, agriculture, biology, seas and shipping are no good without the study of astronomy, environment, the calendar, the telegraph, magnetism, geography and the history of nations. These sciences, which this verse (*sūra al-Fāṭir*) many times obliges us pursue have been abandoned by the Muslims and taken up by others. There will be a chastisement for them in this world and the hereafter for those who rejected and did not listen to the words of the counsellors and all are blameworthy until there is order in the Muslim lands!<sup>901</sup>

Based on the above statement, al-Tūnisī criticized the *al-Jawāhir* by saying:

Ṭanṭāwī says of mathematics; "These sciences are obligatory" but Muslim did not say this nor did any of the forefathers. It was only said that there was well-known benefit in mathematics and the benefits of astronomy rests at determining the Qibla. His words refer to this *sūra* in an outright lie as this *sūra* does not refer to anything that he mentioned. He said that the Muslims have abandoned it which is a lie; in fact the Muslims have achieved the knowledge required by mathematics and astronomy. He stated that there will be chastisement for them all in this world and the hereafter, etc., which is a great audacity. The professor [Ṭanṭāwī Jawharī] is an enemy for the Muslims and they are not deserving of this. They are not guilty of the audacity of which he speaks.<sup>902</sup>

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<sup>900</sup> Muḥammad bin Yūsuf al-Tūnisī was born in the city of el-Kef (Tunisia), and deported to the East and settled in Damascus that he died on the 21st October 1960. He was Tunisian Maliki jurist raised to Ḥassan tribe. He has published a numerous work on jurisprudence, and the large number of his works was aggrieved to open the door of *ijtihād*, and critics of the views of Jamāl al-Dīn Afghānī and Muḥammad 'Abduh. For further details, see: al-Maktaba al-Syāmīla. Available at: <URL: <http://shamela.ws/index.php/author/2382>, access date: 20<sup>th</sup> September 2012.

<sup>901</sup> *Al-Jawāhir*, 20:129.

<sup>902</sup> Al-Tunisi, Muhammad ibn Yusuf, *al-Masā'il al-Kāfiya fi Bayān wujūb Ṣidq Khayr Rabb al-Bariya*, pp.243-244.

In a similar way, but without taking it as a judgment on Ṭaṇṭāwī's ethical attitude, Fahd al-Rūmī states in his appraisal of the *al-Jawāhir*,

There is no doubt that this exegesis [*al-Jawāhir*] and the like if are among the most dangerous interpretations of the Qur'ān. It takes the established facts and replaces them with meaning that can only barely be substantiated by scientific discoveries which swing between stability and collapse. No one near or far can tolerate what he has written on these verses in his exegesis. He has gone beyond the pale of safety and security.<sup>903</sup>

Fahd al-Rūmī asserts further that Ṭaṇṭāwī confused the idea that the Qur'ān calling for the study of science with the idea that it is a scientific book. It was this which led him to apply scientific theory from different studies into the contents of some verses, based merely on doubtful words which could not be proven.<sup>904</sup>

Another scholar who criticises the *al-Jawāhir* is Muḥammad 'Izzat Darwaza<sup>905</sup>. In his argument, via his book; *al-Qur'ān al-Majīd*, Darwaza questions the *al-Jawāhir* which consists of scientific findings including galaxy, rain, stages in the life of a particular creature, the expansion and division of the heaven and earth, atom, and electricity. The main argument of Darwaza is that he attempts to prove to all that the basic theories were already included in the Qur'ān. Hence, according to him, the methodology of interpreting the Qur'ān by using scientific approach is

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<sup>903</sup> Fahd al-Rumi, *Manhaj al-Madrasa al-'Aqliya al-Ḥadītha fī Tafsīr*, 2:735.

<sup>904</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>905</sup> Muḥammad 'Izzat Darwaza was born in Palestine in 1888 and became a Palestinian politician, historian, and educator from Nablus. Darwaza was then the founder of nationalist *Istiqlāl* party in Palestine and was a primary organizer of anti-British demonstrations. In 1937, Darwaza was exiled to Damascus as a result of his activities and while in prison, he began to study the Qur'ān and its interpretations. In 1945, he was authored the *al-Tafsīr al-Ḥadīth* which containing twelve chapters and verses arranged chronologically. Darwaza has produced a number of other writings such as; *'Aṣr al-Nabī wa Siyār al-Nabī min al-Qur'ān*, *al-Dustūr al-Qur'ānī fī Shu'ūn al-Hayāt* and *al-Qur'ān al-Majīd* that became the opening chapter in the exegesis, *Ṣirāṭ al-Rasūl*, and *al-Mar'ā fī al-Qur'ān wa al-Sunna*. For details of Darwaza's biography, see: Ahmad 'Umar Abū Hajar, *al-Tafsīr al-'Ilmī li al-Qur'ān fī al-Mīzān*, p.310.

considered as unreasonable.<sup>906</sup> There is an example as shown in his first work, *al-Tafsīr al-Hadīth*, Darwaza shortly interpreted the Qur'ān, 36: 37-39:

And a Sign for them is the Night: We withdraw there from the Day, and behold they are plunged in darkness; and the Sun runs his course for a period determined for Him: that is the decree of (Him), the Exalted in Might, the All-knowing and the Moon, We have measured for her mansions (to traverse) till she returns like the old (and withered) lower part of a date stalk.

According to him, the *al-Jawāhir* tends to make a connection on the movements of nature or materializing its academic theories especially in explaining the changes of the night and day.<sup>907</sup> Indeed, Darwaza claims that the *al-Jawāhir* brought forward different views that were extreme from its original truth and the main concern of the style of language became an evidence for mankind to draw their attentions toward the power of God as mentioned by other similar verses.<sup>908</sup>

However, Ṭanṭāwī had tried to convince the reader by arguing; "is it forbidden to Muslims to link between Qur'ān and modern sciences? Or is it, in fact, compulsory for them?"<sup>909</sup> In responding to the criticisms, Ṭanṭāwī says; "only the one who has studied all the sciences knows true wisdom."<sup>910</sup> In *al-Tāj al-Muraṣṣa'*, Ṭanṭāwī says that study between Qur'ān and modern sciences and relate both of them was compulsory for Muslims and that Islam commanded it even more strongly than it commanded prayer and other acts of worship.<sup>911</sup> He adds, "It does not matter to exceed the limits of the meanings of the verses as long as it's related to the verse."<sup>912</sup>

## **Second: Distracting the reader from the Divine Guidance**

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<sup>906</sup> Muhammad 'Izzat Darwaza, (n.d.), *al-Qur'ān al-Majīd*, Beirut: Maktaba al-'Aṣriya, pp.248-249.

<sup>907</sup> M. 'Izzat Darwaza, *al-Tafsīr al-Hadīth*, vol.5, p.79.

<sup>908</sup> *Ibid*, 5:167.

<sup>909</sup> Tantawi, *Nahḍa al-Umma wa Hiātihi*, p.17

<sup>910</sup> *Al-Jawāhir*, 11:198

<sup>911</sup> Tantawi, *al-Tāj al-Muraṣṣa'*, p.37.

<sup>912</sup> Tantawi, *al-Tāj al-Muraṣṣa'*, p.37.

Many writers have challenged Ṭanṭāwī's work on the grounds that the *al-Jawāhir* is extremely distracting the reader and prevents him from benefiting the Qur'ān's guidance, beauty and ways of educating and advancing the spirit as Muṣṭapha al-Hadeedī says in his criticism on the *al-Jawāhir*;

The Noble Qur'ān was revealed to be guidance not an encyclopedia of every science which he thinks he can refer to rather than learning in it detail. The verses should be taken in their literal sense or that of the example of the Prophet (PBWH). This should be in an easy straight forward manner so they are simple to understand and to explain to someone who is ignorant of them or does not believe so he can be guided, not splintered into this artfulness which knows no end or beginning. It would be possible to write a book about this subject independent of exegeses and there would be no objection to including in it Qur'ānic references if they were clear and unambiguous.<sup>913</sup>

According to 'Adnān Zarzoūr<sup>914</sup>, via his criticism on the *al-Jawāhir* has criticised the *al-Jawāhir* for its reliance on unproven scientific theory and the great quantity of science within it to the extent that it read like a book on the history of science or biology. He mentioned the work in his piece on exegetes who were not guided to the divine goal of the Qur'ān, as he says, "Ṭanṭāwī's book is a book of exegesis which contains anything but it is possible that this exegesis is the first erroneous attempt to put together previous works".<sup>915</sup>

Rashīd Riḍā in the opening chapter of the *al-Manār*, argues the scientific exegesis [*al-Jawāhir*] by saying:

The bad luck that had fallen on the Muslims is that most of the written exegesis was misleading the readers from its actual guidance. Some exegetes bore the reader with the grammatical methods, the meaning that is considered as unacceptable and the science of style (*'Ilm al-bayān*) is considered as unreasonable. Another half distracted the readers' attention by arguing on the different views among the theologians. This included the methods by the juristic scholars, hermeneutics by the scholars of inwardness of Islam (*taṣawwuf*) and a group of other sects (*mazhab*). In fact, some scholars even included

<sup>913</sup> Al-Hadeedi, Mustafa, *Ittijāh al-Tafsīr fī 'Aṣr al-Hadīth*, pp.72-73.

<sup>914</sup> 'Adnān Zarzoūr is a Syrian expert of Islamic Studies and history. He has published a number of books and one of them is *'Ulūm al-Qur'ān*.

<sup>915</sup> Adnan Zarzour, *'Ulūm al-Qur'ān*, pp.422-423.

their own exegesis together with the transmitters of Judeo-Christian materials (*Isrā'iliyyāt*) which added the knowledge of mathematics, chemistry and the Greek astronomy that existed during his time.<sup>916</sup>

According to 'Abd al-Mun'am al-Nimr, by using technique of scientific exegesis would distract the reader and hinder him from understanding the verses and the objective of the Qur'ān as a gift to the people in order for them to redeem their lives. It also fragments the Qur'ānic text and gives the illusion of a lack of unity and connection between the different sections; there is no doubt that end goal is not the words alone but the meaning of the text as a whole.

The *al-Jawāhir* also had been criticized by Muhammad 'Izzat Darwaza via his work; *al-Tafsīr al-Hadīth*. In his criticism, Darwaza sets out the main reason for the falsity of the *al-Jawāhir* was when the actual essence of the Qur'ān that was meant as guidance and support for the Messenger became a scope for debates, researches and related to academic theories that are constantly changing and expanding from time to time.<sup>917</sup>

In his argument, Darwaza denied Ṭanṭāwī's opinions which believed that the Qur'ān contained academic symbols and certain forms of arts not known by Prophet Muhammad (PBWH) and all Muslims at that time. He strongly agreed that the main objectives of the Qur'ān that was sent down in stages as guidance exposing the scope of research and criticism from a different angle.<sup>918</sup> Darwaza also criticises these acts by saying that the *al-Jawāhir* is labeled as unbeneficial and could do without.<sup>919</sup>

Muḥammad Ḥussain al-Dhahabī is another scholar who against the scientific exegesis and criticises the *al-Jawāhir* by mentioning that the purpose of Qur'ān was sent down to mankind in order to serve and lead humanity out of darkness and into light [guidance] as he says:

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<sup>916</sup> Rashīd Riḍā, (n.d), *Tafsīr al-Manār*, Egypt: Maktaba Qāhera, vol.1, p.7.

<sup>917</sup> M. 'Izzat Darwaza, *al-Qur'ān al-Majīd*, p.249.

<sup>918</sup> *Ibid*, 2:44.

<sup>919</sup> M. 'Izzat Darwaza, *al-Qur'ān al-Majīd*, 2:222.

The Qur'ān was sent down to serve not as a compendium of medicine, astronomy, geometry, chemistry, or necromancy, but as a book of guidance that would lead humanity out of darkness and into light.<sup>920</sup>

Dhahabī dwells at length on the point that the scientific exegesis [*al-Jawāhir*] will distract the reader from benefiting the divine guidance as he says;

If let say we share the same opinions with them who believed that the Qur'ān is complete in every way possible as a source of scientific knowledge will result to distract the Muslims' from the divine guidance. This is because the scientific methods derived from its theories are constantly changing which may test the faiths of the Muslims since the contents of the Qur'ān will also change accordingly from time to time.<sup>921</sup>

Because of Ṭanṭāwī's preoccupation with the subject, the Muslims might believe that all who read the *al-Jawāhir*, will at first glance imagine that the Qur'ān is a scientific book and that science is its greater objective.

### **Third: Religious Reform and Scientific Reform**

Ṭanṭāwī stood before a complex matter: what is the shortest and most correct way to reform Islamic societies? His effort brought him to believe that the best path was a combination of two ways as Ṭanṭāwī says:

Religious reform is a closer way to advance the Islamic Nation than political reform. If a sleeping country saw that it had a religion which could lead to science and its people understood that their religion required them to accept the best parts of science then they would be raised up to the height of productivity. I believe that this is the most worthy way towards the advancement of all Muslims.<sup>922</sup>

With regard to the above, an element of Ṭanṭāwī's ideas wished for scientific reform achieved via the support and direction of religion. He considered this type of transformation to be the optimal way of productivity and advancement. However, Ṭanṭāwī did not mention religious reform except to say that the religion demanded the study of science.

