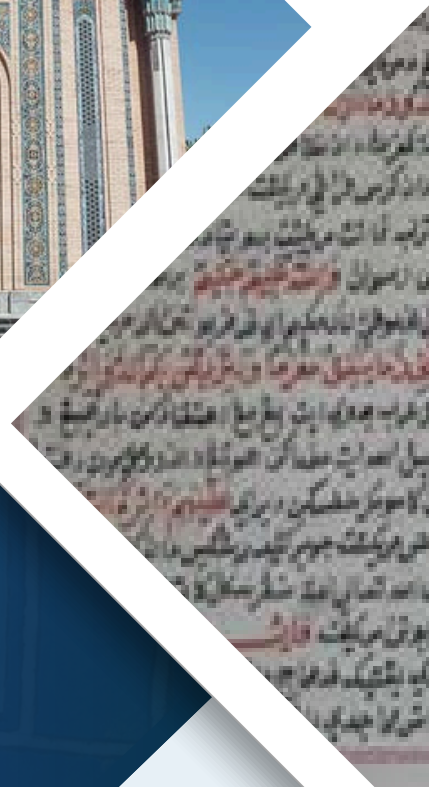


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# THE QUR'ĀN AND THE TURKIC WORLD: Context and Interpretation

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With

WEDNESDAY, 19 FEBRUARY 2025

CONFERENCE BOOKLET



Dear Friends,

Welcome to The Qur'ān and the Turkic World Conference, our virtual gathering of scholars, and researchers from across the globe. We are excited to bring together this diverse community to explore the Qur'ān and exegesis in the Turkic world in our dynamic online environment.

Our one-day program has been carefully curated to maximise engagement and knowledge sharing within our digital format. Participants joining us from different time zones will appreciate our streamlined program designed to facilitate global participation. We are particularly proud to host academics from several countries, demonstrating that geographical distances need not limit intellectual exchange and collaboration.

This conference will examine the correlation between the Qur'ān and Turkic nations, highlighting the contextual factors that impact its interpretation and implementation. It will explore how the Qur'ān has been translated, interpreted and applied in different historical and contemporary contexts of the Turkic world, such as Turkey, Azerbaijan, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Turkmenistan, Uzbekistan and significant Turkic minorities in other states.

Additionally, it will explain the significance and relevance of this topic in understanding the diversity and dynamics of Islamic thought and practice among Turkic peoples.

In addition, this conference will critically examine the history, progression and practical application of the Qur'ān within diverse Turkic world contexts.

Finally, Transoxiana and Central Asia were influential in the literature and scholarship of theology and law in connection with tafsīr. Our aim also is to analyse the Qur'ān and its interpretation (tafsīr) in the Turkic world within the wider Islamic world context, particularly examining its connections to the Arab world and tafsīr literature.

We trust that this day will prove both intellectually stimulating and professionally rewarding, demonstrating the power of digital connectivity in advancing academic discourse.

For technical support during the conference, please contact Hakan Coruh via [hcoruh@csu.edu.au](mailto:hcoruh@csu.edu.au).

Wishing you an engaging and productive conference experience.

Warm Regards

Professorial Research Associate, SOAS University of London



Prof. Peter Riddell

Senior Lecturer, Charles Sturt University



Dr. Hakan Coruh

Postdoctoral Researcher, Albert-Ludwigs-Universität Freiburg



Dr. Mykhaylo Yakubovych

# CONFERENCE SCHEDULE:

Wednesday, 19 February 2025, 7.00-8.00PM  
**Australian Eastern Standard Time (AEST)**

7.00PM -  
7.10PM  
(AEST)

Master of Ceremonies: [Dr Hakan Coruh]  
Opening Remarks by Prof. Peter G. Riddell

## SESSION 1: "HISTORICAL DEVELOPMENT OF EXEGETICAL TRADITIONS"

Prof. Johanna Pink, University of Freiburg, Presiding

7.10-  
8.00PM  
(AEST)

- The Māturīdī tradition of tafsīr: representatives, reception and doctrinal development by Philipp Bruckmayr
- Qur'ānic Hermeneutics in the Turkic Context: Abū al-Su'ūd's Irshād al-'Aql al-Salīm as an Example by Ghada Abdul Salam Ghazal
- Q&A

