The Art of Translation: An Early Persian Commentary of the Qur'ān

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Abstract

This article presents a description and analysis of a Persian translation and commentary of the Qur'ān, entitled *Tafsīr-i munīr*, by Abū Naṣr al-Ḥaddādī (d. after 400/1009), the earliest exegetical work in Persian whose author can be identified. A manuscript of this multivolume work housed in the Topkapı Palace Museum of Istanbul offers an important historical testament to the calligraphic development of Persian exegetical writing and the manners in which scholars and authorities sought creative ways to visually balance the sacred Arabic text of the Qur'ān with vernacular exegetic material. The manuscript also reveals a good deal about Qur'ānic book art, as well as the development of Persian commentaries and translations, thus offering further insight into the history of the Qur'ān across the frontiers of Central Asia and Khurasan.

Keywords

Introduction: A Public Gift

On Sunday February 2, 2012 a facsimile edition of a unique, imperial manuscript from a multivolume Persian translation and commentary of the Qurʾān was unveiled before members of Iran's unicameral parliament, the Islamic Consultative Assembly (*majlis-i shūrā-yi Islāmī*), in Tehran. The facsimile edition of the manuscript, the original of which is housed in the Treasury of Holy Relics (*emanet hazinesi*) in the Topkapı Palace Museum of Istanbul, was presented as a gift to the Library of the Majlis by the Director of the Topkapı Museum, Dr. İlber Ortaylı, and the Turkish Ambassador to Tehran, Ümit Yardım. The precious volume, illuminated and copied with the highest calibre of craftsmanship, was originally commissioned by the Ghaznavid Sultan Ibrāhīm b. Masʿūd (r. 451-92/1059-99). The build-up to the unveiling ceremony before parliament had been widely publicized in the Iranian media. Leading politicians, dignitaries, religious scholars, and academics attended the occasion, the proceedings of which were covered by several news organizations. As reported in the press, the timing of the ceremony was intentionally designed to fall on Rabīʿ al-Awwal 12, the traditional date for the celebration of the birth (*mawlid*) of the Prophet. The gift was laden with both political and religious significance.[1]

Two themes were foregrounded in the ceremony, namely, the sacred art of Qurʾānic calligraphy and the early practice of translating the Qurʾān into Persian. When the speaker of parliament, ʿAlī Lārījānī, addressed the assembly, he described the Qurʾān as a force capable of drawing together Muslims, otherwise separated by sectarian differences. Beyond the larger matter of Muslim unity, he presented the gift of the holy book from the Turkish delegation, as a diplomatic gesture of friendship that might unite the Sunnis of Turkey and the Shia of Iran. In a similar vein, Lārījānī remarked that by gripping the Qurʾān, the hearts of believers come together in these otherwise tumultuous times. The materiality suggested in Lārījānī's statement addressed the beauty of the physical copy before parliament, but also it alluded to a long tradition on the corporeal comprehension of scripture. This was further highlighted in Lārijānī's remark that "the Lord in the noble Qurʾān referred to this celestial book as a clear light (*nūr mubīn*), meaning that one should attempt to acquire (*kasb*) the meaning of the noble Qurʾān from the Qurʾān itself and that by grasping (*tamassuk*) on to this divine book the truth of it is then realized."

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1 For coverage of the event, see: www.isna.ir/fa/news/9011-09651; www.khabaronline.ir/ detail/195815/culture/bookIran; www.ibna.ir/vdcdsnofzytoxf6.2a2y.htm; www.abna.co/data .asp?lang=1&id=294933; www.mirasmaktoob.ir/d_newsold.asp?id=2085 (all last accessed September 15, 2014).

Beyond the hermeneutical argument that one should understand the Qurʾān through the Qurʾān, these comments also reflect the vernacular exegetical practice of interpreting the meaning of scripture in Persian. This point was further foregrounded by the Iranian scholar who oversaw the facsimile edition of the manuscript, Dr. Muḥammad ʿImādī Ḥāʾirī, the first to fully draw attention to the significance of the text for the field of Persian exegesis. In his address at the occasion, Ḥāʾirī presented an overview of the work, and the sacred art of Qurʾānic calligraphy, while emphasizing to the audience that, while earlier Persian translations and commentaries are known to have circulated, the Topkapı manuscript represented the earliest dated copy of a Persian translation of the Qurʾān known to exist.

The unveiling of the Topkapı manuscript, or rather its facsimile, is noteworthy on many levels. In chiastic concord, Turkey gifted to Iran a medieval Persian commentary that was copied on the orders of a Turkish sultan. The original manuscript produced at the court of the Turkish Ghaznavids (388-582/998-1186) in modern-day Afghanistan was itself an overtly political act that drew upon the physical power of scripture in the spheres of stately legitimacy. This is also attested to by the value of the manuscript as a material object, with its luxurious use of gold and the monumental script. Furthermore, as the many news outlets stressed in their lead on the ceremony, the manuscript offers an early testament to the practice of translating the Qurʾān into Persian. The codex forms part of the important history of the vernacularization of Qurʾānic learning. Persian followed by Turkish, and then a host of other languages, came to embrace the Qurʾān in a vernacular tradition of exegesis and translation. In the modern period, both Turkey and Iran have remained at the fore in the official promotion of translating the Qurʾān. In this context, the Topkapı manuscript represents a shared heritage of grasping the Qurʾān, as it were, through vernacular exegesis.

Beyond the very overt political statements made before the Iranian *majlis*, the Topkapı manuscript also reveals a good deal about Qurʾānic book art and the development of Persian commentaries and translations. Taken together, the physical and the exegetical implications of the text offer further insight into the history of the Qurʾān across the frontiers of Central Asia and Greater Khurasan. The period in question, from the original production of Ḥaddādī's commentary in Samarqand to its imperial execution in the Ghaznavid court, overlaps with the increased autonomy of regional successor states in the east and the diminishing political authority of the Abbasid caliphate in Baghdad. Through it all, though, Iraq continued to shape the expression of religious and courtly authority. From Ḥaddādī's travels in pursuit of knowledge to the royal cultivation of book culture, the influence of earlier paradigms developed within Iraq is undeniable. Yet, this commentary also reflects palpable forms

of regionalization, articulated in the rise of Persian as a vehicle for religion learning and in the calligraphic artistry expressed in the contexts of courtly manuscript culture.

The Manuscript

Several important pieces of information can be adduced from the imperial codex under consideration, which contains slightly less than a tenth of the Qurʾānic text, from Q 18:60 through the end of Q 22. Foremost is the fact that it almost entirely overlaps with an acephalous manuscript of the same commentary, preserved in the British Library (Or. 6573), which covers Q 18:74 through Q 25:10. In 1974, the Iranian scholar Jalāl Matīnī published an edition of the British Library manuscript as *Tafsīrī bar ʿushrī az Qurʾān-i Majīd* (A Commentary on a Tenth of the Glorious Qurʾān). As Matīnī's title suggests, the British Library manuscript, which is missing an identified number of pages at the beginning and the end, lacks any information concerning the name of the commentary or the identity of its author. From the Topkapı manuscript we now know the author's name, Abū Naṣr al-Ḥaddādī (d. after 400/1009), a Qurʾānic scholar who lived in the city of Samarqand, and we also know the title of the work, the *Tafsīr-i munīr* (The Radiant Commentary). Although the Topkapı copy has been referenced in the study of Islamic art and calligraphy,[2] its connection with the British Library manuscript, its significance for the development of Persian exegesis, and its larger historical value as an artifact of Qurʾānic book culture in the history of Persian vernacularization had gone largely unnoticed.

This situation, however, changed significantly with the recent work of Muḥammad ʿImādī Ḥāʾirī, who has written a series of studies in Persian on Ḥaddādī and the Topkapı manuscript. In 2010, Ḥāʾirī published a short monograph on the manuscript, wherein he drew attention to the relationship between Ḥaddādī's commentary and the British Library copy of the text. He also explored the importance of the Topkapı manuscript in the broader context of Persian exegesis. He incorporated many of these findings and observations into the introduction to his facsimile edition of the Topkapı manuscript

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2 Folios from the manuscript have been previously published in Derman, *Fann al-khaṭṭ*, 177 (fig. 11); Sayyid, *al-Kitāb al-ʿArabī*, II, 562 (plate 7). Two pages appeared in the introduction to Sefercioğlu and İhsanoğlu, *World Bibliography of Translations*, xvi-xviix, which Ḥāʾirī republishes in *Kuhantarīn*, 63 (fig. 1). The entire manuscript has been published as a facsimile under the title *al-Mujallad al-thāmin min maʿānī kitāb Allāh taʿālā wa-tafsīruhu l-munīr*, with introduction by Ḥāʾirī (Tehran, 1390 Sh./2011).

published in 2011. More recently, in 2012, Ḥāʾirī wrote an article further address-
ing the question of Ḥaddādī's identity.[3] This body of Persian scholarship, how-
ever, has received little attention outside of Iran.

In the aggregate, these recent studies illustrate that the history of Qurʾānic
exegesis, of material book cultures, and of the vernacularization of religious
learning is still very much a work in progress. Despite the broad range of mate-
rial already examined, there is much work that remains to be done, in terms
of the codicological analysis of the Topkapi manuscript, the significance of
Ḥaddādī as a scholar and exegete, and the wider exegetical and social contexts
of the commentary in the development of Qurʾānic studies. In this regard, the
present article is designed not only to draw attention to recent Persian research,
but also to further contextualize Ḥaddādī's commentary and the Ghaznavid
imperial manuscript production in light of the broader history of book culture,
religious learning, and translation that supported the development of Persian
exegesis. This is a history that is intimately connected to the regional artic-
ulation of religious and courtly authority. The Topkapı manuscript not only
helps us further illuminate the early rise and reception of vernacular Qurʾānic
hermeneutics, but it also bears testament to the lavish cultivation and circula-
tion of Qurʾānic learning, and with it religious authority, in the courtly contexts
of eastern dynasties.

The Topkapı manuscript preserves a single volume of Ḥaddādī's Persian
commentary. It consists of 239 folios, copied on two types of paper; one is
more brownish than the other. It had been restored at some point in time and
rebound with an Ottoman style of binding. According to the last folio (fol.
239v, fig. 1), the manuscript was copied and gilded by the famed calligrapher,
ʿUthmān b. al-Ḥusayn al-Warrāq, during the months of 484/1091-2.[4] The vol-
ume concludes with an illuminated finispiece (fols. 238v-239r, fig. 2), which
states that the Ghaznavid Sultan Ibrāhīm b. Masʿūd commissioned the work,
a production that was undoubtedly one of many volumes. The manuscript
constitutes an imperial copy of Ḥaddādī's major commentary. The sumptuous
use of gold, the rich color palette, the extensive rubrics, the varying scripts,
and the magisterial artistry of the calligraphy and the decoration all point to
the courtly provenance of the manuscript and highlight its value as a precious

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3 Ḥāʾirī, Kuhantarīn; idem, Muqaddima; idem, Yaftahā-yi digārī.

4 *Katabahu wa-dhahhabahu al-ʿabd ʿUthmān [ʿAlī] b. al-Ḥusayn al-Warrāq al-Ghanzawī fī
   shuhūr sanat arbaʿ wa-thamānīn wa-arbaʿ miʾa.* On the later attempt to alter ʿUthmān's name
   to appear as ʿAlī, see below, page 135. We would also like to thank Ayşe Erdoğdu, Director of
   the Topkapı Palace Museum, as well as Esra Müyesseroğlu, who oversaw reproductions and
   who greatly facilitated our research on this particular manuscript.

FIGURE 1
Colophon of ʿUthmān b. al-Ḥasan al-Warrāq al-Ghaznawī, dated 484/1091-2 (Ḥaddādī, Tafsīr-i munīr, Topkapı Sarayı Müzesi Kütüphanesi, E.H. 209, fol. 239v), courtesy of the Topkapı Palace Museum.
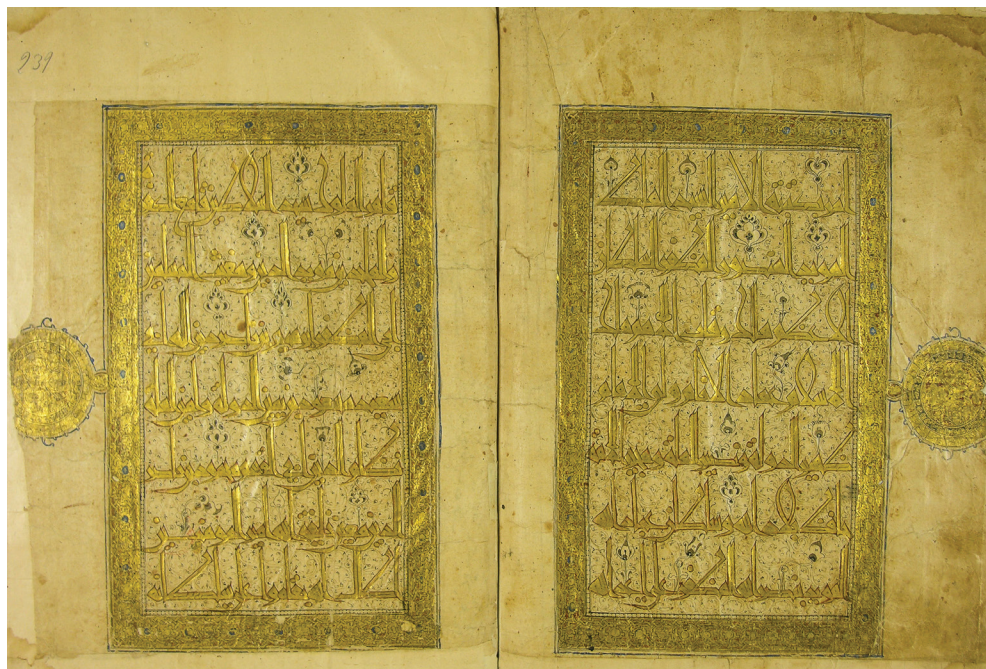

FIGURE 2   *Illuminated finispiece at the orders of Sultan Ibrāhīm b. Masʿūd (Ḥaddādī, Tafsīr-i munīr, TSMK, E.H. 209, fol. 238v-239r), courtesy of the Topkapı Palace Museum.*

object, both in sacred and in monetary terms. Regrettably, the other volumes
of this imperial copy do not appear to be extant.

The manuscript measures 24.5 × 34 cm and is copied on paper in four pri-
mary scripts. The Qurʾānic text, in black, features the newly adopted Qurʾānic
script of the century, the "New Style" (NS), as François Déroche names it.[5] The
Persian commentary is executed in a smaller size of the New Style type, with
rounder features that make it a more legible script, while the Arabic passages
cited in the body of the commentary are copied in a round script, similar to
what is commonly referred to as *muḥaqqaq*; this appears in black, blue, and
red. All the scripts are of high quality and their layout is well studied, indicat-
ing the work of a skilled calligrapher (or calligraphers), who also innovatively
designed the headlines. The vowels are noted on the Qurʾānic text in red while
the *shadda* and *hamza* are noted in green. The unpointed *muhmala* letters
are distinguished by the same letterform below while the *sīn* and *rāʾ* have a
circumflex above to distinguish them from the *shīn* and *zayn*. In an uncom-
mon gesture, the vowels are noted on the Persian text; this gives the work an
aesthetic harmony and makes the overall appearance of the pages resemble
the Arabic in Qurʾānic codices of the period.

The codex is a masterpiece of calligraphy and a supreme expression of gilded
illumination. The full illuminated pages at the beginning and end of the manu-
script, the illuminated banners, indicating the beginning of a Qurʾānic chapter,
and the marginal devices are exquisitely executed. The biography of the manu-
script, the history of its travels from the Ghaznavid court to Topkapı palace of
the Ottoman sultans, is largely unknown. However, some visible signs help us
sketch out part of the story: At one point, the copy formed part of a religious
endowment, as the word *waqf*, signaling its status as a charitable gift, appears

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5   This varied group of scripts, which started developing in the fourth/tenth century, has been
    given descriptive names such as "broken cursive," "semi-Kufic," or "broken Kufic," and geo-
    graphic names such as "Eastern Kufic," among others. Sheila Blair lists the different names
    that have been used in the modern scholarly literature to describe this type of script, see
    Blair, *Islamic Calligraphy*, 144. We will adopt Déroche's naming of this group of scripts, "New
    Abbasid Style" or New Style (NS), which seems the most appropriate for the time being, as
    these calligraphic forms did not develop linearly from the cursive scripts nor from the Kufic
    and are not only confined to the Eastern Islamic lands. See, Déroche, *The Abbasid Tradition*,
    133-5. However, the surviving material copied in the highly stylized New Style originates from
    the Ghaznavid court and more generally from the eastern Islamic lands. Unfortunately, not
    enough material copied in NS survives from Iraq during this period constraining us from
    any conclusion as to where these new scripts were born and developed. Note that the "Old
    Abbasid Style" is Déroche's naming for *kūfī*; however, for the sake of simplicity we will employ
    the general term Kufic to denote all geometric scripts before NS.

twice in the manuscript, in what looks to be ink that either faded or has been intentionally bleached.[6] A later hand has also gone through the manuscript smudging, in discrete instances, the names of several early companions, which would appear to reflect a reader with Shiite sympathies.[7] This may indicate that, at some point in its westward journey, the manuscript passed through an area and period with a large Shiite population, such as Safavid Iran.

The first folio of the Topkapı manuscript (noted as fol. 2r, fig. 3) bears a large gilded design formed by four concentric circles inlaid with florets and tendrils. This decoration frames a rubricated title, in the New Style, outlined in gold, which notes that the tome in question is the eighth volume of the *Maʿānī Kitāb Allāh taʿālā wa-tafsīruhu l-munīr* (Meanings of the Book of God Almighty and its Splendid Commentary). This is followed by a notice written in a smaller vocalized script that identifies this work as among the compositions (*min taṣnīf*) of Abū Naṣr Aḥmad b. Muḥammad b. Ḥamdān b. Muḥammad al-Ḥaddādī (d. after 400/1009), whose name is prefaced with the title "the shaykh imam, the pillar of Islam, and the sword of the sunna" (*al-shaykh al-imām wa-rukn al-Islām wa-sayf al-sunna*). The note ends with a traditional supplication, "may God be pleased with him and sanctify his soul" (*raḍiya Allāhu ʿanhu qaddasa rūḥahu*), indicating that the author is deceased.

The frontispiece of the manuscript is a double page on which an illuminated panel projects a vignette in the margin (fols. 2v-3r, fig. 4). The design of the right panel is made of interlaced circles filled with floral motifs, while the design of the left panel is created by lines forming various geometric shapes, from lozenges to squares, and is filled with smaller geometric ornaments. In both designs, the negative spaces created by the overlaps of various shapes are colored in blue, thus providing depth to the page. The frames surrounding the panels are filled with a geometric interlace of lines intercepted by blue geometric forms. The panel of the right page is framed by a thinner geometric lattice, while the left page has four eight-pointed stars, one in each corner, which together make the following inscription, reading right to left, top to bottom, "the *warrāq* of Ghazna, may God forgive him (*al-warrāq | al-ghaznawī | ghafara Allāhu | lahu*)." This signature hidden within the design points

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6 See Topkapı Sarayı Müzesi Kütüphanesi, Emanet Hazinesi 209 (hereafter E.H. 209), fol. 52v-53r.

7 The names of Abū Bakr, ʿUthmān, and Abū Hurayra have been intentionally smudged; this likely reflects a Shii practice of cursing particularly the Companions (*sabb al-ṣaḥāba*), E.H. 209: Abū Hurayra, fol. 29r, l. 18; fol. 83r, ll. 8, 15; fol. 114v, l. 7; however, his name is not smudged on fol. 35r, l. 3; Abū Bakr, fol. 53v, l. 8; and ʿUthmān, fol. 72r, ll. 4, 13. On the identification of these figures and others in early Imāmī tradition with the hypocrites (*munāfiqūn*) mentioned in the Qurʾān, see Kohlberg, Some Imāmī Views, 152-6.

FIGURE 3   *Title page, with name of author and volume of the collection (Ḥaddādī,*
Tafsīr-i munīr, TSMK, E.H. 209, fol. 2r), courtesy of the Topkapı Palace
Museum.

evidently to ʿUthmān al-Warrāq, the principle copyist and illuminator whose
name is featured at the end of the volume.[8] The vignettes projected from each
panel to the right and left are designed with floral tendrils symmetrically inter-
laced that have the typical polylobed blue contour found in Qurʾāns produced
in Khurasan during the period. The medallion projecting from the left panel

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8   For an earlier example of embedding a signature within the frontispiece, see British Library
     MS Add. 7214, fol. 2v-3r, a Qurʾān copied in 427/1036, likely in Khurasan, by Abū l-Qāsim Saʿīd
     b. Ibrāhīm; the name of the gilder, Abū Manṣūr Nājiʿ b. ʿAbd Allāh is set within the opening
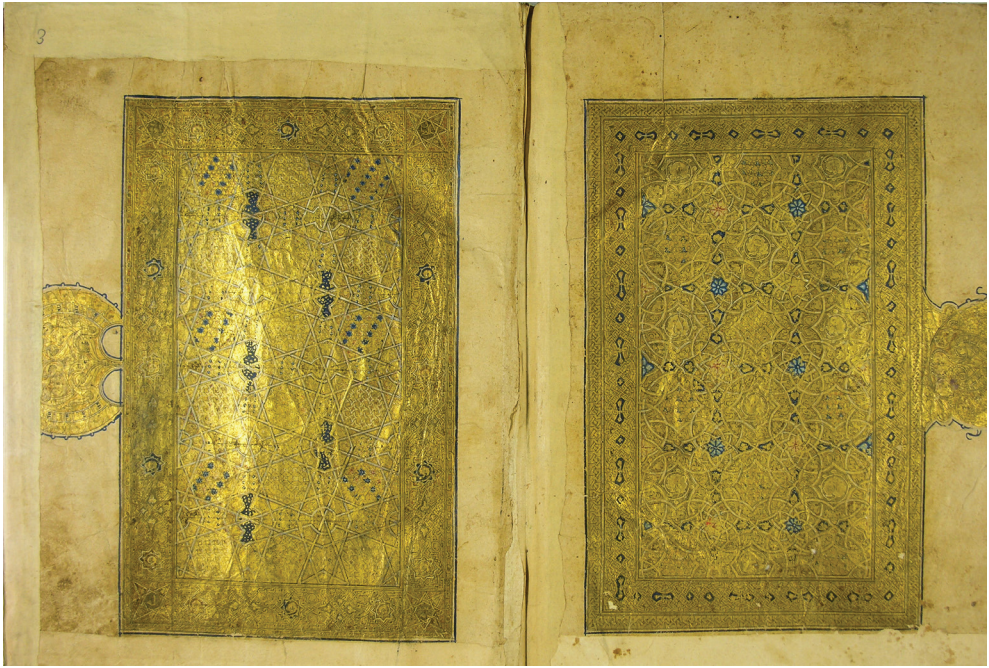   decorative panel, see Duda, Abūʾl-Qāsem Saʿīd.

has a beehive-like frame while the one on the right has a sinuous thin line
extension, both characteristics of the Khurasani type of illuminated vignettes.[9]
A testament to its regional form, the decorative schema that guides the entire
production is also inflected with notable Indic elements.[10]

The opening spread after the frontispiece is prominently illuminated with
thin black floriated scrolls that decorate the ground of the text panel on

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9   For similar medallions see, for example, the Qur'ānic codex in the Bibliothèque national
     de France (BNF Ar. 6041), dated 504/1111-2, and copied in Bust, southwest of Ghazna.
     Published in Déroche, *Catalogue*, II, 121, plates VI and XXV-A. This Qur'ān was copied by
     ʿUthmān b. Muḥammad and illuminated by no other than ʿAlī b. ʿAbd al-Raḥmān, who
     likely copied Topkapı R. 14 and may also have been involved in the production of E.H. 209,
     see below, page 137, note 24.

