

## **The Interpretive Lesson of Touat Scholars from the 12th to the 14th C. AH**

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### **Abstract:**

Since the first century AH, Muslims have been studying the Qur'an from all its aspects. Among those aspects was research into its language and revealing its meanings, which is known as 'Tafsir', in this article, we refer to 'interpretation'. Scholars have followed this path throughout the ages until the Islamic library was filled with thousands of interpretations. There is no generation without someone who is interested in interpretation.

The gatherings of the science of interpretation were widely spread among the scholars of Touat region, in which they studied the interpretations that had become famous and were accepted in the countries of the Islamic East and West, and the product of those gatherings were prominent figures in the science of interpretation, and some of them had efforts in this field, much of which was unfortunately lost.

This research paper aims to reveal the contributions of the scholars of Touat, located in southern Algeria, and their efforts in serving the interpretive lesson.

**Keywords:** The Interpretive Lesson, Touat, Interpretation gatherings, manuscripts.

### **The Interpretive Lesson of Touat Scholars from the 12th to the 14th C. AH**

Since its revelation, the Qur'an has been the focus of Islamic studies. It was the basis for the emergence of many sciences whose goal was to serve the Holy Qur'an, reveal its miracles, and clarify its rulings. Anyone who looks at the first writings in all Islamic sciences will find them closely linked to the Qur'an.

Since the first century AH, Muslims have been studying the Qur'an from all its aspects. Among those aspects was research into its language and revealing its meanings, which is known as 'Tafsir', in this article, we refer to 'interpretation'. Scholars have followed this path throughout the ages until the

Islamic library was filled with thousands of interpretations. There is no generation without someone who is interested in interpretation.

This research paper aims to reveal the contributions of the scholars of Touat, located in southern Algeria, and their efforts in serving the interpretive lesson.

### **The first requirement: The concept of interpretation and Muslims' care of it:**

The science of interpretation is considered one of the most important sciences, due to its close connection to the Holy Qur'an, followed by all the other Islamic sciences; because they serve it; the science of jurisprudence to understand its rulings and legislation, the science of grammar and morphology to control its writing and know its meanings, the science of rhetoric to reveal its eloquence, style and miracle, and so on with all the other Islamic sciences.

Interpretation is defined as the clarification and uncovering the covered, or uncovering the intended meaning of the problematic word, as it is from the word "fasr" which means explanation and interpretation.<sup>1</sup> Scholars have supplied varied and multiple definitions of which we choose the one of Al-Zarkashi who says that interpretation is: "A science by which the Book of God revealed to His Prophet Muhammad, may God bless him and grant him peace, is understood and its meanings are clarified and its rulings and judgments are extracted, and this is derived from the science of language, grammar, morphology, the science of rhetoric, the principles of jurisprudence and readings, and it requires knowledge of the reasons for revelation and the abrogating and abrogated."<sup>2</sup> Abu Hayyan defined it by saying: "Interpretation is a science that studies the manner of pronouncing the words of the Qur'an and their connotations, their individual and combined rulings, and the meanings that the state of composition carries with them and the completions of that."<sup>3</sup> Our choice of these two definitions, despite the abundance of definitions that scholars have provided, is only because they include the script, the method of pronunciation, the meanings and the rulings. Al-Zarkashi added the sciences that the interpreter needs. The science of interpretation has taken great strides to show the Muslims' interest in it; Or we say that the people did not work with it much because the Messenger, may God

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<sup>1</sup> See: Jamal al-Din Ibn Manzur: Lisan al-Arab, vol. 5, 3rd edition, Dar Sader, Beirut, 1414 AH, p. 55.

<sup>2</sup> Badr al-Din al-Zarkashi: Perfection in the Sciences of the Qur'an, edited by: Muhammad Abu al-Fadl Ibrahim, vol. 1, Dar Revival of Arabic Books, Beirut, 1st edition, 1957 AD, p. 13.

<sup>3</sup> Abu Hayyan Al-Tawhidi, Tafsir Al-Bahr Al-Muheet, Dar Al-Fikr, Beirut, d.t., d.t., vol. 5, p. 185.

bless him and grant him peace, was the reference for them, and because they were pure Arabs who understood its meanings because it was revealed in their language, but after the opening of the Islamic State and the entry of the non-Arabs into Islam and the emergence of incorrect pronunciation from those who came to the Islamic State, it was necessary for the interpretation to keep pace with this stage; so its circle expanded little by little and the Companions and the Followers worked with it, so they brought a big amount of interpretations that fill libraries throughout the Islamic world and even international libraries in languages other than Arabic. The Muslims' interest in the Qur'an and its interpretation has increased, since the Islamic mission until today without realizing its purpose or stopping at its end, from an interpreter of some of its surahs to a comprehensive interpreter of all its surahs, and from a linguist in the direction of its interpretation to a rhetorical to a jurisprudential, and from an interpreter of the transmitted to an interpreter of opinion to a scientific interpretation; The methods of extracting the meanings of the Qur'an have varied from one era to another and from one country to another. There is no era without finding in it those who are keen to learn about the meanings of the Qur'an, for its wonders never end and never become obsolete despite frequent repetitions, nor do scholars get enough of it. Due to the Islamic conquests, the conquerors carried with them the Islamic religion, religious sciences, and books in various sciences to the countries they conquered, and with them accompanied the scholars and memorizers of the armies in their conquests; the Arabic language was brought with Islam wherever it landed and in every quarter it descended, because the Qur'an and the Arabic language are inseparable and can only be together. {*Indeed, We have sent it down as an Arabic Qur'an that you may understand.*} Surah Yusuf: verse 02. The credit for spreading Islam was not only due to the conquests, but also to the journeys of Muslim merchants, who were credited with their morals and Islamic dealings for being able to introduce Islam to many regions.