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<sup>920</sup> Al-Dhahabī, *Al-Ittijāhāt al-Munharifa fī Tafsīr al-Qur'ān al-Karīm*, pp.86-87.

<sup>921</sup> Al-Dhahabī, *al-Tafsīr wa al-Mufasssīrūn*, 2:295.

<sup>922</sup> Tantawi Jawhari, *al-Qur'ān wa al-'Ulūm al-'Aṣriya*, p.69.

For examples, Ṭanṭāwī's words reveal his obvious focus on science when he wrote "Muslims and God have nothing but the fortified bastion of science and knowledge".<sup>923</sup> Indeed, in his view religion was dependent on science: "The nations have not life and religion will not survive except by the study of all; the sciences and the dissemination of reading and writing among the nations of Islam".<sup>924</sup>

According to Regis Blache're<sup>925</sup>, religious reform is of more primary concern than scientific reform because if faith is reconciled to people's lives then all aspects of their lives will be repaired, scientifically and otherwise.<sup>926</sup> In his major argument towards the *al-Jawāhir*, Blache're argues on the basis that history has long shown people that science has not rebounded in the lands of Muslims until they embrace their religion and doctrine and cease. It has also shown that they will not dispute and their nation and civilisation will not be lost unless they leave their religion, which is the case today.<sup>927</sup>

Blache're also shows that if Ṭanṭāwī had lived into our present time, he could have realised that science alone does not reform societies.<sup>928</sup> He adds that science has come into our countries, we have gained scientific credentials and illiteracy has decreased but the situation gets worse and worse, the people are straying even further from their faith and the nation is still misguided and trailing behind.<sup>929</sup>

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<sup>923</sup> *Al-Jawāhir*, 26:169.

<sup>924</sup> *Ibid*, 5:174.

<sup>925</sup> Regis Blache're was born in 1900 at Moun Rouj, near Paris. He graduated from faculty of Literatures, University of Algeria and specialised in Arabic language. He was then worked as a head teacher at the Institute of Postgraduate studies, Rabat, Morocco. He has been awarded PhD degree in 1936 and appointed as a lecturer at Sorbonne University, Paris. He passed away in 1973. For details, see: Blache're, Regis, *Introduction Au Coran*, back cover page.

<sup>926</sup> *Ibid*, p.225.

<sup>927</sup> *Ibid*, p.226.

<sup>928</sup> Blache're, *Introduction Au Coran*, p.315.

<sup>929</sup> *Ibid*, p.316.



Ṭanṭāwī's thoughts were reflected in his exegesis where he wanted to support learning with religion and the Qur'ān and to direct people towards the study and obtaining of science via the Qur'ānic Verses.

#### **Fourth: Dependence on Worrying and Changeable Scientific Theories and Hypotheses**

Abū Ḥayyān al-Andalusī<sup>930</sup> believes that the words and truths of the Qur'ān are categorically stable and proven.<sup>931</sup> He demonstrates that Muslims do not change the Qur'ān and it will not be changed by any human thoughts or words. Therefore, according to al-Andalusī, any conclusions reached by mankind are inconsequential and open to alteration and indeed denunciation.<sup>932</sup>

However, Muḥammad Muttawālī al-Sha'rāwī<sup>933</sup> reports that the Qur'ān can prove or disprove the findings of science, but it is safer and wiser to refrain from correlating any scientific theory with the facts recorded in it until it has been proved and verified beyond any doubt.<sup>934</sup> He further asserts that it is grievously wrong to hastily attribute something to God, only to discover, later, that it is untrue. Therefore, according to al-Sha'rāwī, all scientific hypotheses, which

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<sup>930</sup> Abū Ḥayyān al-Andalusī was also known as Muḥammad ibn Yūsuf ibn 'Alī ibn Yūsuf. He was born in Granada, Spain in the year 654H. Muslims unanimously believed that he was considered as a prominent scholar and he has published a number of various field of studies such as; grammar (*naḥw*), exegesis, *Hadīth*, recitation of the Qur'ān (*Qiraāṭ*) and Ethics. Amongst the books are; *al-Baḥr al-Muḥīṭ fī Tafsīr al-Qur'ān al-Karīm*, and *al-Nāfi' fī Qiraāṭi al-Nāfi'*. He passed away in 754H in Egypt. For further biography, see: al-Mashnī, Muṣṭapha Ibrāhīm, *Madrasa Tafsīr fī Andalus*, p.104.

<sup>931</sup> Abū Ḥayyān, Muhammad ibn. Yūsuf, *al-Baḥr al-Muḥīṭ*, Riyadh: *Maktaba wa Maktabi al-Naṣr al-Ḥadītha*, vol.1, p.342.

<sup>932</sup> *Ibid*, p.345.

<sup>933</sup> Muḥammad Muttawālī al-Sha'rāwī al-Ḥusseinī was born on 15<sup>th</sup> April 1911 at the *Dagādūs* village, near Delta Nile, Egypt. He was considered as one of prominent Muslim scholars in Egypt due to his forefather was originated from Ḥussein bin 'Alī bin Abī Ṭālib. He wrote numerous books on scientific miracles of Qur'ān, Sociology and literature such as; *The Miracles of the Qur'ān*, *Tafsīr al-Sha'rāwī*, and *this is Islam*. Al-Sha'rāwī passed away on 17<sup>th</sup> April 1998. For details of his biography, see: Ḥasan, Muḥammad Maḥbub Muḥammad. (1990). *Al-Shaykh Muḥammad Muttawālī al-Sha'rāwī min al-Qarya ila al-'Ālamiya*, Cairo: *Maktaba al-Turāth al-Islāmī*, pp.7-19.

<sup>934</sup> Al-Sha'rāwī, Muḥammad Muttawālī. (n.d.). *The Miracles of the Qur'ān*, London: Dār al-Taqwā, p.67.

disagree with the Qur'ān, have been proved to be unfounded and lacking in empirical evidence.<sup>935</sup>

In the view of Anwār al-Jundī, the twenty-first century disprove two theories which were the theory of the stability of science and the theory of the completion of science. He quoted the words of Western scientists such as; Will Durant<sup>936</sup>. For example, Jundī says:

The scientific laws are relative laws to humanity which is the intellectual machine which speaks of the existent link between it and the external cause...Some expressions such as scientific truth must be understood within strict limits and not be taken literally as is generally believed. There is no scientific truth in the complete sense.

The scholar of the nineteenth century had the audacity to say that state A follows state B and state C follows state D. the scholar of the twentieth century is more conservative and closer to humility than vanity as he does not assert anything.

Changeability, not stability, is the characteristic by which today's learning is distinguished by. The studies and writings of scholars have confirmed the deficiency of human science and this new theory correctly expresses the truth and reality and contributes to the progress of science. This is in direct contrast to the old premise which poses the greatest obstacle to the flourishing and science and the reaping of its rewards.<sup>937</sup>

In the light of the above, Sayyid Quṭb disagrees on the grounds that the definitive verses are applied to presumptive, oscillating and unproven theories as this will expose their meaning to disturbance.<sup>938</sup> In his constructive suggestion, Quṭb therefore, suggests that Ṭanṭāwī supposed to assert that God's verses said

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<sup>935</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>936</sup> William James Durant (November 5, 1885–November 7, 1981) was a prolific American writer, historian, and philosopher. He is best known for *The Story of Civilization*, 11 volumes written in collaboration with his wife Ariel Durant and published between 1935 and 1975. He was earlier noted for *The Story of Philosophy*, written in 1926, which one observer described as "a groundbreaking work that helped to popularize philosophy. Will and Ariel Durant were awarded the Pulitzer Prize for General Non-Fiction in 1968 and the Presidential Medal of Freedom in 1977. For further details, see: Will Durant, Available at: <URL: [http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Will\\_Durant](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Will_Durant), access date: 21<sup>st</sup> September 2012.

<sup>937</sup> Anwar Jundi, *Sumūm al-Istishrāq wa al-Mustashriqīn fī al-'Ulūm al-Islāmiya*, pp.69-70.

<sup>938</sup> Quṭb, *Fī Zilāl al-Qur'ān*, vol.4, pp.115-116.

that the earth was a piece of the sun and later it appears that this hypothesis is incorrect.<sup>939</sup>

In Quṭb point of views, he sees the endless wrong interpretations on the *a/-Jawāhir's* meaning of the Qur'ān so as they are paralleled with the theories and hypothesis that are not permanent. Based on his argument, Quṭb mentions that these hypotheses emerged everyday and are far from challenging the high standard of the Qur'ān.<sup>940</sup>

Quṭb also demonstrates that it still does not mean that Muslims could not be able to gain benefit from what were produced based on the academic theories, nature and human lives in understanding the Qur'ān. For example, in Qur'ān, 41:53:

Soon will We show them Our Signs in the (furthest) regions (of the earth), and in their souls, until it becomes manifest to them that this is the Truth.

In his discussion of the verse, Quṭb encourages Muslims to look into everything that were revealed by all knowledge existed in the world as well as in the human bodies to witness for ourselves the greatness of God and later expand them based on the contents of the Qur'ān.<sup>941</sup>

Furthermore, Quṭb elaborates that the meanings of the Qur'ān were later elaborated with accurate examples based on the correct methods to expand its meanings and understanding not influenced by any theories and hypothesis.<sup>942</sup>

He also says that "we can later declare that the Qur'ān or any verses sent down was to verify the theories and new academic findings".<sup>943</sup>

## **Fifth: Exegesis of the Qur'ān according to Previously Established Meanings**

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<sup>939</sup> *Ibid*, p.116.

<sup>940</sup> *Ibid*, pp.208-209.

<sup>941</sup> *Ibid*, vol.1, pp.180-183.

<sup>942</sup> Quṭb, *Fī Zīlāl al-Qur'ān*, vol. 3, p.184.

<sup>943</sup> *Ibid*.

According to Muṣṭapha al-Ḥamāmī, one of the most dangerous ways to interpret the Qurʾān is the exegete relying on a previously held doctrine, idea or belief and then trying to use the Qurʾānic texts to prove it and commenting them in the light of this conviction.<sup>944</sup> In this case, based on al-Ḥamāmī's view, the exegete will interpret the verse according to the meaning in his own mind, not to what the contents of verse it directs him towards.<sup>945</sup> Al-Ḥamāmī further asserts by saying; "one must not believe then seek evidence. The correct way is to seek evidence then believe."<sup>946</sup>

In the *al-Jawāhir*, Ṭanṭāwī entered this forbidden area as he had information from scientific subjects and wished to apply the verse to correspond with his previously held convictions. He did this to the extent that on some occasions he transgressed the whole Qurʾānic text in order to put forth the message he wanted. For example, when commenting on the Qurʾān, 79:19:

And let me guide you to your Lord so you would fear him?

According to Ṭanṭāwī, this verse refers to knowledge, science and worship. He interprets "fear" as fear of punishment "because fear pertains to knowledge of God's glory and beauty."<sup>947</sup>

### **Sixth: Interpretation of matters of the Unseen (*al-ghaybiyāt*)**

According to Maḥmūd Shaltūt<sup>948</sup>, there are some matters which God has kept from the eyes of men and made it difficult for human minds to comprehend.<sup>949</sup>

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<sup>944</sup> Al-Ḥamāmī, Mustapha. (1352H). *Tafsīr al-'Allāma al-Ustāz al-Shaykh Ṭanṭāwī Jawharī, al-Faḥḥ* magazine, year 8, series 369, p.8

<sup>945</sup> Al-Ḥamāmī, *Tafsīr al-'Allāma al-Ustāz al-Shaykh Ṭanṭāwī Jawharī, al-Faḥḥ* magazine, p.13.

<sup>946</sup> *Ibid*, p.19.

<sup>947</sup> *Al-Jawāhir*, 25:34.