10   For example, the scrolls decorating the vignettes and the grounds of bands in E.H. 209
     are encountered in stone carving that exhibit Indic motif characteristics, such as pointed
     floral buds with long extended tips, see Karame, *Transformations*. In later Ghurid Qur'āns,
     the contrast between the thin swirling stems and the floral buds recall also Indic architec-
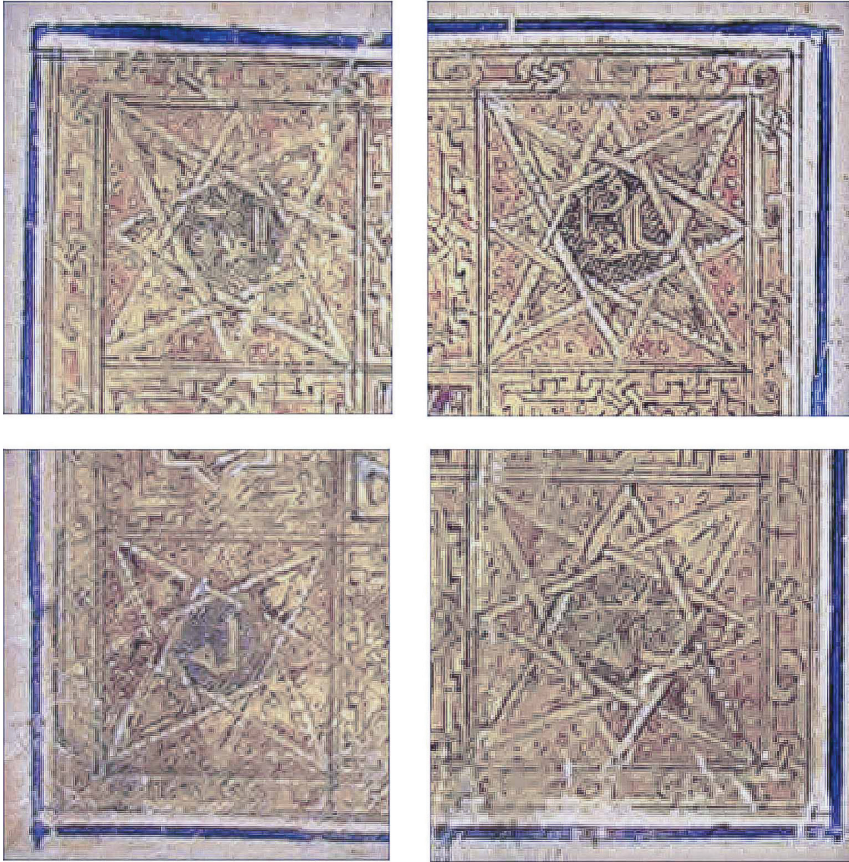   tural motifs.

FIGURE 4B   *Detail of four corners which note* al-warrāq/al-ghaznawī/ghafara Allāhu/lahu
            (Ḥaddādī, Tafsīr-i munīr, TSMK, E.H. 209, fol. 3r).

each page (fig. 5).[11] The right page starts with the title '*Qiṣṣat Mūsā wa-Khiḍr
ʿalayhimā l-salām — qawluhu taʿālā*' (The story of Mūsā and Khiḍr) and is fol-
lowed by Q 18:60 and an accompanying Persian paraphrase. Again, the black
floriated scroll ground reappears at the end of the volume, on the right page
of the closing spread (fols. 237v-238r), which also designs the background of

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11   This corresponds to E.H. 209, fol. 3v and 6r of the modern pagination. In the current
      Topkapı manuscript parts of the first quire, and importantly the opening spread for the
      beginning of the commentary, were re-arranged in the wrong order (from fol. 4r until 8r)
      when it was rebound after restoration. This is why fol. 3v and 6r are separated by a bifo-
      lium while they should be facing each other. The correct order should be: fol. 3, fol. 6 (4),
      fol. 4 (5), fol. 7 (6), fol. 5 (7), fol. 8.

the finispiece (see fig. 2), balancing visually the beginning and the end of the volume. This symmetry from opening to end is further emphasized by the text panels of the closing spread and finispiece that are framed by a gold geometric lattice linked to a vignette in the margin similar in design to those of the opening bifolium.[12] The text panel of this opening spread is framed by a gold geometric lattice and topped by gilded bands with three octagonal shapes in which the number of the eighth volume and an abbreviated title is inscribed — *al-mujallad al-thāmin min maʿānī kitāb Allāh taʿālā*. Medallions from this framing band are projected in the margins, similar in design to the ones projected from the frontispiece, closing pages, and finispiece panels.

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12   Identical background decoration is found in other Qurʾān codices produced in Khurasan, for example the opening spread of a Qurʾān in the Topkapı Palace Museum (E.H. 42), which was copied and gilded by Abū Bakr b. Aḥmad b. ʿUbayd Allāh al-Ghaznawī, maintains a very similar visual repertoire as the manuscript under study here. It is dated 573/1177 (fol. 281r). Published in Lings, *Splendours*, 59.

Two rectangular designs in the right and left margins of the opening, evocative of writing tablets, announce that the manuscript starts at the one hundred and eightieth section (*juzʾ*) of a division of the Qurʾān into three hundred and sixty equal sections (*ajzāʾ*). This is just one of the four systems, used consistently in the manuscript for dividing the Qurʾānic text into equal parts. In addition to this division, there are guidelines in the margins at the sections of one hundred fifty, sixty, and thirty parts, each increasing in the size of the respective division. At times, multiple division markers fall on the same folio.[13] The three divisions of thirty, sixty, and one hundred fifty parts appear in other multivolume Qurʾānic codices of the period, and are used to facilitate movement through the Qurʾān, particularly when it is spread over multiple volumes.[14] The division of the manuscript into thirty parts is also designed for reading the entire Qurʾān over a period of a single month, as is common, for instance, in the nightly liturgical recitations during the month of Ramaḍān. The division of sixty parts reflects a two-month reading plan, while the division of one hundred fifty and three hundred sixty stretch a reading of the Qurʾān over a period of six months and one year, respectively. The practice of segmenting the Qurʾān into smaller parts and thus dividing it up over a longer period appears well suited for reading the Qurʾān as part of the accompanying Persian commentary and paraphrase.[15] These multiple forms of segmenting the Qurʾān, in turn, suggest various means by which the entire text with its enveloping Persian commentary could be used, from the liturgical to the exegetical.

The divisions, indicated in the margins in illuminated rectangular devices are part of a sophisticated reading scheme that is complemented by a smaller navigational system, which is based on markers for ten, five and single verses. This entire navigational system, reflected in the marginal illuminated medallions, verse markers, and other devices, guides the reader through the structure of the text by indicating its various divisions and segments and facilitating the move from macro- to micro-levels of the Qurʾān and its Persian commentary. The end of each Qurʾānic verse is marked by a gold medallion decorated with dots and thin lines radiating around it, as a sunburst; the center of these medallions is inscribed with the number of the verse. Every group of ten verses

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13   For example, on ᴇ.ʜ. 209, fol. 9v and 10r: 181/360 overlaps with 16/30 and 31/60. For other
      visual examples of how these divisions are balanced on the page when they overlap, see
      fol. 3v-6r, 85r-85v, 136r and 190r.

14   See, for instance, a Qurʾān codex dispersed among various collections, that notes divisions
      into thirty, sixty, and one hundred fifty from the same region see below, page 137, note 23.

15   Ḥarbī, *Tahzīb*, 172; cf. Zarkashī (d. 794/1392), *Burhān*, I, 250; Ibn Taymiyya (d. 728/1328),
      "Fī tahzīb al-Qurʾān," *Majmūʿa*, XIII, 219-25.

is numbered throughout the text. In addition to this enumeration from one
to ten that follows in line with the body of the Qurʾānic text, every group of
five verses is further indicated in the margin by a special illuminated design
in which *khams* (five) is inscribed in a gold medallion with a thin rectangular
base and a single crenulated top — a design that is slightly larger than the
individual verse markers (fig. 6). Similarly, groups of ten verses, which mark a
new counting series, are indicated in the margin by a large round medallion in
which every group of ten verses is counted (ten, twenty, thirty; *ʿashr, ʿishrūn,*

FIGURE 6   Khamsa *marker indicating a section of five verses, with the*
inscription "the Handiwork (ʿamal) *of ʿAlī at the bottom of the*
medallion (Ḥaddādī, Tafsīr-i munīr, TSMK, E.H. 209,
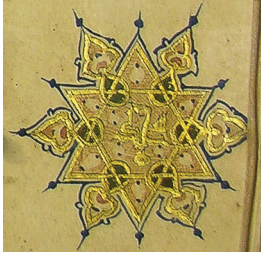*fol. 7v), courtesy of the Topkapı Palace Museum.*

FIGURE 7

Sajda *marker at Q 19:58, indicating that prostration is required when reciting the verse* (Ḥaddādī, Tafsīr-i munīr, TSMK, E.H. 209, *fol. 63v), courtesy of the Topkapı Palace Museum.*

thalāthūn, etc.). As single Qur'ānic verses are often divided up into multiple clauses in the accompanying Persian exegetical material, this system of verse markings often spans a single folio spread.

Notably, the text of the Persian commentary is divided into sentences and clauses that are marked not simply with full stops, but rather with small six-petal gold rosettes with each petal pointed with red dots; these resemble the single-verse dividers in Qur'ānic codices of the period. By replacing the fullstops in the Persian text with rosettes and vocalizing the text, the volume conveys a visual coherency imitating that of a Qur'ān. Other marginal devices appear in the manuscript, like a *khabar* sign announcing the beginning of prophetic reports in the Persian text (e.g., fol. 55v) or *sajda* markers indicating prostration in the Qur'ānic text, designed in various elaborate forms (fig. 7). This well-developed navigational system suggests that the multivolume collection could have been used as an individual personal copy, or among a small group of readers, as a self-sufficient pedagogical work of the entire Qur'ān and its explanation, wherein the text flows from beginning to end, with a visual hierarchy achieved through the varying sizes of the calligraphy. This hierarchy, in turn, lends visual prominence to the Qur'ān and the illuminated devices along the margins that serve as mechanisms for traversing the sacred text.

The Copyists and the Workshop

The last folio (fig. 1) states that ʿUthmān b. al-Ḥusayn al-Warrāq al-Ghaznawī copied and gilded (*katabahu wa-dhahhababu*) the volume. ʿUthmān's name as a copyist and illuminator appears several times in a thirty-volume Qur'ānic manuscript housed in the Imam Reza Shrine Library of Mashhad.[16] Finished

16   This copy had previously been divided between Mashhad and the National Museum of Iran, Tehran. The entirety is now housed in Mashhad, Astān-i Quds Raḍawī (MS 4316). It consists of 2,131 folios, with an average of slightly over 70 folios for each *juz'*. Maʿānī

in 466/1073, the Mashhad codex was copied over a period of five years in the New Style that is identical to the one used for the Qurʾānic text of the Topkapı manuscript. This codex has the same repertoire of illumination as the Topkapı manuscript that characterizes many of the Qurʾāns produced in Khurasan during the period. This copy is divided into thirty separate volumes, with each volume consisting of one section (*juzʾ*), covering one thirtieth of the entire text; such a division would have facilitated the group study of the Qurʾān as well as its use for liturgical purposes.[17] As with the Topkapı manuscript, the Mashhad Qurʾān was also a courtly production, commissioned by al-Shaykh al-Raʾīs Abū Jaʿfar Muḥammad b. Aḥmad al-ʿAbdūsī, a high-ranking official, who appears at the end of the tenth section as the sponsor of the project.[18] The most detailed colophon in the Mashhad codex comes at the end of the final volume: "ʿUthmān b. al-Ḥusayn b. Abī Sahl al-Warrāq al-Ghaznawī copied and gilded [this section], may God forgive him and his parents and all the believing men and women and he finished [copying] it in the year 464. Praise God almighty for His grace and give abundant prayers to His Prophet Muḥammad the Chosen one and to His family. Life withers away while calligraphy remains."[19] Given the magisterial artistry displayed in these folios, the last statement on the endurance of the written word (*al-ʿumr fānī wa-l-khaṭṭ bāqī*) suggests not just writing, with the etymology of *khaṭṭ* rooted in the physical act of carving

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notes that the section copied by Muḥammad al-Warrāq measures 17 × 22.5 cm, while the sections copied by his father, ʿUthmān, measure 20.5 × 26 cm, while the actual writing plane only differs slightly, 10 × 13.5 cm versus 10.5 × 15.5 cm, respectively. According to the colophons the text was copied over a period of five years starting in 462/1069-70, and was not copied in the order of the Qurʾānic text itself, see Maʿānī, *Shāhkārhā-yi hunarī*, 55-9; 65; Ḥāʾirī, *Kuhantarīn*, 33-5. See also: Lings, *Splendours*, 57; Ettinghausen, *Islamic Art*, 180; Blair, *Islamic Calligraphy*, 197.

17   For an early thirty-volume Qurʾān, see the copy endowed in 298/911 to the Great Mosque of Damascus, a section of which is housed in Chester Beatty Library, Dublin (MS 1421), a folio from which is reproduced in James, *Qurʾans and Bindings*, 20 (plate 7). See also two Qurʾāns in the Khalili Collection of Islamic Art, Qur. 155 and Qur. 150, published in Déroche, *The Abbasid Tradition*, 167 and 171, respectively.

18   On the name of the patron, see Maʿānī, *Shāhkārhā-yi hunarī*, 47; 55; Ḥāʾirī, *Kuhantarīn*, 34.

19   *Katabuhu wa-dhahhabuhu ʿUthmān b. al-Ḥusayn b. Abī Sahl al-Warrāq al-Ghaznawī, ghafara Allāhu lahu wa-li-wālidayhi wa-li-jamīʿ al-muʾminīn wa-l-muʾmināt wa-l-farāgh minhu fī sanat arbaʿ wa-sittīn wa-arbaʿ miʾa. ḥāmidan li-Allāhi taʿālā ʿalā niʿamihi wa-muṣalliyan ʿalā nabiyyihi Muḥammad Muṣṭafā wa-ʿalā ālihi wa-sallam kathīran. al-ʿumr fānī wa-l-khaṭṭ bāqī.* Cited in Maʿānī, *Shāhkārhā-yi hunarī*, 56 (note that the captions for the folios on page 57 appear to be reversed). Also cited in Ḥāʾirī, *Muqaddima*, 22 n6.

and engraving, but also specifically the art of calligraphy; this highlights our copyist's confidence in the eternal and sacred nature of the art.[20]

As indicated at the end of the twenty-third *juzʾ* of the Mashhad manuscript, ʿUthmān's son, noted as Muḥammad b. ʿUthmān b. al-Ḥusayn al-Warrāq al-Ghaznawī, copied and gilded the section in question, thus helping his father complete part of the manuscript.[21] Interestingly, on folio 85r of the Topkapı manuscript, in the small octagons of the illuminated panel for Sūrat Ṭaha (Q 20) one can make out: *ʿamal Muḥammad* (the handiwork of Muḥammad) (fig. 8). This may well suggest that ʿUthmān's son, Muḥammad, was also involved in the production of the Topkapı manuscript. As the signature is embedded in an illuminated sura panel on a folio with gilded designs marking the one hundred eighty-seventh division (*juzʾ*) of the text, it is not exactly clear what Muḥammad's role was in the illumination or copying of the manuscript.

However, ʿUthmān and Muḥammad appear not to have been the only two people involved in copying and illuminating. A third name can be made out in the manuscript: on folio 7v at the bottom of the marginal "*khamsa*" sign one can read: *ʿamal ʿAlī* (the handiwork of ʿAlī) (fig. 6). This suggests that a certain ʿAlī was also involved in the production of the Topkapı manuscript. Whether ʿAlī executed only the marginal medallions or whether he was involved in the overall illumination of the manuscript, is not clear from the remaining evidence. The appearance of ʿAlī's name is significant for several reasons. Foremost, the name of ʿUthmān, the master calligrapher, as it features in the colophon at the end of the volume, has clearly been altered by a later hand so that it appears, on first instance, to read ʿAlī (see fig. 1). It may well be that a professional rivalry was at the root of this alteration.[22] As a name, ʿAlī, without a genealogical sequence (*nasab*) or title of affiliation (*nisba*), gives us little lead as to the identity of the artist. However, interestingly, the name ʿAlī also appears as a copyist in a colophon of a contemporaneous Qurʾān, divided, like the Mashhad Qurʾān, into a thirty-volume codex, though with sections and

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20   The expression may be intended to play on the famed first Hippocratic aphorism, translated into Arabic as *al-ʿumr qaṣīr wa-ṣināʿa ṭawīla*, see Rosenthal, 'Life is short, the Art is long'.

21   For the reproduction of this folio, see Maʿānī, *Shāhkārhā-yi hunarī*, 62; Ḥāʾirī, *Kuhantarīn*, 82 (fig. 20). The colophon reads: *katabahu wa-dhahhabahu Muḥammad b. ʿUthmān b. al-Husayn al-Warrāq al-Ghaznawī* (Copied and illuminated by Muḥammad b. ʿUthmān b. al-Ḥusayn al-Warrāq al-Ghaznawī).

22   See E.H. 209, fol. 239v, l. 2 (see fig. 1). It is also possible that a sectarian motivation may have served as the driving factor for the effacement, given that the names of the caliphs Abū Bakr and ʿUthmān are both smudged in the manuscript, see above, page 126, note 7.

FIGURE 8   *Panel division for Sūrat Tāhā (Q 20), with the note in the top that this is handiwork of*
Muḥammad. Marginal markers indicating that this begins the one hundred and
eighty-seventh of three hundred and sixty divisions, as well as the thirty-second of
sixty divisions (Ḥaddādī, Tafsīr-i munīr, TSMK, E.H. 209, fol. 85r), courtesy of the
Topkapı Palace Museum.

fragments dispersed in multiple collections.[23] The colophon marks the final
juz' of the thirty-volume set; it is dated 485/1092-3 and notes that ʿAlī copied
(*katabahu ʿAlī*) the work. However, the last gilded line of the colophon and with
it the copyist's full name has been smudged by a later hand.[24] Nonetheless,
the *nisba* "al-Warrāq al-Ghaznawī" can still be made out at the end of the line.
However, although the line of descent (*nasab*) is marked by "son of" (*ibn*), the
name of ʿAlī's father is not completely legible and so his relation to the mas-
ter calligrapher ʿUthmān of Ghazna is uncertain. Like the Topkapı and the
Mashhad manuscripts, this Qurʾān is copied in a similar New Style script and is
illuminated in the Khurasani type of illumination. We can only speculate as to
the timing and motivation behind this effacement. It would appear, however,
that ʿAlī too was a renowned name, involved in the production of manuscripts
in the Ghaznavid court. If the two artisans are one and the same, it would fur-
ther suggest that al-Warrāq al-Ghaznawī functioned as a guild or family name
covering an entire body of work.

The fact that three names appear in the Topkapı manuscript indicates that
it was a collective enterprise. It also reflects, significantly, the professional
environment of Qurʾānic production from which the manuscript was manu-
factured and to which a number of skilled artists belonged.[25] In this vein, the
double page gilded panel announcing the volume as a production of al-Warrāq
al-Ghaznawī may well speak to this shared undertaking, which bore the

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23   Fragments of the final *juz'* and with it the colophon, were in the private collection of
      Āgā Mahdī Kāshānī, current location unknown. On the colophon see Lings, *Splendours*,
      58 (fig. 21). Lings reprints selections from Topkapı R. 14, which covers the eighteenth *juz'*
      (Q 23:1-25:20), as well as from the Aga Khan Museum in Geneva, MS 261, which covers
      the opening section of the final *juz'* (Q 78.1-88.8). The Metropolitan Museum of Art in
      New York has a folio (accession no. 37.111.2) that appears to be part of this same dispersed
      manuscript. The Chester Beatty Library also has a single folio (CBL 1607). Similarly, the
      Kuwait National Museum has 22 folios (LNS 6 MS), which opens with the seventh *juz'*
      (Q 5:83) and may have also originally formed part of this multivolume copy. Also, see the
      State Library in Munich (cod. Arab. 2603), which contains the entirety of the twentieth
      juz' (Q 27:56-29:45), possibly from the same set, an observation supported by its frontis-
      piece, which is nearly identical to the one in the Kuwait National Museum.

24   To our eyes, the following reading for the *nasab* is quite likely for the colophon published
      by Lings, *Splendours*, 58 (fig. 21): *katabahu ʿAlī b. ʿAbd al-Raḥmān al-Ghaznawī*. The central
      marginal medallions on both sides of this bifolium spread also note *ʿamal ʿAlī*; this indi-
      cates that the copyist and the illuminator were one and the same. The name may well
      correspond to the illuminator of the Qurʾān produced in Bust, (BNF Ar. 6041), illuminated
      by ʿAlī b. ʿAbd al-Raḥmān, see above, page 128, note 9.

25   On workshops, see Déroche, et al., *Islamic Codicology*, 191-3. On the profession of Qurʾān
      copyists and the role of workshops, see Déroche, Copier des manuscrits.

brand name of a distinguished family of bookmen. The fame associated with the name is further highlighted in the case of another Qurʾānic manuscript, housed in a private collection, that exhibits similar calligraphic and stylistic features, though in a significantly inferior form of execution. According to the colophon, the work was copied by ʿUthmān b. al-Ḥusayn al-Warrāq. This may be a case of homophony, or a quick production of lesser value; however, it is entirely possible, as François Déroche has suggested, that the name was added to increase the value of the manuscript.[26] Such value systems, needless to say, are a product of the very prestige associated with the phenomenon of the professional signature, which at once evokes standard forms of pietistic motivations in the transmission of the sacred word and also serves to mark authenticity and professionalization inherent in the commodity of the book.