The preachers and scholars in Touat set out to educate people and teach them religious matters and Arabic and Islamic sciences. Their concern for the Qur'an was greater than their concern for all other sciences. There is no better evidence of this than the educational institutions, not one of which fails to teach the Qur'an and its rulings, regardless of their level.

**The second requirement: Touat scholars interest in interpretation and the sciences that support it:**

The scholars of Algeria were concerned with interpretation as they were with the Holy Quran and its sciences, and the books of biographies testify to the merit of a group of scholars who had the lead in interpreting the Quran, whether by teaching or writing. Some sources indicate that among the oldest works on interpretation across Algeria is a book on interpretation by Abd al-Rahman ibn Rustum, the founder of the Rustamid state<sup>4</sup>. And an interpretation by Hud ibn Muhkam al-Hawari<sup>5</sup>.

Due to the late entry of Islam into the lands of Touat compared to the lands of northern Algeria, we find that the scholars of the cities of Algiers, Bejaia, Tlemcen and Constantine had precedence in the field of interpretation and interest in it. Although historical sources mention the early interest in interpretation and writing about it, its dealings continued to proceed at a weak pace that grew in the following eras, and despite the serious attempts made by many scholars, the features of interpretation did not become very clear, and were not evident in the contributions of Algerian scholars, for reasons including<sup>6</sup>:

- The growth of the phenomenon of imitation, intellectual stagnation, and dependence on the East. Just as the roots of Islam extended to the land of Morocco, the first writings and the mothers of books that were written in various sciences also extended with it, so many were content with standing on these imported Eastern writings, successful researcher; the interpreter of some of their symbols, explainer of their ambiguities, and memorizer of what is in them at other times.

- Following the traditional method of teaching, where memorization and indoctrination prevail in mosques, as the teacher alone manages the educational process, giving, explaining and analyzing what needs to be analyzed, and the learners have to accept what the teacher says most of the time, so indoctrination prevailed in dealing with all sciences, which led to not paying attention to writing and being satisfied with oral transmission in the gatherings. Abu al-Qasim Saad Allah says, "Among those who taught interpretation was Abdul Qadir al-Rashidi al-Qasentini, and despite al-Rashidi's fame in his time, his life

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<sup>4</sup> Baba Ammi Moussa and others: Dictionary of Ibadī Flāgs (Morocco Section), Heritage Society Publications, Arabic Press, Ghardaia / Algeria, 1st Edition, 1420 AH / 1999 AD, translation No. 544.

<sup>5</sup> Rabah Khedoussi et al.: Encyclopedia of Algerian Scholars and Writers, vol. 2, p. 685.

<sup>6</sup> Abd al-Khaliq Kasbawi: Interpretation of the Qur'an in Algerian Manuscripts from 10 to 12 AH, Touat Region as a Model, Journal of Islamic Civilization, vol. 16, p. 27, pp. 277-291.

is still a mystery to us... What concerns us here is not his life, but rather his contribution to the interpretation of the Holy Quran."<sup>7</sup>

As for the interest of the scholars of Touat in interpretation, books and manuscripts attest to their interest and mastery in it, and the biographies of scholars before the twelfth century AH recorded their interest in this art, as we found in the ninth century AH a number of works by Sheikh Muhammad bin Abdul Karim al-Maghili, the scholar of interpretation and Quranic sciences, including, for example: "Al-Badr al-Munir fi Ilm al-Tafsir", and "Interpretation of Surat al-Fatihah"<sup>8</sup>.

It is considered one of the works of Sheikh Al-Maghili that has disappeared, and its title shows that he addressed the topics of interpretation, its types and what is related to it. The titles of the works are enough to show the direction of the intention and intent towards the science of interpretation, whether in terms of principles or meanings.

A good number of scholars in Touat taught interpretation. The researcher in the books of biographies and translations finds that they received the science of interpretation and other religious sciences, and occupied the gatherings of knowledge and judiciary, and established corners and schools of knowledge. Among what we find in their biographies, for example: that he was a grammarian and interpreter, and other descriptions and attributes that tell us about their knowledge, even if they did not leave traces that tell of their efforts. The educational institutions in Touat have paid great attention to the sciences needed to understand the Holy Quran, and this is only because they know the urgent necessity and the definite need to understand the Quran to extract its jurisprudential rulings and religious teachings with which the Muslim can reform his religion and his worldly life. Although the first motive for researching the subject in this study was to refute the prevailing belief - through the abundance and prevalence of jurisprudential writings - that the scholars of Touat were far from Quranic study, the truth is that even if they did not reveal many prominent compositions in the sciences of the Quran and interpretation, the one who carefully studies their jurisprudential writings realizes that what they wrote could only be issued by someone who is proficient in all the sciences related to the Quran, revealing its meanings.

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<sup>7</sup> Abu al-Qasim Saadallah: Cultural History of Algeria, Dar al-Gharb, 1st Edition, 1998, vol. 2, p. 14.

<sup>8</sup> Ahmed Baba Al-Tanbakti: Neil Al-Abhaj with brocade embroidery, supervised and presented by: Abdul Hamid Abdullah Al-Harama, Publications of the College of Islamic Call, Tripoli, 1st Edition, 1989, p. 577.

The scholars and sheikhs of Touat have paid great attention to the sciences of the Quran, as revealed by this huge amount of manuscripts that their treasuries contain, which dealt with most branches of interpretation, strange words, readings, and other topics related to the Quran.