<sup>948</sup> Maḥmūd Shaltūt was born on the 24<sup>th</sup> April 1893. He was one of the prominent scholars of Egypt and appointed as a member of the Institute of Language in 1957 as well as a Senate member of the University of al-Azhār. On the 22<sup>nd</sup> October 1958, he was promoted as the "grand *Shaykh*" of al-Azhār University in Cairo. He has published a number of books on the Qurʾān, Prophet's hadīth, exegesis, comparative sects, theology, *sharī'ah*, Fiqh and relationship between

Shaltūt also claims that the Unseen is one of the matters to which there is no way to know by the senses and it is safer and wiser to believe in what is already known of it rather than to add to, subtract from or analyse it further.<sup>950</sup>

In his criticism on the *al-Jawāhir*, Shaltūt argues the interpretation of matters of the unseen as he says; "If we look at the *al-Jawāhir* on this subject we can see that Ṭanṭāwī transgressed the bounds of safety and wellbeing when he entered areas which he should have not".<sup>951</sup> Shaltūt continues with the following argument:

It was even more peculiar when Ṭanṭāwī made the attempts of interpreting the unseen entity related to the knowledge of God. Indeed, God did not even mention on their actual connotations in detail or revealed them to mankind. For example, he interpreted (*al-kitāb al-mubīn*) and (*al-imām al-mubīn*) with what have been measured in the forms of goodness and badness which will later be shown to them respectively in a form of displays in the Day of Judgment as what were recorded during their entire lives.<sup>952</sup>

Another example of the interpretation of matters of the Unseen in the *al-Jawāhir* is shown by J.J.G. Jansen, via his book, *The Interpretation of the Koran in Modern Egypt* as he says;

In the Qur'ān, 6:38: "Nothing have we omitted from the Book" being used as a basis for intensive scientific exegesis is that the "Book" mentioned in this verse is not the Qur'ān itself, but a "well preserved tablet (*al-Law al-Mahfūz*)" in heaven, of which the earthly Qur'ān is a reflection.<sup>953</sup>

Based on the above examples, Shaltūt believes that this type of exegesis was wrong and unacceptable due to the fact that God did not send down the Qur'ān to discuss on the scientific theories, unseen matters and other arts. These

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Muslim countries. He passed away on a Thursday night, 12<sup>th</sup> December 1963 at the age of 70. See: Maḥmūd Shaltūt. (1996). *Intisari al-Qur'ān*, Singapore: Pustaka Nasional, back cover page.

<sup>949</sup> Shaltūt, Maḥmūd. (1988). *Tafsīr al-Qur'ān al-Karīm*, Cairo: Dār al-Syurūq, p.12.

<sup>950</sup> *Ibid*, p.13.

<sup>951</sup> *Ibid*, p.11.

<sup>952</sup> *Ibid*, p.12.

<sup>953</sup> Jansen, J.J.G. (1974). *The Interpretation of the Koran in Modern Egypt*, Brill Archive, p.35.

notions for him considered as unreasonable and opened the door to the exegete to interpret the Qur'ān as he pleased, denying the inimitability of Qur'ān and not following the method of interpreting Qur'ān in proper way.<sup>954</sup>

### **Seventh: Long-windedness and Digressions**

It is important to state in this chapter that one of the things which contributed to the length of the *al-Jawāhir* was the large amount of citation from books and magazines. For example, Ṭanṭāwī extracted thirty pages on the Caliphs and their luxury from the book *Tārīkh al-Tamaddun al-Islāmī*,<sup>955</sup> forty-nine pages from *Iḥyā' 'Ulūm al-Dīn* on two subjects<sup>956</sup> and twenty-one pages from *Ḥāḍhir al-'Ālim al-Islāmī*.<sup>957</sup> Therefore, the *al-Jawāhir* has been vigorously challenged by a number of writers. As mentioned in the previous point, Rashīd Riḍā criticizes the *al-Jawāhir* by saying; "His exegesis [*al-Jawāhir*] has been described in the same manner as that of al-Rāzī's great work, that is, "it contains everything but not exegesis".<sup>958</sup>

In the *Introduction Au Coran*; Blache're criticises Ṭanṭāwī in the context of his criticism of the lengthiness and digression as well as modern exegetes who believed that the Qur'ān contained signs pointing to all the modern inventions and was capable of developing and adapting to all circumstances and situations. In his criticism of Ṭanṭāwī, Blache're says:

His lengthy dissection of the Qur'ān appears to be a series of inane digressions. He violently attacks materialism and European imperialism, shows the points of weakness among contemporary Muslims and the need for moral and intellectual reform and lists the miracles of creation as did Bernadine. It can be noted that Ṭanṭāwī often loses his direction and goal and turns into a man of generalizations.<sup>959</sup>

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<sup>954</sup> Shaltūt, *Tafsīr al-Qur'ān al-Karīm*, p.14.

<sup>955</sup> *Al-Jawāhir*, 21:139-171.

<sup>956</sup> *Ibid*, 22:203-228, 23:61-95.

<sup>957</sup> *Ibid*, 22:99-121.

<sup>958</sup> Rashīd Riḍā, *Tafsīr al-Manār*, vol.2, p.46.

<sup>959</sup> Blache're, Regis, *Introduction Au Coran*, pp.222-223.

According to Musā'id Muslim Al Ja'far and Muḥyī Ḥilāl al-Sarḥān<sup>960</sup>, the references to science, with and without occasion, the many extracts from books, the delving into derivative subjects which he sometimes called '*Musāmarāt*'- all had a negative effect on the reader, boring him, making him forget the original subject or the verse Ṭantāwī was commenting on and making it difficult for him to bring together the strands of these assorted subjects.<sup>961</sup>

Al Ja'far and al-Sarḥān also criticise the *al-Jawāhir* by saying;

These matters have overshadowed and dominated the exegesis to the point that one finds difficulty in fully interpreting a verse. Whatever the subject, he digresses to science. This is a distraction and missed opportunity for the reader and it is for this that is has been said that his exegesis contains everything but not exegesis. There is no doubt that this is an exaggeration as we can see within it exacting humour and accurate observations the quality and precedence of which cannot be denied.<sup>962</sup>

Al-Shāṭibī<sup>963</sup> strongly rejects the scientific exegesis and explains vividly in his book entitled *al-I'tiṣām*<sup>964</sup>, and in his doctrinal work, *al-Muwāfaqāt*<sup>965</sup> that many exegetes exceeds the limit in their accusation toward the Qur'ān. According to Shāṭibī, the people somehow added on the previous information and the later

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<sup>960</sup> Musā'id Muslim Al Ja'far and Muḥyī Ḥilāl al-Sarḥān are the authors of a book entitled; *Manāhij al-Mufassirīn*. See: Musā'id Muslim Al Ja'far and Muḥyī Ḥilāl al-Sarḥān, *Manāhij al-Mufassirīn*, Cairo: Dār al-Ma'ārif, cover page.

<sup>961</sup> Musā'id Muslim Al Ja'far and Muḥyī Ḥilāl al-Sarḥān, *Manāhij al-Mufassirīn*, p.263.

<sup>962</sup> *Ibid*, p.264.

<sup>963</sup> He was Abū Ishāq Ibrāhīm ibn Mūsa ibn Muhammad al-Lakhmī, al-Gharnāṭī or well-known with a nickname of al-Shāṭibī. He was a pious man, an editor, a jurist, and an expert in the field of linguistic, and rhetoric. He published books of the highest quality such as; his comments toward *Kitāb al-Fiyya* in the field of Grammar in four volumes, *Kitāb al-I'tiṣām* in three volumes, *Kitāb al-Majālis*, his explanations on *Kitāb Buyū* from *Ṣaḥīḥ al-Bukḥārī*, *Kitāb Unwān al-Ittifāq fī 'Ilmi al-Ishtiḳāq* as well as his famous book entitled *Kitāb al-Muwāfaqāt*. The book was said to be invaluable especially in the field of jurisprudence. He passed away on a Tuesday, 8<sup>th</sup> of Sha'ban, 790H/1388CE. For a contemporary study of his life and thought, see: Mas'ūd, Muhammad Ḳhalīl. (1977). *Islamic Legal Philosophy: A Study of Abū Ishāq al-Shāṭibī's Life and Thought*, Islamabad: Islamic Research Institute.

<sup>964</sup> *Al-I'tiṣām* has been edited by Rashīd Riḍā in his influential periodical *al-Manār*, xvii (1333H/1913CE), reprinted several times.

<sup>965</sup> *Al-Muwāfaqāt* was first published from Tunis in 1302H/1884CE, and later from Cairo 1341H/1923CE; see: al-Shāṭibī, Abū Ishāq Ibrāhīm, *al-Muwāfaqāt*, Cairo: Maṭba'a al-Mīdānī, vol.1, pp.1-2.

ones involving the knowledge of science such as; a compendium of medicine, astronomy, geometry, or chemistry, and mathematically based subjects like engineering, algebra, logic, alphabets claiming them as being invalid.<sup>966</sup>

It was later supported by al-Shāṭibī by giving his opinion based on the classical point of views pertaining to the scientific exegesis as he says:

Indeed the people under the category of classical who were the companions and successors and the group after them were the knowledgeable on the Qurʾān and the knowledge within. However, the information did not reach to others as what you claim other than what were related in exegesis. It involved the rules and regulations of responsibility (*taklīf*) the knowledge about the hereafter and others associated to it. Without doubt the Qurʾān did not explain what they have thought of or alleged to be.<sup>967</sup>

Rashīd Riḍā also disagrees with the existence of scientific exegesis and later asserts that are a group of modern scholars who imitated the previous exegetes using long elaborations on the Qurʾānic verses such as; the sky, earth, flora and fauna diverging the readers' thought from the original text.<sup>968</sup>

If we study previous works of exegesis we will find that some comprise of a number of volumes and offer a lengthy exegesis and detailed explanations of the verses. It could be that the reason for this verbosity is too present preceding studies of the verses or to delve into questions of linguistics, grammar, and rhetoric, or to direct the reader towards other works, or similar.

However, the lengthiness we find in the *al-Jawāhir* does not occur for reasons such as these; it delves into random, scattered subjects, often far from the actual contents of the verses. Indeed, there is at times not even the most tenuous link between what Ṭanṭāwī writes and the Qurʾānic text. When reading the *al-Jawāhir*, for example, the Qurʾān, 33:46: "and as a lamp spreading light",

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<sup>966</sup> Al-Dhahabī, *al-Tafsīr wa al-Mufasssīrūn*, vol.2, p.467.

<sup>967</sup> Al-Shāṭibī, *al-Muwāfaqāt*, vol.2, p.79.

<sup>968</sup> Rashīd Riḍā, *Tafsīr al-Manār*, vol.1, p.7.



the reader is struck by his Ṭanṭāwī's long speech on the social and economic aspects in Egypt.<sup>969</sup>

Other example is that when Ṭanṭāwī exegetes the Qur'ān, 8:60:

Against them make ready your strength to the utmost of your power

The researcher finds Ṭanṭāwī began to speak at length of dynamite and its structure and explosives and how they are used.<sup>970</sup> Likewise, when explaining the verses which speak of the story of magic and Prophet Moses (PBWH), Ṭanṭāwī spoke at length about ways of magic and described eighteen magic tricks and how they were achieved.<sup>971</sup> He also digressed to mice, their nature, the illnesses which they cause, ways to avoid them, etc., when interpreting the verses of Moses (locusts, lice, and frogs).<sup>972</sup>

Sometimes Ṭanṭāwī would end his words abruptly to move onto another subject outside the context. On one occasion he was commenting on a verse when he stopped and said to his friend: "Would you like me to tell you a love story which is relevant to this exegesis to rest the spirit, vary our thoughts and delight us?" He then began talking about love and passion.<sup>973</sup>

In another example of this he was explaining verses from *sūra al-Aḥzāb* when he suddenly started talking of the French Orientalist, Ettaine. After he had finished discussing the life of the man, he justified his digression by saying "I merely wrote the history of Monsieur Ettaine as a remembrance for the readers of this exegesis because he died while I was submitting this chapter for printing."<sup>974</sup> It appears that Ṭanṭāwī at times forgot that he was writing an exegesis of the

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<sup>969</sup> *Al-Jawāhir*, 16:105-107.

<sup>970</sup> *Ibid*, 5:74-76.

<sup>971</sup> *Ibid*, 13:30-40.

<sup>972</sup> *Ibid*, 12:162-163.

<sup>973</sup> *Al-Jawāhir*, 17:32-34.

<sup>974</sup> *Ibid*, 16:98.

Qur'ān and this made him write whatever crossed his mind or about whatever subject he came across.

### **Eighth: Mentioning Personal Opinions**

Ṭanṭāwī had a habit of often referring to events in his personal life or things that had happened to him because -in his view- they were important and deserved mentioning for the benefit of the reader. Perhaps there was occasionally benefit in this but it is certain that for the most part this is debatable. It is difficult to see the merit of mentioning his dreams and visions,<sup>975</sup> explaining his ailments such as; toothache and their treatment and other topics which do not serve or have a place in exegesis.<sup>976</sup> It is because Sayyid Quṭb disagrees with that motion and believes that it will lead people to the wrong perceptions on the Qur'ānic exegesis and its application. According to Quṭb, the sacred and complete Qur'ān provides remedy to the souls and paralleled with the humans' existence in the quest to not go in the different direction from the world they are living in.<sup>977</sup>

However, in response to the criticism, Ṭanṭāwī resorts to Ghazzālī, quoting from his book; *Iḥyā' 'Ulūm al-Dīn* from a section under the title "Understanding the Qur'ān and its exegesis by personal opinion not transmission." He considers Ghazzālī's words a riposte to the objectors. The following points summarize Ghazzālī's words:

a. A prohibition of exegesis by personal opinion can occur for two reasons:

First: The exegete has an inclination and tendency to a particular view and interprets the Qur'ān to agree with his view to serve his doctrine or heresy.

Second: The exegete is quick to interpret the Qur'ān according to its apparent meaning in Arabic without study.

b. The Qur'ān was established to people with a deep understanding as Qur'ān, 4:83 says: "Those among them who are able to think out the matter would have known it."

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<sup>975</sup> For examples, see: *Ibid*, 6:44, 8:44, 9:187, 10:128, 12:215, 18:86, 21:6, 26:108.

