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MÂTÜRİDÎ'NİN ERKEN DÖNEM TEFSİR GELENEKLERİNE ve
İLGİLİ KONULARA BAKIŞI

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Emekli Öğretim Üyesi / Fransa

Mâtürîdî'nin Kur'ân tefsirini okuyanlar, onun erken dönem müfessir ve tefsirlerine âşinâ olduğunu görürler. Ancak o bazı durumlarda bu müfessirlerin rivâyetlerine mesafeli durur, özellikle aynı âyet veya kelimeye çok farklı anlamlar verdiklerinde (Kevser Sûresi'nde olduğu gibi). İmâm Mâtürîdî'nin tefsirinin önemli özelliklerinden biri de budur.

Bu tebliğimizde onun tefsirine özgü bir başka özelliği daha ele alacağız. Bu özellik ise *Te'vilât*'ta daha önceki tefsirlerde pek rastlanmayan kelâmî/teolojik konuların (Hz. İbrâhim ve gökcisimlerine bakışı örneğinde olduğu gibi) ele alınmış olmasıdır.

MÂTURÎDÎ'S TREATMENT OF EARLY EXEGETICAL TRADITIONS
AND RELATED TOPICS

(Surah al-Kawthar and Abraham and the star)

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A. Introduction

Who reads the Koranic Commentary of Abū Maṣṣūr al-Mâtūrîdî al-Ḥanafî Imām al-Hudā (d. 333/944)¹⁶³⁷ remarks that he knows very well the early exegetes and their interpretations¹⁶³⁸. But in some cases he distances himself from their

1637 W. Madelung, « al-Mâtūrîdî », *ET*² (French edition), VI, p. 836-838 ; Kutlu, Sönmez (ed./haz.), *İmâm Mâtürîdî ve Mâtürîdîlik*, Ankara, 2003 ; al-Nasafî, Şayf al-Dîn Abū al-Mu'în Maymūn b. Muḥammad al-Makḥūlî, *K. Tabṣirat al-adilla*, I-II, ed. Claude Salame I-II, Damascus, IFEAD, 1990-93, I, p. 358-359 ; al-Zabîdî, al-Sayyid Murtaḍā, *Ithāf al-sādat al-muttaqîn bi-sharḥi l-ḥyā 'ulūm al-dīn*, I-XIV, Beyrouth, Dār al-Kutub al-'ilmiyya, 1409/1989, II, p. 6-7.

1638 Rudolph, Ulrich, *Al-Mâtūrîdî und die sunnitische Theologie in Samarkand*, Leiden, E. J. Brill,

reports, above all when he sees that they have given many interpretations of the same Koranic word, verse or passage. This is one of the peculiarities of his commentary. It will be dealt here through the example of Maturīdī's exegesis of the word *al-kawthar* (surah 108).

We shall also examine another distinctive token of his exegesis concerning "sectarian" exegesis. We find sometimes in his commentary theological material (here "heresiographic material") that we hardly encounter in edited commentaries previous to his *Ta'wilāt al-Qur'ān* or *Ta'wilāt ahl al-sunna*. This issue will be presented here through the example of the exegesis of Q 37 (*al-Şaffāt*), 88: "And he [*i.e.* Abraham] glanced a glance at the stars" (*fa-naẓara naẓratan fī al-nuġūm*), or better say of Q 6, 76-79: "(76) When the night grew dark upon him he beheld a star...". Here on some doctrines of the Ismailis.

B. Māturīdī distancing himself from early exegetical reports. The case of *al-kawthar* (surah 108)

We shall not repeat here all the data collected by Harris Birkeland (1904-1961) in his seminal study on Surah 108¹⁶³⁹ and by myself in my French contribution, whose title is given here in English: "The embarrassment of a Muslim exegete facing a palimpsest. Māturīdī and the the surah of the Abundance"¹⁶⁴⁰.

The date of the surah *al-Kawthar* is uncertain, but traditionally Meccan, of the first Meccan period¹⁶⁴¹. A minority consider it Medinan: Mujāhid b. Jabr, 'Ikrima, Ḥasan al-Baṣrī and Qatāda¹⁶⁴². Some of those who say that the surah is

1997, p. 206 ; Māturīdī, *Ta'wilāt al-Qur'ān*, I, ed. Ahmet Vanlioğlu, under the direction of Bekir Topaloğlu, Istanbul, Mizan Yayınevi (« Emam Ebû Hanîfe ve İmâm Mâtürîdî Araştırma Vakfı »), 2005, p. 33, 37-42 (*Muqaddima*).