The introduction of paper in Islamic lands, and with it a corresponding increase in book production, created conditions for a further professionalization of book culture. A professional environment of copying ensued with the development of new areas of expertise, which included notably, the *warrāq*, a rather versatile guild name that could refer to various activities associated with the manufacture, production, and distribution of books. During this period the profession of *wirāqa* and the title of *warrāq*, from the word *waraq* (leaf, sheet, and paper, e.g., *kāghaz*), may have denoted a scribe, bookbinder, or bookseller.[27] As for ʿUthmān's title, *warrāq*, it was often applied to copyists of Qurʾānic codices and other religious material, a point emphasized by the Central Asian religious authority ʿAbd al-Karīm al-Samʿānī (d. 562/1166), who also notes, however, that in Baghdad the title was used to describe those who manufacture and sell paper.[28] We do know that the *warrāq*s of Iraq were also involved in copying books, particularly Qurʾānic codices, and were influential not only in the promulgation of paper, but also the development of new scripts. For instance, the famed Imami Shii bookseller of Baghdad Ibn al-Nadīm (d. 380/990) makes a distinction between the older scripts used for copying the Qurʾān and those developed by *warrāq*s for copying the Qurʾān during the beginning of the Abbasid era. It was during this period that a new calligraphic script (*khaṭṭ*) developed, known variously as Iraqi, *muḥaqqaq* (i.e., precise, exact, completed to perfection), as well as *warrāqī*, so named after its association with the professional copyists from Iraq. According to Ibn

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26   See Déroche, Une reliure, 4-6 (plate 1); Déroche, et al., *Islamic Codicology*, 188 n14.

27   See Bloom, *Paper Before Print*, 47-56; Toorawa, *Ibn Abī Ṭāhir Ṭayfūr*, 56-60; Déroche, et al., *Islamic Codicology*, 186-9.

28   See al-Samʿānī, *Ansāb*, XII, 236, s.v. *Warrāq*; cf. Khalīl (d. 175/791), *Kitāb al-ʿAyn*, V, 210; Ibn al-Manẓūr (d. 711/1311-2), *Lisān al-ʿarab*, X, 375, right-hand column.

al-Nadīm's report, this script reached the heights of perfection during the reign of al-Maʾmūn (r. 198-218/813-33), with the calligraphic work of his companions and scribes. Ibn al-Nadīm also notes that *warrāq*s would copy Qurʾānic codices in *muḥaqqaq, mashq* and other such scripts.[29] Despite these details, it is difficult to link the names of the scripts mentioned here with the actual extant calligraphic forms.

The surviving codicological evidence, on the other hand, reveals a good deal about the various social contexts of Qurʾānic manuscript production. Codices signed by *warrāq*s were often commissioned by patrons connected to the court. A *warrāq* could have been an independent book dealer or copyist, or could have been employed by high-ranking officials, or employed by caliphs.[30] This is specifically illustrated in an additional number of imperial Qurʾāns that were copied by *warrāq*s. For example, the famous manuscript known as the Nurse's codex of the Qurʾān (*muṣhaf al-ḥāḍina*), was commissioned by the nurse of the amir al-Muʿizz b. Bādīs (r. 362/972 to 543/1148), of the Zīrid dynasty in North Africa, endowed to the great mosque of Qayrawan, and copied in 410/1019-20 by ʿAlī b. Aḥmad al-Warrāq.[31] Although its use of gold is minimal, the Nurse's Qurʾān would have cost a small fortune to produce, as it was copied on parchment in a monumental size (45 × 30 cm), with only five lines per page. The *warrāq* ʿAlī b. Aḥmad not only copied the Qurʾān, but, as its colophon states, vocalized, illuminated, gilded, and bound it (*kataba, shakkala, rasama, dhahhaba, jallada*). Despite this singular assertion of artistic control, it is possible that multiple hands were involved in the production of the manuscript. Similarly, even though the colophon of the Topkapı manuscript states that the volume was the work of ʿUthmān, the appearance of two additional names in the manuscript indicates that ʿUthmān not only participated in copying and in the illumination of the book, but could have also overseen the production of the entire manuscript while he drew on the aid of others. Indeed, some *warrāq*s were copyists, while others commissioned work to other scribes.[32]

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29   Ibn al-Nadīm, *Fihrist*, 1, 16-7 n2, *bi-l-khaṭṭ al-muḥaqqaq wa-l-mashq wa-mā shākala dhālika*, cf. 1, 20 n1; 29-30.

30   Toorawa, *Ibn Abī Ṭāhir Ṭayfūr*, 57.

31   The manuscript is dispersed among various private and public collections, see Déroche, et al., *Islamic Codicology*, 187 n13. Folios from the Nurse's Qurʾān have been published widely. See, for example, Safadi, *Islamic Calligraphy*, 78; Lings and Safadi, *The Qurʾān*, 31; Munajjid, *al-Kitāb al-ʿArabī al-makhṭūṭ*, plate 7. See, also, Blair, *Islamic Calligraphy*, 154-6; Roxburgh, *Writing the Word of God*, 32-4; Fraser and Kwiatkowski, *Ink and Gold*, 58-61.

32   See Toorawa, *Ibn Abī Ṭāhir Ṭayfūr*, 57. Pedersen references instances in which *warrāq*s hired slaves for copying books, *The Arabic Book*, 46; Déroche also mentions cases in

The Topkapı manuscript, in turn, represents the culmination of a larger process of professionalization in the sacred art of Qurʾānic codices, an art which drew on the continued cultivation of skills and resources over several generations. This field of specialization intersected both with religious education and with the cultivation of book arts both in and beyond the court. At the end of the Mashhad codex, ʿUthmān signs off with his full name as ʿUthmān b. al-Ḥusayn b. Abī Sahl al-Warrāq al-Ghaznawī.[33] The form suggests that, just as his son Muḥammad took the professional name *warrāq* from his father, so ʿUthmān inherited the *nisba* from Abū Sahl, his paternal grandfather. This may be the same figure as Abū Sahl al-Warrāq Muḥammad b. Aḥmad b. Sahl from Zūzan, a large region between Herat and Nishapur, mentioned by the famed traditionalist al-Ḥākim al-Nīshābūrī (d. 405/1014), in his biographical history of religious authorities from Nishapur.[34]

Based on the number of religious scholars in the prosopographical materials of the period identified with producing and copying books, it is evident that the process of manuscript production was also closely associated with the circulation and maintenance of religious authority. Such is the case, for instance, with the *Ḥadīth* transmitter and jurist Abū Ḥabīb al-Jāmiʿī (d. 351/962) of Nishapur, who was known as a *maṣāḥifī*, renowned for the numerous beautiful codices (*maṣāḥif*) of the Qurʾān that he copied over the course of many years and which he donated as religious endowments.[35] Associations between the professional copyist and the normative fields of mystical piety are also attested, as we see, for instance, with Abū Aḥmad al-Ḥusayn b. Muḥammad (d. 440/1048-9). Known as both a *warrāq* and as a Sufi, Abū Aḥmad studied under the famed mystic of Nishapur Abū ʿAbd al-Raḥmān al-Sulamī (d. 412/1021), and copied extensively from his master's teachings. His son, Abū Naṣr ʿAbd Allāh (d. 491/1097) also took the guild names *al-warrāq* and *al-ṣūfī*.[36] The biographical sources describe copyists of the region during the period as teaching Arabic grammar, law, *Ḥadīth*, serving as muezzins, and producing exquisite copies of the Qurʾān. This extended into the field of exegesis, as is the case with the copyist Abū Muḥammad ʿAbd Allāh (d. 419/1029), a broker, known as the *maṣāḥifī*, for he copied, by hand, nearly nine-hundred codices

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which some copyists were slaves, Copier des manuscrits, 138; Déroche, et al., *Islamic Codicology*, 191.

33   See Mashhad MS 4316, at the end of the last *juzʾ*, cited in Maʿānī, Shāhkārhā-yi hunarī, 56.

34   See al-Ḥākim al-Nīshābūrī (d. 405/1014), *Tārīkh-i Nīshābūr*, 176, §2275.

35   Al-Ḥākim al-Nīshābūrī, *Tārīkh-i Nīshābūr*, 174, §2224; Samʿānī, *Ansāb*, XI, 337-8, s.v. *Maṣāḥifī*, cf. III, 167, s.v. *Jāmiʿī*.

36   See Fārisī (d. 529/1134), *Muntakhab*, 299, 453, §§579, 956; idem, *Mukhtaṣar*, 31, 180-1, §§1742, 1936.

of the Qurʾān; he lived next to the congregational mosque in Nishapur, and is also said to have produced several copies of the multivolume Arabic commentary of the Qurʾān by the famed exegete from the city, Abū l-Qāsim b. al-Ḥabīb (d. 406/1016).[37]

Based on the codicological evidence, the quality of the material that circulated in and beyond the context of religious education varied significantly and was tailored to particular ends and to the amount of capital invested in book production in any given instance. In terms of resources, this situation undoubtedly is magnified by the cultivation of calligraphers by the court, which could finance considerably more lavish productions. Yet, here too, both in the circulation of the material, and in the very intellectual and artistic capital used in the process of production, the courtly networks directly intersected with the authority of the religious elite. In this light, there is reason to believe that ʿUthmān and his coterie of bookmen had religious training that included not only knowledge of the Qurʾān, *Ḥadīth*, and law, but also Arabic grammar, syntax, and poetry. This is particularly evident in light of the creative means by which the copyists engage with the actual meaning of the Qurʾānic text and Ḥaddādī's Persian commentary. It is also clear, as with the religious elite and the courtly officials, that these copyists and illuminators in the service of the Ghaznavid court were steeped in bilingual traditions of education that extended across the diverse fields of Early New Persian vernacular writing. The visual brilliance of the Topkapı manuscript, in turn, demonstrates that the resources invested in the cultivation of Arabic book art formed the basis for the emergence of Persian in the Arabic script as a language to be expressed and adorned in the celebrated medium of sacred calligraphy.

The Artistic Value of the Topkapı Manuscript

As a dated document, the Topkapı manuscript offers an important historical testament to the calligraphic development of Persian exegetical writing and the ways in which scholars and authorities sought to creatively and visually balance the sacred Arabic text of the Qurʾān with the vernacular expanse that surrounded it. The codicological record of Persian exegetical literature reveals several models for positioning both Arabic and Persian exegetical material within the space of the Qurʾānic text, including notably: 1) the interlinear form that offers a line-by-line rendering, ranging from word-for-word glosses to self-sufficient translations; 2) the division of the Qurʾānic text into short groups

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37   See Fārisī, *Muntakhab*, 429, §891.

of verses, which are then followed by a paraphrase or more literal translation; 3) running exegetical material that presents Qurʾānic verses, often rubricated in a distinct color or overlined in red, which are followed on the same line by exegetical explanations and expansions.

The model for the Topkapı manuscript, however, focuses at an even smaller level than the interlinear codex, by highlighting the unit of the Qurʾānic verse, which here is often broken into smaller clauses. The Qurʾānic material is then opened up to paraphrastic explanations in Persian that often expand into larger exegetical discussions. The various visual forms, in layout and in the size and choice of scripts, reflect a desire to visually distinguish the Qurʾānic text from the exegetical field. Nonetheless, the vocalization of the Persian text, along with the round medallions marking off each full stop, blanket this exegetical material in a visual idiom, which while distinct from the Qurʾānic text, also accords it a degree of sanctity and respect befitting the larger sphere of the sacred word.

According to the juridical record, the practice of interlinear translations dates to the rise of New Persian vernacular writing from the previous century. The Ḥanafī *qāḍī* of Balkh, Abū Jaʿfar al-Hinduwānī (d. 362/973), for instance, argued that a translation of the Qurʾān underneath (*taḥt*) each line of verse was perfectly licit, particularly in the region, as this was one of the primary means by which the masses could understand the sacred text.[38] Taking care to distinguish the Persian exegetical material from the sacrality of the original Arabic scripture appears to have been one of the motivating factors behind the various calligraphic and visual strategies developed in these bilingual Qurʾānic codices.

The Shāfiʿī jurist and exegete from Nishapur, Abū l-Muẓaffar Shāhfūr Isfarāʾīnī (d. 471/1079), offers specific advice on the matter in the opening to his Persian translation and commentary of the Qurʾān, the *Tāj al-tarājim fī tafsīr al-Qurʾān li-l-aʿājim* (The crown of all translations in the interpretation of the Qurʾān for Persians). Here, Isfarāʾīnī argues that care must be given when copying the Qurʾān so that nothing is written in the codex that is not from the Qurʾānic text, unless it is clearly distinguished in either color or form. This is designed to prevent any confusion as to where the Qurʾānic text begins and ends. Isfarāʾīnī remarks,

> It is for this reason that the translations of the Sūras of the Qurʾān, the dividers marking out every thirtieth, tenth, and seventh part of the

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38   See Zadeh, *Vernacular Qurʾan*, 111 n92, 309. On Hinduwānī, see Balkhī (fl. 610/1214), *Faḍāʾil-i Balkh*, 299-310; Qurashī (d. 775/1373), *al-Jawāhir*, I, 192-4.

Qurʾān, and the signs indicating the parts where prostration is required
have all been written down in another color.

It is of note that Isfarāʾīnī distinguishes Qurʾānic codices from commentaries,
and argues that one need not take the same caution with exegetical material,
for everyone understands that such exegetical works include both the Qurʾān
and its commentary. However, he contends that it "is preferable in commen-
taries, whether in Persian or in Arabic, for the Qurʾān to be copied using one
script and for the translation (*tarjuma*) of the Qurʾān to be copied in another."
He concludes that such a visual distinction would strike a good balance and
ensure that complete care and caution were given to the Book of God.[39]

In this regard, the Topkapı manuscript is significant as a dated calligraphic
witness to this process of visually maintaining a distinction between the
Qurʾānic text and the surrounding exegetical material. Four distinct scripts
appear consistently throughout the manuscript, in high quality and with an
unrivaled degree of stylization. The visual plane of the calligraphy is consistent
and steady, arguably making this courtly production one of the most rare and
innovative calligraphic samples to survive from the period.

The first monumental script used in the Topkapı manuscript is the New Style
script, deployed throughout the volume with utmost quality and uniformity as
the primary form for the Qurʾānic text. While the New Style draws on a visual
idiom that dates back to the second/eighth century, the script only started
appearing in Qurʾānic codices two centuries later and gradually became more
stylized, gaining along the way consistency in letterforms and size.[40] By the
fifth century of the Islamic era, Qurʾānic codices copied using the Kufic script,
in the horizontal format on parchment, became increasingly rare. In contrast,
during this period codices that were copied in the New Style in the vertical
format on paper developed into various sub-styles; to this day these remain
largely understudied.[41] Some types of the New Style, like the script used for the
Qurʾānic text in the Topkapı manuscript, are characterized by a high contrast

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39   Isfarāʾīnī, *Tāj al-tarājim*, I, 10. It is of note that Isfarāʾīnī refers to commentaries in Arabic
      and Persian that offer a translation of the Qurʾān by using the word *tarjuma*, indicating
      here a notion of translation that extends clearly into the exegetical realm of an interpre-
      tation or paraphrase, regardless of the language that seeks to explain but not replace the
      sacred text.

40   See early characteristics of NS in the Antinoë inscription (117/735), addressed in George,
      The Rise of Islamic Calligraphy, 115-8.

41   Déroche conducted a preliminary study of this group of scripts, *The Abbasid Tradition*,
      132-7.

between thin and thick strokes.[42] The diagonal aspect of the bowls of letters, such as the final forms of *nūn* and *yā'* dropping below the baseline and the triangular heads of letters, such as *wāw* and *mīm*, characterize this particular style of script (see fig. 5). The monumental New Style used in the Topkapı manuscript represents a high peak of maturity and stylization. The script, almost always rendered in black, is pointed with a consistent color palette, and evokes the diacritical markings for Qur'ānic codices in the older Kufic style; these markings are entirely based upon the "modern" system of vowels and orthoepics for vocalization of the Arabic script that developed in the third century of the Islamic era. Here red diacritics mark the vowels (*ḍamma, kasra, fatḥa, tanwīn*), gold dots indicate the pointed letters (*al-ḥurūf al-muʿjama*), blue diacritics mark the sign for no vowel or quiescence (*sukūn*) and the unpointed letters (*al-ḥurūf al-muhmala*), and green diacritics for the elongation of *alif* (*madda*), the glottal stop (*hamza*), and geminated letters (*hadda*).[43]

The second monumental script deployed in the manuscript achieves a similar degree of artistry. As opposed to the angular New Style, it is written in a rounded monumental script, which is also stylized and consistent in size and form. This stylized rounded script was used for Qur'ānic codices during the fifth/eleventh century.[44] Although the elements that characterize the later mature round scripts, such as *thuluth* and *muḥaqqaq*, can be detected in the round scripts from this century, fixed categories for these styles were not yet entirely formed, nor easily identifiable in the period at hand.[45] Famously, the bookman of Baghdad Ibn al-Nadīm identifies *muḥaqqaq*, literally exact or perfected, as a script that developed earlier during the Abbasid period. He notes that it is also referred to as *warrāqī*, i.e., the script used by the *warrāq*. However,

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42   Déroche identifies two types of NS: NSI and NSIII, with the latter being rounder than the former. However, a larger number of NS types could be detected in Qur'ānic manuscripts of the period, with different degrees of angularity, diagonality, and contrast in strokes. In Déroche's typology of NS scripts, the monumental NS used in the Topkapı manuscript is similar to the NSI type. See Déroche, *The Abbasid Tradition*, 136-7; see also, Karame, *Transformations*.

43   On the differing systems of vocalization, see Gacek, *Arabic Manuscripts*, 288-90.

44   The earliest known example of a Qur'ān copied in a stylized and consistent round script is the famed Qur'ān of Ibn al-Bawwāb (d. 413/1022), copied in 391/1000-1, this copy is now housed in the Chester Beatty Library in Dublin (MS 1431). For a study of Ibn al-Bawwāb's manuscript see, Rice, *The Unique Ibn al-Bawwāb Manuscript*.

45   The situation changed in the sixth/twelfth century, where the *muḥaqqaq* begins to look more consistent as a category of script. See, for example, the Qur'ānic manuscript copied in 499/1105-6 by ʿAbd al-Malik al-Iṣfahānī, housed in the National Library of Egypt (Dār al-Kutub, Cairo), MS no. 227, and featured in Mansour, *Sacred Script*, 92 (fig. 1 and 2).

Ibn al-Nadīm does not provide us with a full description of the script itself.[46] In the Topkapı manuscript, the round script is of an exquisite quality, particularly when compared to other contemporary codicological material. The shallow bowls of letters *nūn* and *lām*, for example, are characteristics of the *muḥaqqaq* style, while the high ascenders of the letters, such *alif* and *lām*, and the sinuosity at their end parallel features associated with *thuluth* script.[47] In other words, the Topkapı manuscript represents the peak of stylization and consistency of the round Qurʾānic scripts that developed slightly earlier and continued to mature for several centuries.[48] Throughout the volume, this script is deployed for Arabic quotations referenced in the course of Ḥaddādī's Persian commentary, either in the form of other passages from the Qurʾān, *Ḥadīth*, supplications (*duʿāʾ*), or poetry, all of which are vocalized.[49] This Arabic material is visually highlighted, in contradistinction to both the Persian exegesis and to the verse-by-verse sequence of the main Qurʾānic text. While the script and accompanying vocalization is generally black, it also appears in red and blue and at times with chiastic variations in color for the pointed vocalization.[50]

The third type of script is reserved entirely for the Persian commentary and is deployed as a smaller visual counterpoint to the primary Qurʾānic text that it surrounds. Copied in a smaller size than the angular monumental version, it is a rounder form of the New Style and hence more legible. While the monumental New Style has sharp corners and is high in contrast, the smaller New Style used for the commentary has little contrast in its strokes and has rounder features. This small sized script combines both characteristics of New Style

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46   See Ibn al-Nadīm above, page 139, note 29. Abū Ḥayyān al-Tawḥidī (d. 414/1023) lists *muḥaqqaq* as one of the four main types of scripts in his *Risāla fī ʿilm al-kitāba*, 22. Al-Ṣūlī (d. 335/947) mentions two types of *muḥaqqaq*: *al-riyāshī l-muḥaqqaq* and *al-khafīf al-muṭlaq*, see Ṣūlī *Adab al-kuttāb*, 49. Ibn al-Ṣāʾigh (d. c. 722/1322) also identifies *riyāshī* as a script that leans towards *muḥaqqaq* and *naskh*, see Ibn al-Ṣāʾigh, *Tuḥfat*, 43.

47   In the fifth/eleventh century the Qurʾānic round scripts were composites of the different styles that would independently emerge in later centuries. Therefore the mature characteristics of *thuluth* and *muḥaqqaq*, for example, while they appear combined in one style in the fifth/eleventh century, become independent from each other in later centuries. See, Karame, *Transformations*.

48   Until the middle of the fifth/eleventh century, the category *muḥaqqaq* appears to have been used in sources to indicate careful quality of writing, see Mansour, *Sacred Script*, 34-5, who examines the early appearance of the *muḥaqqaq* and *thuluth* scripts and their listings in primary sources.

49   See, for instance, Qurʾānic citations, E.H. 209: fols. 27r, 30r, 35v, 38r, 39v, 40r, 44r, 62r, 62v, 71v, 79v, 80r, 80v, 98v, 112v, 120r, 142r, 144r, 172r; Arabic supererogatory liturgy: fols. 16a, 17r, 42r-43v, 50r, 75a-v, 80v, 83v-84r, 161r, 207v; verse citation, fol. 55v.

50   See, for instance, E.H. 209, fol. 13r-v.

and round scripts, and represents a calligraphic form seen in other contemporary Qur'ānic codices.[51] It is rendered here entirely in black and is pointed with diacritics for the vowels, as well as markers for gemination and quiescence. The vocalization of the Persian text in the form of diacritical markings, while distinct from the sacred sphere of the primary scripture, lends the entire codex a greater visual harmony and unity.

The fourth type exhibited in the manuscript is another small round script that resembles the book scripts of the period, with round everyday *naskhī* script characteristics, but less stylized than the monumental version used for the commentary. It appears rubricated in red in the same size as the rounded New Style script used for the Persian text, and is generally embedded in the commentary itself. It has a minimal appearance in the surviving volume and serves to highlight *Ḥadīth* and poetry in Arabic, and express the prefatory descriptions introducing the sura, which are in a mixture of Arabic and Persian (fig. 8).[52]

Interestingly, the manuscript introduces a fifth specimen of calligraphy, but only by way of an example that features once in the surviving volume. This script represents the old Kufic hand generally used to copy Qur'ānic codices.[53] It appears here with the old system of dots marking vowels, all in red, but also employs the more modern markers for the *sukūn* and the unpointed letters in blue, and the *shadda* and *madda* in green. As mentioned earlier, Kufic dropped out of Qur'āns during this period and its appearance in this particular instance is clearly meant as a calligraphic flourish of supreme artistry. By using Kufic and the old vocalization system, the copyist not only gives more aesthetic and historical value to the folio, and hence to the manuscript, but also demonstrates his knowledge of various scripts, and makes this specific spread a true specimen of the calligraphic styles studied and mastered during the period.