<sup>976</sup> For examples, see: *Ibid*, 8:54, 23:277, and 25:152.

<sup>977</sup> Quṭb, Sayyid, *Fi Zilāl al-Qur'ān*, vol. 3, pp.206-207.

- c. The Companions said – and this appears in their disagreements in the interpretation of some verses – it was not reasonable to believe that all these views were transmitted from God’s Messenger.
- d. Hearing is not a condition of interpretation and a deep instinctual understanding of the Qur’ān by understanding and knowledge is permitted.<sup>978</sup>

In order to defend himself from being criticized on such motion, Ṭanṭāwī says, “I am not one of those reprehensible ones who exegete according to their own opinions, and the censure does not fall on me. There is room for a deep understanding of the Noble Qur’ān.”<sup>979</sup>

### **Ninth: Commenting only on some verses from each *Sūra***

After analyzing the *al-Jawāhir*, it is possible to divide its interpretation of the verses into two parts: exegesis based on literal meaning (*tafsīr lafzī*) and exegesis based on technical meaning (*tafsīr ma’nawī*) of some verses. However, the main weakness of the *al-Jawāhir* is that the former is not really Ṭanṭāwī’s own production and effort. It is due to the fact that Ṭanṭāwī extracted it from the works of previous exegeses such as; the *Anwār al-Tanzīl* by al-Bayḍāwī, the *Mafātīḥ al-Ghayb* by al-Rāzī, the *Jāmi’ al-Bayān* by al-Ṭabarī, the *Lubāb al-Ta’wīl* by al-Khāzīn, and the *al-Kaṣṣāf* by Zamakhsharī. There are many examples where Ṭanṭāwī depended on the exegeses as have been mentioned in the previous chapter.<sup>980</sup>

His own real work was the exegesis based on technical meaning of specific verses he selected from the context of the *sūra* and then focused on and interpreted in his own method. Based on this, it could be said that Ṭanṭāwī did not produce a complete exegesis of the Qur’ān of his own thoughts and efforts. With regard to the above, Fahd al-Rūmī suggests that the *al-Jawāhir* would have been much more convincing if Ṭanṭāwī had interpreted all the verses then call his

<sup>978</sup> *Al-Jawāhir*, 15:251-253.

<sup>979</sup> *Ibid*, 15:253.

<sup>980</sup> For details, please refer to chapter 4.4 Section Three: Sources of *al-Jawāhir*.

book an exegesis or, if he wanted to limit himself to only certain verses, not to call his work an exegesis.<sup>981</sup>

### **Tenth: Straying from the Content of the Verses**

The *al-Jawāhir* has been strongly challenged by a number of writers on a basis of straying from the content of the verses. `Affāt al-Sharqāwī, for example, criticizes the *al-Jawāhir* as he says;

Some of the narrators are incapable of differentiating between the truth of the meaning and the effect the words have on their spirit. These do not give us an exegesis of the content of the verse but an exegesis of their personal experience of reading it. They keep repeating what they feel towards the text although there is a clear distinction between their feelings of the meaning and the meaning itself.<sup>982</sup>

Another contemporary scholar who highly rejects and makes criticism on the *al-Jawāhir* is Maḥmūd Shaltūt. It is obvious in his opening exegesis while debating on the two obligatory aspects that ought to be considered in preserving the sacredness of the Qurʾān as he says:

There are two obligatory aspects should be bear in mind in order to preserve the sacredness of the Qurʾān: First: do not interpret the Qurʾān based on various sects. Second: do not interpret the Qurʾān by using scientific exegesis. It is due to the fact that God does not reveal the Qurʾān to mankind for the purpose of presenting scientific theories, complicated technologies, and other diverse knowledge which is related to natural phenomenon. By doing so, it would lead to stray from the content of the verses.<sup>983</sup>

Indeed, Shaltūt begins his argument with a statement that emphasizes the essence of the Qurʾān that was extracted by exegetes to suit their field of interest rather than interpret contents of the Qurʾānic verses itself. He also claims

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<sup>981</sup> Al-Rumi, Fahd, *Manhaj al-Madrasa al-'Aqliya al-Haditha fi Tafsir*, 2:422.

<sup>982</sup> Al-Sharqawi, `Affat, *al-Fikr al-Dini fi Muwajaha al-'Asr*, p.360.

<sup>983</sup> Shaltūt, Mahmūd, *Tafsir al-Qurʾan al-Karim*, p.9.

that the sanctity of the verses ought to remain untouched to preserve its highest degree of holiness.<sup>984</sup>

According to Shaltūt, in certain circumstances, discussion in scientific exegesis was brought to another degree and results however, were not similar and parallel to the main reason of the Qur'ān was sent down to mankind. Along with the bizarre happenings in exegesis books, he postulates some evidences from Qur'ānic verses<sup>985</sup>. For example, Qur'ān says:

Then watch you for the day that the sky will put forth a kind of smoke (or mist) plainly visible, enveloping the people: this will be a penalty grievous.  
(Qur'ān, 44:10-11)

Referring to the above verse, Shaltūt says:

He [Ṭantāwī] interpreted the verse with the existence of poisonous gasses produced by human knowledge that later became a weapon used to annihilate all forms of livings. It was a directly translated verse that did not take into account of the following verse, as Qur'ān says:

(They will say :) "Our Lord! Remove the penalty from us, for We do really believe!" How shall the Message be (effectual) for them, seeing that a messenger explaining things clearly has (already) come to them- Yet they turn away from him and say: "Tutored (by others), a man possessed!"<sup>986</sup>

(Qur'ān, 44:12-14)

With regards to the verses, Shaltūt argues that contemporary scholars, like Ṭantāwī who have learnt and mastered academic theories, philosophy, and medicine, should not misuse their knowledge to interpret the Qur'ān.<sup>987</sup> Shaltūt further asserts that Ṭantāwī elaborated on these verses based on his own

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<sup>984</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>985</sup> There are many examples of Qur'ānic verses such as; (Qur'ān, 2:164), (Qur'ān, 16:66), and (Qur'ān, 36:38). According to Shaltūt, who in the case for the scientific exegesis have interpreted these verses by promoting scientific facts such as; lightning, thunder, theories pertaining to the creation of rain and clouds as well as how they were flown by the wind. Indeed, they have elaborated the verses with flora, fauna, sun, moon, stars and the entire galaxy and later claimed that all these are absolute truth of the science of Qur'ān. See: *Ibid*, p.11.

<sup>986</sup> Shaltūt, *Tafsīr al-Qur'ān al-Karīm*, p.12.

<sup>987</sup> *Ibid*, p.13.

understanding, and this kind of exegesis does not uphold to raise the standard of Islam as a religion.<sup>988</sup>

Shaltūt, moreover, criticises Ṭaṭṭāwī's work by saying;

Even with the verses Ṭaṭṭāwī did exegete; on many occasions we do not find that he discusses their apparent content. He writes whatever crosses his mind and calls these thoughts "indicative meanings". He expresses every emotion he feels, regardless of whether the link between what he writes and the actual verses is weak or strong... Ṭaṭṭāwī fails to draw a distinction between his feelings of the meaning and the meaning itself. The mixture between the two would lead to invaluable exegesis. Therefore, the *al-Jawāhir* might have been far more persuasive if Ṭaṭṭāwī had considered the content of the verses and the truth of the meaning.<sup>989</sup>

To sum up this point with regards to objections against the scientific exegesis of the *al-Jawāhir*, the researcher would like to highlight what have been mentioned by Rotraud Wielandt on Shaltūt's views as he says:

1. It is lexicographically untenable, since it falsely attributes modern meanings to the Qur'ānic vocabulary.
2. It neglects the contexts of words or phrases within the Qur'ānic text, and also the occasions of revelation where these are transmitted.
3. It ignores the fact that, for the Qur'ān to be comprehensible for its first audience, the words of the Qur'ān had to conform to the language and the intellectual horizon of the ancient Arabs at the Prophet's time.
4. It does not take notice of the fact that scientific knowledge and scientific theories are always incomplete and provisory by their very nature. Therefore, the derivation of scientific exegesis is actually tantamount to limiting the validity of these verses to the time for which the results of the science in question are accepted.
5. Most importantly, it fails to comprehend that the Qur'ān is not a scientific book, but a religious one designed to guide human beings by imparting to them a creed and a set of moral values.<sup>990</sup>

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<sup>988</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>989</sup> *Ibid.*, pp.13-15.

<sup>990</sup> Wielandt, Rotraud. *Exegesis the Qur'ān: Early Modern and Contemporary*. In *the Encyclopedia of the Qur'ān*, vol.2, pp.8-10.

## **Eleventh: The inclusion of science hard for the ordinary reader to understand**

The *al-Jawāhir* contains many sciences and arts including philosophy, astronomy, geography, zoology, botany, chemistry, and physics. The fact is that these fields of studies are essential in education for readers but many of these subjects will be difficult for them to absorb and understand. Indeed, barely anyone who was not previously familiar with these sciences and their terminology would not be able to comprehend it. Ṭanṭāwī attempted to simplify these matters and explain them in an easy, accessible manner but they remain difficult for the ordinary readers who may miss out on the benefits Ṭanṭāwī was hoping to provide by presenting these subjects.

Dhahabī is probably the best known critic of the *al-Jawāhir*. He argues by saying that “the Qur’ān is at the highest point of Rhetoric (*Balāgha*)<sup>991</sup>, and if we agree with the *al-Jawāhir* that stated the contents included all forms of knowledge [including biology, chemistry, and physics], it will place us in a dilemma”<sup>992</sup> as he says;

It’s due to the fact that those who are subjected to the scientific exegesis [*al-Jawāhir*] might not be able to comprehend totally its meaning and if they only understood the meanings or what it meant to be then why is it that the Arabs themselves did not master the knowledge of science from the first night of its descent to mankind?<sup>993</sup>

Another critic question which Dhahabī also evolved around the reason why Ṭanṭāwī intended to interpret more connotations and used scientific terms in his exegesis? In this case, Dhahabī argues that the Qur’ān was sent down after

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<sup>991</sup> The word *balāgha* is defined literally as eloquence, art of good style and communication, rhetoric. Technically, it is adapting words based on its occurring situations. A contextually appropriate definition of *balāgha* would be 'the ability to produce speech that creates the desired effect or impact in the listener' or 'the ability to convey via one's speech a message that illicit from the listener the desired response'. For further details see: al-Qazwini, Muhammad b. 'Abd Rahman. (1982). *Al-Talkhīṣ fī Miftāḥ al-'Ulūm*, ed. 'Abd Rahman Barqūq, Cairo: Dār al-Kutub al-'Ilmia, pp.153-155.

<sup>992</sup> Al-Dhahabī, *al-Tafsīr wa al-Mufasssīrūn*, 2:294.

<sup>993</sup> *Ibid.*

several generations and its content was already read by the companions in front of the Prophet Muḥammad (PBWH) himself. Therefore, according to him, it's not relevant to create new scientific terms in the Qur'ān.<sup>994</sup>

### **Twelfth: Leaving aside Exegesis by previous example**

Muslim scholars believe that the best method of exegesis is that by previously established examples. Ibn Taymiya was asked of the best way of interpreting the Qur'ān and he replied;

The best way is to exegete the Qur'ān with the Qur'ān. If you cannot then look to the *Sunna* as this explains and clarifies the Qur'ān. If you do not find exegesis in the Qur'ān or *Sunna* then we must look to the words of the Companions of the Prophet as they have knowledge of what they witnessed and complete understanding and knowledge. If you do not find exegesis in the words of the Qur'ān, the *Sunna* or the companions then you must look to the followers.<sup>995</sup>

As mentioned in the previous, Shaltūt criticizes the technique and method of the scientific exegesis as he believes that it is considered as an absolutely wrong method due to not uphold to raise the standard of Islam as a religion.<sup>996</sup>

Al-Tūnisī agreed with Shaltūt's criticism and continues his analysis of the technique and method of the *al-Jawāhir*, which he considers the *al-Jawāhir* contradictory to religion and not to follow the previously established examples.<sup>997</sup> Therefore, al-Tūnisī suggests that the writing of the *al-Jawāhir* would have been much more interesting if Ṭanṭāwī commits himself to this technique set out by other scholars as their technique more authentic and after this adjoin whatever meanings occurred to him as long as in his efforts he did not depart from the

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<sup>994</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>995</sup> Ibn Taymiya, *Muqaddima fī Uṣūl al-Tafsīr*, pp.39-44.

<sup>996</sup> Shaltūt, *Tafsīr al-Qur'ān al-Karīm*, p.13.