1639 Birkeland, Harris, *The Lord guideth. Studies on primitive Islam, in Avhandlingar Utgitt av det Norske Videnskaps-Akademi i Oslo*, II. Hist.-Filos. Klasse, 1956/2, « Surah 108 », p. 56-99.

1640 Gilliot, Claude, « L'embarras d'un exégète musulman face à un palimpseste. Māturīdī et la sourate de l'Abondance (*al-Kawthar*, sourate 108), avec une note savante sur le commentaire coranique d'Ibn al-Naṣīb (m. 698/1298) », in Arnzen, R., and Thielmann, J. (ed.), *Words, texts and concepts crusing the Mediterranean area*. Studies on the sources, contents and influences of Islamic civilization and Arabic philosophy and science. Dedicated to Gerhard Endress on his sixty-fifth birthday, Leuven, Paris, Peeters, 2004, p. 33-69.

1641 Muir, Sir William, *The Coran*. Its composition and teaching and the testimony it bears to the Holy Scriptures, London, Society for promoting Christian knowledge, 1878, p. 43, and Nöldeke.

1642 Al-Qurṭubī, Shams al-Dīn Abū 'Abd Allāh M. (d. 671/1273), *Tafsīr = al-Jāmi' li-aḥkām al-Qur'ān*, I-XX, ed. A. 'Abd al-'Alīm al-Bardūnī et al., Cairo, 1952-67², reprint Beirut, Dār Iḥyā at-turāth al-'arabī, 1965-7, XX, p. 216 ; cf. Gilliot, « L'embarras », *art. cit.*, p. 36, for other references.

Medinan¹⁶⁴³ think that it refers to the death of Muḥammad's son İbrāhīm, which is rejected by Nöldeke¹⁶⁴⁴. It is supposed to give Muḥammad encouragement when insulted (for instance by al-'Āṣ b. Wā'il)¹⁶⁴⁵. All the surah poses a great problem of meaning. Nöldeke-Schwally suggest that like the other surahs which begin with *innā* "Indeed we", or "Lo! We", or "Surely we" (surahs 48, 71, 97, 108), the beginning of the surah could had been lost¹⁶⁴⁶. Or it "may possibly be a fragment of somewhere else, but it is difficult to suggest the context"¹⁶⁴⁷.

I. Al-Kawthar *crux philologorum et interpretum* (the cross/burden of philologists and exegetes)

Linguistically the word *kawthar* seems to offer no special problems. However it is an hapax legomenon in the Koran and it is not frequent in the linguistic use of the ancient Arabs¹⁶⁴⁸. It is built on the form *faw'al* which is not very frequent: gift, very generous man (*al-raḡul al-mi'tā'*, *yuṣabbah bi-l-baḥr*), the sea, beautiful young man, etc.¹⁶⁴⁹.

1643 Al-Suyūṭī, *al-Itqān fī 'ulūm al-Qur'ān* [*Soyutī's Itqan*], ed. under the direction of Aloys Sprenger, Calcutta (Bibliotheca Indica), 1852-1854, 959 p., reprint Osnabrück, Biblio Verlag, 1980, p. 30, l. 4-5/I-IV in 2, ed. M. Abū al-Faḍl İbrāhīm, Cairo, Maktabat al-Mashhad al-Ḥusaynī, 1967, revised ed., Cairo, al-Hay'a al-miṣriyya al-'āmma li-al-kitāb, 1974-75, I, p. 55. For *Sa'id* b. Jubayr, verse 2 of this surah: « was revealed the day of al-Ḥudaybiyya », quoted by Ṭabarī, Abū Ja'far M. b. Jarīr b. Yazīd (d. 310/923), *Tafsīr* =, éd. A. Sa'id 'Alī, Muṣṭ. al-Saqqā *et al.*, I-XXX, Cairo, Muṣṭafā al-Bābī al-Ḥalabī, 1373-77/1954-57, XXX, p. 327-8; Makki b. a. Ṭālib al-Qaysī (d. 437/1045), *al-Hidāya ilā bulūḡ al-nihāya*, I-XIII, ed. under the direction of al-Shāhid al-Būshikhi, Sharjah (al-Shāriqa), Kulliyat al-dirāsāt al-'ulyā wa al-baḥth al-'ilmī, 1429/2008, 9112 p., XII, p. 8470, considers that this declaration of *Sa'id* is the proof that the sūrah is Medinan. For Suyūṭī, this poses a problem; *Itqān*, p. 35, l. 4-5/I, p. 80 (end of chapter II).