In a playful gesture from our copyist, the meaning of the text on the spread (fig. 9) is translated visually. The commentary in question begins at the bottom of the previous folio, where the significance of the verbal noun *wurūd*, as it appears in Q 19:71 (*wa-in minkum illā wāriduhā kāna ʿalā rabbika ḥatman*

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51   According to Déroche's typology this script, which he names NSIII, was used to copy non-Qurʾānic texts. See Déroche, *The Abbasid Tradition*, 132-3. For Qurʾāns copied in a similar script, although more angular than the type used in the Topkapı manuscript, see the famous Qurʾān of ʿAlī b. Shādhān al-Rāzī, copied in 361/972 and published in Blair, *Islamic Calligraphy*, 152, 182 n35; and the Qurʾān in the Topkapı Palace Library, R. 10, dated 419/1028 (fol. 265r), published in Zayn al-Dīn al-Maṣraf, *Muṣawwar al-khaṭṭ al-ʿArabī*, 28.

52   See, for instance, E.H. 209, fols. 52v, 85r 150v, 190r.

53   This script is the closest to Déroche's group F of Kufic types, *The Abbasid Tradition*, 46.

FIGURE 9   *Bi-folium spread commenting on Q 19:71, with five types of calligraphic specimens illustrated (Ḥaddādī, Tafsīr-i munīr, TSMK, E.H. 209, fol. 70v-71r), courtesy of the Topkapı Palace Museum.*

maqḍiyyan) is discussed. Ḥaddādī notes that verb *wurūd* features in the Qurʾān four times with the meaning of *dukhūl*, to enter, while only once does it take the meaning of *ḥuḍūr*, to come, appear or be present. The commentary then proceeds to cite each of these five examples, which appear at different instances in the Qurʾān. As a rule, the calligraphic pattern throughout the manuscript renders Qurʾānic citations from the body of the commentary in a script that is distinct from the monumental New Style used to execute the verse-by-verse progression of the Qurʾānic text. Here the copyist chooses to copy the five Qurʾānic citations using five distinct calligraphic specimens.

The first script introduced in the series of examples on this spread is the monumental *muḥaqqaq-thuluth* type (Q 19:71, *wa-in minkum illā wāriduhā*). This is followed by the Kufic script with its accompanying system for vocalization using red dots (Q 11:98, *fa-awradahumu l-nāra*). The third example returns to a slightly smaller and more highly contrasted variation of *muḥaqqaq-thuluth* (Q 21:98, *ḥaṣab jahannam antum la-hā wāridūn*); while the fourth, at the top of the facing folio, showcases another tightly composed variation of the same

script (Q 21:99, *law kāna hā'ulā'i ilahatan mā waradūhā*). The final specimen
turns to a variation of the monumental New Script used for the Qur'ānic text of
the manuscript (Q 28:23, *wa-lammā warada mā'a madyana*), with the slightly
distinct rendering of letters (i.e., the pointed flourish on the tops of both the
alif and *lām*, and the shallow thin tail on the *wāw*) and the use of the diacriti-
cal system of vocalization typical of the Kufic script, suggesting an affiliation
between the two scripts. All of these samples, in turn, illustrate the diverse
ways in which the text of Qur'ān could appear (*wurūd*) calligraphically, at least
during the period, and as such reflect a playful reading of the exegetical mate-
rial that visually represents the semantic interplay suggested in the Persian
commentary and its engagement with the Arabic Qur'ān.

These five calligraphic specimens on the bifolium are enveloped in the
smaller round New Style script used for the Persian text in the manuscript,
which is balanced across the spread with a precision and harmony typical of
the entire volume. The artistry consistent throughout the whole manuscript
is also reflected in the visual layout of the various elements that make up the
entire text. Each monumental New Style line is equivalent to three lines of the
round small version of the New Style text and each page of round small New
Style text fits nineteen lines, constituting the grid of the manuscript. Whatever
type of script is used, the copyist generally maintains this nineteen-line grid to
set his text. The copyist follows a set grid, with defined margins, to achieve a
balanced layout on one page, even when different types of scripts are used, and
this allows for a consistent layout between the right and left pages. Lines of the
monumental New Style appearing on both right and left pages are horizontally
aligned and reflect the consistency and the attention to the layout present in
the manuscript. Moreover, when a monumental Qur'ānic line does not reach
the marginal edge, the smaller Persian commentary wraps around it achieving
balance between the negative and the positive spaces (for example fol. 12v-13r,
fig. 10). In some instances, the empty space is filled with an illuminated medal-
lion counting the number of verses (visible on the last line of fol. 12v). The copy-
ist achieves the hierarchy needed in the layout by changing the type of script
and the size used, always giving more importance to the Qur'ānic sections and
in some instances to the round Arabic non-Qur'ānic sections. Harmoniously
presented, the different types of scripts are laid out together smoothly, reflect-
ing the copyist's attention to detail on each single page.

The meticulous ways in which the copyist sets the monumental Qur'ānic
New Style instills the manuscript with a beauty born of balance and propor-
tion. For example, on fol. 4r (fig. 11), the *yā'* of the *fī* extends backwards in a
zigzag manner below the words and into the margin; this feature, present in

FIGURE 10   *Arabic report of the scripture found in the treasure* (kanz) *referenced in Q 18:81,
written here in round monumental lines coloured in red or blue with vocalization
that alternates in colour; the accompanying interlinear Persian translation,
continues onto the verso side of the folio* (Ḥaddādī, Tafsīr-i munīr, TSMK, E.H. 209,
fol. 12v-13r), *courtesy of the Topkapı Palace Museum.*

other Qurʾānic manuscripts, appears several times in the Topkapı manuscript
(e.g., fol. 51v).[54] In addition, the copyist plays innovatively with the monumen-
tal New Style script. For instance, on fol. 29v, the letters at the beginning of
the Qurʾānic chapter, right after the *basmala*, are given prominence and are
balanced by extending the *kāf* to the right and the *ṣād* to the left, keeping the
three headed letters at the center. Another example that illustrates our copy-
ist's attention to detail is in the last two monumental New Style lines on fol. 64r,
in which the bottom diagonal strokes of the *alif*s cup each other. The *ṣād* on

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54   See the Qurʾān of ʿAlī b. Shādhān al-Rāzī, published in Blair, *Islamic Calligraphy*, 151-2
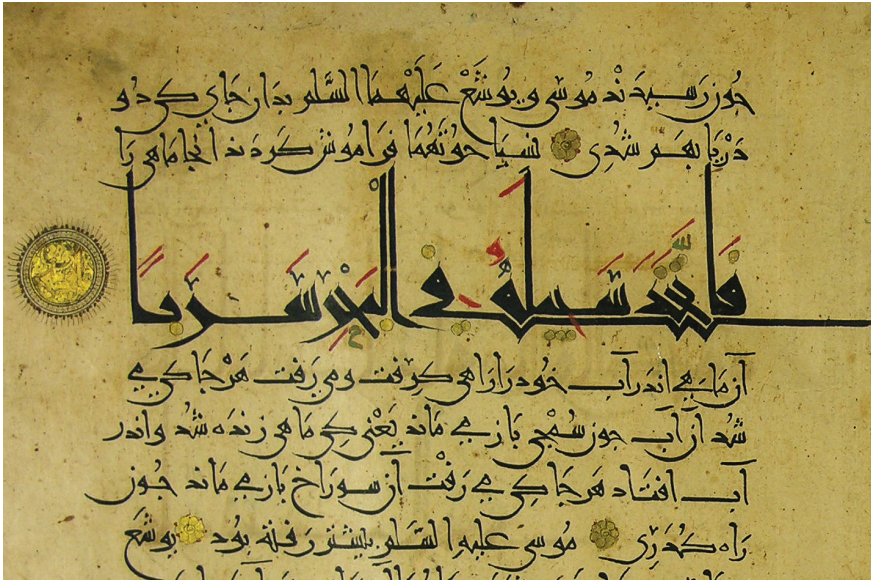(figs. 5.3a and 5.3) for a similar gesture.

FIGURE 11   *Stylistic backward extension of the yā' in the word* fī, *in Q 18:61, "fa-ttakhadha*
               sabīlahu fī l-baḥr saraban" (Ḥaddādī, Tafsīr-i munīr, TSMK, E.H. 209, fol. 4r),
               courtesy of the Topkapı Palace Museum.

this same line is drawn above the horizontal baseline, linked to the word only
through its tooth, balancing with the negative spaces created by the vertical
*alif*s. ʿUthmān's production is of the highest innovative calibre, especially as he
sometimes breaks with the grid he set for himself. For example, the headlines
of "*Qiṣṣa*" (see fig. 5; cf. fol. 111v), copied in gold, are centered on the page and
break the right alignment of the layout, as do the headlines in round monu-
mental scripts (e.g., fol. 30r). This daring practice gives a dynamic range to the
page that is also seen in the way some round monumental lines are colored in
red or blue with vocalization that alternates in color (fig. 10).

The *Tafsīr-i munīr* and the Question of Authorship

Several points should be stressed concerning the identity of Abū Naṣr
al-Ḥaddādī and the *Tafsīr-i munīr*. First, Ḥaddādī's name as preserved in the
opening of the Topkapı manuscript, including the patronymic, the genealogi-
cal sequence, up to the grandfather, Ḥamdān, and the title of affiliation (*nisba*),
matches exactly the author of a propaedeutic study in Arabic on Qurʾānic gram-
mar, syntax, and Arabic letters, which is preserved in a variorum manuscript

housed in the Chester Beatty collection.[55] This work was edited and published by Ṣafwān ʿAdnān Dāwūdī in 1988, under the title *al-Madkhal li-ʿilm tafsīr kitāb Allāh* (Entrance to Knowledge of the Interpretation of the Book of God).[56] Although the manuscript clearly identifies the author as Abū Naṣr Aḥmad b. Muḥammad b. Ḥamdān al-Ḥaddādī, Dāwūdī changed Ḥamdān to Aḥmad, without explicitly stating so, or giving a justification for his alteration.[57] This was done evidently in order to harmonize Ḥaddādī's name with biographical information preserved in the late prosopographical study of Qurʾānic reciters by Abū l-Khayr Ibn al-Jazarī (d. 833/1429).[58] One of the only surviving sources to offer information on the author, Ibn al-Jazarī's collection refers to the scholar as Abū Naṣr Aḥmad b. Muḥammad b. Aḥmad al-Samarqandī and states that he was known by the *nisba* Ḥaddādī. Ibn al-Jazarī's entry explicitly draws from the study on variant readings of the Qurʾān by Abū l-Qāsim al-Hudhalī (d. 465/1072-3). Although Hudhalī mentions Abū Naṣr on several occasions, and refers to him as an ironworker or blacksmith (*ḥaddād*), whence the *nisba*, he does not give a full genealogical sequence for the author.[59]

However, Ibn al-Jazarī also references a work by Ḥaddādī on variant readings of the Qurʾān, the *Kitāb al-Ghunya fī l-qirāʾāt* (The Sufficient Provision for Variant Readings), evidently no longer extant. Material from this work is likely the source for the short autobiographical account preserved by Ibn al-Jazarī, wherein Ḥaddādī describes in the first-person his experience studying under numerous masters. This work on Qurʾānic variants also appears to have offered Ibn al-Jazarī further information on the names of the teachers with whom Ḥaddādī studied, and it could well be that the copy of this particular work in Ibn al-Jazarī's possession was also the source for the confusion over Ḥaddādī's full name, as Aḥmad and Ḥamdān can easily be confused in the codicological record. Whatever the case may have been, it is clear that the author of the Arabic study of Qurʾānic grammar, the *Madkhal*, and the Persian commentary

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55   See Arberry, *Handlist*, IV, 48, MS 3883; the opening folio in question is reproduced in Dāwūdī's edition to Ḥaddādī, *Madkhal*, 46, compare this with the edited text, 51. For other manuscripts of the work, not used by Dāwūdī, see Sayyid, *Fihrist*, III, 114, Dār al-Kutub, Cairo MS 20792b, an extract by Abū Muḥammad ʿAlī b. al-Qāsim al-Bāmiyānī; the catalogue for the Kitābkhāna of Āyat Allāh Maʿarshī in Qom contains another copy, though it appears to have confused the name of the redactor, Bāmiyānī, with that of the author, Marʿashī, et al., *Fihrist*, III, 60, §869.

56   On the question of the title of the work, which Dāwūdī takes from Ḥaddādī's introduction (*Madkhal*, 51), see Iṣlāḥī, A-hādhā.

57   See Ḥāʾirī, Yaftāḥa-yi digarī, 118.

58   Ibn al-Jazarī, *Ghāya*, I, 97-8, §483.

59   See Hudhalī (d. 465/1072-3), *Kāmil*, 187, 216, 217.

of the Qurʾān, commonly known as the *Tafsīr-i munīr*, are indeed the same authority on Qurʾānic exegesis.

This identification is strengthened by a second factor related to Ḥaddādī's identity and his authorship of the *Tafsīr-i munīr*, namely the honorific title "*al-shaykh al-imām*" which is used in the title page of the Topkapı manuscript (fig. 3). The opening to the Arabic primer, the *Madkhal*, refers to Ḥaddādī as "the jurist, the imam, the exegetic, the ascetic" (*al-faqīh al-imām al-mufassir al-zāhid*); this is followed by the prayer, "may God be pleased with him in both life and in death" (*raḍiya Allāh ʿanhu ḥayyan wa-maytan*). In the introduction of the *Madkhal*, Ḥaddādī also notes that he had already composed a study on Qurʾānic exegesis, *al-Muwaḍḍiḥ li-ʿilm al-Qurʾān* (The Elucidation for Knowledge of the Qurʾān), which appears to be lost. This reference suggests a process of composition and authorial design to both works.[60] Nonetheless, the *Madkhal* makes repeated reference to Ḥaddādī as an authority, addressing him as either *al-shaykh al-zāhid al-imām*, or simply *al-shaykh al-imām*; this appellation too is followed by the customary prayer, "may God be pleased with him" (*raḍiya Allāh ʿanhu*), indicating that the transmission of the collection, at least in its present form, took place after Ḥaddādī's death.[61]

This is of note, for the *Tafsīr-i munīr* makes repeated reference to a certain "Khwāja Imām" (i.e., the master imam), whose title is also always followed by the customary prayer, "may God be pleased with him," indicating that the authority in question was deceased. The same references to Khwāja Imām also feature in the British Library copy of the work, which, as noted above, replicates nearly all of the material found in the Topkapı manuscript and also extends slightly beyond it. In the introduction to his edition of the British Library copy, Matīnī drew attention to these numerous citations to the otherwise unidentified Khwāja Imām; here he lists several authorities referred to by this admittedly rather generic title.[62] Among the examples Matīnī adduced are citations to the *Tafsīr-i munīr* of Khwāja Imām Aḥmad Ḥaddādī that appear in the Persian commentary of the Qurʾān, the *Tafsīr-i baṣāʾir-i yamīnī*, composed by the Ghaznavid courtier and judge Muʿīn al-Dīn Muḥammad b. Maḥmūd

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60   See Ḥaddādī, *Madkhal*, 51, 107. Dāwūdī edited the untitled and anonymous fragment that precedes the *Madkhal* in the Chester Beatty MS 3883 (fols. 228b-44a), and published it as the *Muwaḍḍiḥ* of Ḥaddādī. However, this ascription has been convincingly rejected by Iṣlāḥī, A-hādhā; see also Ḥāʾirī, Yaftahā-yi digārī, 117-8.

61   See Ḥaddādī, *Madkhal*, "al-shaykh al-imām al-zāhid," 53, 59, 66, 94, 101, 282, 290, 346, 376, 391, 425, 428, 451, 549, 552, 578, 590; and simply "al-shaykh al-imām," 87, 105, 106, 113, 114, 124, 129, 131, 147, 182, 202, 206, 228, 233, 405, 488, 525, 578; several of these references are cited in Ḥāʾirī, Yaftāha-yi digarī, 120 nn3-4.

62   Matīnī, *Tafsīrī*, introduction, 18-19.

FIGURE 12 *Bi-folium spread of Q 20:49-53 (*Ḥaddādī, Tafsīr-i Munīr, *British Library OR 6573, fol. 61b-62a) © The British Library Board.*

al-Nīshābūrī (fl. 547/1153).[63] As the identification of the British Library manuscript with Ḥaddādī's *Tafsīr-i munīr* was unknown to Matīnī, the significance of these references in Nīshābūrī's commentary eluded him. On close inspection, it is clear that while the Topkapı and British Library manuscripts share similar calligraphic features, they descend from different manuscript copies; this conclusion is based on variants in wording and spelling, and suggests that the commentary once enjoyed a good deal of popularity in its own right, surviving as it does in distinct manuscript recensions (fig. 12).[64]

While Matīnī was unaware of the connections with the Topkapı volume, he was able to draw attention to similarities between the British Library copy

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63 See Nīshābūrī, *Tafsīr-i baṣāʾir*, 27, 81, 304, 376-7. Discussed in Zadeh, *Vernacular Qurʾan*, 568, 587 n35; see, also, Matīnī, *Tafsīrī*, introduction, 18 n2; Ḥāʾirī, Muqaddima, 17 n11.

64 Several forms of divergence between the British Library and Topkapı manuscripts are examined in Ḥāʾirī, Muqaddima, appendices 1 and 2, 29-34.

and the so-called Lahore *tafsīr*. Published under the title *Tafsīr-i Qurʾān-i Pāk* (Commentary of the Pure Qurʾān), this fragment of a Persian commentary was donated to the Punjab University of Lahore (MS 4797) by the Indian scholar Maḥmūd Shīrānī (d. 1946), who first studied the work. Consisting of forty-six folios, spanning Q 2:65-151, this manuscript was published as a facsimile edition by Mujtabā Mīnawī in 1966 and was then subsequently edited by ʿAlī Rawāqī in 1969. Based on internal evidence, Shīrānī contended that the commentary was likely to have been composed between the fourth/tenth and fifth/eleventh centuries. Several linguistic studies on the archaic language of the Lahore *tafsīr* support this dating and furthermore there is evidence that the commentary shares dialectical features of Early New Persian from Transoxiania, with particular connections to Parthian and even Sogdian.[65] Matīnī noted that the Lahore *tafsīr* shared significant lexical similarities with the British Library manuscript that he had edited; furthermore, he observed that both texts also cite "Khwāja Imām" as a direct authority. On separate occasions in the two texts, which as noted above cover different sections of the Qurʾān, Khwāja Imām is quoted narrating reports that he had heard from a certain Qāḍī Bū ʿĀṣim.[66] From this Matīnī concluded that the Khwāja Imam of the two commentaries was likely the same authority.

Drawing on these points of overlap, Muḥammad ʿImādī Ḥāʾirī has argued, foremost, that the Lahore *tafsīr* is likely a fragment from the first volume of Ḥaddādī's *Tafsīr-i munīr*.[67] Furthermore, in his most recent publication on the topic, he reasons that the recurrent references to Khwāja Imām in the *Tafsīr-i munīr* and in the Lahore *tafsīr* are not to a teacher of the author, but refer to none other than the author himself, Abū Naṣr Ḥaddādī. As *khwāja* in early New Persian can be used synonymously for *shaykh* in Arabic, the repeated

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65   Shīrānī, Qurʾān-i pāk, 13; translated from Urdu into Persian by ʿĀrif Nawshāhī in the second edition of ʿAlī Riwāqī's publication of the *Tafsīr-i Qurʾān-i pāk*, 23; see also Khūʾī, Tafsīr-i Qurʾān-i pāk, 58; Mackenzie, Vocabulary, 407; Abdullayeva, Some Linguistic Peculiarities, 21, 23.

66   See Shīrānī, Qurʾān-i pāk, 11; translated in *Tafsīr-i Qurʾān-i pāk*, xxi. See Matīnī, *Tafsīrī*, introduction, 19; cited in Ḥāʾirī, Muqaddima, 18 n5; see idem, *Kuhantarīn*, 19 n14. As for the reference to al-Qāḍī Abū ʿĀṣim al-ʿĀmirī, he is cited without the *nisba* in the *Tafsīr-i Qurʾān-i pāk*, 55; the *nisba* appears in the citation in *Tafsīr-i ʿushrī*, 48 (EH 209, fol. 45b). Shīrānī, who did not have access to the *nisba*, mistakenly identified this figure with the famed Shāfiʿī *qāḍī* of Herat, Abū ʿĀṣim Muḥammad b. Aḥmad al-ʿAbbādī (b. 375/985-6, d. 458/1066); see Subkī (d. 771/1370), *Ṭabaqāt*, IV, 104-13, §296. Both the date and name, however, are off. This may be, rather, the Ḥanafī judge of Damascus, Abū ʿĀṣim al-ʿĀmirī, see Qurashī, *al-Jawāhir al-muḍiyya*, III, 84; IV, 58, §1938; Laknawī, *Fawāʾid*, 263, §33.

67   Ḥāʾirī, *Kuhantarīn*, 13-5, 19-20, 31; ibid., Muqaddima, 12-3, 18, 20.

references to Ḥaddādī in the *Madkhal* as *al-shaykh al-imām* are a direct parallel to the Persian citations to Khwāja Imām in the *Tafsīr-i munīr*.[68]

The customary prayers honoring the deceased imam following these citations would thus signify that the redaction of the commentary in its present form also took place after Ḥaddādī's death. This is noteworthy as it points to a generational transmission of Ḥaddādī's Persian commentary following a similar pattern of redaction for the *Madkhal*, which likewise took its present form after the death of its author. As with Arabic book culture in general, this pattern of transmission was well established in the exegetical tradition preceding Ḥaddādī's commentary, whereby disciples would often transmit the work of their masters.[69] In this collaborative system of publication, it was also common for the transmitter (*rāwī*, pl. *ruwāt*), be it a student or even child of the master, to significantly shape the work's final published form, well after the death of the original 'author.' This suggests, in the context of Ḥaddādī's *Tafsīr-i munīr*, that early Persian exegetical material followed a path of dissemination similar to the transmission of Arabic religious learning and authority.