Among the books that dealt with the topics of Quranic studies in the Sheikh's library: Sidi Abd al-Rahman bin Muhammad al-Anzjamiri: a book that included the places of deletion in the Holy Quran. It was copied by Sheikh Ahmad bin Abd al-Rahman on Saturday, Shawwal 7th, 1382 AH, according to what the copyist himself mentioned. He did not begin the manuscript with a title<sup>9</sup>; he opened it by saying:

يقول من نفسه أسير      وقلبه مرجو به كسير  
المرتجي العفو من الرحمان      تفضلا نجل على الجكـاني  
وبعد قصدي بذا الكتاب      تسهيل حفظ الحذف للطلاب  
إلى أن يقول:  
سبحن مطلقا والحمدون      والحفظ ما عدا يحافظون  
في سورة الانعام والفلاح      وسورة المعارج الصحاح<sup>10</sup>

It is evident from the verses that the composition was written in the Quranic script to facilitate memorization of the places where some letters are omitted even if they are apparent in pronunciation, in addition to how to write some letters, and this is a care for the Quranic script which differs from the spelling script. Among the contributions of the scholars of Touat in enriching the linguistic study in general and the grammatical study in particular, we find the poem "Jumanat al-Qurra, a poem in the Quranic script" by Sheikh Hajj Abdul Rahman Hafsi<sup>11</sup>, and although its subject is in the script, it refers us to the readings and interpretation and to the strange words of the Quran, and he explained this in his poem saying:

الحمد لله الذي قـد      قلوب أرباب الحجا ذوي النقى  
فتقا  
وعلم الإنسان مالم      عليه أسبغ جزيـل  
يعلم      النعم  
على النبي القرشي      الهاشمي العدناني

<sup>9</sup> Abdul Qadir Qasbawi: A descriptive study of the treasury of Sheikh: Sidi Abdul Rahman bin M'hamed Al-Anzjamiri - a reading in his book The Sniper Network, Rufouf Magazine, No. 03, December 2013, p. 52.

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<sup>11</sup> Muhammad bin Abbou: Jumana reciters Argoza in Quranic painting, organized by Hajj Abdul Rahman Hafsi. (Descriptive Study), Journal of Memory, Volume 06, Volume 02, Laboratory of Linguistic and Literary Heritage in the Southeast of Algeria, University of Ouargla, June 2018, pp. 24-31.

اليثربي	العربي
.....	وآله وصحبه فخر
غرائب القرآن	التجوي
والتذكير	نظمتها للسهل من
	تفسير

He also wrote "Al-Utrujah Al-Jinniyah fi Al-Nasikh wa Al-Mansukh", in which he discussed the topic of Al-Nasikh wa Al-Mansukh in the sciences of the Qur'an. It appears that the term "Sciences of the Qur'an", through what appears from their dealings with the sciences, included everything related to the Holy Qur'an, such as script, abrogating and abrogated verses, reasons for revelation, divisions of the Qur'an, its virtues, and others. It is evident that they wrote little about it, because these are topics that they address through their study of interpretations, and through their dealings with the legal texts in rulings, as it is necessary to have precise knowledge of the verses, their abrogating and abrogated verses, in order to understand the rulings and provide evidence from the verses.

### **The Third requirement: Interpretation gatherings among the scholars of Touat:**

Interpretation gatherings are those scientific circles that are held to study the Book of Allah and contemplate its meanings, verses and rulings, in accordance with the saying of the Messenger, may Allah bless him and grant him peace: "A group of people do not gather in one of the houses of Allah, reciting the Book of Allah and studying it, except that tranquility descends upon them, mercy covers them, angels surround them, and Allah mentions them among those with Him."<sup>12</sup>

The hadith urges the desirability of gathering to recite the Qur'an in a study circle, by contemplating its meanings, so that it may serve as the ultimate message, warning, clarification, guidance, mercy, good tidings and intercession for its companions on the Day of Resurrection. These councils differ in their content according to their attendees. They may be for the general public to bring the Quranic meanings closer to them through preaching, guidance, and explaining the stories, lessons, and sermons contained therein, to achieve educational meanings and establish them in the souls of the recipients. They

<sup>12</sup> Narrated by Muslim, Kitab al-Dhikr, Du'aa, Tawbah and Istighfar, chapter on the virtue of meeting over the recitation of the Qur'an and on dhikr, no: 2699, vol. 4, p. 2074.

may also be for the elite to understand the subtleties of its meanings, especially its rulings and the arts of its methods, to achieve contemplation that reveals the depths of the Holy Quran.

The scholars of Touat were so concerned with interpretation and various other sciences that they received them as a whole, not separate from each other. The student would begin by memorizing the Quran and end up with licenses from the sheikhs in the Quran and its sciences, jurisprudence, hadith, Arabic, and inheritance, these sciences that constituted the common base for the scholars of Touat.<sup>13</sup>

Therefore, it is not surprising that we find in the biographies of the scholars of Touat that they received and studied the Quran and its sciences, interpretation, and other sciences. This gives us a clear picture that their sheikhs, from whom they learned, held interpretation councils, whether from the prevailing curricula at that time or from their explanations and compositions.

Anyone who looks at these interpretation sessions of the scholars of Touat will find them fixed in both their biographies and their lives. They received interpretation, taught interpretation, and wrote about it. It is well known that these scholars and sheikhs supervised, on the one hand, the corners by teaching in them according to the curricula, and supervised, on the other hand, the mosques that were prepared for them to give lessons to the public in the principles of language, jurisprudence, biography, and the Qur'an. Although the sources did not provide us with the early beginnings of those scientific circles in interpretation, we realize the close relationship between the Qur'an and interpretation. They go hand in hand, neither of them lags behind the other, and the meanings of the Qur'an do not lag behind its verses in the discussions of language, or in the discussions of jurisprudence, or in biography, or any of the Islamic sciences that the scholars of Touat used to discuss. Some sources have helped us with the oral interpretation council held by Sheikh Moulay Slimane Ben Ali, the founder of the first Zawiya in the region, which can be considered the first of the interpretation gatherings in Touat. Data show that the Sheikh interpretation was directed to the public and the elite as well for several reasons, including<sup>14</sup>:

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<sup>13</sup> Mohamed Bey Belalem: *The High Journey*, vol. 01, pp. 292-298.