1644 Nöldeke, Th., *Geschichte des Qorāns*, Göttingen, Verlag der Dieterischen Buchhandlung, 1860 p. 73-74.

1645 Watt, W. Montgomery, *Companion to the Qur'an*, London, George Allen and Unwin, 1967, p. 329.

1646 Nöldeke, Th. [*GdQ*, I-III] *Geschichte des Qorāns*: I. *Über den Ursprung des Qorāns*, bearbeitet von Fr. Schwally, Leipzig, 1909², XII+262 p.; II. *Die Sammlung des des Qorāns*, völlig umgearbeitet von Fr. Schwally, Leipzig, 1919², VII+224 p.; III. *Die Geschichte des Korantexts*, von G. Bergsträsser und O. Pretzl, Leipzig, 1938², XII+351 p.; here *GdQ*, I, p. 92-3. For surah 71 (*innā arsalnā*), v. I, p. 124; for surah 97 (*innā anzalnāhu*), v. I, p. 95.

1647 Bell, Richard, *A Commentary of the Qur'an*, prepared by R. Bell, edited by Clifford Edmund Bosworth and M.E.J. Richardson, University of Manchester, 1991, XXII+608+603 p., p. 591.

1648 Sprenger, Aloys, *Das Leben und die Lehre des Moḥammad*, I-III, Berlin, 1869³, II, p. 3-4.

1649 Zabīdī, al-Sayyid Murtaḍā, *Tāj al-'arūs min jawāhir al-Qāmūs*, I-XL, ed. 'Abd al-Sattār Aḥmad Farāj *et al.*, Kuwayt, al-Majlis al-waṭanī li-al-thaqāfa wa al-funūn wa al-ādāb (al-

The Arabic paradigms *fay'al* and *faw'al*¹⁶⁵⁰ does exist. The Arabian philologists consider that they are built by the affixation (*ilhāq*)¹⁶⁵¹ of *yā'* or *wāw* after the first radical consonant¹⁶⁵². But many of them declare that this form is not very usual. It is possible according to them to say, *ḍayrab* or *ḍawrab*, even if we say *ṣayraf* and *kawthar*¹⁶⁵³. For *faw'al* they say *hawṣal* (place where water remains, or gizzard, French: *gésier*), *jawzal* (young pigeon)¹⁶⁵⁴, *nawfal*¹⁶⁵⁵. Suyūṭī gives a list of eighty words of this form¹⁶⁵⁶, hoping so to refute the opinion of the ancient philologists for whom the use of this form is rare. In fact his enumeration is given in