As for the codicological record, the following points thus can be made concerning Ḥaddādī and his Persian commentary: 1) the British Library manuscript edited by Jalāl Matīnī is actually Ḥaddādī's *Tafsīr-i munīr*, which covers almost all the same material found in the Topkapı copy; 2) the Lahore *tafsīr*, published as the *Tafsīr-i Qurʾān-i pāk*, is likely to be a fragment from the first volume of Ḥaddādī's commentary, which apart from these three manuscripts is no longer extant; 3) the texts, as we have them, were redacted in some form and at some point after Ḥaddādī's death; 4) the "Khwāja Imām" referenced as a deceased authority throughout these manuscripts is none other than Ḥaddādī himself; 5) this is also the author of the *Madkhal*, an Arabic treatise on Qurʾānic grammar and polysemy; 6) a biographical entry on Ḥaddādī features in Ibn al-Jazarī's biographical history of Qurʾān reciters. Such connections help to more fully historicize the production and reception of Ḥaddādī's Persian commentary, which has been largely unknown to modern scholarship.

Our recent discovery of an otherwise unknown Arabic commentary of the Qurʾān also composed by Ḥaddādī sheds further light on the topic. Two manuscripts of the same Arabic Qurʾānic commentary are housed in the

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68   See Burhān, *Burhān-i qāṭiʿ*, II, 779; also, see, Ḥāʾirī, Yāftahā-yi dīgar, 120-1.

69   For examples of such transmission from widely differing contexts of Qurʾānic exegesis, see Muqātil b. Sulaymān (d. 150/767), *Tafsīr*, I, 25; ʿAbd al-Razzāq (d. 211/827), *Tafsīr*, I, 37; Ṭabarī (d. 310/923), *Jāmiʿ*, I, 3 n2; Abū l-Layth al-Samarqandī (d. c. 396/1006), *Tafsīr*, I, 71. More broadly on this phenomenon in Arabic book culture, see Schoeler, *The Oral and the Written*, 62-86.

Public Library of Kastamonu, in northern Anatolia — the only known copies of the work to date. One manuscript is the complete commentary bound in a single large volume (MS 3659). The other manuscript is an acephalous fragment, missing the first folio from the opening and an unidentified number of folios from the end. This second manuscript was part of a set that likely spread the text over two or three volumes (MS 306).[70] Fortunately, the opening of MS 3659 preserves the frontispiece with the title of the commentary, *al-Itqān fī l-maʿānī l-Qurʾān* (The Perfect Guide on the Meanings of the Qurʾān), which is identified as one of the compositions of the shaykh of all the shaykhs of the world (*shaykh shuyūkh al-ʿālam*), Abū Naṣr Aḥmad b. Muḥammad b. Ḥamdān al-Ḥaddādī.

As with the *Madkhal*, in this Arabic commentary Ḥaddādī is referred to as "al-Shaykh al-Imām al-Zāhid," or simply "al-Shaykh al-Imām," which is always followed with the honorific prayer, "may God be pleased with him," again indicating that the work, in its present form, was transmitted after the author's death. In the introduction, Ḥaddādī offers a rationale for composing this concise Arabic commentary:

> Al-Shaykh al-Imām al-Zāhid, may God be pleased with him, stated: As for the matter at hand. You my brothers, may God aid you, requested and together determined that I should grant you a bit from the commentary of the book of God almighty, consisting of such matters as the meanings (*maʿānī*), the syntax (*iʿrāb*), the statements of the pious forefathers (*aqāwīl al-salaf*), and the variant readings (*qirāʾāt*), and treating the juridical rulings (*aḥkām*) and the mystical allusions (*ishārāt*) in an abridged concise form (*mukhtaṣaran mujāzan*), so that each day you may take these matters from me, to the extent of your capacity and your comprehension and so that you might have from me a memorial (*tadhkira*). In the end, I found your wish to be pleasing and I considered your desire to seek knowledge from me through this [commentary] to be a blessing, for the book of God is the greatest means for the servant to reach his Lord.[71]

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70   Both manuscripts are well worn and written in a quick hand typical of *madrasa* productions; they form part of the *waqf* endowment of al-Shaykh Shaʿbān Afandī al-Qasṭamūnī. Neither are paginated. We would like to thank the Sevgı Turali and Mehmet Öztürk, librarian and manager respectively, at the Kastamonu İl Halk Kütüphanesi for their help in acquiring copies of both manuscripts.

71   Kastamonu MS 3659, fol. 3v (all folios are unnumbered).

Although the pious request of students to a master, as presented here, reflects a well-worn conceit of modesty, the promised focus reflects well the range of issues that Ḥaddādī addresses in the course of the work. Exegetical material from the Baghdadi philologist Zajjāj (d. 311/923), known for his *Maʿānī l-Qurʾān*, appears frequently, as does a concern for variant readings, and issues of grammar. Ḥaddādī repeatedly draws on citations from Arabic poetry as a means of illustrating matters of syntax and lexicography and in this regard the commentary reflects a continuation of literary interests developed in his Arabic primer, the *Madkhal*.

However, here Ḥaddādī progresses verse-by-verse through the entire Qurʾān, drawing on early exegetical figures, such as Ibn ʿAbbās (d. c. 68/687), Mujāhid b. Jabr (d. c. 104/722), Ḍaḥḥāk al-Khurāsānī (d. 105/723-4), Ismāʿīl b. ʿAbd al-Raḥmān al-Suddī (d. 127/744-5), Muḥammad b. al-Sāʾib al-Kalbī (d. 146/763), and Muqātil b. Sulaymān (d. 158/775), to explain basic matters of meaning, as well as to explore larger narrative accounts associated with stories of the prophets. Here too he takes little interest in the transmission of *Ḥadīth* reports ascribed to the Prophet. A pronounced set of Ḥanafī legal commitments emerge, through Ḥaddādī's treatment of juridical matters. In sum, this commentary was well suited for instruction in the context of religious education, particularly in areas of grammar, variant readings, exegetical matters of basic comprehension, and issues of juridical divergence.

While many of the same concerns emerge in Ḥaddādī's Persian *Tafsīr-i munīr*, it is evident that the two commentaries are quite different in terms of focus, specific citations, and areas covered. Upon close inspection, it is apparent that these are actually two distinct works that share many features and fields of emphasis but diverge in important and noticeable ways. This is markedly unlike the case of the Persian commentary by the Nishapuri exegete Abū l-Muẓaffar Shāhfūr al-Isfarāʾīnī (d. 471/1079), which is for all intents and purposes an unacknowledged translation of *al-Kashf wa-l-bayān ʿan tafsīr al-Qurʾān* (The Unveiling and Elucidation in Qurʾānic Interpretation) by the famed exegete of Nishapur, Abū Isḥāq al-Thaʿlabī (d. 427/1035).[72] Rather, Ḥaddādī, or perhaps his students working after him and in his name, produced two distinct works of Qurʾānic exegesis, one, for an audience interested in the fine points of Arabic grammar, poetry, and lexicography, and another focusing on the meaning of the Qurʾān through the filter of Persian paraphrases, stories, and translations of Arabic exegetical authorities. The *Tafsīr-i munīr* also develops a greater interest in matters of mystical exegesis, which while evident in Ḥaddādī's Arabic commentary are not nearly as prevalent. As the *Tafsīr-i munīr*

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72   See Zadeh, *Vernacular Qurʾan*, 382-418.

remains in a fragmentary state, our understanding of Ḥaddādī's role as a compiler, translator, and as an exegetical authority, remains tentative. In any case, the notion of unitary authorship is perhaps not the most productive framework for texts of this nature.

From the biographical and codicological record, we know that Ḥaddādī is associated with at least four Arabic works in the field of Qurʾānic studies: 1) a study of variant readings, *Kitāb al-Ghunya fī l-qirāʾāt*; 2) a work of exegesis, *al-Muwaḍḍiḥ li-ʿilm al-Qurʾān*; 3) an introduction to the study of the Qurʾān, *al-Madkhal*, which focuses on grammar, syntax, and rhetoric; and 4) a concise verse-by-verse commentary, *al-Itqān fī maʿānī l-Qurʾān*. While the first two works are presumed lost, a good deal of material survives, suggesting in its own right Ḥaddādī's importance in the field, which has hitherto remained largely unexplored. To this we can add the *Tafsīr-i munīr*, his Persian commentary of the Qurʾān, which was clearly a significant work, highly esteemed in its day.

It was not uncommon for scholars of the Qurʾān to produce multiple commentaries and other works in the field of Qurʾānic studies over the course of a lifetime. One of the most famous examples can be seen in the renowned disciple of Thaʿlabī, the Nishābūrī exegete Abū l-Ḥasan al-Wāḥidī (d. 468/1076), who composed several works in the field, notably, *al-Basīṭ, al-Wasīṭ*, and *al-Wajīz*, his major, middle, and minor commentaries of the Qurʾān, respectively. Wāḥidī is an important case, for while his three commentaries are related, they are clearly independent compositions governed by distinct interests with different spheres of hermeneutical concern.[73] Similarly, at least based on a comparison with the *Itqān*, it is clear that Ḥaddādī's Persian commentary was a distinct work with its own areas of attention. As the full scope of his writings remains unknown, we are unable to state the extent to which the *Tafsīr-i munīr* was composed independently of Ḥaddādī's other Arabic writings. There is no doubt, however, that the Persian exegetic corpus in general, and Ḥaddādī's enterprise as an exegete closely drew upon and incorporated earlier hermeneutical models developed in Arabic. Yet, Ḥaddādī's body of writing also highlights bilingual religious education in the region and points to the diverse linguistic skills and competencies cultivated amongst the religious elite.

In the aggregate these discoveries underscore the fragmentary condition of the codicological material. This proves true for the manuscript record in Arabic as well as in Persian. It is of note, with regard to the early history of Persian exegetical writing, that there are several Persian commentaries and translations of the Qurʾān whose authorship remains unknown. This is the

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73   See Saleh, The Last of the Nishapuri School, 225. See, also, the editorial introduction to al-Wāḥidī, *Basīṭ*, I, 76-92.

case, for instance, with the Persian commentary preserved in the University of Cambridge (MS Mm. 4.15);[74] the fragment of the unique prosimetrical translation of the Qurʾān housed in the archive of the shrine complex of Imam Riḍā in Mashhad (MS 2039),[75] as well as the interlinear translation known as the *Qurʾān-i quds*, from the same collection (MS 54), which is also incomplete and preserved in an anonymous manuscript.[76] Each of these texts have been the subject of a good deal of scholarship, yet, attempts at historicization generally have been left to the realm of historical linguistics, which is admittedly a rather inferential process. Several other examples of such acephalous texts can be easily adduced. Undoubtedly, such anonymous codicological evidence opens a window on the early development of Persian exegetical literature; however, contextualizing this material often proves difficult, as it is unmoored from its original production and reception. This is, of course, what makes the identification of Ḥaddādī's *Tafsīr-i munīr* particularly significant, as it offers more concrete evidence regarding the historical development and dissemination of Persian exegetical literature.

The Scholarly Networks of Vernacular Exegesis

One of the most noteworthy parts of this story is that, as it currently stands, the *Tafsīr-i munīr* is the earliest exegetical work in Persian whose author can be identified. This does not mean that there were not earlier Persian commentaries or translations of the Qurʾān. Such material was already in circulation in Khurasan and Transoxiana during the course of fourth/tenth century. Foremost, we have the example of the major commentary and translation commissioned by the Sāmānid ruler al-Manṣūr b. Nūḥ (r. 350-65/961-76), which according to its introduction purports (incorrectly) to be a translation of Ṭabarī's major commentary, undertaken by a joint commission of scholars from the region. The text of this work survives in a highly redacted form, abridged at some later point by an unidentified editor. Nonetheless, the

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74   See Matīnī's introduction to his edition of the manuscript, *Tafsīr-i Qurʾān-i majīd*, I, 23-31.

75   Edited by Aḥmad ʿAlī Rajāʾī as *Pulī miyānī shiʿr-i hijāʾī wa-ʿarūḍī-i Fārsī*; see also Reinert *Hajaz*; Ḥāʾirī, *Qurʾān-i Fāsrī*, 30-2; Zadeh, *Vernacular Qurʾān*, 268-79.

76   See *Qurʾān-quds*, edited by ʿAlī Rawāqī. Rawāqī proposed the late third or early fourth century for the composition of the text, a dating which has been accepted by many Iranian scholars, see Rūḥānī, *Nawtarīn ganj*, 139-40; Khūʾī, *Fihristgān*, 63-4; however, a later date is much more likely, see Ḥāʾirī, *Qurʾān-i Fārsī*, 27-8, and importantly the historical linguistic study of the text by Lazard, *Lumières nouvelles*, 192-8.

surviving material from the *Tafsīr-i Ṭabarī*, as it is commonly known, likely dates, in some form, to the Sāmānid court in the city of Bukhara.[77] The Sāmānid translation project of Ṭabarī's commentary is framed as a collaborative work undertaken by a team of Ḥanafī jurists, whose identities are not specified, and who were funded by the court.[78]

In contrast, the *Tafsīr-i munīr* is known specifically as the work of Ḥaddādī. This fits into a well established paradigm in Arabic exegetical writing wherein a given scholar composes and transmits a commentary of the Qurʾān, which, while drawing extensively from earlier sources and reports, reflects an individual interpretive authority, often in juridical, theological, and linguistic terms, or can serve as the source for the transmission of earlier material. Among early Persian exegetes of the Qurʾān, Ḥaddādī thus joins the ranks of Abū l-Muẓaffar Isfarāʾīnī (d. 471/1079), a Shāfiʿī jurist from Nishapur; Abū ʿAtīq Sūrābādī (d. 494/1100), a leading Karrāmī authority from the region; the mystic Rashīd al-Dīn Maybudī (fl. 520/1126); the Ḥanafī jurist of Samarqand Najm al-Dīn Nasafī (d. 537/1142); his compatriot Abū Naṣr Darwāzaqī (d. 549/1154), known also as Zāhidī; the Imāmī exegete of Rayy, Abū l-Futūḥ Rāzī (d. c. 554/1159); and the Ḥanafī judge of Ghazna, Muʿīn al-Dīn Nīshābūrī (fl. 547/1153).

Given the fragmentary state of the archive, care must be taken not to overstate the significance of Ḥaddādī's commentary in the development of vernacular exegetical writing, for our knowledge of the period is largely dependent on the serendipity of what has survived from a body of sources that stretch back over a millennium. Apart from the actual codicological evidence of the work, there is nothing in the prosopographical material on Ḥaddādī's life that links him with Persian exegetical writing. This is to be expected; the same is true for most of the other exegetical authorities who wrote in Persian during this period. Generally, the classical Arabic biographical sources on religious scholars from the region were not particularly interested in tracking the development of Persian vernacular culture. Such material offers a very limited basis for assaying the development of the field of Persian exegesis. In the introduction to his major Persian commentary and translation of the Qurʾān, Isfarāʾīnī observes that by his day Persian exegetical writing had long been in circulation.[79] There is good reason to suspect that there were other authorities who had also produced Persian exegetical writings that are no longer extant.

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77   See Zadeh, *Vernacular Qurʾan*, 302-23; ibid., Persian Translations.

78   It is not clear which of the named Ḥanafī authorities listed in the introduction of the abridgement as issuing juridical approval for the project were then assigned with undertaking the work, see *Tarjuma-i Tafsīr-i Ṭabarī*, I, 5-6.

79   See Isfarāʾīnī, *Tāj*, I, 5-6; translated in Zadeh, Persian Translations.

Indeed the survival and recent discovery of Ḥaddādī's commentary is itself a testament to the tenuous nature of the textual condition and the often perfidious turns of happenstance.

As with many other religious authorities from the region, we have relatively little in the way of biographical information on Ḥaddādī. Najm al-Dīn Nasafī has a short entry in his history of scholars from Samarqand on an otherwise unidentified Abū Naṣr Aḥmad b. Muḥammad al-Samarqandī, who took the *nisba* Qurashī; this may well be Ḥaddādī, although the identification is by no means certain.[80] The only other major source that appears to have survived for Ḥaddādī's life is Ibn al-Jazarī's late biographical dictionary of Qurʾān reciters.

Some of Ibn al-Jazarī's information is admittedly vague, such as the note that Ḥaddādī died at some point after the year 400/1009. Yet, despite its rather cursory nature, a good deal of information can be adduced from the entry. Foremost, Ḥaddādī's inclusion in this particular work stresses his authority as a Qurʾān reciter and as a scholar of variant readings. Here he is referred to as the master of the reciters (*shaykh al-qurrāʾ*) in Samarqand, known for his book on the topic, the *Kitāb al-Ghunya*, the only work that Ibn al-Jazarī mentions in the account. It is likely that Ibn al-Jazarī's sole quotation from Ḥaddādī, wherein Ḥaddādī discusses the importance of having studied under various masters, is taken from this particular work. We may assume also that it is from this same source that Ibn al-Jazarī derived his list of Ḥaddādī's teachers. Some fourteen authorities are named, many of whom are well known. As Ḥaddādī's work on Qurʾānic variants is likely the source for this material, it is of little surprise that many of the authorities cited share an interest in Qurʾānic grammar, recitation, and lexicography. The list though fits into a larger network connecting religious authorities in the east with the urban centers of Iraq.

To be expected, Ḥaddādī studied with local scholars from Samarqand, such as the Qurʾān reader (*muqriʾ*) Abū Saʿīd Jaʿfar b. Muḥammad al-Sakhtyānī, with whom Ḥaddādī began to study after the year 360/970-1; and Abū Qāsim Muḥammad b. Muḥammad al-Fusṭāṭī, who taught Ḥaddādī in Samarqand and was still alive in 370/980.[81] Ḥaddādī's primary teacher in the city, at least as far as the field of Qurʾān recitation is concerned, was the Qurʾān reader Abū Yaḥyā Muḥammad b. Sulaymān al-Khayyāṭ, with whom Ḥaddādī studied the recitation of the Qurʾān for some twenty years; Abū Yaḥyā, in turn, was a student of Abū l-Faḍl b. Abī Ghassān, who studied under the famed Qurʾān reciter of

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80   Nasafī (d. 537/1142), *Qand*, 77-8, §74; Ḥāʾirī, Muqaddima, 13 n9; idem, *Kuhantarīn*, 19.

81   See Ibn al-Jazarī, *Ghāya*, I, 180, §909 and II, 226, §3454, respectively.

Baghdad, Ibn Mujāhid (d. 324/936), author of the *Kitāb al-Sabʿ fī l-qirāʾāt*, on seven variant readings of the Qurʾān.[82]

Also in the greater region, Ḥaddādī was a disciple of Abū Bakr Ibn Mihrān (d. 381/991), the famed *adīb*, jurist, and Qurʾān reader of Nishapur.[83] Ibn Mihrān is well known for his *Kitāb al-Ghāya fī l-ʿashr*, a work on ten variant readings that was quite popular in Khurasani exegetical circles and was transmitted by multiple generations of scholars, including notably the famed exegete of Nishapur, Abū Isḥāq al-Thaʿlabī (d. 427/1035).[84] Without even traveling beyond Khurasan and Transoxiana, Ḥaddādī obtained lines of transmission that located him in a network of scholars associated with the canonization of variant Qurʾān readings. Each of these readings, in turn, is rooted in the tradition of individual Qurʾān reciters, all of whom lived during the second/eighth and third/ninth centuries.

However, Ḥaddādī not only left the region, but by his own account he traveled quite extensively. Ibn al-Jazarī addresses him as a wayfaring transmitter (*nāqil raḥḥāl*), who journeyed widely. From the list of teachers cited, it is clear that Ḥaddādī studied for some time with Iraqi authorities, many of whom were, in turn, disciples of Ibn Mujāhid. Such is the case with the well-known Qurʾān reader Abū Bakr Aḥmad al-Shadhāʾī (d. c. 373/984) from Basra;[85] and the Baghdad traditionists Abū l-Qāsim ʿAbd Allāh b. al-Ḥasan al-Nakhkhās

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82   Ibn al-Jazarī, *Ghāya*, ii, 132, §3045; cf. ii, 14, §2582; see Hudhalī, *Kāmil*, 244; here the editor of the *Kāmil* has confused Abū l-Faḍl b. Abī Ghassān with Abū l-Qāsim ʿAbd al-ʿAzīz, also known as Ibn Abī Ghassān (d. 412/1021-2), cf. Ibn al-Jazarī, *Ghāya*, i, 353, §1671. See also Melchert, Ibn Mujāhid; Shady, *Transmission*, 35-78.

83   See Yāqūt (d. 626/1229), *Irshād*, i, 233-4, §77; Ibn al-Jazarī, *Ghāya*, i, 49-50, §208. See also the editor's introduction to Ibn Mirhān, *Ghāya*, 17-24. Al-Ḥākim Abū ʿAbd Allāh al-Nīshābūrī (d. 405/1014) relates that he studied with Ibn Mirhān not in Nishapur but in Bukhara; the same may have been the case for Ḥaddādī, see Dhahabī (d. 753/1352-3), *Siyar*, XVI, 406-7, §294.

84   See Fārisī (d. 529/1134), *Muntakhab*, 117, §213; 708, §1581; ibid., *Mukhtaṣar*, 398, §2272; cf. Hudhalī, *Kāmil*, 185-6. The biographical authorities, ultimately taking their cue from Fārisī's history of Nishapur, note that Thaʿlabī transmitted from Ibn Mihrān: see, Fārisī, *Muntakhab*, 109, §197; Yāqūt, *Irshād*, ii, 507, §187; Dhahabī, *Siyar*, XVII, 435-7, §291. However, as Walid Saleh observed, as far as Thaʿlabī's *Kashf* is concerned, Thalʿabī transmits Ibn Mihrān's material on variants via an intermediary, *Formation*, 33, cf., however, 43. See also, Thaʿlabī, *Muqaddima*, 139-40, 141.

85   On Shadhāʾī, see Dhahabī, *Siyar*, XVI, 353; ibid., *Maʿrifa*, ii, 616-17, §335; Ibn al-Jazarī, *Ghāya*, i, 131-2, §673.

(d. 368/979),[86] and Abū Ḥafṣ ʿUmar b. Ibrāhīm al-Kattānī (d. 390/1000), who delivered lessons in his own mosque in the city.[87]

Ibn al-Jazarī also notes that around the year 370/980-1, Ḥaddādī studied with the Baghdadi traditionist Abū ʿUmar Muḥammad b. al-ʿAbbās Ibn Ḥayyuwayh al-Khazzāz (d. 382/992), known for his transmission of larger multivolume works, particularly the biographical dictionary of Ibn Saʿd (d. 230/845), the respective *maghāzī* collections on the early history of the Islamic state by Muḥammad b. ʿUmar al-Wāqidī (d. 207/822) and Yaḥyā b. Saʿīd al-Umawī (d. 194/809), as well as the writings of the famed Iraqi philologist, traditionist, and exegete Abū Bakr Ibn al-Anbārī (d. 328/940).[88] Access to such wide-ranging material in its own right would provide a firm basis for scholarly pursuits in a variety of fields of religious learning. While Ibn al-Jazarī's book on Qurʾān reciters accentuates Ḥaddādī's authority in this particular discipline, there is much evidence pointing to his expertise across a range of discourses in the traditional Islamic sciences.