<sup>14</sup> Abdelkhaleq Kasbawi: *Interpretation of the Qur'an in Algerian Manuscripts...*, op. cit., p. 281.

- The Zawiya was the first in the region, and it was based on the idea of performing all roles of education, hospitality and shelter, and the idea of zawiya did not crystallize at that time in its current form as specialized higher education institutions.

- The scientific movement at that time did not reach a large level, so the sheikhs and scholars had the role of promoting and educating members of society, and spreading awareness and love of knowledge among them.

- Interpretation was the first effort he followed for his students after memorizing the Holy Quran because they needed it in jurisprudence in particular, rhetoric and other sciences.

We can mention The gathering of Sheikh Al-Hajj Ahmed ben Malik Al-Fulani, and this can be concluded from the license that his son approved, that he had authorized him in the books of the two Sahihs and other books of Hadith, jurisprudence, grammar and interpretation, in a license in which he mentioned the chains of transmission of all the books in which he was authorized.<sup>15</sup>

Besides, the scientific gatherings of Sheikh Abdul Rahman bin Baamer Al-Tinilani, which he used to organise in his house for students to use, he included in them several sciences; such as jurisprudence, language, interpretation, rhetoric and others, as is the custom of prominent scholars in digressing in various sciences.<sup>16</sup>

Among the interpretation gatherings during the study period is the circle explaining the interpretation of *Anwar Al-Tanzil and Asrar Al-Ta'wil* by Imam Al-Baydawi by Imam Abdul Rahim bin Ibrahim Al-Tawati (d. 1160 AH), which his student, the interpreter Al-Tinilani, mentioned to him in his license, as well as the circle of Sheikh Abdul Rahman Al-Janturi.<sup>17</sup>

And the gathering of Sheikh Muhammad bin Muhammad Al-Zajlawi (d. 1212 AH); The author of *Alfiyya Gharib Al-Quran*, and it was the custom of the scholars of Touat to rely on their works in their lessons, and to refer to them in their studies with students.

We also mention from the interpretive gatherings; the council of Sheikh Al-Janturi; Sheikh Abdul Rahman Al-Tinilani mentioned the authorization of

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<sup>15</sup> Muhammad Bey Belalem: *The Attic Journey*, vol. 1, p. 267.

<sup>16</sup> Abd al-Rahman al-Tanlani: *Index Paper 08 Face*

<sup>17</sup> Mohamed Bey Belalem, *ibid.*, vol. 1, p. 34.

Sheikh Sidi Muhammad bin Ali bin Muhammad bin Ibrahim from Bani Al-Qadi Al-Dar'i to him in several books, including Tafsir Al-Jalalain.<sup>18</sup>

As well as his authorization from his Sheikh Imam Al-Janturi in Tafsir Al-Baydawi<sup>19</sup>. He also mentioned that after memorizing the Quran, he turned to Al-Durr Al-Masun fi Ilm Al-Kitab Al-Maknun and summarized its discussions and benefited from it.<sup>20</sup>

Among those gatherings were a circle of Sheikh Muhammad bin Ab, a circle of Sheikh Muhammad bin Abdullah al-Wanqali, a gathering of Sheikh Sayyid al-Hajj Muhammad al-Balbali (d. 1244 AH), another of his son Sheikh Muhammad Abdul Aziz al-Balbali (d. 1261 AH), a similar one of Sheikh Muhammad al-Hasan bin Saeed al-Bakri, and a circle of Muhammad al-Alam bin Sayyid Muhammad al-Jazuli (d. 1305 AH)<sup>21</sup>, where they had discussions in those gatherings on interpretation and what was related to it.

Among those who took care of teaching interpretation in the fourteenth century AH was Sheikh Abdul Rahman Hafsi (d. 1440 AH), an imam and teacher in the Aoulef, region of Tidikelt. He studied jurisprudence, hadith, language, hadith, interpretation and other books under Sheikh Moulay Ahmed Al-Tahiri Al-Idrisi. He accompanied Sheikh Bay Belalem in his teaching career in the Aoulef region, and studied Al-Muwatta, Al-Bukhari and Sahih Muslim from him. He taught at Amanat Mosque, and had teaching sessions in jurisprudence from the easiest paths, and in language from Malhat Al-I'rab, Alfiya and Ajrumiyya, and in interpretation from Al-Qurtubi's interpretation.<sup>22</sup>

Sheikh Bay Belalem mentioned in the book (The Lofty Journey) that he moved to the school of Sheikh Ahmed bin Abdul-Muati Al-Sabai Al-Idrisi, and stayed there for years, during which he studied jurisprudence, grammar, inheritance, hadith and interpretation. In his teaching program at the Mus'ab bin Umair School, which he founded and supervised; A lecture on interpretation by Muhammad Hassan Khan "Fath al-Bayan" on weekdays except Thursday and Friday, as part of a series of lessons on jurisprudence, hadith and

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<sup>18</sup> Muhammad Bey Belalem: The proximal branch, p. 39.

<sup>19</sup> Ibid., p. 34.

<sup>20</sup> Ibid., p. 53

<sup>21</sup> 'Abd al-Rahman ibn Ba'amr al-Tanlani: al-Fihr, folio 20 noon, Muhammad 'Abd al-'Aziz al-Balbali: al-Ghania al-Mutarafa version, folio 02 noon, 'Abd al-Hamid Bakri: al-Nubza, pp. 97, 166 and 170.

<sup>22</sup> See: Mahfouz ibn Sa'id Boukraa: al-Farqad al-Na'ir, p. 473.

interpretation<sup>23</sup>. The sheikh also explained his reliance on al-Qurtubi's comprehensive interpretation of the rulings of the Qur'an.