- Turāth al-'arabī, 16), 1385-1422/1965-2001, XXXI, 19-20 ; Brockelmann, Carl, *Grundriss der vergleichenden Grammatik der semitischen Sprachen*, I-II, Berlin, 1908-13, XL+1374 p., I, p. 344, for other words.
- 1650 According to Nöldeke-Schwally, *GdQ*, I, p. 92, n. 4 : « Actually *kawthar* is and adjectiv an means much, full abundant » (*viel, reichlich in Fülle*). Zabīdī, *Tāj*, *op. cit.*, XIV, p. 18-19, on *kawthar* ; Ibn Manẓūr Ibn al-Mukarram, Jamāl al-Dīn Abū al-Faḍl Muḥammad al-Khazrajī al-Anṣārī al-Ifriqī al-Miṣrī, *Lisān al-'Arab*, I-VI+I-III (index), Cairo, 1400-01/1979-80, V, p. 3828-9, *s.r. kthr*.
- 1651 For the two kinds of derivation by *ilhāq*, according to Ibn Ya'īsh, *Sharḥ al-Mufaṣṣal*, p. 64-5 ; v. Bohas, Georges «Morphologie», in Bohas, Georges and Jean-Patrick Guillaume, *Étude des théories des grammairiens arabes*, I, *Morphologie et phonologie*, Damascus, IFEAD, 1984, p. 13-166, p. 106-14, above all the second kind with which we are concerned here, with the infixation of : ' , l, y, w, m, t, n, s, ' (i.e. *alif* of the Arabian grammarians), *h.*, p. 111-4.
- 1652 Ibn 'Uṣṣūr, *al-Mumtī 'fī l-taṣrīf*, I-II, ed. Fakhr al-Dīn Qabāwa, Beirut, Dār al-Āfāq al-jadīda, 1398/1978³ (1390/1970¹), I, p. 204 (for *kawthar*) ; II, 696 (*kawthar*, *ṣayqal*) ; here in relation with the nasal resonance (*ghunna*), because the grammarians deals with the total assimilation of *nūn* (*idghām*) to the five initial consonants : r, l, m, w, y ; v. Fleisch, Henri, *Traité de philologie arabe*, I, *Préliminaires, phonétique, morphologie nominale*, Beyrouth, Imprimerie Catholique (Recherches, XVI), 1961, p. 85, § 12f.
- 1653 Ibn 'Uṣṣūr, *op. cit.*, II, p. 737.
- 1654 Fleisch, *Traité de philologie arabe*, I, *op. cit.*, p. 353, § 77h ; p. 391, 85c 1° (forme pour les augmentatifs et les diminutifs) : *ṣawqar* (grand marteau pour casser des pierres), *hawbar* (singe très velu), *jawzal* (pigeonneau), *dawbal* (ânon). Other examples in the Semitic languages in Brockelmann, *Grundriss der vergleichenden Grammatik der semitischen Sprachen*, *op. cit.*, I, p. 344 : *tau'am*, *jauzal/gôzal/gauzalpā* (syriaque : flamme), *naufal*, 'aulak (mâcher), *awbaṭat* (malheur).
- 1655 Al-Baghawī, *Tafsīr* = *Tafsīr al-Baghawī al-musammā bi-Ma'ālim at-tanzīl*, I-IV, ed. Khālīd 'Abd al-Raḥmān. al-'Ak and Marwān Sawār [uncritical ed.], Beirut, Dār al-Ma'rifa, 1992³ (1983¹), p. 532, basing himself on *ahl al-lugha* ; al-Rāzī (Zayn al-Dīn Muḥammad b. a. Bakr, *adhuc viv.* 666/1268), *Masā'il al-Rāzī wa ajwibatuhā min gharā'ib āy al-tanzīl*, ed. Ibrāhīm 'Aṭwa 'Awaḍ, Cairo, Muṣṭafā al-Bābī al-Ḥalabī, 1381/1961, p. 385 : *nawfal*, *ay kathīru al-nawāfil* (very generous man).
- 1656 Al-Suyūṭī, *al-Muzhir fī 'ulūm al-lugha wa anwā'ihā*, I-II, éd. M. A. Jād al-Mawlā, *et al.*, Cairo, Dār Iḥyā al-kutub al-'arabiyya, 'Isā al-Bābī al-Ḥalabī, 1958, II, p. 142-4.

disorder, also with words whose origin is not Arabic¹⁶⁵⁷. He does the same with *fay'al* (116 words)¹⁶⁵⁸, of which some examples are false, v. g. *ḍayfan* (*ḍayf*+an suffix)¹⁶⁵⁹.