Such a broad cultivation of learning can also be seen in the most well-known of Ḥaddādī's teachers referenced in Ibn al-Jazarī's entry, namely Abū Saʿīd al-Sīrāfī (d. 368/979), the famed Ḥanafi judge, grammarian, and littérateur of Baghdad. As with many of Ḥaddādī's masters, Sīrāfī also studied the Qurʾān from Ibn Mujāhid. However, Sīrāfī's skill as a scholar extended well beyond variant readings. He taught a wide array of subjects that included the various branches of Qurʾānic learning, but also extended to arithmetic, lexicography, grammar, poetry, prosody, and jurisprudence.[89] Sīrāfī's renown as a scholar had reached the Sāmānid court in Bukhara and Samarqand long before Ḥaddādī had set out for Baghdad. This is attested to by Abū Ḥayyān al-Tawḥīdī (d. 414/1023), who records that, years earlier, the Sāmānid amir Nūḥ b. Naṣr (r. 331-43/943-54), and his vizier al-Balʿamī, presumably the famed Abū ʿAlī

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86   On Nakhkhās, see al-Khaṭīb al-Baghdādī (d. 463/1071), *Tārīkh*, XI, 98-99, §5010; Samʿānī, *Ansāb*, XII, 56, s.v. *Nakhhās*; Ibn al-Jazarī, *Ghāya*, I, 371-2, §1757.

87   On Kattānī, see al-Khaṭīb al-Baghdādī, *Tārīkh*, XIII, 138-9, §5984; Samʿānī, *Ansāb*, X, 352-3, s.v. *Kattān*; Dhahabī, *Siyar*, XVI, 482-4, §356; Ibn Jazarī, *Ghāya*, I, 518-9, §2382.

88   On Khazzāz, see al-Khaṭīb al-Baghdādī, *Tārīkh*, IV, 205-6, §1405; Dhahabī, *Siyar*, XVI, 409-10, §296; Ibn al-Jazarī, *Ghāya*, II, 140, §3091. The professional or guild titles associated with many of the Qurʾān reciters is noteworthy: blacksmith (*ḥaddādī*), linen cloth seller (*kattānī*), tailor (*khayyāṭ*), silk trader (*khazzāz*), cattle/slave trader (*nakhkhās*).

89   On Sīrāfī, see Ibn al-Nadīm, *Fihrist*, I, 183-4; al-Khaṭīb al-Baghdādī, *Tārīkh*, VIII, 316-7, §3816; Yāqūt, *Irshād*, II, 876-910, §321; Humbert, *Sīrāfī*.

(d. 363/974), sent letters to Sīrāfī requesting the explanation of various linguistic issues relating to Arabic usage, proverbs, and matters in the Qurʾān.[90]

The range of materials covered in Ḥaddādī's *Madkhal*, an introduction to the study of the Qurʾān, offers an indication of his command of Arabic letters, and again underscores the lasting influence of earlier Iraqi authorities in the diverse spheres of learning along the eastern frontiers. In this work, Ḥaddādī focuses on Arabic grammar, lexicography, semantics, and rhetoric, and he draws extensively from early philologists, with a particular emphasis on such Basran authorities as al-Khalīl b. Aḥmad (d. c. 160/776), Sībawayh (d. c. 180/796), Abū ʿUbayda (d. c. 211/826), and Abū l-Ḥasan al-Akhfash (d. 215/830). Other Iraqi scholars in the field also feature, such as Abū Zakariyyāʾ al-Farrāʾ (d. 207/822), Abū Bakr al-Anbārī (d. 328/940), Abū l-ʿAbbās al-Mubarrad (d. 286/900), and Abū Isḥāq al-Zajjāj (d. 311/923). Many of these figures composed works on the *maʿānī* of the Qurʾān, a field that focuses above all on the semantic qualities, grammatical structures, and stylistic features of the Qurʾānic text. Ḥaddādī often cites the group as simply the *ahl al-maʿānī*. This emphasis on semantic valences is expressed in the opening of the *Madkhal*, where Ḥaddādī states that he composed the work as a gift for his son, Muḥammad, and for his fellow Muslims, as an introduction to the field of exegesis and as a means of understanding the *maʿānī* of the Qurʾān, which here means the distinct linguistic features and grammatical structures.

Ḥaddādī also stresses in the introduction that he designed the study as a means of combating theological distortions as promoted by "heretics who attack the Book of God," and who on the whole, he notes, have a poor command of Arabic. Despite this assertion, the work offers relatively little in the way of direct engagement with the major theological controversies of the day. Rather Ḥaddādī illustrates points of grammar, semantics, and rhetoric with extensive citations of Arabic poetry, stretching from the pre-Islamic period to the heyday of the early Abbasid court poets. His expertise in variant readings also features here as a dimension that forms part of his broader linguistic analysis of Qurʾānic style. The picture that emerges from the collection is of a scholar steeped in *belles lettres* and the philological study of the Qurʾān, a pattern well reflected in many of Ḥaddādī's masters.

It is also clear that, in this particular work of Qurʾānic hermeneutics, Ḥaddādī focuses very little on the transmission of *Ḥadīth*. That said, he does on occasion draw upon contemporary *Ḥadīth* authorities. Arguably, the most significant of these is the Nishapuri traditionist Abū Bakr Ibn Manjawayh (d. 428/1036), who traveled extensively in the region and is best known for his

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90   Tawḥīdī, *Imtāʿ*, I, 129-30; Yāqūt, *Irshād*, II, 888; see Zadeh, Balʿamī.

study of transmitters featured in the canonical *Ḥadīth* collection of Muslim b. al-Ḥajjāj al-Nīshābūrī (d. 261/876).[91] The citation of Ibn Manjawayh not only situates Ḥaddādī in a wide web of regional *Ḥadīth* authorities, but it also leads us to believe that, as Ibn al-Jazarī claims, Ḥaddādī was still alive at beginning of the fifth/eleventh century.[92] Similarly, Ḥaddādī also notes that he only composed the *Madkhal* after having completed his earlier study on Qurʾānic exegesis, *Muwaḍḍiḥ*.[93] This too would suggest that the work was composed toward the middle or end of his career.

No direct mention is made of his Persian commentary and it is not entirely clear, given the incomplete nature of the text as it survives today, how this particular work fits into the sequence of Ḥaddādī's other writings. As with the *Itqān* and the *Tafsīr-i munīr*, the *Madkhal* also appears to have been transmitted after his death. It also remains to be seen the extent to which this material was reworked in the course of its reception. Ibn al-Jazarī notes that the main transmitter of Ḥaddādī's work was his son, Naṣr, who transmitted material on variant readings, presumably from Ḥaddādī's *Kitāb al-Ghunya*, to the Qurʾān reader Hudhalī; however, it is of note that Naṣr also related material to Hudhalī from sources other than his father.[94] As these works from the field of Qurʾānic studies all appear to have taken their present form after Ḥaddādī's death, it could well be the case that they were redacted in significant ways during the course of their transmission. Needless to say, without further textual evidence, the full nature of Ḥaddādī's works and their relationship to one another remains largely unresolved.

Exegetical Method

Despite this state of uncertainty, much can be said in the way of positive statements about Ḥaddādī and his Persian commentary. The *Tafsīr-i munīr* takes relatively little interest in prophetic *Ḥadīth* as such, and rather draws much of its authority from the exegetical corpus of early Arabic authorities. In addition

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91 Ḥaddādī, *Madkhal*, 600; on Ibn Manjawayh, see Samʿānī, *Ansāb*, XI, 492-4, s.v. Manjawayh; Dhahabī, *Siyar*, XVII, 438-40, §293; and the editor's introduction to Ibn Manjawayh, *Rijāl*, 21-2.

92 As with many religious authorities, Ibn Manjawayh lived a long life, dying at the age of 81, and so Ḥaddādī could have transmitted from him at any point during this time. However, compare this also with the authorities listed in the *isnād* cited by Ḥaddādī, *Tafsīr-i munīr*, 326-7.

93 See above, page 152, note 60 and page 158.

94 See Ibn al-Jazarī, II, 292, §3723; Hudhalī, *Kāmil*, 187, 216, 217, 244, 265.

to the verse-by-verse explanation of the Qurʾān, Ḥaddādī also gives prominence to narrative accounts that form part of the *qiṣaṣ al-anbiyaʾ* genre on prophetic tales, with much material taken from the likes of Wahb b. Munabbih (d. 110/728), Ibn Isḥāq (d. 150/767), and Wāqidī (d. 207/823).[95] In the aggregate, the work presents the Qurʾān to a Persian audience in an accessible and dynamic manner that alternates between close attention to detail and broad narrative expansion. As with his surviving work in Arabic, Ḥaddādī synthesizes in the course of his Persian commentary an earlier body of scholarship produced largely in Iraq during the preceding centuries.

The curatorial process of what to include or exclude, where to focus, and how to structure the interpretive work at hand reveals a good deal about Ḥaddādī's priorities and method as an exegete. Given his background in Qurʾānic grammar, lexicography, rhetoric, and variant readings, which feature prominently in his surviving Arabic exegetical writings, it is perhaps surprising that these areas of expertise, as drawn directly from Arabic authorities in the field, appear with relatively little frequency. Rather, Ḥaddādī directs his philological energy to the actual activity of explaining in Persian the meaning of the Qurʾān.

Indeed, the full title of the work as preserved on the title page (fig. 3) of the Topkapı manuscript is particularly relevant in this regard; as noted above, it reads, "*Maʿānī Kitāb Allāh taʿālā wa-tafsīruhu l-munīr.*" The phrasing notably picks up on the title of Ḥaddādī's Arabic commentary, the *Itqān*, which also highlights *maʿānī* as a primary area of exegetical concern. The phrase is particularly relevant to a vernacular context of exegesis, as the title offers two distinct categories for the interpretive process. The first focuses on *maʿānī*, a multivalent word that, given Ḥaddādī's own training, immediately evokes the Arabic philological genre of exegetical writing on *maʿānī*, or grammatical, semantic, and rhetorical features of the Qurʾān. The second category of the title, *tafsīr*, suggests both the interpretation and explanation of the Qurʾān, and more broadly the exegetical tradition writ large. However, when paired together, in light of Ḥaddādī's actual method, *maʿānī* suggests in this particular context the actual process of paraphrastically rendering into Persian the meaning of each Qurʾānic verse. This would be, as it were, the domain of translation proper and stands in notable contrast to Ḥaddādī's Arabic *Itqān*, which is not primarily occupied with paraphrasing the Qurʾān as such. The category of *tafsīr*, in contrast, points to the larger commentarial tradition of interpreting, contextualizing, and explaining the Qurʾān often by drawing upon a coterie of exegetical

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95   See, for instance, Ḥaddādī, *Tafsīr-i munīr*, 10, 11, 38, 40, 42, 47, 50, 52, 100, 123, 185, 186, 192, 198, 248.

authorities. Whatever intention animates these two categories, the realms of interpretation and translation very much blend throughout the *Tafsīr-i munīr*.

Although Ḥaddādī's Persian commentary consistently follows the basic unit of the individual verse as the starting point for exegetical intervention, it generally breaks verses up into smaller clauses and phrases. This material is then rendered into Persian, through a loose paraphrastic explanation that is often interwoven into a broader exegetical engagement with the text. Similarly, Ḥaddādī often tries to maintain the larger arc of meaning between verses that are semantically linked together.

Many of these elements can be seen, for instance, in Ḥaddādī's treatment of Q 19:7, a rather straightforward verse announcing the miraculous birth of John to Zachariah and his barren wife: "Zachariah, We bring you good tidings of a son whose name is John, We have chosen this name for no one before him." Ḥaddādī breaks the verse into two parts with paraphrases of both:

> *Yā Zakariyyāʾ innā nubashshiruka bi-ghulām ismuhu Yaḥyā.* Gabriel, peace upon him, gave out a cry: *yā zakariyyāʾ*, and he [i.e., Zachariah] was in the mihrab praying. He [i.e., Gabriel] said: We give you good tidings (*muzhdagān*) of a boy, whose name is John.

> *Lam najʿal lahu min qablu samiyyan.* That is: We have not created before him anyone with the name John. That means that the name did not exist and that no one before him was named John.[96]

Here, Ḥaddādī supplies for both sections of the verse paraphrases that simultaneously translate and explain the material at hand. The interpretive dimension of translation is brought to the fore in the gloss to both the archangel Gabriel as the speaker and to the mihrab, or sanctuary, as the location of the address. Without stating it, this draws on the parallel passage in the Qurʾān (Q 3:39), where angels (*malāʾika*) greet Zachariah, who is praying in the mihrab, with the miraculous announcement of John's coming birth. Such a seamless flow between translation, commentary, and the primary Arabic text proves a model for much of Ḥaddādī's exegetical method in the *Tafsīr-i munīr*. It is in this sense that meanings (*maʿānī*) and commentary (*tafsīr*), or translation and interpretation, blend into what we may call an expansive and encompassing tapestry of Persian exegesis.

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96   E.H. 209, fol. 32r; Ḥaddādī, *Tafsīr-i munīr*, 31. The bracketed explanations in the translation here and below are editorial additions provided for clarity.

The *Tafsīr-i munīr* frequently weaves the statements and interpretations of exegetical authorities directly into the space of the commentary. This can be seen succinctly in Ḥaddādī's treatment of Q 19:12: "'John, hold firmly on to the Scripture.' While he was still a boy, We granted him wisdom." As with much narrative material in the Qurʾān, the story unfolds as a pericope, abridging material and elliptically shifting focus, often relying upon the audience's foreknowledge of the account at hand. In this case, moving from Zachariah's anticipation of the miraculous arrival of John (Q 19:11), the Qurʾān skips over the birth itself, which is implied; rather the text addresses John directly. Ḥaddādī explains the shift in focus, divides the verse up into different parts, and offers a paraphrastic translation that concludes by directly citing two Arabic exegetical authorities:

> *Yā Yaḥyā khudh al-kitāb bi-quwwa.* In this verse there is an abridgement and the meaning of it is that a child came to him [i.e., to Zachariah] and his name was John and this John had attained reason. We said to him, through our revelation: *yā Yaḥyā,* O John *khudh al-kitāb bi-quwwa.* This book of ours, that means the Torah, take it firmly and stick close to it (*ba-jidd gīr wa-muwāẓabat kun*), that is, be obedient (*kārband*) to it.

> Then the Lord Almighty praised John and said: *ātaynāhu l-ḥukma ṣabiyyan.* Muqātil said: "We gave to John in his childhood knowledge and understanding and he was three years old." Kalbī said: "We gave him prophethood (*payghāmbarī*) and understanding of Our book while he was still young."[97]

As the text slides between translation and interpretation, making a firm distinction between the two is perhaps not the most useful heuristic devise for understanding the hermeneutical process at hand. As with other Persian exegetical material from the period, this interpretive movement is not designed to replace the original Arabic scripture, but rather to open it up to reception in a new vernacular context. Similarly, in this example the citation of exegetical authorities does much of the actual work of translating the phrase in question,

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97   E.H. 209, fol. 33v-34r; *Tafsīr-i munīr,* 33. It is of note that in the calligraphic presentation of the Qurʾānic text, E.H. 209 often breaks up verses into smaller units, as it does here, while BL Or. 6573 keeps the verses intact, as is the case in this particular verse and as reflected throughout Matīnī's edition of the manuscript. See fig. 12 in the present article. Cf. Samarqandī, *Tafsīr,* II, 320. For the same interpretation, though not ascribed to Kalbī, see Māturīdī, *Taʾwīlāt,* III, 260; Wāḥidī, *Basīṭ,* XIV, 206.

as Ḥaddādī renders Arabic explanations from both Muqātil and Kalbī into Persian. This is of note, for much of the earlier Arabic exegetical tradition was designed precisely as a form of paraphrastically rendering the Qurʾānic text in a meaningful way through the use of short glosses and concise explanations that may also be thought of as a form of translation, even though the source and target language remain Arabic.

In this regard, the example of Muqātil's Arabic commentary is particularly illuminating. As with many other early exegetical authorities, Muqātil appears with a good deal of frequency in the surviving portion of Ḥaddādī's *Tafsīr-i munīr*, where he is cited by name over sixty times in the course of a single volume. A redaction of Muqātil's commentary has been published in a modern edition. Keeping in mind the inevitable variants inherent in the textual condition, which in the case of exegetical material may well be motivated by theological scrutiny, it is nonetheless possible to see how Ḥaddādī draws upon the original Arabic source material from Muqātil's commentary at his disposal. This can be seen, for instance, in the interpretation of the aforementioned verse (e.g., Q 19:12), where Muqātil offers the following explanation:

> *Yā Yaḥyā khudh al-kitāb* that means the Torah. *Bi-quwwa* that means taking it firmly and sticking close to it (*bi-jidd wa-muwāẓaba ʿalayhi*), *wa-āytanāhu l-ḥukma ṣabiyyan*, that means we gave Yaḥyā knowledge and understanding [when] he was three years old.[98]

In this instance, Ḥaddādī's citation directly reflects the content of Muqātil's *tafsīr*, as preserved in the modern edited text of the work. Furthermore, it would seem that Ḥaddādī drew on Muqātil's explanation here that the scripture given to John was the Torah. Similarly, with the Persian phrase, "*ba-jidd gīr wa-muwāẓabat kun*," Ḥaddādī parallels Muqātil's expression, "*bi-jidd wa-muwāẓaba ʿalayhi*," as an explanation of the Qurʾānic command to John that he take or grasp the scripture firmly, i.e., "*bi-quwwa*." Again, Ḥaddādī does so without any direct reference to his source material. This paraphrase of Muqātil's explanation relies on two Arabic words to convey its meaning, and so Ḥaddādī, in turn, offers a further Persian translation, this time without relying on Arabic loanwords, "that is, be obedient to it" (*ay ki kārband-i ān bāsh*). Other examples of unstated points of overlap with the pre-existing Arabic exegetical

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98   Muqātil, *Tafsīr*, 2, vol. 622. Muqātil's commentary survived in the classical period through multiple transmissions that appear to have reworked the text in significant ways, sometimes with theological ends in mind. The modern published edition preserves only one strand of this polyphony. For further details, see Gilliot, Muqātil, 40-8; Koç, Comparison.

corpus are easily adduced. Although a detailed analysis of these moments of intertextuality is beyond the scope of the present study, it is clear that Ḥaddādī was not only occupied with translating Qurʾānic material into Persian, but sought to showcase an array of Arabic exegetical writing to a Persian audience. While Ḥaddādī's Arabic commentary, the *Itqān*, also treats this same passage of the Qurʾān in a succinct manner, the progression of authorities cited, the material presented, and the specific areas of exegetical attention featured are quite distinct.[99]

Although the authorities Ḥaddādī cites in both the Arabic and Persian commentaries are for the most part identical, they are drawn upon at different moments and thus generally do not directly overlap. It is of note that Ḥaddādī's coterie of exegetical voices appear in contemporaneous Arabic exegetical writing from the region, such as the major commentary by Thaʿlabī of Nishapur and the slightly earlier commentary by Ḥaddādī's co-regionalist, Abū l-Layth al-Samarqandī (d. c. 396/1006). The most obvious difference separating these works from Ḥaddādī's *Tafsīr-i munīr*, however, is the use of Persian as the vehicle for communication. As with Thaʿlabī and Samarqandī, Ḥaddādī draws extensively from a pre-existing, largely normative corpus of Arabic material, as far as Sunni exegetical sources are concerned. Yet what makes Ḥaddādī's work unique in the context of the *Tafsīr-i munīr* is that he translates this material for an explicitly Persian-speaking audience.

There is reason to believe that Ḥaddādī was working with a wide array of written sources.[100] Apart from the direct citation of titles and works, many of the authorities he references are associated with written collections in wide circulation in the region. For instance, interpretations ascribed to the famed companion Ibn ʿAbbās, known by the sobriquet the interpreter (*tarjumān*) of the Qurʾān, feature with a good deal of frequency. This material was redacted in later written collections, during the course of the second/eighth century. Thus, for instance, Ḥaddādī repeatedly turns to the interpretations of the exegete Ḍaḥḥāk al-Khurāsānī (d. 105/723-4), who was active in the cities of Balkh,

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99   See Ḥaddādī, *al-Itqān fī maʿānī l-Qurʾān*, Kastamonu İl Halk Kütüphanesi, MSS 3659, 190a-b (unnumbered).

100   This presumes that Ḥaddādī was not translating a work of Arabic exegesis that had already collated these materials together in some fashion. Points against such a proposition would be: 1) the repeated recourse to Ḥaddādī's own exegetical voice, in the form of Khwāja Imām, which speaks to authoritative polyphony; 2) the explicit reference to specific titles of Arabic works which, in turn, give the appearance, at least, of an authority working with a range of written sources. Neither of these points, however, are conclusive with respect to the nature and use of the Arabic source material behind the Persian translation.

Samarqand, and Nishapur. Ḍaḥḥāk is often identified as a *mawlā*, or client, of Ibn ʿAbbās, although it is likely that he never met the famed Companion.[101] In the introduction to his Arabic commentary, Thaʿlabī lists Ḍaḥḥāk as one of the main transmitters of the *tafsīr* of Ibn ʿAbbās.[102] However, Thaʿlabī also catalogues Ḍaḥḥāk's *tafsīr* under the rubric of the exegetical collections of the Followers; Thaʿlabī received this particular work in five different transmissions, highlighting its broad popularity in the region.[103]

Muqātil also features with regularity in Ḥaddādī's work. As with Ḍaḥḥāk, Muqātil was a scholar originally from Khurasan. However, his commentary was produced in the context of Iraqi exegetic circles, only to then circulate across the Persianate spheres of the east.[104] Likewise, Muqātil is also associated with material from Ibn ʿAbbās. In the recension of the *tafsīr* as transmitted by Abū Ṣāliḥ al-Hudhayl b. Ḥabīb al-Dandānī (d. 190/805), which ultimately forms the basis for the modern edited text,[105] Muqātil draws extensively from interpretive material ascribed to Ibn ʿAbbās, often with an *isnād* that passes through Ḍaḥḥāk; this underscores the interconnected nature of much of the material at hand. Muqātil also often proposes his own direct interpretation without recourse to any other sources, as an exegetical authority in his own right.

From an early period Muqātil was criticized as an unreliable transmitter, and was attacked for exegetical interpretations that promoted an anthropomorphic vision of God.[106] Despite this early negative reception, Muqātil's commentary was particularly popular with eastern Sunni exegetical authorities, as the work offered a concise and accessible paraphrastic explanation of the Qurʾān and it presented his interpretation of each sura as a largely

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101   Ibn Saʿd records the report that Ḍaḥḥāk did not directly meet Ibn ʿAbbās, but rather took his commentary tradition from Saʿīd b. Jubayr (d. c. 95/712), *Ṭabaqāt*, VIII, 417-9, §3198; see also Ibn Abī Ḥātim, *Jarḥ*, IV, 458-9, §2024, Mizzī, *Tahdhīb*, XIII, 291-7, §2928; Zarkashī, *Burhān*, II, 158; Dhahabī, *Siyar*, IV, 598-600, §238. Also, see the editorial introduction to Ḍaḥḥāk, *Tafsīr*, I, 43-8, 58-61; Sezgin, *GAS*, I, 29-30, §4; Gilliot, Lʾexégèse, 130.