## SESSION 2: "TRANSLATION MOVEMENTS AND CROSS-CULTURAL EXCHANGE"

Prof. Peter G. Riddell, SOAS, Presiding

8.00PM-  
9.15PM  
(AEST)

- Central Asian or Anatolian? Polish-Lithuanian Tatars and their Qur'anic hermeneutics in transfer from East to West by Mykhaylo Yakubovych
- Mehmet Akif Ersoy's Quran Translation: Linguistic and Political Challenges in Early Republican Turkey by Mortaza Firuzi
- Qur'an translators between the Ottoman Empire and Western Europe: The lives and languages of Mahmut Muhtar Katircioğlu and Nejmi Sagib Bodamialisade by Johanna Pink
- Q & A

**BREAK TIME 9.15PM-9.45PM (AEST) (30MIN)**



# CONFERENCE SCHEDULE:

## SESSION 3: "LITERARY AND NARRATIVE TRADITIONS"

Dr Mykhaylo Yakubovych, University of Freiburg, Presiding

9.45PM-  
11.00PM  
(AEST)

- The Influence of the Koran on Uzbek Classical Literature by Shukurova Zilola Yusufovna and Akhmedova Muattar Abdukayum
- "The clearest point of the story": Rabghuzi's Qışaşu l-anbiyā' and the message of the Qur'an for Mongol Central Asia by Robert Paix
- Quranic Footprints from Southeast Asia in the Turkic world by Prof. Peter G. Riddell and Osman Nuri Solak (15 min)
- Q&A

## SESSION 4: "MODERN APPROACHES TO QUR'ANIC INTERPRETATION"


Dr Hakan Coruh, Charles Sturt University, Presiding

11.00PM-  
00.15AM  
(AEST)

- The Development of Female Qur'anic Exegetes in Modern Turkey: A Study Based on Feminist Hermeneutics by Zulfikri
- Methodological Approaches to Scientific Exegesis: A Comparative Analysis of Elmalılı Muhammed Yazır and Tañāwī Jawhari on Kawniyyāt Verses by Norain Azlan, Yakub Zulkifli Mohd Yusoff & Sedek Bin Ariffin
- Bridging Tafsīr Tradition and Modernity: Ali Bulaç's Qur'ān Commentary in the Context of Contemporary Turkey by Suleyman Sertkaya and Hakan Coruh
- Q&A

00.15AM-  
00.30AM  
(AEST)

Concluding Remarks



# SPEAKER BIOS AND ABSTRACTS

## The Māturīdī tradition of tafsīr: representatives, reception and doctrinal development

This contribution provides an overview of the history of Māturīdī Quranic exegesis, understood as a tradition within the field of tafsīr that is characterized by its reflection and/or elaboration of theological doctrines associated with the Māturīdī school of kalām. As is the case with the Māturīdiyya itself, this tradition not only originated in the Turkic World. What is more, its further development and transmission also occurred primarily in Central Asia and in Ottoman lands. After introducing Abū Manṣūr al-Māturīdī's (d. 333/944) famous Quranic commentary, Ta'wīlāt ahl al-sunna, and its role in the exposition and transmission of his theological teachings, it will focus on the still largely understudied tafsīr works of later Māturīdī scholars, particularly those of Najm al-Dīn al-Nasafī (d. 537/1142) and Abū l-Barakāt al-Nasafī 710/1310). Taking these foundational texts from the Māturīdiyya's home region as a starting point, the reception history of Māturīdī-influenced Quranic exegesis until the 19th century will be sketched in the following. Hereby attention will not only be paid to original Quranic commentaries but also to glosses and super-commentaries to earlier works of the tradition. Furthermore, it includes the Ottoman commentarial literature on the most widely distributed non-Māturīdī books of the genre during the period, al-Zamakhsharī's (d. 538/1144) al-Kashshāf and al-Bayḍāwī's (d. 685/1286) Anwār al-tanzīl. The last section will present a number of case studies to demonstrate how the representatives of the tradition have expounded, transmitted and further developed al-Māturīdī's teachings through their works of tafsīr. It will be shown that the influence of al-Māturīdī and his doctrines cannot be reduced to the spheres of kalām and 'aqīda. Much to the contrary, Quranic commentaries have for a millenium served as a main vehicle for the exposition, confirmation, sophistication and distribution of Māturīdī teachings.