That *kawthar* and its meaning have posed a problem both to philologists and exegetes is evident in their declarations. So *al-kawthar*, has become a *crux grammaticorum aut philologorum*. (a cross/burden for the grammarians and philologists), so in this declaration of al-Zajjāj (d. 311/923 or other dates)¹⁶⁶⁰. He begins giving the exegesis which has prevailed, that is not acting as a philologist, but as a theologian and an exegete: "According to the exegesis (*jā'a fī al-tafsīr*)"¹⁶⁶¹ *al-kawthar* is a river of Paradise [whose water is] whiter than milk, sweeter than honey, whose banks are domes of hollow pearls (*ḥāffatāhu qibāb al-durr mujawwaf*) According to the exegesis also *al-kawthar* is *Islām* and prophecy"¹⁶⁶². Then (only !) according to the philologists: "The philologists (*ahl al-lughā*) say that *al-kawthar* has the form *faw'al*, for the quantity, and the meaning is an abundant good/wealth (*al-khayr al-kathīr*). And all that has been said in the interpretation of this has been given to the Prophet. He has been given Islam, prophety, the triumph of the religion which he has proclaimed over other all religions, victory on his enemies, intercession and all the innumerable things which were granted to him. He has been granted Paradise in a measure superior to that of the (other) inhabitants of Paradise"¹⁶⁶³.

1657 Which is of Persian origin ; also *ḡawrab*, etc.

1658 *Op.cit.*, II, p. 139-141.

1659 Fleisch, *Traité de philologie arabe*, I, p. 353, n. 1.

1660 Al-Zajjāj Abū Ishāq Ibrāhīm b. al-Sarī ; Sezgin, *GAS*, VIII, p. 99-101 ; IX, p. 81-82.

1661 *V. infra* our *excursus* on the *Kitāb al-Tafsīr* of Ibn Ḥanbal .

1662 Cf. the traditions attributed to 'Ā'isha, al-Bukhārī, *Ṣaḥīḥ*, 65, *Tafsīr* (108), n° 4965/ el-Bokhārī, *Les Traditions Islāmiques*, I-IV, traduites de l'arabe avec notes et index par O. Houdas et W. Marçais, Paris, Adrien Maisonneuve, 1977 (1903-14¹), III, p. 514 ; Ibn Ḥajar al-'Asqalānī, *Fath al-bārī bi-sharḥ Ṣaḥīḥ al-Bukhārī*, I-XIII+*Muqaddima*, ed. 'Abd al-'Azīz b. 'Al. Bāz, numeration of the chapters and *ḥadīth*-s by M. Fu'ād 'Abd al-Bāqī, under the direction of Muḥibb al-Dīn Khaṭīb, Cairo, 1390/1970, reprint Beirut, Dār al-Ma'rifa, n.d., VIII, p. 731 ; al-Ṭabarī, *Tafsīr*, XXX, p. 320-321, in different versions. Or according to Anas, al-Ṭabarī, *Tafsīr*, XXX, p. 323-324. Muqātil b. Sulaymān (d. 150/767), *Tafsīr*, I-V, ed. 'Abd Allāh Maḥmūd Shihāta, Cairo, al-Hay'a al-miṣriyya al-'amma li-al-kitāb, 1980-89, IV, p. 879-880 : has a long description, without chain of authority or warrant, as usual for him.

1663 Al-Zajjāj, *Ma'ānī l-Qur'ān wa i'rābuhu*, I-V, ed. 'Abd al-Jalīl 'Abduh Shalabī, Beirut, 'Ālam al-kutub, 1408/1988, V, p. 369.

Excursus on the *Kitāb al-Tafsīr* of Ibn Ḥanbal:

It should be noticed that al-Zajjāj writes that he had got a licence of transmission of the *K. al-Tafsīr* (or of a part of this *Tafsīr*) of Ibn Ḥanbal, from his son ‘Abd Allāh (d. a little after 290/903 ; *GAS*, I, p. 511)¹⁶⁶⁴. Al-Zajjāj declares also that most of the exegesis (exegesis in tradition, and not the grammatical or stylistic explanations) that he gives in his *Ma‘ānī al-Qur‘ān wa i’rābuh* is taken over from *K. al-Tafsīr* of Ibn Ḥanbal, according to the transmission of (‘an) Ibn Ḥanbal’s son ‘Abd Allāh (*wa ka-dhālika aktharu mā rawaytu fī hādhā al-kitābi min al-tafsīri, fa-huwa min kitābi al-tafsīri ‘ani bni Ḥanbalin*)¹⁶⁶⁵.