102   Thaʿlabī, *Muqaddima*, 24-7; cf. Gilliot, Muqātil, 46 n37.

103   Thaʿlabī *Muqaddima*, 38-44. Zāwītī's edition has reconstructed Ḍaḥḥāk's commentary on the basis of citations in later sources. See also Versteegh, The Name of the Ant.

104   See Sezgin, *GAS*, 1:36-7, §2; Gilliot, Muqātil; idem, Lʾexégèse, 132. See also, Koç, Comparison.

105   Muqātil, *Tafsīr*, I, 25. See al-Khaṭīb al-Baghdādī, *Tārīkh*, XVI, 121-2, §7373; Thaʿlabī, *Muqaddima*, 72-5; Gilliot, Muqātil, 41-2.

106   On the question of Muqātil's reliability, see Ibn Saʿd, *Ṭabaqāt*, IX, 377, §4475; Ibn ʿUdayy, *Kāmil*, VIII, 187-92, §1913, cf. VI, 282. Ibn al-Nadīm identifies Muqātil as a Zaydī, *Fihrist*, I, 641. See also al-Khaṭīb al-Baghdādī, *Tārīkh*, XV, 207-19, §7095; Dhahabī, *Siyar*, VII, 201-2, §79; Zarkashī, *Burhān*, II, 159; Dāwūdī, *Ṭabaqāt*, II, 330-1, §642; Gilliot, Muqātil, 54-81; van Ess, *Theologie*, II, 516-32; Crone, A Note, 245-9.

coherent whole.[107] The famed theologian of Samarqand Abū Manṣūr al-Māturīdī (d. 333/944) draws freely from Muqātil's commentary, and only once offers a limited critique of the exegete.[108] Similarly, Muqātil's influence is felt widely throughout the respective Arabic commentaries of Abū l-Layth al-Samarqandī and Thaʿlabī, who repeatedly turn to him as a respected authority.[109] As for the movement of the work in the exegetical circles of the period, Thaʿlabī notes that Muqātil's commentary was disseminated in the region with two distinct lines of transmission.[110]

On numerous occasions Ḥaddādī also quotes the Iraqi scholar Muḥammad b. al-Sāʾib al-Kalbī, cited above. As with Muqātil's *tafsīr*, the exegetical material associated with Kalbī presents a concise paraphrastic explanation of the Qurʾān.[111] At one point Ḥaddādī directly references Kalbī's *tafsīr* and quotes the transmission (*riwāya*) of Abū Ṣāliḥ (d. ca. 111/730).[112] This *isnād* forms the basis of Kalbī's redaction of the commentarial tradition of Ibn ʿAbbās and thus it too fits into the larger corpus of exegetical material ascribed to the Companion.

Kalbī's collection, like Muqātil's *tafsīr*, was widely known in the region.[113] During this period, both in and beyond traditionist circles Kalbī was often associated with a Shii bias.[114] However, the famed *rijāl* expert Abū Aḥmad b. ʿUdayy al-Jurjānī (d. 365/976) noted that, apart from some glaring exceptions, the exegetical material of Ibn ʿAbbās that Kalbī transmitted via Abū Ṣāliḥ was generally considered sound, and was preferred to the commentary of Muqātil.[115] Certainly, the accounts Ḥaddādī offers in Kalbī's name, much in the way of

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107   See Versteegh, *Arabic Grammar*, 130-1.

108   See Māturīdī, *Taʾwīlāt*, 3:552 (Q 27:9); cf. Muqātil, *Tafsīr*, III, 297. Cited in Koç, Comparison, 72 n11.

109   Koç, Comparison, 73 nn18-9, 74ff.

110   See Thaʿlabī, *Muqaddima*, 69-71; see also Gilliot, Muqātil, 40-8.

111   Versteegh, *Arabic Grammar*, 114.

112   Ḥaddādī, *Tafsīr-i munīr*, 193. For other transmissions of Abū Ṣāliḥ via Kalbī, see ibid., 39 (Q 19:22), 381 (Q 24:47), the last citation giving the following form, *"Kalbī guft ka Bū Ṣāliḥ guft ka Ibn ʿAbbās guft …"* Compare this with the citation of Abū Ṣāliḥ's transmission of Ibn ʿAbbās with no mention of Kalbī, ibid., 219 (Q 21:100). On Abū Ṣāliḥ Bādhān (or Bādhām), see Ibn Saʿd (d. 230/845), *Ṭabaqāt*, VIII, 413, §3179, Ibn Abī Ḥātim (d. 327/938), *Jarḥ*, II, 431-2, §1716; Mizzī (d. 742/1341), *Tahdhīb*, IV, 6-8, §636.

113   For the manuscript record, see Sezgin, *GAS*, I, 34-5, §14; see also Versteegh, *Arabic Grammar*, 115.

114   See, for instance, Ibn al-Nadīm, *Fihrist*, I, 300.

115   See Ibn ʿUdayy, *Kāmil*, VII, 273-82, §1626, particularly 282; this last statement is copied by Zarkashī, *Burhān*, II, 158-9; the assessment in Nöldeke, et al., entirely misses this point, *Geschichte*, II, 170.

narrative exegesis, are quite tame and do not readily draw attention to a sectarian bias. Thaʿlabī records two major recensions of the *tafsīr* ascribed to Ibn ʿAbbās transmitted via Abū Ṣāliḥ to Kalbī; one which was known as Kalbī's *tafsīr*,[116] and the other which was redacted by Abū Muḥammad Ṣāliḥ b. Muḥammad, who is said to have expanded the collection by adding some four thousand *ḥadīth*s.[117] Thaʿlabī received these two collections via multiple transmitters, the most prominent of which were his primary masters in the field of exegesis from Nishapur, the preacher Abū Muḥammad ʿAbd Allāh b. Ḥāmid (d. 389/999) and the major exegete Abū l-Qāsim Ibn Ḥabīb (d. 406/1016).[118]

Given the range of authorities cited, it is noteworthy that Ḥaddādī takes relatively little interest in grammatical analysis, Arabic rhetoric, or matters of variant readings, particularly given his penchant for this material as expressed in his Arabic primer, the *Madkhal* and his Arabic commentary, the *Itqān*. As noted above, some of this energy is folded into the actual process of commenting on and translating the Qurʾān into Persian. The exegetical activity of translation is fundamentally a philological endeavor, as it reflects a process of reading based on a close study of language.

Particularly significant, in this regard, is Ḥaddādī's engagement with the famed Iraqi philologist Zajjāj (d. 311/923), known for his *Maʿānī l-Qurʾān*, an exegetical study that focuses on Arabic lexicography, syntax, and morphology, as well as rhetoric and variants. Ḥaddādī directly cites Zajjāj on several occasions, generally to explain words or phrases, but not as a grammatical authority *per se*. Interestingly, many of these citations either have no direct parallel in Zajjāj's commentary as preserved in the modern edited version of the text,[119] or are not foregrounded or readily apparent.[120] There is even an occasion where Ḥaddādī's commentary actually mischaracterizes Zajjāj's position as expressed

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116   See Thaʿlabī, *Muqaddima*, 30-5; Ḥajjī Khalīfa, *Kashf*, I, 457.

117   On Ṣāliḥī, see Thaʿlabī, *Muqaddima*, 36-8; see Ḥajjī Khalīfa, *Kashf*, I, 451.

118   On ʿAbd Allāh b. Ḥāmid, see al-Ḥākim al-Nīshābūrī, *Tārīkh*, 165, §2008; Subkī, *Ṭabaqāt*, III, 306-7, §195; Dhahabī, *Tārīkh*, XXVII, 182-3. On Ibn Ḥabīb, see Fārisī, *Muntakhab*, 268, §482; *Mukhtaṣar*, 6, §1684; Dhahabī, *Siyar*, XVII, 237-8, §143. Also, see, Gilliot, L'exégèse, 139; Zadeh, *Vernacular Qurʾan*, 336, 384-5, cf. 415-7.

119   For material with no direct parallel with Zajjāj's printed edition, see Ḥaddādī, *Tafsīr-i munīr*, 72 (Q 19:59), 77 (Q 19:68), 83 (Q 19:76), 98 (Q 20:5), 178 (Q 21:47), 217 (Q 21:95); compare with Zajjāj, *Maʿānī*, III, 336, 340, 344, 350, 394, 405.

120   For interpretations that appear to have something in common with the modern edition of Zajjāj's text, see Ḥaddādī, *Tafsīr-i munīr*, 97 (Q 20:2), 260 (Q 22:38); Zajjāj, *Maʿānī*, III, 349, 429.

in the modern edition.[121] That said, there are other cases that reveal a clear interconnection between Ḥaddādī's citation and the edited text of Zajjāj's *Maʿānī*.[122] These points of disconnectivity, nonetheless, further suggest that Ḥaddādī was working with a different set of materials than those that are currently available to us, at least with regard to Zajjāj's commentary.[123]

These divergences also further underscore the discontinuous nature of the archive, which varied temporally across different periods and spatially, in distinct traditions expressed in particular regional recensions. A telling contrast can be seen in Ḥaddādī's use of the Arabic commentary of the renowned Iraqi mystic Abū Muḥammad Sahl al-Tustarī (d. 283/896). As with citations taken from other Arabic source material, Ḥaddādī renders into Persian a variety of Tustarī's interpretations. These, in turn, find direct parallels in Tustarī's Arabic exegetical collection, in a form that generally follows the modern edited text quite closely.[124]

In addition to recourse to Tustarī, this deontological current of piety and devotion is reflected in the range of prominent ascetics and mystics that appear in the surviving sections of the *Tafsīr-i munīr*. Ḥaddādī often refers to this group as the masters of the community of gnosis (*pīrān-i ahl-i maʿrifat*), those who speak in allusion (*ishārat-i gūyān*) or through the language of allusion (*ba-zabān-i ishārat*), or simply the community of allusion (*ahl-i ishārat*).[125] A pantheon of mystical authorities line the commentary, including notably, Abū Sulaymān al-Dārānī (d. c. 215/830), Dhū l-Nūn al-Miṣrī (d. c. 245/859), Abū Yazīd al-Basṭāmī (d. c. 261/874), Abū Saʿīd al-Kharrāz (d. 277/890), Abū l-Ḥasan al-Nūrī (d. 295/907), Abū l-Qāsim al-Junayd (d. 298/910), Ibn ʿAṭāʾ (d. 309/921), and Abū Bakr al-Wāsiṭī (d. c. 320/932). Taken as a whole the exegetical material culled from these authorities reflects early currents of Islamic mystical devotion and piety, as it emerged particularly in Iraq during the course of the third

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121   See Ḥaddādī, *Tafsīr-i munīr*, 36 (Q 19:17), which states that according to Zajjāj the word *rūḥ* in this verse is Jesus; however, compare this with Zajjāj, *Maʿānī*, III, 322-3, where this interpretation is offered only to be rejected.

122   For moments of clear overlap between the texts, see Ḥaddādī, *Tafsīr-i munīr*, 26 (Q 18:110), 107 (Q 20:22), 232 (Q 22:5); compare with Zajjāj, *Maʿānī*, III, 316, 335, 413.

123   In this regard it is also of note that Zajjāj's *Maʿānī l-Qurʾān* was available to Thaʿlabī through two lines of transmitters, *Muqaddima*, 114-5.

124   See Ḥaddādī, *Tafsīr-i munīr*, 108 (Q 20:23), 300 (Q 23:51), 356 (Q 24:26); compare with Tustarī, *Tafsīr*, 196, 205, 206, respectively. As for divergence, in the last example on Q 24:26, Ḥaddādī presents Tustarī's interpretation of "*al-ṭayyibāt li-l-ṭayyibīn*," while the edited text has Tustarī comment on the parallel phrase in the same verse, "*al-khabīthāt li-l-khabīthīn*." The other two examples offer Persian translations of the edited text.

125   See, for instance, Ḥaddādī, *Tafsīr-i munīr*, 62, 107, 216, 222, 397.

and fourth centuries of the Islamic era.[126] Ḥaddādī also cites interpretations
ascribed to the Shii Imam Jaʿfar al-Ṣādiq (d. 148/765), which reflects specifi-
cally his association with esoteric and mystical knowledge. Despite his reli-
gious centrality for diverse Shii communities, Jaʿfar al-Ṣādiq was historically
embraced in the articulation of Sunni piety, particularly in his capacity for
esoteric exegesis. In addition, from this earlier period, Ḥaddādī turns to Ḥasan
al-Baṣrī (d. 110/728) and Sufyān al-Thawrī (d. 161/778), authorities, who like
Jaʿfar al-Ṣādiq, were associated with pietistic and devotional exegetical writing
that came to wield an important place in the development of mystical modes
of interpreting the Qurʾān.[127]

   These same authorities feature in a range of mystical and esoteric exe-
getical discourse; they appear, for instance, in Thaʿlabī's *al-Kashf wa-l-bayān*
(The Unveiling and the Elucidation), which in the expanse of material cited
serves as part of a larger canonizing force for the genre of the major com-
mentary. Thaʿlabī, in turn, drew directly from the commentary of the famed
Sufi of Nishapur, Abū ʿAbd al-Raḥmān al-Sulamī (d. 412/1021), which likewise
showcases an expansive panoply of mystical exegesis.[128] As with his citation
of early Arabic authorities for interpretations of the literal meaning of the
Qurʾān, Ḥaddādī's translation of these sources opens up a corpus of esoteric
hermeneutics to a Persian audience. If the identification of Khwāja Imām with
Ḥaddādī is indeed correct, then this focus on the esoteric is all the more tell-
ing, as Khwāja Imām also joins in this chorus of mystical exegesis, and offers
his own interpretations set alongside the masters of gnosis and allusion.[129]
The emphasis on mystical and esoteric interpretation is more pronounced
in the *Tafsīr-i munīr* than in Ḥaddādī's Arabic counterpart, the *Itqān*, which
gives notably less space to mystical exegetes and their interpretations of the
Qurʾān. Rather it focuses generally on the primary grammatical and syntactical
meaning of the text in literal terms.

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126   On this period see Karamustafa, *Ṣūfism*, 1-55.

127   See Godlas, *Ṣūfism*, 351-2; Böwering, Sulamī's Commentary, 42, 52-5; idem, Sufi
       Hermeneutics, 2-3, however, contrary to Böwering's suggestion here, it is certainly incor-
       rect to view the Persian *tafsīr* of the Karrāmī exegete Abū ʿAtīq al-Sūrābādī (d. 494/1100) as
       an example of a Sufi commentary, unless the term is to be taken so broadly that it includes
       the wide range of normative piety articulated throughout much of the exegetical writing
       of the period, in which case what makes the interpretative strategies to be uniquely "Sufi"
       remains to be seen. The same of course is to be said of Ḥaddādī, whose *Tafsīr-i munīr*
       engages with a wide array of interpretive strategies that include an appreciation of both
       esoteric and exoteric hermeneutics.

128   See Thaʿlabī, *Muqaddima*, 106.

129   See, for instance, notably, Ḥaddādī, *Tafsīr-i munīr*, 62 (Q 19:50).

At the level of allegory, symbol, and allusion, mystical interpretations represent one of the primary interpretive strategies featured in the *Tafsīr-i munīr*. The references to Ḥaddādī in the *Madkhal* and the *Itqān* as bearing the title of *zāhid*, a renunciate or an ascetic, shed further light on the esoteric dimensions of his Persian commentary. From his recourse to mystical interpretations to his own identification with asceticism, Ḥaddādī was clearly steeped in mystical currents of Islamic piety, in the form of Sufi devotional practice and thought. However, we should not make too much of this mystical dimension, for by this period it was quite common for religious Sunni authorities across a range of juridical and theological divides to embrace various elements of Sufi piety. In this regard, rather than an exception, Ḥaddādī's work advances a normative vision of Islamic ethics that held wide currency.

Similarly, on several occasions Ḥaddādī addresses matters of legal concern that in turn suggest his own proclivities toward Ḥanafī jurisprudence. These issues are at times framed in the form of divergence (*ikhtilāf*) as posed between the followers of al-Shāfiʿī (d. 204/820) and Abū Ḥanīfa (d. 150/767). Ḥaddādī also delves into differences between the early founders of Ḥanafī positive law, and cites instances in which Zufar b. al-Hudhayl (d. 158/774-5), Abū Yūsuf (d. 182/798), Muḥammad al-Shaybānī (d. 189/805), the main disciples of Abū Ḥanīfa, diverged from their master. While a preference for Ḥanafī authority can be detected, the tone of these discussions is not particularly polemical, aggressive, or judgmental, but rather notes matter-of-factly the areas of dispute between various legal scholars.[130] Given the strong associations between Central Asia and Ḥanafī jurists, this orientation is not surprising, particularly for a scholar from Samarqand, a city that had long been a stronghold for the practice of Ḥanafī law in the region.[131]

In terms of Ḥaddādī's theological inclinations, it is noteworthy that he cites Abū Ḥanīfa in a discussion on the matter of faith (*īmān*), as Abū Ḥanīfa is said to have reasoned that faith is the most favored form of devotion before God.[132] This fits into an argument advanced by early Ḥanafī authorities, particularly in the east, that faith is not action (*ʿamal*), it can neither increase nor decrease, but rather it is an inner form of ascent. The roots of this view are expressed in Murjiʾī arguments, which had a profound influence on the early Ḥanafī position on the definition of faith; this position, in turn, finds full expression in the development of Māturīdī theology that emerged prominently with its founder in the city of Samarqand and then spread through Central Asia, specifically

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130   See Ḥaddādī, *Tafsīr-i munīr*, 254-5 (Q 22:33-4), 336 (Q 24:4-5), 338-40 (Q 24:8-9).

131   See Madelung, The Early Murjiʾa; Kaya, Continuity and Change.

132   Ḥaddādī, *Tafsīr-i munīr*, 127 (Q 20:76).

along Ḥanafī networks in the region. The Māturīdī attitude on faith was one of the notable areas of difference that distinguish it from Ashʿarī *kalām*.[133]

Another instance in which Ḥaddādī reveals his theological proclivities can be seen in his treatment of the verse "*al-raḥmān ʿalā l-ʿarsh istawā*" (Q 20:5), which would appear to describe God as sitting on a heavenly throne. In the development of dialectical theology, this verse, and others like it, served as a shibboleth in the larger debates over anthropomorphic conceptualizations of God. Responding to withering criticism mounted by Muʿtazilī theologians, a range of traditionist authorities sought to distance themselves from the charge of anthropomorphism, without stripping the many corporeal descriptions of God and His attributes found in the Qurʾān and *Ḥadīth*. One of the primary responses was the doctrine of *bi-lā kayfa*, which sought to affirm the truth of these scriptural statements about God without attempting to understand or qualify them. This was a position that was prominently promoted by Māturīdī and Ashʿarī theologians, who had embraced many of the earlier traditionist attitudes regarding the nature of God.[134] On this particular verse Ḥaddādī cites a range of authorities, including Ibn ʿAbbās, Ḍaḥḥāk, Zajjāj, Ḥasan al-Baṣrī and Mālik b. Anas, who give various explanations. He then argues that the soundest response of all is that "the servant knows that, just as God the Lord says, He alone sits on the throne (*bar ʿarsh istwā*), how this is we do not know (*chigūnagī-i ān nadānīm*), for more than this He did not say."[135] In the word, "*chigūnagī*" quality, manner, howness, Ḥaddādī renders into Persian the notion of not qualifying what would otherwise appear to be anthropomorphic descriptions of God, encapsulated in the Arabic expression *bi-lā kayfa*. As for Ḥaddādī's regional context, such a position fits comfortably within the doctrines promoted by Māturīdī theologians of Transoxiana.

This is of note, for in his analysis of Ḥaddādī's commentary, Muḥammad ʿImādī Ḥāʾirī theorized that Ḥaddādī was an adherent of the Karrāmiyya, a Sunni ascetic movement that was particularly popular in greater Khurasan.[136] This movement, which took its name from the spiritual leader Abū ʿAbd Allāh Muḥammad b. Karrām (d. 255/896), originally from Nishapur, reached out

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133   Abū Ḥanīfa (attributed), *ʿĀlim*, 27-28; and from the same collection, "Risāla," 38, Abū Ḥanīfa's citation of the caliph ʿAbd al-ʿAzīz b. ʿUmar (r. 99-101/717-20) supporting this position on faith also appears in Ḥaddādī's treatment of the topic, without reference to Abū Ḥanīfa, *Tafsīr-i munīr*, 126. See also al-Ḥakīm al-Samarqandī, *al-Sawād al-aʿẓam*, 28, §48; idem, *Tarjuma-i al-Sawād-i aʿẓam*, 127-30, §41; Madelung, The Early Murjiʾa, 33, 36-9; idem, The Spread, 113, 117-9 n30; idem, Māturīdiyya. See also Rudolph, *Māturīdī*, 30-45.

134   See Abrahamov, The *Bi-lā Kayfa* Doctrine.

135   Ḥaddādī, *Tafsīr-i munīr*, 98-9 (Q 20:5).

136   Ḥāʾirī, *Kuhantarīn*, 18-9; idem, Muqaddima, 15-7.

to the poor and unlettered masses in a program of converting large numbers from rural and urban centers.[137] In addition to ascetic and mystical practices, the populist dimension of the Karrāmī movement and its appeal to the lower classes of society are perhaps its most salient features. Abū l-Ḥasan al-Ashʿarī (d. 324/935-6) classified the Karrāmiyya as part of the Murjiʾa theological movement that placed an emphasis on faith over acts.[138] The followers of Ibn Karrām are identified as emphasizing above all the testament of faith as a sufficient qualification for salvation, a move that appears to have played a role in their larger mission of conversion.[139] Similarly, as with several other groups accused of anthropomorphic attitudes toward God, many of the Karrāmiyya, evidently after the systematizing teachings of the leading Karrāmī of Nishapur, Abū ʿAbd Allāh Muḥammad b. al-Hayṣam (d. 409/1019), adopted the *bi-lā kafya* position of accepting God's attributes without any qualification as to how.[140]

The Ḥanafīs, with their own roots in Murjiʾa theology, are known to have had ties with the Karrāmiyya, both theologically and juridically, particularly in Khurasan.[141] The Karrāmiyya also had connections with traditionist Shāfiʿī scholars from the region. Nonetheless, there was a good deal of antagonism between the Karrāmiyya and the other juridical factions. There are notable instances where Ḥanafī authorities sought to distinguish themselves from the renunciatory movement. While it is not impossible that Ḥaddādī had ties with the group, the Ḥanafī association with the Karrāmiyya in Samarqand appears to have been rather fraught. According to the geographer Abū ʿAbd Allāh al-Maqdīsī (fl. 375/985), the Karrāmiyya had a strong presence in Khurasan, particularly in Nishapur and Herat; he also notes that in addition to other cities in Central Asia they maintained a *khānaqa*, or religious retreat, in Samarqand.[142] Yet, several generations of leading Ḥanafī officials from the city, such as Abū Bakr Muḥammad b. al-Yamān (d. 260/875), Abū l-Qāsim al-Ḥākim (d. 342/953), Abū l-Layth (d. c. 396/1006), and Abū l-Muʿīn al-Nasafī

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137 See Shāfiʿī-Kadkanī, Chihra; Bosworth, The Rise; Chabbi, Remarques; Malamud, Politics of Heresy; Melchert, Sufis.