Sheikh Muhammad bin Ahmad al-Matarfi (d. 1215 AH), the jurist and interpreter, had lectures on interpretation. His nephew Ahmad Abu al-Abbas bin Abdul Qadir bin Ahmad bin Ahmad al-Rashidi studied from him; an imam, jurist and interpreter<sup>24</sup>. The author of al-Durrah al-Fakhira says about him: "The scholar Sidi Muhammad bin Abdullah bin Sheikh Sidi Ammar bin Abdul Rahman al-Tanlani was a knowledgeable imam in jurisprudence and interpretation. He studied from his sheikh Sidi Muhammad bin Ahmad al-Matarfi, who gave him permission to obtain a license. He was diligent in research, consideration and teaching."<sup>25</sup>

It can be said that the previous attention to interpretation before the twelfth century paved the way for interpretation during the scientific movement between the twelfth and fourteenth centuries AH. The efforts of Sheikh Al-Maghili in interpretation, the efforts of Sheikh Suleiman bin Ali and others that have not reached us, were truly the building blocks on which the study of interpretation was built by the later scholars of Touat.

**The fourth requirement: The works established in the science of interpretation by the scholars of Touat:**

**1- "Fath Al-Bayan fi Maqasid Al-Quran" by Muhammad Siddiq Hasan Khan Al-Qanuji<sup>26</sup> (d. 1307 AH):**

It is one of the late interpretations in history, but it achieved acceptance among scholars; because of the knowledge that its author spread in it and the scientific adornments that he wrote with it. The author gathered the experience of the interpreters before him, and benefited from all Islamic sciences, so "he

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<sup>23</sup> See: Mohamed Bey Belalem, *ibid.*, vol. 2, pp. 378-384.

<sup>24</sup> Rabah Khedoussi et al.: *Encyclopedia of Algerian Scholars and Writers*, p. 43.

<sup>25</sup> Muhammad Bey Belalem: *The Attic Journey*, vol. 2, p. 185.

<sup>26</sup> Abu Tayyib Siddiq Khan bin Hassan bin Ali bin Lutf Allah Al-Husseini Al-Bukhari Al-Qanuji Indian, descendant of a family known for science and inherited father from grandfather, was born in the town of "Bareilly" in India in 1248 AH, then his mother brought him from "Bareilly" to "Qanuj" in India, the homeland of his honorable fathers, died in India in 1307 AH, raised his writings about the two hundred, explanations, compositions and systems, and had a long hand in the revival of many of the sciences of the Qur'an, Sunnah and other arts, jurisprudence, hadith, translations, language, interpretation, Qur'anic sciences and others; His interpretation opened the statement in the purposes of the Qur'an. See: Siddiq bin Hussein Al-Qanuji: *Fath Al-Bayan fi Maqasid Al-Qur'an*, reviewed: Abdullah bin Ibrahim Al-Ansari, Al-Asriya Library, Beirut, vol. 1, 1996, pp. 3-8.

wrote an interpretation free of Israelite stories and superstitions that are proven false. As well as sectarian debate and theological discussions, so he combined narration and knowledge with renewing what was long and short for the seekers of it, in order to awaken the sleepers and incite the discouraged."<sup>27</sup> Perhaps Sheikh Bay Belalem chose this book for teaching because of the Salafi tendency that he found free from fanaticism, Isra'iliyyat and sectarianism. Regarding the distinction of this interpretation, the uniqueness of its choices and its pursuit of correct meanings, Rashid Rida says in *Al-Manar*, commenting on Al-Zamakhshari's interpretation, leaning slightly towards it; after many quotes, he says: "I conclude these quotes with what Mr. Muhammad Siddiq Hasan Khan mentioned... in his interpretation *Fath Al-Bayan fi Maqasid Al-Quran*, which he included in the interpretation of his teacher, Judge Al-Shawkani, called *Fath Al-Qadir*, and he added to it, so what he mentioned about it was sufficient for its original."<sup>28</sup> This reliance by the author of *Al-Manar* on the meaning of Muhammad Siddiq Hasan Khan in his interpretation is an acknowledgment of his position and the value of this interpretation.

## **2- "Anwar al-Tanzil wa Asrar al-Ta'wil" by al-Baydawi<sup>29</sup> (d. 685 AH):**

The interpretation of *Anwar al-Tanzil* is one of the interpretations that scholars in the East and the West have accepted, and it has been received by writers, so many have explained it and written many annotations on it. Some have called it *Mukhtasar al-Kashaf* because it relied in its compositional method on refining the interpretation of *al-Kashaf*, and because it was knowledgeable and scientific, it combined interpretation according to the rules of language with its interpretation.

The value of al-Baydawi's interpretation is due to its collection of the interpretations of its predecessors, such as *al-Kashaf*, as we mentioned, and the interpretation of *Mafatih al-Ghayb* by al-Razi, and the interpretation of al-Raghib al-Isfahani. The essence of their meanings was combined in it with what he worked on in it of interpretation by opinion, making it the link between those

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<sup>27</sup> Siddiq bin Hussein Al-Qanuji: *Ibid.*, vol. 1, p. 2.

<sup>28</sup> *Ibid.*, vol. 1, pp. 02-03.

<sup>29</sup> He is Nasir al-Din Abu al-Khair Abdullah bin Muhammad bin Muhammad bin Muhammad bin Shirazi Shafi'i al-Baydawi Persian Baghdadi, born in the White City of Persia near Shiraz, was a prominent imam collected mental and transport sciences, authored many books in jurisprudence, grammar, logic, assets, syntax, interpretation, hadith and mysticism, including his interpretation of "Anwar al-Tanzil and the secrets of interpretation" known as *Tafsir al-Baydawi*, died in Tabriz in 685 AH. See: *Biographies of Nobles*, p. 2446.

interpretations, in addition to what it included of the opinions of the Sunnis, so it received the attention of scholars and their explanations from the farthest reaches of India to the farthest reaches of Morocco.<sup>30</sup>

Al-Baydawi combined the Islamic sciences with the Arabic sciences, and he had the advantage and ability to formulate the opinions, meanings and ideas he collected in a concise language that did not compromise the meanings, was elegant and refined, and was inclined to by the masters of eloquence, simple and not rugged, and explained without explaining to its readers; which made his interpretation easy to accept and made it a resource for later interpreters.