<sup>997</sup> Al-Tūnisī, Muhammad ibn Yusuf, *al-Masā'il al-Kāfiya fī Bayān wujūb Ṣidq Khayr Rabb al-Bariya*, pp.245-246.



known rules of exegesis, or from standard Arabic language or interpret according to his own views.<sup>998</sup>

There is example as reported by al-Tūnisī in order to prove his criticism as he says;

The *al-Jawāhir* contradicts with the previously established exegesis. For example, it claimed that the intended meaning of "those against whom thou are wrathful"<sup>999</sup> was those who are rebellious and the "those who are astray"<sup>1000</sup> was those who are ignorant.<sup>1001</sup> However it is proven by the previously established exegesis that the former refers to the Jews and the latter to the Christians as Suyūṭī says;

This is interpreted as meaning the Jews and the Christians as reported from the Prophet (PBWH), and all the companions and followers. Ibn Ābī Hātem even said, "I do not know of any difference of opinion on this among exegetes."<sup>1002</sup>

Also, Ṭanṭāwī's understanding of The Night of Power (*Layla al-Qadr*) is questionable. It's due to the fact that he claims The Night of Power does not occur at a set time and it may be in Ramaḍān or it may occur at some other time.<sup>1003</sup> However, it is agreed and found in authentic sources that The Night of Power occurs in the last ten days of Ramaḍān.<sup>1004</sup>

Another weakness with Ṭanṭāwī's approach is that he fails to include the sound *hādīths*. Ṭanṭāwī, however, heavily relies on weak and fabricated *hādīths* in the *al-Jawāhir*. For example, Ṭanṭāwī denies the story of the reason for the revelation (*asbāb al-Nuzūl*) of the Qur'ān: 23:76:

We inflicted Punishment on them, but they humbled not themselves to their Lord, nor do they submissively entreat (Him)!

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<sup>998</sup> *Ibid*, p.247.

<sup>999</sup> Qur'ān, 1:7.

<sup>1000</sup> Qur'ān, 1:7.

<sup>1001</sup> *Al-Jawāhir*, 1:19.

<sup>1002</sup> Al-Tunisi, *al-Masā'il al-Kāfiya fī Bayān wujūb Ṣidq Khayr Rabb al-Bariyya*, p.248. Also see: al-Suyuti, *Al-Itqān fī 'Ulūm al-Qur'ān*, 2:190 and see: *Al-Durr al-Manthūr Fī Tafsīr Bil-Ma'thūr*, 1:42.

<sup>1003</sup> *Al-Jawāhir*, 25:253.

<sup>1004</sup> See: Al-Bukhari, *Ṣaḥīḥ al-Bukhārī*, 3:60-61, and 9:40-41.

Ṭanṭāwī claims that the *asbāb al-Nuzūl* of the verse was incorrect as it does not occur in the six books of Prophet Hadīth (*Sunan Sitta*).<sup>1005</sup> However, a study of the prophet's hadīth on the *asbāb al-Nuzūl* mentioned that it is correct.<sup>1006</sup>

Another example is that when commenting on the Qur'ān, 29:8:

But if they (either of them) strive (to force) thee to join with me (in worship) anything of which thou hast no knowledge, obey them not.

A serious weakness with Ṭanṭāwī's argument is that he rejected the story of Sa'ad ibn Ābī Waqqās, and his mother on the pretext that it does not occur in the six books.<sup>1007</sup> However, if Ṭanṭāwī had undergone a more in depth study he would have found the story in *Ṣaḥīḥ Muslim* and *Sunan al-Tirmizī*.<sup>1008</sup>

It appears that the reason for his mistake is that his dependence on the book of *Taysīr al-Wūṣūl* as he regarded every *hadīth* in it to be sound and all not found in it to be not sound.<sup>1009</sup> It would have been more worthwhile for him to return to the originally books which are relied on in authentic *hadīth*. How could he not when he was interpreting the Qur'ān for the people?

### **Thirteen: Contradiction in Exegesis**

According to al-Sa'adī, the scholars of the Najd and the Hejāz took a strict stance on the *al-Jawāhir*, denouncing the *al-Jawāhir* as it's contradiction with other exegeses and considering it a deviation from the interpretations of the *ahl al-Sunna*.<sup>1010</sup> Al-Sa'adī adds by saying;

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<sup>1005</sup> *Al-Jawāhir*, 11:153.

<sup>1006</sup> For details, see: al-Hakim, *Al-Mustadrāk, Kitāb al-Tafsīr, Tafsīr sūra al-Mu'minūn*. Also, see: Ibn Jarir, *Jāmi' al-Bayān*, 18:34. See also: al-Bayhaqī, *Dalā'il al-Nubūwa*, 2:198-199.

<sup>1007</sup> *Al-Jawāhir*, 14:95.

<sup>1008</sup> See: Muslim, *Ṣaḥīḥ Muslim, Kitāb Faḍā'il*, chapter *Sa'ad ibn Waqqās*, 15:184-186. Also, see: Tirmizī, *Sunan al-Tirmizī, Kitāb al-Tafsīr, Tafsīr sūra al-Ankabūt*, 12:64-65.

<sup>1009</sup> *Al-Jawāhir*, 6:125.

<sup>1010</sup> Al-Sa'adī, 'Abd al-Raḥman. (1988). *Bāb al-Murāsala wa al-Munāzara fī Majalla al-Manār*, Egypt: Damanhūr, p.145.

Ṭaṇṭāwī does not refer to the fact that the source of his literal exegesis is taken from al-Bayḍāwī and this misleads the reader into thinking that everything which appears in the *al-Jawāhir* is the words of Ṭaṇṭāwī. In some areas this has led to confusion and made the reader hesitate between two consecutive and contradictory exegeses. This is shown in Ṭaṇṭāwī's exegesis of the Mustering in which he says that the faces of those who were ignorant and did not use their mental capacity will be gathered and turns their faces.<sup>1011</sup> Ṭaṇṭāwī had previously said that the Unbelievers will on the Day of Judgment actually walk on their faces, quoting the prophetic saying: "He who walks on his feet is capable of walking on his face on the Day of Judgment."<sup>1012 1013</sup>

In al-Shāṭibī's point of views, he criticizes the scientific exegesis as he believes that it would lead to contradiction with the early Muslims' interpretation.<sup>1014</sup> Al-Hadeedī also criticizes the *al-Jawāhir* as he says;

We could call this book as '*Jawāhir al-'Ulūm*' (The Jewels of Sciences) and not '*Jawāhir al-Tafsīr*' (The Jewels of Exegesis) due to contradiction in his exegesis and the two are in two separate fields. For example, the Qur'ān, 33:44 says: "Their salutation on the Day they meet Him will be "peace!"

According to Ṭaṇṭāwī, the greeting of peace in the verse is for those that know the universe<sup>1015</sup> whereas he had previously said it meant the greetings between the believers, the angels and God.<sup>1016 1017</sup>

Indeed, the *al-Jawāhir* has been criticised by 'Adnān Zarzoūr via his book; '*Ulūm al-Qur'ān*, as he says;

The *al-Jawāhir* is the first erroneous and many contradictions. For examples, Ṭaṇṭāwī interpreted the vision of God as the knowledge of the universe which brings God to people's hearts.<sup>1018</sup> However, he previously interpreted the Qur'ān, 75:22-23: "Some faces that Day, will beam (in brightness and beauty). Looking towards their Lord."

<sup>1011</sup> *Al-Jawāhir*, 12:191.

<sup>1012</sup> *Ibid*, 12:134.

<sup>1013</sup> Al-Sa'adī, *Bāb al-Murāsala wa al-Munāzara fī Majalla al-Manār*, p.146.

<sup>1014</sup> Al-Shāṭibī, *Muwāfaqāt*, vol.2, p.81.

<sup>1015</sup> Al-Shāṭibī, *Muwāfaqāt*, 6:54.

<sup>1016</sup> *Ibid*, 6:5.

<sup>1017</sup> Al-Hadeedī, Muṣṭafa, *Ittijāh al-Tafsīr fī 'Aṣr al-Hadīth*, p.73.

<sup>1018</sup> *Al-Jawāhir*, 24:312-313.

In referring to the above verse, Ṭaṇṭāwī claims the believers will look at their God with their eyes, without a barrier, and their faces will be radiant.<sup>1019</sup>

Another example is that when interpreting the Qur'ān, 55:22: "Out of them come Pearls and Coral". Ṭaṇṭāwī states that inside pearl and coral was salt water only<sup>1020</sup> then in following pages decided that they came out of salt water and also fresh water.<sup>1021 1022</sup>

To sum up this point, al-Sa'adī suggests that it would have been more useful if Ṭaṇṭāwī had used to decide on one opinion in his exegesis or when mentioning Bayḍāwī's views clarifying that he had a different opinion in the matter.<sup>1023</sup>

#### **Fourteen: Overuse of literary style**

Due to overuse of literary style, the *al-Jawāhir* has been criticised by a number of scholars. Al-Shāṭibī, for example, via his book; *al-Muwāfaqāt*, declines a proposition to expand the literary style in the scientific exegesis.<sup>1024</sup> Al-Shāṭibī, however, believes that the Qur'ān was not supposed to be interpreted by overusing literary style because it was not a book of science and would be contradicted with the early Muslims' exegesis as he says:

The good early Muslims knew the Qur'ān, its sciences and what it contains better [than us]. In that which has reached us, none of them said anything like this [i.e. inclusion of science]. Adding something [literary style] that does not necessarily exist in the Qur'ān is not permissible. As is not allowed to reject what it must be the meaning of the Qur'ān. Everyone should limit themselves in finding a reference to understand the Qur'ān (as what is known to the previous Arabs). Whoever is using a method other than that, it will be lost in understanding the Qur'ān.<sup>1025</sup>

In supporting his argument, al-Shāṭibī states an example and claims that what is included in the meaning of "Book" (*al-Kitāb*) in the Qur'ān, 6:38 is "Well-guarded

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<sup>1019</sup> *Ibid*, 24:311.

<sup>1020</sup> *Ibid*, 24:18.

<sup>1021</sup> *Ibid*, 24:26.

<sup>1022</sup> Adnān Zarzoūr, *'Ulūm al-Qur'ān*, pp.422-423.

<sup>1023</sup> Al-Sa'adī, *Bāb al-Murāsala wa al-Munāzara fī Majalla al-Manār*, p.148.

<sup>1024</sup> Al-Shāṭibī, *Muwāfaqāt*, vol.2, p.80.

<sup>1025</sup> *Ibid*, p.81. Also see: al-Dhahabī, *al-Tafsīr wa al-Mufassirūn*, vol.2, p.467.

Tablet of Destiny" (*al-Law al-Mahfūz*). Meanwhile, the meaning of the term *farrata* in the verse literally means; to omit, to neglect, to overlook, and to leave out of calculation.<sup>1026</sup> But, al-Shāṭibī says that the verse excluded all types of knowledge in the form of transmitted (*naql*)<sup>1027</sup> and intellectual (*ʿaql*)<sup>1028</sup>, but only that is contains general principles of all those matters that human beings must need to know and act by in order to reach physical and spiritual perfection.<sup>1029</sup>

With regards to the Qurʾān, 6:38, Dhahabī agrees with al-Shāṭibī regarding the literal meaning of the term *ʿfarrataʿ* in the verse as; to neglect, to overlook, to leave out of calculation. The verse, technically, according to Dhahabī, leaves the door open for human beings to figure out and elucidate, to the extent possible in a given age, details of different disciplines of knowledge.<sup>1030</sup> Al-Dhahabī, however, criticises Ṭanṭāwī's work due to assort literary styles<sup>1031</sup> in commenting on his exegesis to present his book to the people and arouse their passion for the subjects he wrote of.<sup>1032</sup> Al-Dhahabī also criticizes that the *al-Jawāhir* has been applied wrongly and overuse on the application of Linguistic (*Lughawiya*)<sup>1033</sup>. In his point of views, Al-Dhahabī reports that the dependence

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<sup>1026</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>1027</sup> According to al-Ghazzālī, transmitted knowledge synonymous with the term "religious sciences" which means; those which have been acquired from the prophets and are not arrived at either by reason, like arithmetic, or by experimentation, like medicine, or by hearing, like language. See: N.A. Farīs. (1962). *The Book of Knowledge*, Being a translation with notes of the *Kitāb al-ʿIlm* of al-Ghazālī's *Ihyāʾ ʿUlūm al-Dīn*, Lahore: Shaykh Muḥammad Ashrāf, pp.36-39.

<sup>1028</sup> The intellectual knowledge based on Ghazzālī's point of view is that knowledge which is attained by the human intellect alone. With regards to this point, Ghazzālī uses the term "non-religious sciences" instead of intellectual knowledge. *Ibid*, p.36, see also: al-Ghazzālī, Abū Ḥāmid. (1998). *Direct Knowledge from God (al-Risāla al-Lādūniya)*, translated by: A. Godlas, p.33.

<sup>1029</sup> Al-Shāṭibī, *Muwāfaqāt*, vol.2, p.80.

<sup>1030</sup> Al-Dhahabī, Muḥammad Ḥusain. (1976). *Al-Ittijāhāt al-Munḥarifa fī Tafsīr al-Qurʾān al-Karīm*, Cairo: Dār al-ʿItisām, p.87.

<sup>1031</sup> There are many examples of literary style in the *al-Jawāhir*. For examples, see: *al-Jawāhir*, 6:62 and 143.

<sup>1032</sup> Al-Dhahabī, *Al-Ittijāhāt al-Munḥarifa fī Tafsīr al-Qurʾān al-Karīm*, p.88.

