

Mesut Kaya. *Şerh ve Hâşiyeleri Bağlamında el-Keşşâf'ın Tefsire Etkileri: Tefsir Tarihine Bibliyografik Bir Katkı [The Influences of al-Kashshâf on Tafsîr in the Context of its Commentaries and Glosses: A Bibliographic Contribution to the History of Tafsîr]*. Ankara: İlahiyat Yayınları, 2015. 312 pages. ISBN: 9786059168281.

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Studies of the late (*muta'akhhir*) period in Islamic science and thought are still in their infancy. The field of *tafsîr* (Qur'anic exegesis) is no exception to this. If we take *al-Kashshâf* as a turning point between the early (*mutaqaddim*) and later periods, we will find that most of the contributions made during the late era are neglected in the historiography of *tafsîr*. The sources of this specific historiography can outline only a limited number of original works authored by famous *tafsîr* scholars. For a long period, Ömer Nasuhi Bilmen's (d. 1971) *Büyük Tefsir Tarihi* and Bergamalı Cevdet Bey's (d. 1925) *Tefsir Tarihi*, both in Turkish, stood out as exceptions. But due to the Turkish divinity schools' growing interest in the last decade of the late period, the era is being subjected to more detailed research that is primarily focused on identifying the manuscripts and, over time, studying the contents of those works mentioned in the literature.

The book evaluated here deals with the commentaries (*sharh*) and glosses (*hâshiya*) written on *al-Kashshâf*, one of the late period's most neglected literature. As its title implies, the author seeks to show, within the bibliographical framework, *al-Kashshâf*'s influence on the history of *tafsîr* within the context of its subsequent commentaries and glosses.

Despite the "bibliographical contribution" in the book's title, the preface notes that "the work's main objective is to investigate the historical developmental process of sources based on *al-Kashshâf* since it was written, follow its course in the history of *tafsîr*, and analyze their content and their interactions with each other"

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(10-11). In addition, the introduction promises “an exhaustive critique of immersive analytical works on a certain main source” (80). These promises exceed the limits of what the quite modest title implies. Upon investigation, the work seems to be consistent with the title, but not altogether compatible with what is stated in the preface and the introduction. In fact, it contains no such detailed analyses or exhaustive critiques with regard to the commentaries and glosses’ contents. In addition, no special effort has been made to demonstrate the interaction between the commentaries and glosses or to reveal the transformation and development in the history of this specific tradition. Instead, the author has chosen to provide an insufficient number of examples concerning the contents of several examined commentaries and glosses.

The work comprises an introduction and four parts. The introduction prioritizes *al-Kashshāf*’s its linguistic (*lugha*), rhetorical (*balāga*), and theological (*kalām*) aspects. The first part defines the terms *commentary* and *gloss*. The second part discusses the early works of *al-Kashshāf* literature, beginning with al-Ṭabarsī (d. 584/1154) and ending with al-Sakūnī (d. 717/1317). The third part investigates the period of systematic commentaries from al-Ṭibī (d. 743/1343) to al-Taftāzānī (d. 792/1390), and the fourth and final part concentrates on the Ottoman-era *al-Kashshāf* literature under the influence of al-Taftāzānī and al-Sayyid al-Sharif al-Jurjānī (d. 816/1413).

The introductory part, which outlines *al-Kashshāf*, provides the type of commonplace secondary source information found in every source. As such, it is not organized in a way that upholds the main sections. Certain inconsistencies can be observed between the introduction’s titles and the contents found therein. For example, under the title “The *Tafsīr* of the Qur’an and the Peak of Its Inimitability (*I’jāz*): *al-Kashshāf*” are such sub-chapter headings as “*al-Kashshāf* and the Rhetorical Sciences” and “*al-Kashshāf* and Mutazalite Thought”. It is hard to say that the latter is compatible with the heading, because *al-Kashshāf*’s being at the highest level of *tafsīr* is in no way related to Mutazilite thought. The first subtitle that is consistent with the heading emphasizes the science of eloquence (*bayān*), and all of the examples given are from this particular science. However, the author had already asserted, citing Abd al-Qāhir al-Jurjānī (d. 471/1078-79), that the Qur’an’s *i’jāz* and *balāga* are more related to semantics (*ma’ānī*) than *bayān*. One would expect such a remark to fall under the heading of *al-I’jāz*.

The title of the first part, “The Method of Interpreting the Foundational Texts: Commentaries and Glosses,” is questionable for two reasons: (1) it is controversial

to define the commentaries and glosses as a *method of interpreting the foundational texts*. In fact, the contributions of these sources may be more pertinent to explaining, rather than interpreting, the main text, and (2) the idea that each such work is a *methodology* is itself problematic. Exactly what is meant by *methodology* in this context remains unclear. This part gives general information on the writing of commentaries and glosses, the dynamics of which yielded the field of commentary-gloss authorship, and various reasons for authoring such works. Although these topics are not dealt with in a way that substantiates the idea of *methodology*, aside from their inconsistency with the heading, the information and classifications provided are quite informative.