### **3- "Al-Jami' li-Ahkam al-Quran, and al-Mubin li-ma Dhaman min al-Sunnah wa-Ahkam al-Furqan" by al-Qurtubi (d. 671 AH)<sup>31</sup>:**

It appears from the title of the book that al-Qurtubi intended to focus on the verses of rulings without other verses of the Qur'an, despite the familiarity of interpreters and students with this type of compositions, such as *Ahkam al-Quran* by Abu Bakr Ibn al-Arabi, except that al-Qurtubi's interpretation came out unique and distinct, al-Safadi says about its fame and distinction; "And the caravans traveled with his interpretation, and it is a great interpretation in its field."<sup>32</sup>

Al-Qurtubi's interpretation stirred the spirits of scholars and opened their minds to a solid scientific method that distinguishes the useful from the sciences and determines what should be agreed upon. It was practical in its presentation and discussions of the sayings. Ibn Farhun describes his method, saying: "Al-

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<sup>30</sup> Yusuf bin Zidan Al-Sulami: *Al-Induction according to Al-Qadi Al-Baydawi through his interpretation of the lights of revelation and the secrets of interpretation*, p. 65.

<sup>31</sup> He is Mohammed bin Ahmed bin Abi Bakr bin Farah Al-Ansari Al-Qurtubi, nicknamed Shams al-Din and Makni Abu Abdullah was born in Cordoba in Andalusia and lived by his youth in the days of glory, so he benefited from the scientific and cultural movement by whatever benefit, known from a young age his love for science and his request, learn the Holy Quran and its sciences and pain in jurisprudence, readings, Arabic and grammar, behind several books, the most famous of which is his comprehensive interpretation of the provisions of the Qur'an, died in Egypt in 671 AH. See: *Al-Qurtubi: The Collector of the Provisions of the Qur'an*, Tah: Abdullah bin Abdul Mohsen Al-Turki, Al-Resala Foundation, Beirut, vol. 1, 1st edition, 2006, p. 5.

<sup>32</sup> Salah al-Din al-Safadi: *Al-Wafi with Deaths*, Tah: Ahmad Al-Arnaout and Turki Mustafa, Part 2, House of Revival of Arab Heritage, Beirut, 1st Edition, 2000, p. 87.

Qurtubi compiled a large book in twelve volumes in the interpretation of the Qur'an, which he called: 'The Book of the Comprehensive Rulings of the Qur'an and the Explanation of its content from the Sunnah and the Verses of the Qur'an'. It is one of the most noble and beneficial interpretations. He omitted stories and histories from it, and instead established the rulings of the Qur'an, deriving evidence, mentioning readings, grammar, and abrogating and abrogated."<sup>33</sup> Thus, he clearly explained his intention and method and avoided the method of transmission without scrutiny or verification.

#### **4- "Tafsir al-Jalalain" by Jalal al-Din al-Mahalli (d. 864 AH)<sup>34</sup> and Jalal al-Din al-Suyuti (d. 911 AH)<sup>35</sup>:**

God did not will for Jalal al-Din al-Mahalli to complete his project of interpreting the Qur'an, and his death prevented him from doing so. However, he left behind a student who inherited from him his knowledge, his ambition in seeking knowledge, and his method of writing. It was from al-Suyuti's loyalty to his sheikh that he completed his journey and finished what was missing from his interpretation, following in the footsteps of his sheikh. It became known as Tafsir al-Jalalain, when the efforts of the sheikh and his student met in it. What distinguishes Tafsir al-Jalalain is that it combines the ambitions of two sheikhs known for their mastery of rational and transmitted sciences, such as Hadith, jurisprudence, language, principles, interpretation, and other sciences. Al-Suyuti followed the approach of al-Mahalli, who tended toward brevity, so the interpretation came out abbreviated by "mentioning what is understood by the words of God Almighty, relying on the most reliable sayings, parsing what is

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<sup>33</sup> Al-Dibaj Al-Madhab, vol. 2, p. 309.

<sup>34</sup> He is Mohammed bin Ahmed bin Mohammed bin Ibrahim local Shafi'i, Jalal al-Din, jurist fundamentalist interpreter, was a verse in intelligence and understanding, excelled in the arts of science jurisprudence and assets and grammar and logic and others, known in his time the behavior of the approach of the predecessors in righteousness and piety, took over teaching and was a little read, wrote books hit her necks Mataya to abbreviate and revise and the integrity of her phrase, was born in Egypt and died in 864 e. See: Tabaqat al-Mufassirin, Tah: A Committee of Scholars, vol. 2, Dar al-Kutub al-Ilmiyya, Beirut, 1st edition, 1983, p. 84.

<sup>35</sup> He is Abdul Rahman bin Abi Bakr bin Muhammad Ibn former al-Din al-Khudairi al-Suyuti, Jalal al-Din, was born an orphan in Egypt, and orphaned when he was young, excelled in the science of hadith was the most knowledgeable people of his time, also excelled in several mental sciences and transport such as jurisprudence, Arabic, assets, history and interpretation, counting of scientists abounding in the classification of what libraries abound in his writings in various arts, died in Cairo in 911 AH.

needed, and drawing attention to the different famous readings in a gentle manner and concise expression, and leaving out the prolixity by mentioning unsatisfactory sayings, and parsings that are appropriate for Arabic books.”<sup>36</sup>

Among the jokes mentioned about Tafsir al-Jalalain is that one of the scholars of Yemen counted its letters and matched them with the letters of the Qur’an and found them equal except in places where the letters of interpretation exceeded the letters of the Qur’an, so he based a ruling on this allowing it to be interpreted without ablution.<sup>37</sup> An abbreviation like this attracts the attention of students of knowledge because it makes it easy for them to collect the various issues in a simple wording.