### Philipp Bruckmayr

studied Arabic and Islamic Studies, Turkish Studies and History at the University of Vienna. He has served as research fellow and visiting lecturer at the University of Vienna, the International Research Center Cultural Studies (Vienna), University of Passau, National University of Malaysia and University of Exeter, and as Visiting Professor in Islamic Studies at the University of Freiburg. Presently he is Assistant Professor (Akademischer Rat) in Islamic Studies at the University of Bamberg. He was awarded the Dissertation Prize of the German Association of Middle Eastern Studies (DAVO) in 2015 and the Dr. Hermann Stieglecker-Scholarship for Christian-Islamic Studies of the Forum of World Religions (FWR) in 2017. Much of his research has focused on Islam in Southeast Asia, the Māturīdī school of rational theology, and transnational aspects of modern Sunnī and Shī'ī Islam.



# Qur'ānic Hermeneutics in the Turkic Context: Abū al-Su'ūd's Irshād al-'Aql al-Salīm as an Example

## Ghada Abdul Salam Ghazal

A PhD Candidate in Qur'ānic Studies at Charles Sturt University's School of Theology, Centre for Islamic Studies and Civilisation. Ghada's research is on the concept of Naẓm al-Qur'an, with focus on Islamic hermeneutical approaches versus Western approaches to the Qur'ān in contemporary Qur'ānic studies. Ghada has three Qur'ān Ijazahs through memorization in three qirā'āt (readings): qirā't al-Shāṭibiyyah, qirā't Shu'bah, qirā't Ṭayyibat al-Nashr.



Ottoman commentaries on the Qur'ān were often written in Arabic that was not widely understood in Western scholarship. The Ottoman hermeneutical legacy needs to be researched and explored to gain a better understanding of the Ottoman trajectory of the Qur'ānic commentary. The aim of this paper is to present an in-depth study of an Ottoman tafsīr; namely, Irshād al-'Aql al-Salīm ilā Mazāyā al-Kitāb al-Karīm [Guiding the Sound Mind to the Prominent Features of the Qur'ān] by Shaykh al-Islām Abū al-Su'ūd al-'Imādī (d. 982 AH/1574 CE). In the introduction of his commentary, Abū al-Su'ūd Efendi indicates his reliance on the exegetical work of two late exegetes: al-Zamakhsharī and al-Bayḍāwī. What distinguish al-Zamakhsharī's al-Kashshāf and al-Bayḍāwī's Anwār al-Tanzīl is the focus on disclosing the prominent features of the Qur'ān and unveiling its majestic secrets that are the proof of its i'jāz (inimitability). Influenced by al-Zamakhsharī and al-Bayḍāwī's Qur'ānic rhetorical interpretation, Abū al-Su'ūd focuses on revealing the rhetorical and linguistic features of the Qur'ānic text. The climacteric of Abū al-Su'ūd's literary and discretionary interpretation is his focus on Arabic literature in his tafsīr of each verse of the Qur'ān. In the Turkic context, Qur'ānic hermeneutics generally employs tradition and reason-based approaches. Thus, the study of Irshād allows an analysis of how the tradition and reason-based approaches can be integrated with the linguistic-based approach in Qur'ānic commentary. This paper aims at understanding the evolution of Qur'ānic hermeneutics in the Ottoman context through studying and analyzing the Qur'ānic literary interpretive methodology used by Abū al-Su'ūd in his Irshād.