138 Ashʿarī, *Maqālāt*, I, 141.

139 Dhahabī, *Tārīkh*, XIX, 315.

140 See van Ess, *Ungenützte*, 60; Madelung, *Religious Trends*, 41; Zadeh, *Vernacular Qurʾan*, 484-5, 530.

141 On the theological similarities between the Karrāmiyya and the Murjiʾa, see Maqdisī, *Aḥsan al-taqāsīm*, 39; Dhahabī, *Tārīkh*, XIX, 313; on questions of law see Aron Zysow, Two Unrecognized Karrāmī Texts.

142 Maqdasī, *Aḥsan*, 323; Chabbi, Remarques, 44.

(d. 508/1115), spoke out against the Karrāmiyya, rejecting many of their theo-logical tenets as heretical.[143]

In terms of Qurʾānic hermeneutics, two major commentaries associated with Karrāmī religious authorities from the period are known to have survived, both were from Khurasan: the first was written in Arabic by ʿAbd al-Wahhāb of Herat (d. 415/1025), and the second was produced in Persian by Abū ʿAtīq al-Sūrābādī of Nishapur (d. 494/1100). Both works engage directly with Karrāmī authorities, in addition to an array of early ascetics and Sufis.[144] In contrast, the surviving material of the *Tafsīr-i munīr* reveals no direct affiliation with Karrāmī spiritual masters; the same is true of the *Itqān*. Ḥāʾirī adduces entirely circumstantial evidence for his theory that Ḥaddādī was a Karrāmī; namely that Ḥaddādī cites Sufi authorities and that during this period the Karrāmiyya were known to speak and write in Persian. These traits, however, were by no means unique to Karrāmī asceticism. Indeed, during Ḥaddādī's day a range of differing theological and juridical groups promoted Sufi piety and Persian writing. The staunch rejection of the Karrāmiyya by the Sufis of Khurasan and Transoxiania should not be overlooked.[145] Similarly, we know that in addition to Ashʿarī and Māturīdī theologians, Ismāʿīlī missionaries wrote in Persian. The Karrāmī appropriation of early mystical authorities and their use of Persian were not exceptional characteristics, but largely normative for the region dur-ing Ḥaddādī's day.

If we accept Ḥāʾirī's quite compelling argument that the *Tafsīr-i Qurʾān-i pāk* is indeed a fragment from the opening volume of Ḥaddādī's *Tafsīr-i munīr*, then we must contend with this manuscript's direct citations of Abū Manṣūr al-Māturīdī.[146] Indeed, the two texts overlap not only in terms of vocabulary and syntax, but also with regard to theological and juridical orientation, and with respect to the surprising range of exegetical authorities featured. Both

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143 On Abū Bakr Muḥammad al-Samarqandī, see Nasafī, *Tabṣira*, 471, also see the index (594) for more direct instances where Nasafī counters various Karrāmī positions. In his rejection of the group, Abū l-Layth al-Samarqandī references Abū l-Qāsim al-Ṣaffār (d. 326/938), a leading Ḥanafī of Balkh who also came out against them, *Nawāzil*, fol. 270b. al-Ḥakīm al-Samarqandī directly rebukes the Karrāmī position on faith, *Tarjuma-i al-Sawād al-aʿẓam*, 186; see also van Ess, *Ungenützte*, 75; Madelung, *Religious Trends*, 39, Zadeh, *Vernacular Qurʾan*, 465-6.

144 On Surābādī, see chapters 11 and 12 in Zadeh, *Vernacular, Qurʾan*, where there can also be found a discussion of ʿAbd al-Wahb al-Harawī (510-9).

145 See Chabbi, Remarques, 63-72; Melchert, Competing, 237, 240-2.

146 *Tafsīr-i Qurʾān-i pāk*, 14 (Q 2:73-4), 78 (Q 2:117). This first citation has a direct parallel with Māturīdī, *Taʾwīlāt*, I, 65.

texts appear to have used a similar recension of Zajjāj;[147] both draw on Abū Ḥanīfa, as well as Zufar, Abū Yūsuf, Muḥammad al-Shaybānī; both feature with similar frequency such figures as Ibn ʿAbbās, Ḍaḥḥāk, Kalbī, and Mujāhid. And importantly, as Matīnī and then Ḥāʾirī noted, both turn to the authority of the otherwise unnamed Khwāja Imām. Taken together, the two direct references to Abū Manṣūr Māturīdī in the *Tafsīr-i Qurʾān-i pāk* would suggest that, rather than professing a Karrāmī theological or judicial orientation, as with many of his co-regionalists from Central Asia, Ḥaddādī was trained in Ḥanafī law, practiced a normative form of Sufi piety, and was affiliated with Māturīdī theology.

Courtly Provenance

We may conclude by asking why the Ghaznavid potentate Abū l-Muẓaffar Ibrāhīm b. Masʿūd I (r. 451-92/1059-99) chose to commission an imperial copy of Ḥaddādī's Persian commentary. Foremost, there is the issue of the increased vernacularization in all fields of learning, a pattern that had been in place for over a century. As a successor state, the Ghaznavids continued many of the literary, cultural, and administrative practices developed and promoted by the Sāmānids (279-395/892-1005). This included, notably, material support and patronage that helped to underwrite a florescence of New Persian, which the Sāmānids had cultivated earlier in their courts in Bukhara and Samarqand. The major Persian commentary and translation of the Qurʾān known generally as the *Tafsīr-i Ṭabarī*, is a testament to this process; though the version that survives today reflects a later redaction and abridgement, there is good reason to believe, as its introduction states, that the project was originally commissioned under the orders of the Sāmānid ruler al-Manṣūr b. Nūḥ (r. 350-65/961-76).

The early Ghaznavid court was known to have continued a similar tradition of patronage. They played a significant role in the development of Persian letters, from panegyric and epic poetry to historiography and didactic literature. The Ghaznavids famously first instituted the office of the Poet Laureate (*malik al-shuʿarāʾ*), a position which served to valorize both Persian poets and the dynasty. Although the early Ghaznavid rulers were Turks, and spoke Turkish with their commanders and *ghulām*s in the army, Persian and Arabic were the

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147   On Zajjāj, see *Tafsīr-i Qurʾān-i pāk*, 72 (Q 2:113); as with other citations in the *Tafsīr-i munīr*, this differs notably from the modern edition.

formal languages of the bureaucracy and the religious elite, in a court where Persian officials dominated the administration of the state.[148]

Unlike other Turkish dynasties of the period, many of the Ghaznavid rulers were celebrated for their knowledge of Arabic and Persian; Ibrāhīm's father, Masʿūd I (r. 421-32/1030-41) was known to have a strong command of Arabic poetry and was competent in Persian chancery arts.[149] In his long reign, Ibrāhīm followed the practice established by his father and grandfather, Maḥmūd (d. 421/1030), of populating his court with Persian poets, who celebrated him in verse. Ibrāhīm's four decades of rule are marked by relative stability, as the dynasty concentrated its power in Afghanistan and North India, with capitals in Ghazna and Lahore, maintaining a *modus vivendi* with the rival Seljuk state to the west, which a generation before had ended, definitively, Ghaznavid control over Khurasan. This period of Ghaznavid history is also characterized by a high level of literary creativity, particularly in the effervescence of Persian poetry.[150] Within the fields of historiography and *belles lettres*, Ibrāhīm was celebrated as a just, benevolent, and learned ruler, a patron of scholars and supporter of religion. The historian Ibn al-Athīr (d. 630/1233) famously noted that each year Ibrāhīm would copy in his own hand a codex of the Qurʾān and send it, along with other charitable donations, to Mecca. While this may well be a literary trope, it also reflects the cultivation of the image of sultan Ibrāhīm as a devout ruler committed to divine scripture.[151]

The colophon of the Topkapı manuscript fits directly into this image of righteousness, in the pious list of titles attached to the potentate's name:

> Commissioned by the Lord Emir, the divinely assisted king, victorious, triumphant, most magnificent sultan, master of the necks of nations, king of Islam, pillar of the people, the delegate of the Imam, the champion of the dynasty, helper to the nation, refuge for the community, protector of the regions of God, and sultan of the servants of God, assisted by the aid of God, victorious against God's enemies, conqueror of kings, lord of sultans, smasher of infidels and heretics, supporter of the religion and

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148   See Bosworth, Development of Persian, 39-44; idem, *Ghaznavids*, 39, 131-4; idem, *Later Ghaznavids*, 75-7, 107-10; Meisami, Why Write History in Persian? 348-54; idem, *Persian Historiography*, 47-53; Rypka, et al., *History of Iranian Literature*, 173-7.

149   Bosworth, *Ghaznavids*, 129-30. Compare this to the famed comments by Bīrūnī (d. 440/1048), who notes that while Maḥmūd of Ghazna I (r. 388-421/998-1030) loathed Arabic, he recognized its importance for science and learning, *Kitāb al-Ṣaydana*, 14.

150   See Rypka, et al., *History of Iranian Literature*, 196-7; de Bruijn, *Of Piety and Poetry*, 53, 148-9; Sharma, *Persian Poetry*, 35-6.

151   Ibn al-Athīr, *Kāmil*, VIII, 456, s.a. 481; cited in Bosworth, *Later Ghaznavids*, 74.

a refuge for Muslims, Abū l-Muẓaffar Ibrāhīm, the son of the Defender of God's religion, Abū Saʿīd Masʿūd, son of the right hand of the dynasty and the confident of the nation, the order of religion, Abū l-Qāsim Maḥmūd, son of Nāṣir al-Dīn, the assistant to the caliph of God, the Emir of the Faithful — may God ensure his longevity and elevate his sovereignty.[152]

Many of the honorific titles listed here are also reflected in other literary and numismatic evidence from the period and form part of a particular titular practice of Ghaznavid propaganda that promoted the divine majesty of the sultan, and his supreme role as a pious defender of religion. The genealogical sequence is particularly significant as it ties Ibrāhīm to his forefathers and their own honorific status as protectors and supporters of caliphal orthodoxy.[153] Despite the military and political debilitation that characterizes this period of Abbasid rule, the caliph in Baghdad remained a moral polestar. While the caliphate had been reduced to a largely ceremonial status, the investiture of titles upon rulers, as well as the caliphal exchange of gifts, both far and wide, still carried significant symbolic power.[154] Importantly, the acknowledgement of caliphal authority is here subsumed in a litany of titles that ultimately underscores Ghaznavid autonomy. In this regard, the royal colophon of the Topkapı manuscript also reflects a process of articulating regional power that effectively provincializes Iraq. A similar process of reorientation inflects the vernacular exegetical work at hand and the calligraphic mastery enveloping it.

The colophon's triumphant deontology also reflects a broader historical situation. In the context of continued raids and territorial expansion along the Indian frontier during Ibrāhīm's reign, the honorific "smasher of infidels and heretics" takes on a noted military significance. At once the title evokes the

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152   The imperial colophon reads: "*amara bi-kitbatihi al-amīr al-sayyid al-malik al-muʾayyad al-manṣūr al-muẓaffar al-sulṭān al-aʿẓam, mālik riqāb al-umam, malik al-islām, ʿimād al-anām, walī l-imām, ẓahīr al-dawla wa-naṣīr al-milla, wa-mujīr al-umma, ḥāfiẓ bilād Allāh wa-sulṭān ʿibād Allāh al-muʾayyad bi-naṣr Allāh al-Muẓaffar ʿalā aʿdāʾ Allāh, qāhir al-mulūk, sayyid al-salāṭīn, qāmiʿ al-kafara wa-l-mulḥidīn, muʾayyid al-dīn wa-mughīth al-muslimīn, Abī* [sic] *l-Muẓaffar Ibrāhīm b. Nāṣir Dīn Allāh Abī Saʿd Masʿūd b. Yamīn al-Dawla wa-Amīn al-Milla, Niẓām al-Dīn Abū l-Qāsim Maḥmūd b. Nāṣir al-Dīn Muʿīn Khalīfat Allāh, Amīr al-Muʾminīn, aṭāla Allāh baqāhu wa-aʿlī sulṭānahu,*" fol. 238v-239r (fig. 2). Also cited in Ḥāʾirī, Muqaddima, 21.

153   See Bosworth, Titulature, 217-8, 231.

154   On Ghaznavid relations with the Abbasids, see Bosworth, The Imperial Policy, 59-66. For the rival Buyids of Iraq, see Madelung, The Assumption of the Title Shāhānshāh. For further use of caliphal authority in the context of the Delhi sultanate, which rose out of the Ghaznavids and Ghurids, see Auer, *Symbols of Authority*, 104-34.

notorious Ghaznavid aggression toward Ismailis; but it also speaks directly
to the history of eastward expansion along the Gangetic plain. This theme
of expansion continues to shape the ideological articulation of Ghaznavid
authority.[155] For instance, the statesman Abū l-Maʿālī Naṣr Allāh Munshī
opens his Persian translation of *Kalīla wa-dimna*, which he dedicated to the
Ghaznavid sultan Yamīn al-Dawla Bahrām Shāh (r. 512-47/1118-52) with a pan-
egyric celebrating one-hundred seventy years of Ghaznavid rule. Here Abū
Maʿālī contends that, through the supreme might of the rulers, true religion
has spread across the idolatrous lands of Hindūstān, as the regions of war
have been converted into the abode of peace, as mosques and minarets are
erected, infidels become believers, and "everyone performs the same rituals
and recites the noble Qurʾān."[156] It is of note that Abū Maʿālī's translation is
peppered with Qurʾānic verses accompanied in the earliest manuscript tradi-
tion with Persian translations that are clearly part of the original work. As with
the Ghūrids who ultimately succeeded them in both Afghanistan and North
India, the Ghaznavid sultans articulated their legitimacy in the lands of infi-
dels with a calligraphic regime that drew on Qurʾānic authority from the archi-
tectural monumentalism of mosques and madrasas, to elaborate productions
of Qurʾānic codices and commentaries.[157] For instance, the religious orthodoxy
of the Ghaznavid rulers is celebrated in the course of the Persian commentary
the *Tafsīr-i baṣāʾir-i yamīnī* by the judge of Ghazna, Muʿīn al-Dīn al-Nīshābūrī
(fl. 547/1153), highlighting the continued intersection between exegesis, ver-
nacular learning, and dynastic authority.

The court was not the only force behind this process of vernacularization,
which extended to all forms of scholarly and religious authority. The religious
elite, particularly in the context of madrasa education, was also a primary
driver in the formalization of Persian learning and writing. The circulation of
Ḥaddādī's Persian commentary is a testament to the interconnections between
religious and courtly authority, as it crossed diverse contexts of education and
instruction.

Beyond the field of madrasa education, Persian exegetical literature was
also a vehicle for introducing the Qurʾān and its teachings to rulers and court-
iers. Niẓām al-Mulk (d. 485/1092), Persian chief minister and effective head of
the rival Turkish Seljuk dynasty, famously argued that Muslim rulers who do
not know Arabic must still have a basic understanding of the Qurʾān. While

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155   See Bosworth, The Imperial Policy, 56-8.

156   Naṣr Allāh Munshī, *Tarjuma-i Kalīla wa-Dimna*, 12-3.

157   On Qurʾānic calligraphy in the material cultures of Ghanzavid and subsequent Ghurid
       authority, see broadly Flood, *Objects of Translation*, 15-59.

Niẓām al-Mulk admits that it would be better to master the original Arabic, he contends that such rulers can obtain this knowledge through the explanation (*tafsīr*) of the Qurʾān, whether in Turkish, Persian, or Greek. Further, he advises that rulers listen to religious scholars relate the commentary of the Qurʾān, accounts of Muḥammad, as well as stories of just rulers and ancient prophets at least once or twice a week.[158] It is of note that Niẓām al-Mulk, a trained Shāfiʿī scholar, was instrumental in the state sponsorship of madrasa education. This support may well have extended to the field of Persian exegesis, as indicated by Niẓām al-Mulk's appointment of Isfarāʾīnī to the head of the Niẓāmiyya madrasa of Ṭūs. From the codicological record, we know that Isfarāʾīnī's Persian commentary was later copied in the Niẓāmiyya madrasa of Balkh, which further points to interconnections between state authority and vernacular religious education.[159]

Against this backdrop, it is of note that, in legal terms, Ḥaddādī's commentary takes on a notable Ḥanafī hue, the preferred juridical school of the Ghaznavid sultans and their court officials. Yet, there are many other features of the *Tafsīr-i munīr* that undoubtedly also commended the commentary to the court and contributed to its popularity. Foremost, it is written in a lucid manner that offers succinct Persian explanations that flow almost as a narrative, with catch phrases that often link the Qurʾānic verses together so as to form a larger progression that could easily be read aloud in a group for the purposes of comprehension. It is neither burdened by the weight of formal *Ḥadīth* scholarship, nor the finer points of Arabic grammar or syntax, matters that can be rather cumbersome to fully explore in the framework of Persian writing. Yet, the *Tafsīr-i munīr* covers a broad array of issues and offers a steady variety to the primary Qurʾānic text. This variety is expressed notably in the meritorious benefits of reciting the Qurʾān, the repeated recourse to formal Arabic prayers of supplication (*duʿāʾ*), the pietistic focus on mystical interpretation, as well as a close attention to the literal meaning of the verses themselves. Similarly, the commentary weaves together occasional citations of Arabic poetry, *Ḥadīth*, and explanations of Arabic lexicography, all of which are generally rooted in concise citations of classical authorities.

In this vein the attention to storytelling is noteworthy. The sustained focus on narrative material in the form of prophetic history, preceding and covering the life of Muḥammad and the early Companions, certainly fits well within traditions of Persian didactic and homiletic literature. There are other cases

158   Niẓām al-Mulk, *Siyāsat-nāma*, 79, §1, 81, §7.
159   See Zadeh, *Vernacular Qurʾān*, 342, 358-9.

of Persian exegetical writing that circulated in the fields of courtly piety. Well-known examples are the *Tafsīr-i Ṭabarī*, the *Tafsīr-i baṣāʾir*, and the four-volume Persian commentary compiled by Muḥammad b. ʿAlī b. Muḥammad b. ʿAlī l-Nīshābūrī l-Laythī, dedicated in 584/1188 to the Ghūrid sultan, Ghiyāth al-Dīn Muḥammad b. Sām (d. 599/1203).[160] All of these works share, to varying degrees and to different ends, an interest in the narrativization of the Qurʾān through the filter of storytelling in Persian. They also, in their own ways, all circulated in and beyond the frameworks of courtly education and religious institutions in the region.

This process of vernacular regionalization overlaps in important manners with the calligraphic repertoire that emerges in the east. While there are points of intersection with earlier codicological models that had developed in Iraq, the Ghaznavid imperial codex cannot be viewed as simply an extension of the book arts of Baghdad. The calligraphic stylization of the New Style appears at its peak in the Ghaznavid manuscripts and more generally in Khurasan and central Iran. An indication of this stylistic development can be seen in Iran already in the last decade of the fourth/tenth century.[161] In this period, there is very little surviving evidence for Qurʾānic codices copied in Iraq that employ such monumental and stylized forms of the New Style.

The Topkapı manuscript embodies a visual language that distinguishes the Ghaznavid courtly copy from the rest of the extant material originating outside the region. Next to the script stylization and its monumentalism, the illumination also offers a distinct visual repertoire that characterizes the Qurʾāns produced during this period in the Eastern Islamic lands. Both in the body of the commentary and its visual expression there is much that connects the Ghaznavid production to earlier Abbasid materials. Yet as with the Persian text, the calligraphic forms and the enveloping decorative illumination reflect bold regional expressions. In visual terms, this regionalization importantly also forms part of growing contacts with Indic decorative expressions, articulated both in this particular manuscript, as well as in other Ghaznavid codicological

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160   On this later Ghurid collection, see Flood, Ghurid Monuments and Muslim Identities, 267-70; Zadeh, *Vernacular Qurʾan*, 549-54.

161   See for example the famous Isfahan Qurʾān dated 383/993. It is a dispersed manuscript, copied in a different type of New Style than the one used in the Topkapı manuscript, by Muḥammad b. Aḥmad b. Yāsīn al-Isfahānī, on paper in the horizontal format. Examples from it have been widely published, See, for instance, George, *The Rise of Islamic Calligraphy*, 125; Déroche, *The Abbasid Tradition*, 154-155; Şahin, *The 1400th Anniversary of the Qurʾān*, 197.

and architectural productions. This is a pattern that notably continues with the successor state of the Ghurid dynasty.

The calligraphic artistry of the Ghaznavid copy of the *Tafsīr-i munīr* offers a striking emblem of stately legitimacy intertwined with the art of the sacred word. The imperial codex underscores the embeddedness of the book as a material object produced in a specific time and place. This is expressed both in the calligraphic and exegetic regimes of knowledge. These emergent forms are the result of visual and linguistic idioms that developed along the eastern frontiers. This process of making and remaking, in object and word, also suggests a reworking of the very paradigm of the center and its periphery, exfoliated and reconstituted in a reception that spans historically over time and geographically across space.

The Ghaznavid production was designed as a visual monument of brilliance to be read, studied, and even gifted, as a testament to dynastic legitimacy. Yet, inevitably, as the circulation of such objects of value demonstrates, the situated particularity of material culture requires continual manufacturing, to be recovered, redefined, and renewed. Left with only fragmented vessels to convey it, much of this history has been lost to the entropy of the archive. Serendipitously, this single tome made its way, by gift or by force, to the imperial treasury of the Ottomans. Centuries later, it breathed life anew in the lavish facsimile gifted from one modern successor state to another. Yet for much of its history, this imperial manuscript and with it Ḥaddādī's broader significance for the field of Qurʾānic studies was largely forgotten. The aphoristic promise of the master calligrapher ʿUthmān al-Warrāq of Ghazna, who originally gave the imperial collection its form, is of course only partially true. Writing can indeed endure, transcending the bounded span of a human life, but to do so requires the hand of living communities invested in recuperating and refashioning its meaning.

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