In view of the previous works; We realize the secret of the scholars of Tuat's reliance on these works and their acceptance and approval in their interpretive councils. Through what we have explained, we find that:

- They were widely spread in all Islamic countries, East and West, and scholars praised them and advised each other to study them, either by teaching them or commenting on them and explaining them.

- These works are considered rare in their time, and were the pure essence, in which their authors gathered the efforts of their predecessors, thus making it unnecessary to read a large number of works on interpretations.

- These interpretations gathered within their folds several sciences, in addition to interpreting meanings, they touched on readings, grammar, syntax and the sciences of the Qur'an, and these sciences are among the objectives of learners seeking to understand matters of religion.

Since Islamic sciences overlap and serve each other, the efforts of the scholars of Tuat were not limited to the interpretive study, as they gathered alongside it the sciences of the Qur'an and the sciences that serve interpretation.

#### **Fifth requirement: The writings of the scholars of Touat in the science of interpretation:**

During the study period, there was no known activity in the science of interpretation at the general level, and the interpretive activity of the scholars of

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<sup>36</sup> Jalal al-Din al-Mahali and Jalal al-Din al-Suyuti: Tafsir al-Jalalain, ed: Fakhr al-Din Qabawa, Librairie du Liban Publishers, 1st Edition, 2003, p. 2.

<sup>37</sup> Khalifa Haji: Kashf al-Sunon on the Names of Books and Arts, ed.: Muhammad Sharaf al-Din Yatqaya, Dar Revival of Arab Heritage, Beirut, vol. 1, 1940, p. 445.

Algeria remained limited to explaining the famous interpretations, and a few scholars who were able to complete their oral interpretations, which were written after that; such as the interpretation of Ibn Badis, but unfortunately it was not preserved and much of it was lost together with some other interpretations.

The scholars of Touat did not stop writing in interpretation directly, but they wrote about some of its meanings and parts or mixed it with other topics of other sciences, and their approach in dealing with the science of interpretation may become clear to us through their approach in teaching it, so "After the student memorizes the Holy Qur'an in the Qur'anic school (kuttabs), he joins the religious school to receive the sciences, so he follows the texts of Islamic doctrine, jurisprudence, grammar, morphology and inheritance, by memorizing them, then studies their interpretation and meanings with the specialized teacher... After mastering the aforementioned sciences, the student moves on to the sciences of hadith and then interpretation until he graduates from the school..."<sup>38</sup>.

It is evident from the rank of the science of interpretation in the scientific hierarchy that the scholars of Touat are more inclined towards the sciences of jurisprudence, creed and language. Accordingly, we find a number of works that dealt with the meanings of the Holy Quran, its topics and sometimes its language, which can be considered in this regard as exegetical works; Sheikh Abdul Rahman bin Omar Al-Tinilani (d. 1189 AH) wrote his book called "Mukhtasar Al-Durr Al-Masun by Al-Sameen fi I'rab Al-Kitab Al-Mubeen", which is an abridgement of the book of Al-Sameen Al-Halabi (d. 756 AH)<sup>39</sup>, he says about it: "When I came across it, I was fascinated by it and I could not obtain it due to its large size, so I sought help from God Almighty to abridge it so that it would be beneficial for those Muslims who wanted it"<sup>40</sup>.

Sheikh Abdul Rahman explained in the opening of his summary his method of abridgement; According to the following<sup>41</sup>:

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<sup>38</sup> Muhammad Bey Belalem: *The Attic Journey*, vol. 01, p. 325.

<sup>39</sup> Ahmed bin Yusuf bin Abdul Dayem Al-Halabi, Abu Al-Abbas, Shihab Al-Din known as Al-Halabi: interpreter, scholar of Arabic and readings, Al-Halabi relative to Aleppo, but he settled and became famous in Cairo, among his books: *Interpretation of the Qur'an*, *Al-Qawl Al-Wajeez fi Ahkam Al-Kitab Al-Aziz*, *Al-Durr Al-Safen in the Syntax of the Qur'an*, *Mayor of Al-Hafiz in the interpretation of Ashraf Al-Words*. Al-Zarkali: *Flags*, vol. 1, p. 274.

<sup>40</sup> Mohamed Bey Belalem: previous reference, vol. 1, p. 269.

<sup>41</sup> Mohamed Bey Belalem: *The proximal branch...* op. cit., pp. 53-54.

- Limiting the readings mentioned in the book of Al-Samīn, which are transmitted and irregular, to the reading of Nafi' narrated by Warsh and Qalūn. He made this choice to make the summary useful, as most of the readings are based on them and are prevalent in the memory of the people of the country.

- Omitting the directions in which the author explains his intention and expressed them with intentions, which are those in which he says "And I intended by such-and-such" and other words indicating the same meaning.

- Sufficient with the acceptable grammatical aspects that Al-Samīn stated, as for the weak and rare aspects that Al-Samīn mentioned to clarify and explain their weakness, Al-Tanīlānī did not mention them, in order to achieve the intended purpose of the summary.

- Explaining what has a place in grammar and what does not have a place in sentences, mentioning the place.