# Central Asian or Anatolian? Polish-Lithuanian Tatars and their Qur'anic hermeneutics in transfer from East to West

As it well known for the specialized circles, the Polish–Lithuanian Qur'anic manuscripts constitute a huge part of the Islamic heritage in East-Central Europe, mainly present-day Poland, Belarus, Lithuania, and Ukraine. Having its roots in the long-standing tradition of Muslim presence in a mostly Christian Catholic/Orthodox milieu, this manuscript legacy developed in a unique way, mainly due to the constant ethnic, social, and linguistic changes of the Tatar community. Since the middle of the 20th century, as this tradition became the focus of academic studies, these documents have been usually referred to as kitabs or ketabs (from Arabic kitāb), including Qur'an translations. The study is going to answer the major research question whether those translations into Old Slavic vernaculars (first of all, Polish) based on the Arabic text or if the earliest Turkic translations were used as well. Establishing its roots during the early Islamisation period of the Golden Horde (14th–15th century), the Polish–Lithuanian Tatars' familiarity with the Qur'ān and its interpretation follows the Ḥanafī school of law and the Māturīdī approach to theology, widely popular in Central Asia and Anatolia from the 12th–13th centuries onwards. The research also going to outline how those interpretations differed from some other developments, happening in the Crimean and Anatolian (mostly Ottoman-dominated tradition), especially popularity of some tafsirs.

## Mykhaylo Yakubovych

(born 1986 in Ostroh, Ukraine) Got his PhD in 2011 from The National University of Ostroh Academy with a study on interreligious relations in medieval Sunni traditionalism. Currently being a member of "Global Qur'an" ERC-funded project (University of Freiburg, Freiburg, Germany) research team, he involved in studies on the Qur'an translations produced by international institutions and publishers worldwide, also focusing on Central Asian and Eastern European languages. He is the author of an annotated translation of the Qur'an into Ukrainian (first published in 2013), a couple of books and translations from Arabic and many research articles published in academic journals from the UK to Turkey, Saudi Arabia and Australia. Furthermore, he has conducted several academic projects on the Islamic manuscript heritage, starting from the post-classical intellectual history of the Crimean Khanate (Institute for Advanced Study, Princeton, USA) and finishing with 16th–17th century Qur'anic interpretations among Lithuanian Tatars (Nicolaus Copernicus University, Torun, Poland).



# Mehmet Akif Ersoy's Quran Translation: Linguistic and Political Challenges in Early Republican Turkey

## Mortaza Firuzi

is an Assistant Professor at the Iranian Islamic Encyclopedia, specializing in Ottoman-Iranian relations. He holds a Ph.D. in History from the University of Szeged, Hungary, and his research explores the geopolitical dynamics and diplomatic exchanges between the Ottoman and Iran during the early modern era. Dr. Firuzi is particularly known for his interest in Ummah studies, focusing on Mehmet Akif Ersoy. He has contributed to various research institutes, taught Turkish, Persian, and Ottoman Turkish, and participated in numerous international conferences. In addition to English, Dr. Firuzi is fluent in Persian, Turkish, and Ottoman Turkish, with working knowledge of Quranic Arabic and Uzbek.

Mehmet Akif Ersoy (1873–1936), a revered Turkish poet, translator, writer, and the author of the Turkish National Anthem, played a significant role during the Turkish War of Independence and in the formative years of the Turkish Republic. As part of the new government's efforts to propagate Islamic culture in the Turkish language, the Turkish Grand National Assembly allocated funds to the Diyanet İşleri Başkanlığı (Presidency of Religious Affairs) for the translation of religious texts. Recognized for his linguistic expertise in both Arabic and Turkish, Mehmet Akif Ersoy was commissioned to translate the Quran into Modern Turkish, with a financial offer of 6,000 liras. He accepted the commission with the stipulation that the term "meâlî"—which carries a deeper religious and scholarly connotation than the term "translation"—be used. However, in 1932, Mehmet Akif Ersoy withdrew from the project and returned the payment. This paper explores the linguistic and political challenges Mehmet Akif Ersoy encountered, analyzing his initial acceptance of the commission and the reasons behind his eventual rejection of the project. It also delves into the significance of his translation efforts, parts of which were completed in Turkey and Egypt but have only recently been discovered. The study sheds light on the complex interplay between religion, language, and politics in early Republican Turkey.





# Qur'an translators between the Ottoman Empire and Western Europe: The lives and languages of Mahmut Muhtar Katircioğlu and Nejmi Sagib Bodamialisade

This talk follows the lives of two men who lived in the Eastern Mediterranean during the first half of the twentieth century. At the time, Qur'an translations were emerging as a new genre of Islamic literature, especially within the British Empire. An increasing number of Muslims produced such translations in the languages of Western Europe, and the two protagonists of this talk were among them. But the Ottoman Empire was also a site of strong demands for up-to-date Qur'an translations, as well as heated controversies over their permissibility. This reflected in the life stories of Mahmut Muhtar and Nejmi Sagib Bodamialisade.