<sup>1033</sup> Linguistics (*Lughawiya*) means the study of the nature, structure, and variation of language, including phonetics, phonology, morphology, syntax, semantics, sociolinguistics, and pragmatics. See: *Dictionary of the English Language of the American Heritage*. 2009. United States: Houghton Mifflin, p.1046.

on such modes is not appropriate for books of exegesis and should be avoided out of respect for the Qur'ān and to preserve its sanctity. These styles may be innovative and worthy in books of literature and that field but books of exegesis must be more precise and ordered. Wisdom dictates that the right thing should be in the right place.<sup>1034</sup>

Muḥammad al-Sabbāgh in his criticism on the *al-Jawāhir* claims that the aims of Ṭanṭāwī's exegesis were sound but his overuse of literary style was flawed and discordant and that he could have achieved his objectives by putting his ideas in a book instead of making the Qur'ān do this indiscriminately subjecting the texts to his desires.<sup>1035</sup>

### **Fifteen: Citing from Westerners' ideas**

The *al-Jawāhir* has been vigorously challenged by a number of writers due to the fact that it cites from westerners' ideas<sup>1036</sup>. Muḥammad Muḥammad Ḥussein, for example, goes on to say:

Nothing detracts from the worth of this exegesis except Shaykh Ṭanṭāwī's inclusion of what he learnt from Westerners of Spiritism. He likewise relies on many western modern views in experimental and mathematical studies exceed the bounds of scientific premise. He applies these ideas and rulings of conjecture to the Qur'ān. Therefore, his exegesis is not reliable as a piece of scientific exegesis.<sup>1037</sup>

In his book on *The Orientalists and its effects in contemporary Islamic Thought*, Malik bin Nabi lists this attitude, which he himself has criticised and believed that the *al-Jawāhir*, was a "superficial" response to westerners which announced that the Arabs had not had any luck in the building of science and that he had taken

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<sup>1034</sup> Al-Dhahabī, *Al-Ittijāhāt al-Munḥarifa fī Tafsīr al-Qur'ān al-Karīm*, p.88.

<sup>1035</sup> Al-Sabbagh, Muḥammad, *Lamaḥāt fī 'Ulūm al-Qur'ān wa Ittijāhāt al-Tafsīr*, pp.209-210.

<sup>1036</sup> There are many examples of westerners' ideas in the *al-Jawāhir*. For examples, Newton, Galileo, Kepler, Martin Luther, Thomas More, and Weber, see: *al-Jawāhir*, 2:21-23, 3:97-99, and 17:24-26. The sources of western ideas have been discussed in chapter 4.4.3 under "various scientific books, religious and non-religious", pp.191-196.

<sup>1037</sup> Muḥammad Muḥammad Hussein, *al-Ittijāhāt al-Waṭaniya fī al-Adab al-Mu'āṣir*, 2:342.

on the role of quieting the inner conscience of Muslims in the face of the great western civilisation<sup>1038</sup> as he says:

There is no doubt that a brave work such as Ṭanṭāwī's exegesis, in which we do not see a great deal of value, reflects the phenomena of the accumulation of information to the point that it is closer to a circle of knowledge than to an exegesis of the Qur'ān. It expresses a new phenomenon, the sterile to the secular influence on our thoughts. This has nothing to do with Islamic thought but I nothing more than a process of compensation in an area in which the challenge of Western civilisation is most greatly felt.<sup>1039</sup>

Likewise, in the *Bāb al-Murāsala wa al-Munāẓara fī Majalla al-Manār*, 'Abd al-Rahman Nāṣir al-Sa'adī points out that the *al-Jawāhir* contains many ancient philosophical atheistic views such as; the origins of the unity of existence and that philosophy based on law is mere fancy and uses untruthful examples.<sup>1040</sup> According to al-Sa'adī, Ṭanṭāwī had wrote of these ideas when commenting on *sūra al-Baqara*.<sup>1041</sup> He adds that Ṭanṭāwī expressed the same views as the westerners and philosophers perhaps without intending to and was perhaps a believer of sound conviction.<sup>1042</sup>

However, Ṭanṭāwī counters back the criticisms that have made by quoting the Qur'ān, 16:43: "And before you also, the messengers We sent were but men, to whom We granted inspiration: if you realize this not, ask of those who possess the message." According to Ṭanṭāwī, this verse asks the people of the message if they do not know to take learning from those who know of science and knowledge.<sup>1043</sup>

In respond to the criticism, Ṭanṭāwī also quotes an example of the prophet's history as he says;

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<sup>1038</sup> Malik bin Nabi, *The Orientalists and its effects in contemporary Islamic Thought*, p.28, p.30 and p.34.

<sup>1039</sup> *Ibid*, p.29.

<sup>1040</sup> Al-Sa'adi, *Bāb al-Murāsala wa al-Munāẓara fī Majalla al-Manār*, vol.29, part 2, p.143.

<sup>1041</sup> Al-Sa'adi, *Bāb al-Murāsala wa al-Munāẓara fī Majalla al-Manār*, p.144.

<sup>1042</sup> *Ibid*.

<sup>1043</sup> *Al-Jawāhir*, 1:117.

The Prophet (PBWH) took the opinion of Salman, the Persian in digging trenches around the city during the battle of *Khandaq* even though he was non-Arab but his idea was superb.<sup>1044</sup>

Ṭanṭāwī continues his respond by arguing that there is nothing wrong with learning from the Westerners due to the fact that the advancement of the Islamic nation depends on the study of science, an area in which Westerners have in order to benefit from them and to facilitate matters of life and development.<sup>1045</sup>

### **Sixteen: Placing Science of Creation above the Science of Islam**

Every subject in Islamic science has its merit, status, origins and benefits. The purpose of these studies was to advance Islamic civilization and its affairs, contribute to the education of Muslims and teach them about their faith and doctrines.

The researcher is not surprised when he finds that Ṭanṭāwī belittles these studies. Ṭanṭāwī sees jurisprudence as a sign of hard heartedness and mean spiritedness<sup>1046</sup> and believes that observing the universe is more sublime and worthier than worship.<sup>1047</sup> Ṭanṭāwī also believes that the scholar who knows the upper and lower worlds and their beauty and order and the limit of every art is more knowledgeable than a mere exegete.<sup>1048</sup>

Indeed, Ṭanṭāwī believes that those who read the science of astronomy and mathematics and other subjects are a true monotheist, more so than one who only learns the known study of monotheisms.<sup>1049</sup> Also, he believes that we see time and again that Islam resembles a tree with a heart and branches. The heart which is better and more important than the branches is the study of creational

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<sup>1044</sup> *Ibid*, 12:60.

<sup>1045</sup> *Al-Jawāhīr*, 12:60.

<sup>1046</sup> *Al-Jawāhīr*, 3:154.

<sup>1047</sup> *Ibid*, 2:82.

<sup>1048</sup> *Ibid*, 1:17.

<sup>1049</sup> *Ibid*, 6:112.



and astronomical sciences and the branches are the study of Sharīa, jurisprudence and language, etc.<sup>1050</sup>

In this context, Rashīd Riḍā believes that there is no objection to bringing the merits of science to the forth as science had a great importance in facilitating the affairs of living and achieving comfort and happiness. However, according to Riḍā, Ṭanṭāwī is not right to mix science with religion and the life of worship.<sup>1051</sup>

#### **5.4 THE INFLUENCE OF SCHOLARS AND EXEGETES ON THE *AL-JAWĀHIR* AND HIS INFLUENCE ON LATER EXEGETES AND WRITERS**

In this section, the researcher will examine the influence of previous exegetes on the *al-Jawāhir* and then Ṭanṭāwī's influence on the exegeses and writings that came after the *al-Jawāhir*. The researcher does not mean by having this that he has studied all the exegeses and writings of the great scholars. However, the researcher has only perused the pertinent eminent books and what has feel into his hands in the way of other scientific books.

##### **5.4.1 The Influence of Scholars and Exegetes on the *al-Jawāhir***

When examining Ṭanṭāwī's sources, it is clear to us that Ṭanṭāwī relied on two exegeses, those of al-Bayḍāwī and al-Rāzī. This is in addition to quoting from a number of specific areas in other exegeses. However, Ṭanṭāwī did not reveal to us the secret of why he chose those two works; it remains a matter of study and deduction.

In referring to Bayḍāwī's exegesis, researcher found one of its many merits is that it combines Qur'ānic exegesis with analysis of Arabic grammar. Another merit is that it is a concise, finely expressed exegesis which is committed to

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<sup>1050</sup> *Ibid*, 5:200-201.

<sup>1051</sup> Rashīd Riḍā, *Tafsīr al-Manār*, vol.1, p.67.

academic advantage. It also seldom refers to Israelite exegeses (*Isrāīliyāt*)<sup>1052</sup>. Indeed, it has been praised by the greatest of scholars such as; al-Suyūṭī and others and its number of annotations increased to over forty.<sup>1053</sup> Perhaps it was these characteristics which made Ṭanṭāwī depend on and utilise it, in particular the fact that it was concise and in accordance with the Sunna.

Perhaps Bayḍāwī's interest in the sciences and concentration on the creation verses in the Qur'ān were among the factors which attracted Ṭanṭāwī to refer this exegesis as Dhahabī says, "When Bayḍāwī spoke of the creation verses, he did not leave the subject before plunging into a discussion of creation and nature."<sup>1054</sup>

The other exegesis which Ṭanṭāwī relied on was that of Rāzī, although this was less than his reliance on Bayḍāwī. When examining the subjects which Ṭanṭāwī took from, it appears that Rāzī's greatness was in the field of rulings and jurisprudence. The researcher knows that Ṭanṭāwī was not one of those inclined to detailed study of Sharī'a law and that in his exegesis; he preferred to write a summary. It appears that he found his like in Rāzī's exegesis which summarised the manifold opinions along with the names of their originator.

Perhaps one of the factors which prompted Ṭanṭāwī to concentrate on Rāzī's exegesis regarding the field of jurisprudence is that Rāzī was a Shāfi'ī and promoted his doctrine. It is known that the Shāfi'ī school of thought is mostly adhered to -at present- by the people of Egypt. Thus, Ṭanṭāwī wished to explain to the people the rulings of the school which applied to them.

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<sup>1052</sup> *Isrāīliyāt* means reports that contain elements of the legendary and religious literature of the Jews, but more inclusively and more commonly it also refers to Christian, Zoroastrian, and other Near Eastern elements including folklore. For details, see: Gordon Newby. (1979). *Tafsīr Isrāīliyāt*, Journal of the American Academy of Religion, Thematic Issue S 47/4, p.686. Also, see: Abdullah Aydemir. (1985). *Tefsir de İsrailiyat*, Ankara: Beyan Yayınevi, p.29.

<sup>1053</sup> Muḥammad Ibn al-Āshūr, *al-Tafsīr wa Rijālihi*, pp.135-137, and pp.141-147. See also: Muḥammad Ḥussein al-Dhahabī, *al-Tafsīr wa al-Mufasssīrūn*, pp.297-304.

<sup>1054</sup> Muḥammad Ḥussein al-Dhahabī, *al-Tafsīr wa al-Mufasssīrūn*, vol.1, p.300.

The researcher found that there is a broad harmony between the ideas of Ṭaṇṭāwī and Rāzī; they were both adherents of the school of Qur'ānic scientific exegesis, both were distinguished in their scientific endeavors and their love of sciences of horizon and nature, philosophy and all sciences. Indeed, Rāzī's exegesis contained many fields of studies; it became an "encyclopedia" and it was said that it "had everything in it except exegeses." Ṭaṇṭāwī followed the same method and similar remarks were made about his work.

In the previous section, the researcher indicated that Ṭaṇṭāwī relied greatly on Rāzī's words and he considered Rāzī's to be a *hujja* and quoted him repeatedly.

There was another scholar who Ṭaṇṭāwī was clearly influenced by and who he took from when writing the *al-Jawāhir*. This was Ghazzālī and Ṭaṇṭāwī was one of the greatest admirers of him and his methods as well as the way he brought together the study of religion and the sciences of the temporal world.<sup>1055</sup> This planted a desire in Ṭaṇṭāwī's soul to follow in his footsteps and bring together religion and science. When he quoted some Qur'ānic verses from his book; *al-Tāj al-Muraṣṣa'*, Ṭaṇṭāwī said: "I asked God make me able to make an exegesis of the Qur'ān in the same style referred to by Ghazzālī."<sup>1056</sup>

Indeed, Ṭaṇṭāwī had admired and was deeply impressed by Ghazzālī's way of interpreting the Qur'ānic verses. He imitated this technique when writing the *al-Jawāhir* and mentioned various sciences when interpreting the verses on creations. Ghazzālī's influence on Ṭaṇṭāwī is apparent in his book; *Jawāhir al-Qur'ān* in which verses of the Qur'ān are divided into verses of science and verses of ethics. Ṭaṇṭāwī confirmed this division in his exegesis. He focused a great deal on the verses which related to creations specified by Ghazzālī and began to demonstrate the ancient and modern science connected with the Qur'ānic verses.

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<sup>1055</sup> Ṭaṇṭāwī, *al-Tāj al-Muraṣṣa'*, p.28.