The second part, “Early *al-Kashshāf* literature from al-Ṭabarsī to al-Sakūnī,” is more successful in this regard, for its analysis of controversial authorship questions makes significant contributions to the historiography of *tafsīr*. However, it is a mistake to consider Quṭb al-Dīn al-Shīrāzī (d. 710/1311) and Quṭb al-Dīn al-Fāli (d. c. 720/1320-21) the same person. It is quite possible that Kaya argues that the commentary on *al-Kashshāf* attributed to al-Shīrāzī is al-Fāli’s abridged commentary: *Taqrīb al-Tafsīr*. The inconsistent information in the bibliographic sources and library catalogue registries must have fed this erroneous claim. By the way, Süleymaniye Kütüphanesi (Ragıp Paşa Collection, MS 31) possesses a manuscript copy that almost certainly belonged to al-Shīrāzī and is different from al-Fāli’s *Taqrīb al-Tafsīr*. It seems that the author did not have the opportunity to check this copy.

The third part, “The Systematic Commentaries from al-Ṭībī to al-Taftāzānī,” examines works in different formats within the *al-Kashshāf* literature. As a matter of fact, the works treated here, such as Abū Hayyān’s (d. 745/1344) *al-Bahr al-Muhīt*, Taqī al-Dīn al-Subqī’s (d. 756/1355) *Sabab al-Inkifāf*, and al-Zayla’ī’s (d. 762/1360) *Takhrij Ahādith al-Kashshāf*, are not systematic commentaries. However, it is plausible that the heading is designed to conform to existing historical divisions, which is fairly understandable.

One could question the reason for beginning this part with the heading “The Theological *Tafsīr*: Is it a New Period in *Tafsīr*?” First, the “theological *tafsīr*” does not begin with systematic commentaries nor systematic commentaries are a turning point in this respect. Second the coinage of “theological *tafsīr*” does not identify the contents of systematic commentaries accurately. Although many theological (*kalamīc*) issues do arise in these commentaries, their salient features are the linguistic and rhetoric topics, along with the expositions on *al-Kashshāf*’s text. Given this, it seems quite unjustifiable to emphasize the theological *tafsīr* in the intro-

duction. In fact, it would be more appropriate to choose another heading, one that informs the reader about the systematic commentaries' structure and content.

Another problem in this part is treating al-Chārpardī's (d. 746/1346) commentary under this title, for this manuscript, which does not belong to him, is handled as if it does belong to him. Thus, the remarks made do not reflect his commentary, which is the most comprehensive and earliest commentary-gloss tradition of the *al-Kashshāf* literature. In fact, al-Chārpardī's commentary, along with al-Ṭibī's, is the point from which almost all of the later commentaries and glosses are sourced. From this point of view, it is also problematic that Kaya started the period of systematic commentaries with al-Ṭibī's work.

The fourth part, which is devoted to the Ottoman-era literature on *al-Kashshāf*, either treats those commentaries that come after those of al-Taftāzānī and al-Jurjānī or the glosses on their commentaries. After giving general information on Ottoman-era *tafsīr* works, the selected commentaries are ordered chronologically and discussed over three pages. Those commentaries and glosses that are not dealt with independently are cited only by their names and in accordance with the chronological order. Despite some defects, this part provides a quite large bibliography. However, it also contains certain informational inaccuracies in terms of those sources cited only by their titles, for the library catalogue registries are taken for granted. One needs to verify the data presented in the cited bibliographic sources, for it seems that the manuscripts in the field have not been physically examined.

In addition, there is a notable confusion between Muşannefak's (d. 875/1470) commentary and that of 'Alā al-Dīn 'Alī al-Bahlawān (fl. 8th/14th century) on *al-Kashshāf*. Kaya mistakenly argues that Bahlawān, whose date of death is unknown, is actually Muşannefak. Aside from the fact that the evidence he presents here is inadequate, one can conclude after examining all of the manuscripts in their entirety that there are two different titles and works. Since the author could not identify Muşannefak's commentary and supposed that Bahlawān was actually Muşannefak, he failed to take Muşannefak's actual commentary into account and presented Bahlawān's, which was written before Muşannefak's, as the latter's own commentary. Muşannefak's commentary on *al-Kashshāf* is available at Süleymaniye Kütüphanesi (Laleli Collection, MS 326); there is no doubt as to its author.

The book reviews found in the book's second, third, and fourth parts can be considered sufficient, for this work is one of the first attempts in this field. When such works are introduced, biographical information is given about the authors and then their contents are illustrated briefly, mostly from primary sections. No

special effort is made to determine the commentaries and glosses' sources or interrelation; however, significant remarks are made in certain places. The information provided by the author with regards to the contents of the commentaries and glosses on *al-Kashshāf* fills an important gap.

To our knowledge, this is the most comprehensive and informative work to date on the history of *al-Kashshāf*'s commentary and gloss literature, which has been largely neglected in the historiography of *tafsīr* literature. The scarcity of works and the fact that this literature primarily consists of manuscripts make research in this field difficult. But despite such hardships, the author has undertaken the painstaking task of outlining a general idea of the commentary and gloss literature of *al-Kashshāf*. Most of the work's defects are of the kind that can be found in the pioneering works of any field. The increasing number of such works will help the field of commentary-gloss literature find its rightful place in the historiography of *tafsīr*.