Mahmut Muhtar (1867–1935), who later took on the surname Katircioğlu, was a member of the Ottoman military elite, with several short stints as minister on the eve of the First World War. At the beginning of the war, he was ambassador in Berlin. He fell out with the Young Turks and after the foundation of the Turkish Republic ended up in exile. At the height of his influence, he published a selection of verses from the Qur'an in German as part of the propaganda effort of German supporters of the alliance with the Ottoman Empire; three decades later, he translated a rather different selection of verses from the Qur'an into French, presumably writing for a French-speaking Mediterranean cosmopolitan elite that was already rapidly shrinking. Interestingly, it does not seem to have occurred to him to translate the Qur'an into Turkish. This was different with Nejmi Sagib Bodamialisade (1897–1964), who lived on British Cyprus. After a period of study in England, he became the founder and headmaster of the Shakespeare school in Nicosia and translated the Qur'an into English verse in an attempt to convince both his students and the British administrators of the high degree of civilization that Muslims possessed and the need to protect them from unification with Greece (enosis).

As the power of the British Empire began to wane in the wake of the Second World War, he changed his strategy and appealed to the United States instead. When this, too, failed, he ultimately opted for writing in Turkish in a fruitless effort to adapt to the new realities of independent Cyprus.

The biographies of Mahmut Muhtar and Nejmi Sagib reflect their attempts to navigate the terrain of language, religion, and politics in a time of transformation. In the end, both men felt betrayed by the empires they had served, and both failed to find a place within the borders of the newly emerging nation states in which an ideal of multilingual cosmopolitanism was replaced with one of monolingual nationalism. Through the study of their life stories, we can trace some of the spaces and networks that the Ottoman and British empires had created for their Muslim subjects and observe how these spaces were shrinking and networks dissolved when nation state borders were imposed. We may also gain an impression of the shrinking attraction of the tafsir tradition, which seemed ill-suited to the two translators to fulfil the needs of their readership.

## Johanna Pink

Professor of Islamic Studies at the University of Freiburg and taught at the University of Tuebingen and the Free University of Berlin. She is a specialist in the history of Qur'anic exegesis and Qur'an translations with a focus on transregional dynamics in the modern period. Her publications include *Muslim Qur'anic Interpretation Today: Media, Genealogies and Interpretive Communities* (Sheffield: Equinox 2019) and a guest-edited issue of the *Journal of Qur'anic Studies* on *Translations of the Qur'an in Muslim Majority Contexts* (2015).



## The Influence of Koran on Uzbek Classical Literature

### Shukurova Zilola Yusufovna

is an Associate professor at Uzbekistan, Tashkent State University of Uzbek language and literature named after Alisher Navo'i.

Akhmedova Muattar Abdukayum kizi is a PhD candidate at Uzbekistan, Tashkent State University of Uzbek language and literature

In this article, the issue of the introduction of Islam to Central Asia and its influence on Uzbek literature is shown by the example of Nasiruddin Burkhaniddin Rabghuzi's work "Qisasi Rabghuzi". The article analyzes the praise section of the work and the scene related to the "forbidden fruit" that caused the expulsion of Adam and Eve from Paradise.



## “The clearest point of the story”: Rabghuzi’s Qīṣaṣu l-anbiyā’ and the message of the Qur’an for Mongol Central Asia.

Qīṣaṣu l-anbiyā’ (“Stories of the Prophets”), both as a form of discourse and a literary genre, has played a role in the interpretation and explanation of the Qur’an since the earliest days of Islam. The most well-known example of the Qīṣaṣ genre to be written in a Turkic language (and possibly the most read book in Eastern Turkic) is that of Nāṣir ad-Dīn Rabghūzī, written in 709-710/1310-11 under the patronage of a Muslim Mongol beg (amir), probably of the Chaghatay khanate. This was a critical period for Islam in Central Asia and Eurasia. Long-established in the urban and sedentary areas, the faith was gaining ground among the traditionally migratory Turko-Mongol peoples, up to and including the elites and even the khans. The Qīṣaṣ-i Rabghūzī, as our author entitled his book, would play a part in making the sacred writings of Islam accessible and compelling to these newcomers, and would go on to enjoy enduring popularity among Turkic peoples from the Balkans to the Tarim Basin.