<sup>1056</sup> *Ibid*, p.195.

In referring to Ghazzālī's book; *al-Hikma fī Makhlūqāt Allah*, the researcher finds an obvious connection between the technique in this book and Ṭanṭāwī's technique used in the *al-Jawāhir*. For example, Ghazzālī quoted at the beginning of each section of his book on a verse of creation and then spoke in details of the wonders of God's creation in it. In the *al-Jawāhir*, Ṭanṭāwī uses the same method.

To conclude this thought, the researcher will quote a small adage from Ghazzālī's book. It speaks of the Qur'ān, 6:38;

No creature is there crawling on the earth, no bird flying with its wings  
but they are nations like unto yourselves. We have neglected nothing  
in the Book; then to their Lord they shall be mustered.

With regards to this verse, al-Ghazzālī spoke of ants and how God stirs them to wonderful work such as; building their homes in high places to avoid floods, working together in transporting particles and storing them for times when it is impossible to go out, breaking them up so the dew does not make them grow again, taking them out if the earth gets wet and leaving them to dry.<sup>1057</sup> Simultaneously, Ṭanṭāwī spoke in the same way of bees, spiders, silkworms and flies, the eagle and the crow, and insects. This was all via one verse of the Qur'ān and by the same measure the rest of the verses of science had a particular aspect of influence.

#### **5.4.2 The Influence of the *al-Jawāhir* on Exegetes and Writers**

The *al-Jawāhir* exegesis had an outstanding impact on the writings that came after it. However, it is difficult to describe this precisely as some of them were influenced by his methods and ideas without quoting him. The researcher may therefore say that the *al-Jawāhir* had a general influence on developing the methods of scientific Qur'ānic exegesis and a particular effect on certain writings.

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<sup>1057</sup> Al-Ghazzālī, *al-Hikma fī Makhlūqāt Allah*, pp.89-96.

According to 'Abd al-Ghanī al-Rajihī there are influences of the *al-Jawāhir* on exegetes and writers as he says;

I think that this movement by Ṭanṭāwī was the basis for everything that came after him. They were built on the foundation he lay down and they entered through the door which he opened. Writers and researchers then came together in this technique which they called scientific exegesis or scientific miracles of the Qur'ān.<sup>1058</sup>

As for the special influence of the *al-Jawāhir*, the researcher has been able to identify a number of books whose authors have been affected by it and its technique. These are as follows:

a. *The al-Marāghī Exegesis* by Aḥmad Mustāpha al-Marāghī<sup>1059</sup>

After reviewing this exegesis, the researcher found that it is one of the most strongly influenced by the *al-Jawāhir*. Its author announced in the introduction that the material of his exegesis rested on several other exegeses, among them Ṭanṭāwī's *al-Jawāhir*.<sup>1060</sup> The researcher analyzed both exegeses and found that Marāghī's contains many parts of the *al-Jawāhir*, even the words are almost as one. It can be noted that Marāghī does not make clear the source of the interpretation of verses but suffices by mentioning, at the beginning of his exegesis, his use of a number of sources.

In order to clarify, it is sufficient to use two examples: The first is from an interpretation of a verse from Qur'ān, 41:9

What do you disbelieve in Him who created the earth in two days, and do you set up compeers to Him? That is he Lord of all Being.

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<sup>1058</sup> Al-Rajihī, 'Abd al-Ghanī, *kaif al-Tafsīr al-'Ilmī li al-Qur'ān* in *Munabber, Al-Islām* magazine, Year 23, Issue 12, 23<sup>rd</sup> March 1966, p.123.

<sup>1059</sup> Aḥmad Mustāpha bin Marāghī was a scholar and exegete who graduated from Cairo University, Egypt and then taught in *Dār al-'Ulūm* in Cairo. He also taught in Khartoum, Sudan. Marāghī had published a number of books and his exegesis is considered as one of great contributions in contemporary Muslim world. He died in Cairo in 1952. For details of his biography, see: 'Adīl Nuweidh, *Mu'jam al-Mufasssīrīn*, 1:80. Also see: al-Zarkalī, *al-A'lām*, 1:258.

<sup>1060</sup> Al-Marāghī, Aḥmad Mustāpha, *Tafsīr al-Marāghī*, 1:22.

With regards to the verse, Marāghī says:

'This is the Lord of all Being.' That is, he who created the earth in two stages. In the first one, he made it solid after it was a ball of gas. He then made it into twenty-six plates and six mountains which have been shown by geologists."<sup>1061</sup>

On the other hand, Ṭanṭāwī says the following:

'He' who created the earth in two stages, a solid one after it was a gas ball and made it into twenty-six plates, in six mountains which can be seen in geology. Its density is a stage and the structure of its plates is a stage.<sup>1062</sup>

The second example is that from the Qur'ān, 52:6: "And the sea swarming".

In reference to the above verse, al-Marāghī says:

"*Maşjūr*" means a burning stove, as in to light or kindle fire. It means that in the centre of the earth, modern science shows this and the ancient peoples did not know of it. This is referred to the sayings of the prophet, narrated by 'Abdullah bin 'Umar: "Man does not travel the sea except for war or pilgrimage for underneath the sea there is a fire and underneath the fire there is a sea."<sup>1063</sup>

In the *al-Jawāhir* text, on the other hand, says:

'And the sea swarming', i.e. a burning stove. In the middle of an oven is a furnace, as said by Ibn 'Abbās. This is the sea which has been discovered in the current era and has been referred to by the sayings of the Prophet although the ancient peoples did not know of it. 'Abdullah bin 'Umar narrated: "Man does not travel..."<sup>1064</sup> There are many other similar examples.<sup>1065</sup>

Marāghī was so impressed by Ṭanṭāwī that he adopted the belief of Spirits.<sup>1066</sup>

Also, like Ṭanṭāwī, Marāghī began to feel regret for the state of the nation and

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<sup>1061</sup> *Ibid*, 24:110.

<sup>1062</sup> *Al-Jawāhir*, 19:29.

<sup>1063</sup> Al-Marāghī, *Tafsīr al-Marāghī*, 27:17.

<sup>1064</sup> *Al-Jawāhir*, 23:206.

<sup>1065</sup> See: for examples, *Tafsīr al-Marāghī*, 22:71-72 and *al-Jawāhir*, 16:178, *Tafsīr al-Marāghī*, 24:111 and *al-Jawāhir*, 19:90, *Tafsīr al-Marāghī*, 27:44 and *al-Jawāhir*, 23:213.

<sup>1066</sup> See: *Tafsīr al-Marāghī*, 27:46.

urged to look towards science, modern knowledge, progress and sophistication.<sup>1067</sup>

b. The Writings of `Abd al-Razak Nawfal

`Abd al-Razak Nawfal was among the enthusiasts of scientific exegesis of the Qur`ān and demonstration of its scientific miracles. He published many books comprising of these ideas, many of them both directly and indirectly influenced by the *al-Jawāhir*.

After reviewing his works, the researcher found that the influence could be seen in his two books: *Allah wa al-'Ilm al-Hadīth* and *al-Islām wa al-'Ilm al-Hadīth*.

`Abd al-Razak Nawfal made clear that he had utilized a number of sources, among them the *al-Jawāhir*<sup>1068</sup> which he quoted from fully and correctly.

c. The Articles of Ḥussein al-Ḥarawī<sup>1069</sup>

According to Muḥammad Muḥammad Ḥussein, Muḥammad Ḥussein al-Ḥarawī was influenced by Ṭanṭāwī's method of exegesis and took from him exegesis of some of the Qur`ānic verses on creations and quoted him on the concept of relying on science when interpreting the Qur`ān and revealing its miracles.<sup>1070</sup>

This study has given an account of and the reasons for the widespread use of the *al-Jawāhir* due to the writers and exegetes that were influenced by Ṭanṭāwī; it may be that there are others whose writings are scattered throughout books

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<sup>1067</sup> *Ibid*, 8:137.

<sup>1068</sup> `Abd al-Razak Nawfal, *Allah wa al-'Ilm al-Hadīth*, p.270 and *al-Islām wa al-'Ilm al-Hadīth*, p.198.

<sup>1069</sup> Muḥammad Ḥussein al-Ḥarawī was an Egyptian medical doctor. According to Anwār al-Jundī, al-Ḥarawī carried a banner for resisting the campaign of skepticism and westernisation as well as stirring up suspicion of Islamic thought. He wrote a number of books and articles on medicine and Islam including *al-Taṭawūrāt al-'Ilmiya fī al-Qur`ān*. Al-Ḥarawī died in 1954. For details of his biography, see: Anwār al-Jundī, *I'lām wa Ashāb al-Aqlām*, pp.133-138.

<sup>1070</sup> Muḥammad Muḥammad Ḥussein, *al-Ittijāhāt al-Waṭaniya fī al-Adāb al-Mu`āsir*, vol.2, p.342.

and magazines throughout the different parts of the great Islamic world. Based on comparison between several books and exegeses by writers and scholars with the *al-Jawāhir*, the researcher found it to have had an impact on them. However, the researcher disagrees with the veracity of 'Abd al-Ghānī al-Rājihī's claim that Ṭanṭāwī's scientific direction in exegesis influenced to *al-Manār* exegesis by Rashīd Ridā as Rashīd Ridā himself was not pleased by Ṭanṭāwī's technique of exegesis.<sup>1071</sup>

## 5.5 PECULIAR ANALYSIS AND CONCLUSIONS

Every scholar and writer has his own method of analysis and thought and a particular way of arriving at conclusions. This can show the extent of his innovation and understanding. This should be something to which personal effort and striving is applied, but -in my point of views- not without a measure of restraint. There must be constraints and rules to prevent error in human thinking and perhaps the most important conditions which control a scholar is that his thinking must not transgress what is reasonable and inherited from previous generations. It must not contradict Sharīa and must not divert from the technique of safe and sound mind.

When studying the *al-Jawāhir*, it seemed to me that Ṭanṭāwī engaged in bizarre labours and farfetched interpretations of which it is difficult for us to be convinced or to convince others. He crossed what is seen as the accepted line of Islamic thought.

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<sup>1071</sup> As far as *al-Manār* exegesis by Rashīd Ridā is concerned, the researcher found that Ridā used a moderate approach in dealing with the *al-Jawāhir*. In some extent, he criticized and against the *al-Jawāhir* and in some extent, he accepted it due to its huge discussions on earth, sky, astronomy, plants and animals. See: *al-Manār* magazine, chapter *Fatwa al-Manār*, vol.7, 30 January 1929, pp.515-517.



The following presents some examples which show the truth of what the researcher claims. We will first examine his interpretation of the essence of the mission of the Prophet (PBWH) in Mecca and Medina as Ṭanṭāwī says:

In my view twenty-three years are enough for a Muslim to learn everything he needs and the mission of the Prophet (PBWH) was twenty-three years. The Prophet first preached knowledge and morals and then –after emigrating- preached order, society, and preservation of the nation. This was education for the youth as in childhood there is a longing for the beauty which surrounds us on the earth and in the sky. The specialist arts of agriculture and engineering and trade were for the benefit of the Islamic nation...<sup>1072</sup>

In another example, Ṭanṭāwī claims that real faith in the Islamic community depended on sciences and industry as he says:

Real faith is connected with the general order of the Nation, making it just and striving for the completion of science and industry. In an Islamic nation such as this its faith will be true and perfect.<sup>1073</sup>

Ṭanṭāwī strived to define what was meant from the saved group of the seventy-two groups, saying: "What is meant is that the society which holds fast to the knowledge of *sūra al-Anbiyā'* and preserves their nation and are scholars of all the arts and industries."<sup>1074</sup>

Indeed, Ṭanṭāwī saw prayer as a spiritual worship which connects man to his creator, as having a deep link to science as he says: "Every prostration in prayer contains the science of astronomy and a study of the wonders of psychology, instincts and forces of the upper and lower worlds."<sup>1075</sup>

In fact, Ṭanṭāwī pondered the wisdom of the Qur'ān, 7:31:

O Children of Adam! Wear your beautiful apparel at every time and place of prayer: eat and drink: But waste not by excess, for Allah loveth not the wasters.

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<sup>1072</sup> *Al-Jawāhīr*, 7:243.

<sup>1073</sup> *Al-Jawāhīr*, 5:11.

<sup>1074</sup> *Ibid*, 10:236.

<sup>1075</sup> *Ibid*, 6:112.

In explaining these verses, Ṭanṭāwī says;

This symbolizes that as prayer requires cleanliness it needs a healthy body and present mind. There can be no health or presence of mind except by knowing the science of health, which is required even more than cleanliness.<sup>1076</sup>

It appears to me as a researcher that Ṭanṭāwī wanted to bind people to science and urge them to study it but he did this in a transgressing and arbitrary manner and strayed from the safe and logical path. As the analytical and critical approach in this study show that it is wrong to imagine that the Qur'ān was revealed to explain the laws of science and the structure of the universe. This is not the mission of the Qur'ān and thinking in this way restricts the human mind. Even though the term of science has an exalted status in human life as it enables humanity to live a gracious life of prosperity and peace of mind, but science and the Qur'ān are two separate entity. Therefore, we have to preserve the Qur'ān as a book of guidance. When we scrutinize the entirety of the Qur'ān, we can see that the primary and greatest aim for which this book was revealed was to be guidance to humanity in all times and places and to establish law and Nation to ensure a stable life.