Sheikh Sidi Muhammad ibn al-Alam al-Zajlawi (d. 1212 AH) (Muhammad ibn Muhammad ibn Ahmad), known as Mufti al-Anam al-Ansari al-Zajlawi, a student of Sheikh Abd al-Rahman - mentioned above - composed a poem on "Interpretation of the Strange Words of the Qur'an", consisting of a thousand verses, which received the praise and acceptance of his contemporaries, and can be considered among the topics of interpretation because it addresses the meanings of words in their context. The intention of its author to include it in the interpretation was evident at the beginning, when he said:

الحمد لله الذي قد شرفنا      مباحث التفسير فما عرفنا  
وجعل انتحاله في الأجر      مثل الشهادة النفيس الذخر

Ibn Al-Alam Al-Zajlawi divided his Alfiyyah into three sections:

- **The first section:** on the repeated strange words in the Qur'an, arranged alphabetically according to the Moroccan custom of starting with Alif and ending with Ya, and it included three hundred verses.

- **The second section:** on the short ones, i.e. the strange words in the Surahs, including three hundred and fifty-one verses,

- **The third section:** on the faces and counterparts, arranged alphabetically,

Sheikh Al-Zajlawi had composed a poem called "Alfiyyat Al-Gharib" and his sheikh Sidi Abd Al-Rahman advised him to compose a Alfiyyah on interpretation, stripping it of the strange words. His sheikh Abu Zaid Sidi Abd

Al-Rahman said to him, "This will benefit everyone from the common students and that is specifically for the jurists."<sup>42</sup>

Sheikh Bay Belalam composed an explanation of it called "Diyaa Al-Ma'alim Sharh Ala Alfiyyat Al-Gharib by Ibn Al-Alam", in which he elaborated on the evidence of the Alfiyyat and explained the verses and clarified their meanings. It is printed. He says: "Since this Alfiyyah is extremely eloquent and articulate, includes the language of the Qur'an, and its study requires understanding the Qur'an, and it has not been explained by scholars of the region or others, we have explained it."<sup>43</sup> It is clear from what Sheikh Bay mentioned what meanings this Alfiyyah has found that serve the understanding of the Qur'an.

Sheikh Muhammad bin Al-Mahfouz bin Muhammad Al-Washani<sup>44</sup> has a book entitled "Tafseel Al-Qur'an Al-Karim", and it appears from the title "Tafseel", which is the opposite of general, that the author intended in his book to detail and explain verses from the Qur'an, since the manuscript was not mentioned in the complete interpretations that included the entire Qur'an within the sources of research in the region.

There is another book entitled "Explanation of the Word of Sincerity" by Muhammad Al-Safi bin Al-Barakah Al-Adghaghi<sup>45</sup>, and it was mentioned in other researches under the title: "Interpretation of Surat Al-Ikhlās", and Sulaymani Ali mentions that the origin of the composition; In response to the request of some interested in the science of interpretation, the Sheikh took it upon himself to interpret the Qur'an. It seems that the Sheikh did not complete

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<sup>42</sup> See: Mohamed Bey Belalem: The proximal branch in the translation and life of Sheikh Abd al-Rahman al-Tanlani, Dar Houma, Algeria, 2014, p. 28. Mohamed Bey Belalem: Dia Al-Maalem, previous reference, vol. 1, p. 14.

<sup>43</sup> Muhammad Bey Belalem: The Attic Journey, vol. 1, p. 269.

<sup>44</sup> Al-Washani: Relative to the children of Ocean (Ashen, and Shen) in Adrar, the sources did not inform us of information about him, and the researcher Halima Kahlawi mentioned the translation of his father, Sidi Al-Mahfouz bin Sidi Mohamed, "He was born in the palace of Awlad Washen, and was famous for copying, which left many books copied and composed by his hand, as he succeeded his Sheikh Abdul Rahman bin Baomar in teaching since 1233 AH, he died on 14 Dhu al-Hijjah 1249 AH." Halima Kahlawi: Cultural Life in Wusta during the Two Centuries (12 AH-14 AH / 18 AD-20 AD), Master's Note, University of Adrar, Academic Year 2015-2016, p. 195.

<sup>45</sup> One of the jurists and scholars of Adghag Palace, after memorizing the Qur'an at the age of thirteen, collected knowledge through his movement between the corners and schools of the province of Touat, and returned after collecting to his hometown to establish a school in the Great Mosque, his author of the interpretation of Surat Al-Ikhlās and a journey from Adghag to Tedkelt. Halima Kahlawi: *ibid.*, p. 195

the interpretation of the entire Qur'an, or that he completed it, and we only received from him the interpretation of Surat Al-Ikhlās.<sup>46</sup>

The sources mentioned to us a book entitled "Interpretation of Ayat Al-Kursi" by Sheikh Saleh bin Muhammad bin Abi Bakr Al-Adawi Al-Darawi Al-Tawati (d. 1140 AH)<sup>47</sup>, and Al-Tawati is attributed to Touat, and it is proven for him in several sources, but in the references and studies we have, there was no reference to his scientific activity in Touat or his visit to it or his residence there.

**In short**, the Qur'anic study has received a large share among the scholars of Touat, so they established a place for Tajweed and recitation that indicates an understanding of the importance that these sciences have in preserving the reading of the Qur'an, so recitation schools specialized in it, which were a byword in the lands of Touat; As a school in Sahil in Akabli, as well as prominent figures throughout the region, and despite this sought-after importance for them in the sciences of Tajweed and Qira'at, the writing in them is almost non-existent; in contrast, the relied-upon curricula were selected from the best known and praised works by scholars.

The gatherings of the science of interpretation were widely spread among the scholars of the region, in which they studied the interpretations that had become famous and were accepted in the countries of the Islamic East and West, and the product of those gatherings were prominent figures in the science of interpretation, and some of them had efforts in this field, much of which was unfortunately lost.

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<sup>46</sup> Ali Slimani: The Corner of Moulay Slimane Ben Ali, unpublished research.

<sup>47</sup> Muhammad bin Rizq bin Tarhouni: Interpretation and Commentators in West Africa, Dar Ibn Al-Jawzi, Saudi Arabia, 1st Edition, 1426 AH, vol. 1, p. 221.