In this paper I will examine Rabghūzī’s story of Yūsuf (Joseph) as found in the critical text edition of his Qīṣaṣu l-anbiyā’ published by Brill in 2015 and unpack his exposition of its “many instructive points,” culminating in what he calls the “the clearest point of the story.” First, I will identify explicit and implicit references to the Quranic text and look for connections between Rabghūzī’s Eastern Turkic glosses on Qur’ānic verses and contemporaneous Eastern Turkic translations of the Qur’ān. Second, I will explore the way Rabghūzī elucidates/mediates the Quranic account/teaching by weaving it into a complete narrative punctuated by explicit exegesis, theological discussions, didactic asides and even poetry

. Along the way I will comment on Rabghūzī’s stated sources and possible unstated sources and influences (Ibn Ishāq, Ṭabarī, Tha’labī, Kisā’ī, the Persian Qīṣaṣ al-Anbiyā’ of Nīshābūrī, pre-Islamic Turkic and Mongol traditions.) interpretative tools and methods. Finally, I will draw some conclusions on Rabghūzī’s shaping of his discourse to relate the message of the Quran to the exigencies of his historical moment and contextualise its teaching for the Turkic language speaking peoples of his day.

### RL Paix

RL Paix is a PhD candidate of the Australian Catholic University in Melbourne, currently writing his dissertation on Rabghūzī.

## Quranic Footprints from Southeast Asia in the Turkic world

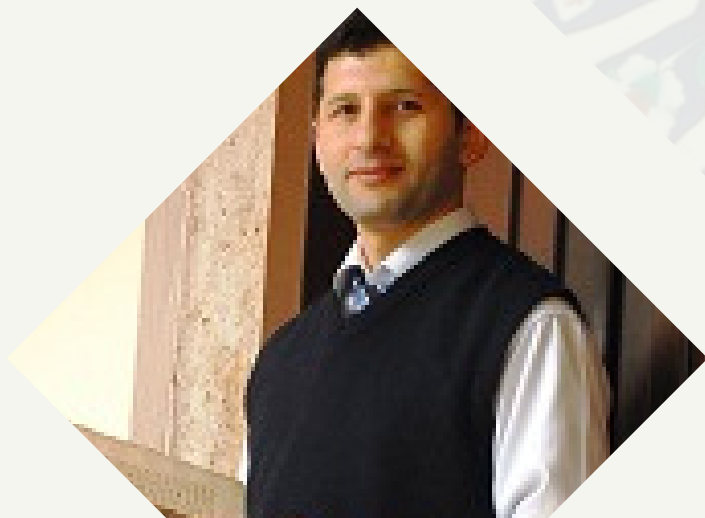
The paper links Southeast Asian Tafsir and the Ottoman State by analysing the first printed edition of the *Tarjumān al-Mustafīd* in Istanbul in 1884. The island of Sumatra and the sultanate of Aceh played a crucial role in the spread of Islam and Qur'anic exegesis (tafsir) throughout the Malay world. A foundational name is that of 'Abd al-Rā'ūf al-Fansūrī (ca. 1615-1693), one of the earliest Qur'anic commentators in the Malay world. His work, *Tarjumān al-Mustafīd*, represents the first – and for several centuries the only – complete interpretation of the Qur'an in the Malay language (Riddell 1990). *The Tarjumān al-Mustafīd*, which was written in Aceh in the late 17th century, was completed with the help of 'Abd al-Rā'ūf's student and co-author, Bābā Dāwūd al-Rūmī (d. first half of 18th century). *The Tarjumān al-Mustafīd* was first printed in Istanbul in 1884, from a manuscript brought to Istanbul and presented to Sultan Abdulhamid II by Ahmad al-Fatānī (d. 1908), supervisor of the Malay printing press in Mecca (Solak 2023). The recent discovered manuscript of *Tarjumān al-Mustafīd*, from which the first edition was printed in Istanbul in 1884, is held in the Faculty of Theology of Uludag University, Bursa.

### Peter G. Riddell

is a Professorial Research Associate in History at SOAS University of London. His research focuses on Southeast Asian Islamic history and theological texts, with particular reference to interpretation of the Qur'an.