The Qur'ān is a complete education and way of life for individuals and societies, a divine and just constitution. It is a book which brings mankind out of darkness and into light and leads to a noble and upright life. While, sciences are not the first objective of the Qur'ān but a part of the lives of the people for which the Qur'ān was revealed to shape and reform. It is sufficient for us that it provided the social, psychological and intellectual environment in which frees the mind and reveals the secrets of existence.

Based on the critical analysis presented in this study, it could be possible to state in here that Ṭanṭāwī fails to draw a distinction between his feelings of the meaning and the meaning itself. The mixture between the two would lead to

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<sup>1076</sup> *Ibid*, 4:155.

invaluable exegesis. Therefore, the *al-Jawāhir* might have been far more persuasive if Ṭanṭāwī had considered the content of the verses and the truth of the meaning.

In addition, the *al-Jawāhir*, as it has been shown that Ṭanṭāwī chose assorted literary styles<sup>1077</sup> to present his book to the people and arouse their passion for the subjects he wrote of. In my point of views, the dependence on such modes is not appropriate for books of exegesis and should be avoided out of respect for the Qurʾān and to preserve its sanctity.

The researcher believes that anyone who wishes to interpret the Qurʾān should not overlook this truth. If they do so their interpretation will stray of this great objective and the reader will miss the opportunity to obtain real benefit from the Qurʾān and its guidance. In term of the *al-Jawāhir* as an encyclopaedia, the researcher affirms that there is no doubt that the information cited by Ṭanṭāwī has benefits and there is still a need for it. However, it is certain that it would have been possible to do without much of it and to refrain from mentioning it when interpreting the Qurʾānic verses.

In positive sides, the scientific exegesis of the *al-Jawāhir* could not be denied because it is a branch of the inimitability of Qurʾān and its language especially is considered as unique and could not be challenged by the scholars of Arabic literature. Besides that, the inimitability of Qurʾān would be narrating on the occurrences in the future and to preserve the sanctity of the Qurʾān while interpreting it, there are several conditions that need to be followed:

First: The scientific exegesis can only be interpreted except by the two groups of people:

- i. Those who master the study of natural sciences.
- ii. Those who master the field of exegesis.

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<sup>1077</sup> There are many examples of literary style in the *al-Jawāhir*. For examples, see: *al-Jawāhir*, 6:62 and 143.

Second: The scope of discussion is not to be prolonged in interpreting the verses until dividing them from the book of exegesis into the book of scientific researches.

Third: The verses that are related to one another in certain topics cannot be separated when interpreting them via scientific exegesis. This action if done so will diverge the meaning from the actual ones.

Fourth: Muslims should have strong believed in the scientific terms of the Qur'ān as the absolute truth that are not contradicting with the Muslim world. Indeed, every contradiction is based on the limited research on the field or narrowing the meaning of the dictums in the Qur'ān.

Fifth: The Qur'ān cannot be interpreted with the academic interpretations unless with findings based on researches or scientific findings related to it. It should not be enacted from assumptions and high-technology gadgets that change from time to time.

## CONCLUSION AND REFLECTIONS

The significant findings of all the five chapters above, despite their limitations which are quite unavoidable especially in a timed study like the present, are positive enough to make us rather confidently say that our suggested hypothesis is reasonably verified and that the intended purposes of the study are considerably accomplished. To illustrate this in short, the researcher shall conclude this challenging and time-consuming, though worthwhile, study by summing up the key findings of all the discussion above and add few fresh clarifying points, which have not found a proper place in the previous chapters.

There are several outcomes based on the examination of the scientific exegesis and the views from the exegetes and towards it as follow:

First: Scientific exegesis has become popular in contemporary Muslims world. If let say, there are no conditions attached, this type of exegesis would provide positive significant and good opportunity for those who would like to master in this knowledge, but surely there have to be some conditions as mentioned above.

Second: It does not accord with the consensus of the main body of exegesis to reject scientific exegesis with a reason that it was not practiced during the Prophet Muḥammad (PBWH) and the companions' time. Muslims believe that scientific exegesis is inclusive in the scope of Qur'ānic interpretation together with *tafsīr bi al-ra'y* whereby the scholars have unanimously agreed to accept it as one of the branches of exegesis based on the terms listed.

Third: The cosmological verses of the Qur'ān are literally a guide and at the same time call upon people to study and observe its meanings.

Fourth: The beginning of scientific exegesis has already existed during the companions time but not as obvious as it is today. This is because the interpretation of cosmological verses that are connected with scientific exegesis were not widely discussed by the companions and the Messenger himself as compared to the verses that touched on faith or theology and rules and regulations. This type of exegesis expanded in the era of the Abbasid ruling in the 5<sup>th</sup> year of *hijrī* that later became one of the branches of exegesis since the 14<sup>th</sup> century until today.

Fifth: Some prominent scholars accepted the scientific exegesis by mentioning its significant to readers and some of them against the scientific exegesis due to the fact that the Qur'ān is the book of guidance and not the book of science. Indeed, they claimed that the Qur'ān supposed to be maintained and preserved from any changes. In their argument, however, accept research findings as constantly changing with time and it will affect the Qur'ān to the criticism. In my point of views, the view of the third group is the most consistent and acceptable as compared to the remaining two groups based on the earlier debates. The main essence for its acceptability is that the Qur'ān connects the two main elements which are as guidance and a source of knowledge to all and it does not contradict with others.

Sixth: The relatively lengthy discussion of Ṭanṭāwī's life from childhood to death in detail has led to the following two main findings. The first is that Ṭanṭāwī was a diligent scholar, a zealous Muslim, a reformist missionary, an active writer, a true patriot and a devout Shaykh. This has been readily justified by the prominent Muslim scholars and western scholars such as; Muṣṭapha al-Ḥadeedī, Muḥammad 'Abd al-Jawwād, 'Abd al-'Azīz 'Aṭīya, Christian Gibb, Santillana, and Baron Carra de Vaux. The second main finding is that

Ṭanṭāwī was distinguished in gathering diverse contemporary science, an act to which he dedicated his time and soul, and the producing of new theories which showed the necessity of reconciling the sciences of religion and the universe. This has been supported by the teachings in his famous book, the *al-Jawāhir* which is aimed to be a major work project in contemporary Muslims world.

Seventh: By discussing a number of phenomena and the age in which Ṭanṭāwī lived, it is aimed to ascertain the influences present on his life, thoughts, goals and mission and it appears that the Islamic nation was living in a difficult era. During this time the caliphate was eroded and then fell and the colonists dominated Muslim lands by invasion, occupation, the looting of goods, corruption of society and the expulsion of intellectuals.

Eighth: By exploring all aspects of Ṭanṭāwī's works, including his writings on the Qur'ān, Arabic language, politics, jurisprudence, philosophy, contemporary sciences, spiritualism, and education, it has become quite clear that the extent of such efforts is remarkable for educating the rest of the generations and for benefits of his thoughts and learning.

After spending large amounts of time studying the *al-Jawāhir* and becoming immersed in its thoughts, pages and opinions, it is requisite that the researcher offers his own assessment on it. The researcher's approach to the study of Ṭanṭāwī goes beyond producing a descriptive discussion on his work, thoughts and methodology. Many of his positions and works in dealing with the scientific exegesis have been critically discussed and assessed. In these studies, the researcher pointed out scholars' criticism whenever he thought there was some inconsistency in Ṭanṭāwī's views.

By writing his exegesis, Ṭanṭāwī almost certainly intended to reach a broad audience with varied levels of scholarly and the examination of the scientific exegesis of the *al-Jawāhir* revealed nine key points as the following:

First: The *al-Jawāhir* is the product of an anxious stage of the life of the Islamic nation and the harsh conditions which dominated most of the Islamic world including Egypt. For this reason, Ṭanṭāwī attempts to offer the hand of assistance in order to advance the nation as much as he could. Indeed, his efforts brought him to believe that knowledge was the way to salvation in order to spread science and education to the Muslims. Ṭanṭāwī achieved the goal set by the Qurʾān or found the appropriate means to present his thoughts and views.

Second: The *al-Jawāhir* represents a trend parallel to an old school of thought, the pioneers of which were philosophers who attempted to reconcile philosophy and religion. This was in the dazzling wake of the Greek philosophers whose books were translated into Arabic and invaded the Islamic world. History repeats itself as the Muslims were stunned by the scientific superiority which arose in Europe they strived to reconcile religion and science. Science took the place of philosophy in this contemporary movement.

Third: It can be noted that the *al-Jawāhir* addressed the people of its own age only as if was defined by the nature, circumstances and problems of this particular age. This makes it less relevant to eras outside that of the author and to problems that have already been solved. Although the *al-Jawāhir* was famous in its time and had a large influence -especially outside Egypt- we can see that its use wanes outside the era of Ṭanṭāwī's mission and this is evidenced by the fact that scholars and ordinary people are leaving it aside.



Fourth: Ṭanṭāwī spent many years of his life preparing and penning his exegesis. Much of this was in vain as he did not –and the wage is with God- producing anything which the forefathers had not already brought forth. Indeed, he departed from the methods of the forefathers in commenting on the Qurʾān. The new information in it about science is available in his scientific books and invented by Ṭanṭāwī. He put this information in a typical place – Qurʾān which was intended to be an encyclopedia of science or its theories and experiments. The Qurʾān was and will ever be a field for the constant human sciences.

Fifth: Ṭanṭāwī offered us a complete exegesis of the Qurʾān from his own efforts and intellect and made an interpretation of the scientific verses. In the study, the researcher explained how Ṭanṭāwī made the *al-Jawāhir* a way of realizing his scientific goals and justifying to people, including and especially secularists, the extent of the harmony and correlation between religion and science.

Sixth: This study showed the ways in which Ṭanṭāwī's work was characteristic and then drew up general methods to apply to his exegesis. The researcher also noted that Ṭanṭāwī did not depend on previously established exegesis or its agreed methods. His exegesis was built on an intellectual method and he interpreted the verses in the light of science. However, this does not denote a lack of originality in the *al-Jawāhir*, for it is original in its unique method of treating a Qurʾānic verse and in producing a logical preference.

Seventh: The researcher believes that the *al-Jawāhir* can be relied on completely as it supports from the previously established exegeses. Instead he relied on his own intellect and interpreted according to his own opinion on more than one occasion, breaking the methods of exegesis.

However, some benefits can be gained from his work after one ascertains their credibility and there are some subjects in which he excelled.

Eighth: It appeared to us during a personal study of Ṭanṭāwī and his influence that his intentions were good and his exegesis was his own hard work, his opinion was his own and his wage is with God Almighty. However, good intentions do not change any of the scholars' comments and criticisms of his work. For example, one of criticism which had been made is that the source of Ṭanṭāwī's literal interpretation was taken from Bayḍāwī's exegesis and his interpretation of the verses of rulings was quoted from Rāzī without reference to either of these sources. Indeed, the researcher checked all the various sources which Ṭanṭāwī referred to in his exegesis and quoted the most important and referenced the rest.

Ninth: The researcher searched for the influence of the *al-Jawāhir* in later books and exegeses. However, he did not find any work which used Ṭanṭāwī's method but came across a small number of authors who quotes his ideas on science such as; al-Marāghī, 'Abd al-Razāq Nawfal and Ḥusseīn al-Ḥarawī.

By weighing up all these findings, and considering in a balanced way all the points for and against Ṭanṭāwī's works, the researcher quite confidently assert that classifying the *al-Jawāhir* as a scientific exegesis is fairly justified and that it significantly contributed to the rich of "Islamic scientific exegesis" in contemporary Muslims world. Yet the importance of this exegesis, particularly for those who wish to study scientific exegesis, deserves to be far more widely appreciated. It is to be hoped that the present study has gone some way towards demonstrating the significance of Ṭanṭāwī's *al-Jawāhir* for this field. More generally, therefore, this study may serve a useful contribution to such an assessment.

Perhaps this study will also have confirmed that texts written in Arabic should not escape the purview of anyone wishing to gain a comprehensive knowledge of the religious sciences of Islam. There is still much scope for research in this field. On the *al-Jawāhir* itself, much work remains to be done. A comprehensive study needs to be made of the sources of Ṭanṭāwī's exegesis. This might throw more light on the provenance of the *al-Jawāhir*, and answer such questions as how can the *al-Jawāhir* be distinguished from other scientific exegesis in the 21<sup>st</sup> century. Another valuable study would be to trace the influence of the *al-Jawāhir* not only on the Middle Eastern countries, but also on the European and western countries.

Ṭanṭāwī's scientific exegesis remains a vast but relatively untapped source of information on geology and medicine. The difficulty is that the material is scattered throughout the twenty six volumes of the work. If there are any efforts and initiatives to ensure that the material is rearrange based on its topic and field of studies, it would be easier to a researcher to explore a new study in the future.

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