### Osman Nuri Solak

is an archivist and manuscript specialist at Uludag University, Bursa/Turkiye. Between 2000 and 2022, he worked as manuscript and archive specialist and manuscript library manager at the Manuscripts Directorate of the Ministry of Culture and Tourism of Turkey. In 2022, he transferred to Bursa Uludağ University, Faculty of Theology and founded the İsmail Hakkı Bursevi Manuscripts Research Center and serves as its administrator. He completed his master's degree in Turkish Islamic History and Arts. His doctoral studies continue.



# The Development of Female Qur'anic Exegetes in Modern Turkey: A Study Based on Feminist Hermeneutics

Interpretation of the Qur'an continues to evolve and engage in dialogue with the times. It is not only ideological perspectives that influence exegesis, but also gender plays a role in interpretation. In Turkey, since around the 1970s, Islamism began to gain clearer visibility in social and intellectual life. This development led to the emergence of scholars and intellectuals who influenced political, social, and religious movements. More broadly, it impacted women's rights in the field of scholarship, particularly in the development of Qur'anic interpretation (tafsir) in Turkey. The author's initial analysis focuses on female exegetes from Turkey, namely Semra Kürün Çekmegil with her tafsir work "Okuyucu Tefsiri," and Necla Yasdiman with her tafsir work "Kur'an Tahlili." These two figures contribute to the list of Qur'anic scholars in Turkey, but it is noteworthy that they are among the few female scholars who have completed a full 30-juz interpretation of the Qur'an, emerging in the early 2000s. The emergence of these works involved a long process and a set of challenges in Turkey, particularly concerning how the Turkish Muslim community accepts tafsir works produced by female Muslim intellectuals. Research on these two female exegetes, especially in Turkey, remains limited, even more so outside Turkey. To date, the author has found that research literature on these two scholars includes three master's theses in Turkey discussing Semra Kürün, and two articles written by Necla Yasdiman herself. To deepen the analysis, the author has also studied both of their tafsir works. This study aims to trace the factors that led to the emergence of these two female exegetes in modern Turkey, explore the epistemology they developed, and understand the implications of their interpretations for the development of Qur'anic exegesis and the intellectual movement of Muslim women in Turkey. The methodology used in this analysis is Feminist Hermeneutics, which involves examining the thoughts of these two Turkish scholars with a focus on "interpretation" that is fair and emancipatory, as the core of Islamic morality. This method is critical, and deconstructive, and aims to produce interpretations that are just. The goal of this study is to uncover the background and feminist hermeneutical epistemology of these two exegetes and assess their implications for Qur'anic scholarship in Turkey, particularly concerning the role of female intellectuals in the religious field.

**Zulfikri**

is a lecturer at the Rahmah El Yunusiyah Education College (STIT) Padang Panjang, Indonesia. He earned a M.A from UIN Sunan Kalijaga Indonesia, and Ph.D from Bursa Uludağ University Turkey specializing Qur'an exegesis. His research focuses on the Islamic Exegesis (Qur'an-Tafsir), Science of Islam, Religious Education, Religious Literature. He is also the author of Feminist Exegesis in Hamka's Tafsir Al-Azhar, in journal "Jurnal Studi Ilmu-Ilmu al-Qur'an dan Hadis", The Relevance of Muhammad Abduh's Thought in Indonesian Tafsir: Analysis of Tafsir Al-Azhar, in Journal Millah: Journal of Religious Studies, Menyoal Penafsiran Al-Khazin Dalam Tafsir Lubab Al-Ta'wil Fi Ma'ani Al-Tanzil (Questioning Al-Khazin's Interpretation in Tafsir Lubab)", in journal Ulunnuha, Model of Parents' and Teachers' Cooperation in Developing Learners' Religious Character, in journal International Journal of Islamic Studies Higher Education, etc. For enquiries [zoulfikri@gmail.com](mailto:zoulfikri@gmail.com)/[zoulfikri@stit-diniyahputeri.ac.id](mailto:zoulfikri@stit-diniyahputeri.ac.id). Orchid: <https://orcid.org/0000-0003-0630-5641>



# Methodological Approaches to Scientific Exegesis: A Comparative Analysis of Elmalılı Muhammed Yazır and Ṭanṭāwī Jawhari on Kawniyyāt Verses

This research focuses on a comparative study between the tafsir (Qur'anic exegesis) of Elmalılı Muhammed Hamdi Yazır and Ṭanṭāwī Jawhari, with particular attention to their interpretation of kawniyyāt verses (verses related to natural phenomena) through the lens of tafsir 'ilmi (scientific exegesis). Both exegetes represent two significant perspectives on the relationship between science and the Qur'an, yet they emerge from different intellectual, cultural, and historical contexts. Elmalılı, a prominent Turkish scholar of the early 20th century, adopts a cautious and more traditional approach to integrating scientific knowledge with the Qur'anic text. In contrast, Jawhari, an Egyptian scholar from the same period, is known for his bold advocacy of using modern science as a tool to unlock the meanings of the Qur'anic verses, positioning his work as a pioneer in tafsir 'ilmi.

The aim of this study is to explore the interpretive methodologies used by these two scholars concerning kawniyyāt verses, focusing on their theological and epistemological views regarding the relationship between scientific knowledge and divine revelation. By examining the exegesis of these verses, this study aims to uncover both the convergences and divergences in their understanding of the role of science in Qur'anic interpretation. Foundational works on tafsir 'ilmi, along with contemporary critiques of the strengths and limitations of scientific exegesis in modern contexts, will be explored.

The primary sources for this analysis are Elmalılı's *Hak Dini Kur'an Dili* and Jawhari's *Al-Jawahir fi Tafsir al-Qur'an*, supplemented by secondary studies on both scholars. This research involves a textual analysis of selected kawniyyāt verses, with each scholar contextualizing these verses within their broader exegesis. The comparative method will be used to juxtapose their approaches to scientific interpretation, considering how historical, social, and intellectual factors influenced their views. Special attention will be given to their treatment of concepts like cosmology, natural order, and divine signs (ayat) as reflections of God's wisdom.

This study contributes to the field of Qur'anic studies by offering insights into how classical and modern interpretations engage with scientific knowledge. It underscores the diversity within tafsir 'ilmi, providing valuable insights into how Islamic scholars have historically navigated the relationship between revelation and reason. Additionally, the study highlights the relevance of these interpretations in contemporary debates on the compatibility of Islam and science, offering reflections on the strengths and possible limitations of using scientific knowledge to interpret the Qur'an. Ultimately, this comparison sheds light on the evolving dynamics of Islamic thought in the modern era.

## Norain Azlan

A PhD Student at Department of Al-Quran and Al-Hadith, Academy of Islamic Studies, University of Malaya, Malaysia.



## Yakub Zulkifli Mohd Yusoff

A honorary Professor at Department of Al-Quran and Al-Hadith, Academy of Islamic Studies, University of Malaya, Malaysia.



## Sedek Bin Ariffin

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# Bridging Tafsīr Tradition and Modernity: Ali Bulaç's Qur'ān Commentary in the Context of Contemporary Turkey

Ali Bulaç (b. 1951), a renowned Turkish intellectual, Islamist and sociologist, has made substantial contributions to contemporary discussions on Islam, modernity, and socio-political issues, particularly within the Turkish context. His recent Qur'an commentary in Turkish, *Kur'ān Dersleri (Dirāsātu'l-Kur'ān)*, provides significant insights into modern tafsīr discourse and Islamic thought. This article explores Bulaç's approach to tafsīr in two key areas. First, it examines his treatment of classical themes, including etymology and semantics, naskh (abrogation), i'jāz (inimitability) of the Qur'an, muhkam and mutashabih (clear and ambiguous verses), and the second coming of Jesus (nuzūl-u Īsā). Second, it analyses his engagement with contemporary debates such as scientific tafsīr, women's rights, environmental concerns, and socio-political issues. While rooted in traditional tafsīr scholarship, Bulaç's background in sociology and media allows him to critically engage with the challenges posed by modernity. Although he often critiques modernist and reformist perspectives, he occasionally aligns with them on certain points. A distinctive aspect of his tafsīr is its capacity to bridge classical Islamic scholarship with the realities of contemporary life, connecting the past to the present. Through his approach, Bulaç successfully makes the Qur'an both relevant and accessible to modern Turkish readers.

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