According to Ibn al-Jawzī: This *Tafsīr* counted 120 000 exegetical traditions (*ḥadīth-s*)¹⁶⁶⁶. According to Abū al-Ḥusayn Ibn al-Munādī Aḥmad b. Ja‘far b. Muḥammad al-Baghdādī (d. 336/947)¹⁶⁶⁷, ‘Abd Allāh received 80 000 of them by the way of audition (*sami’a minhā*) from his father, and the rest from a book (*wijādatan*, i. e. without audition)¹⁶⁶⁸. As for al-Dhahabī, this *K. al-Tafsīr* (‘an Ibn Ḥanbal) has never existed. If it had existed the scholars should have tried to get it. In this case it should have counted at most 10 000 traditions (*āthār*) and five volumes. By way of comparison, al-Dhahabī says, he *Tafsīr* of Ibn Jarīr (al-Ṭabarī) has 20 000 traditions and 15 000 chains of authorities. He adds that if it had ever existed, Ibn al-Jarīr should have transmitted traditions from it¹⁶⁶⁹.

Ibn Ishāq quotes the following verse of Labīd b. Rabī‘a al-Kilābī al-‘Āmirī (born ca. 560 AD.)¹⁶⁷⁰: “The owner of Malḥūb, we were distressed of his day (or death), and at al-Ridā’ is the house of another great man” (*ṣāhibu Malḥūbin fuji’ nā bi-yawmihi* (or *bi-mawtihi*)¹⁶⁷¹ / *wa ‘inda l-Ridā’i baytu ākhara kawthari*)¹⁶⁷².

1664 Al-Zajjāj, *Ma‘ānī al-Qur‘ān*, op. cit., IV, p. 8.

1665 Op. cit., IV, p. 166.

1666 Ibn al-Jawzī, *Manāqib al-Imām Ibn Ḥanbal*, Cairo, 1349/1941, reprint Beirut, al-Khānjī and Ḥamdān, n.d., p. 190.

1667 Al-Dhahabī, *Siyar*, XV, p. 361-362.

1668 Ibn Abī Ya‘lā Ibn al-Farrā’ Abū al-Ḥusayn M. b. M. b. al-Ḥusayn al-Baghdādī al-Ḥanbalī (d. 10 muḥarram 526/2 December 1131), *Ṭabaqāt al-Ḥanābila*, I-II, ed. M. Ḥamid al-Fiqī, Cairo, Maṭba‘at al-Sunna al-muḥammadiyya, 1371/1952, reprint Beirut, Dār al-Ma-rifa, n.d., I, p. 183.

1669 Al-Dhahabī, *Siyar*, XIII, p. 521-522 ; cf. Gilliot, Claude, « Les trois mensonges d’Abraham dans la tradition interprétante musulmane. Repères sur la naissance et le développement de l’exégèse en Islām », *Israel Oriental Studies*, 17 (1997), p. 65-66.

1670 Sezgin, *GAS*, II, p. 126-127.

1671 *Bi-mawtihi*, in *Lisān*, III, 1624c

1672 Ibn Ishāq, *Sīra* = *Kitāb sirat Rasūl Allah Das Leben Mohammed’s*, I-III en 2, nach Mohammed ibn Ishak, bearbeitet von Abd el-Malik ibn Hishām. Aus den Handschriften zu Berlin, Leipzig,

Now some translations of the surah:

Marmaduke Pickthall: "Lo ! We have given thee the *Abundance* ;/So pray unto thy Lord, and *sacrifice*./Lo ! it is thy *insulter* (and not thou) who is *without posterity*".

Richard Bell: "Verily, We have given thee *the Abundance* ;/So pray to thy Lord, and *sacrifice*./Verily, it is he who *hatheth* thee who is the *docked one*,".

Arthur J. Arberry: "Surely We have given thee *abundance* ;/so pray onto thy Lord, and *sacrifice*./Surely he that *hates* thee, he is *the one cut off*".

II. The interpretations of *al-kawthar*

Two interpretations of *al-kawthar* are in competition. The first is a general one: "the abundant good" (*al-khayr al-kathîr*) or "all good". The second one is something which was granted to Muḥammad: a river of paradise or the basin/cistern (*al-hawḍ*).

Among the protagonists of the first interpretation we find Ibn 'Abbās and early exegetes some of which are considered as his pupils, *Sa'īd* b. Jubayr (d. 95/714), Mujāhid b. Jabr (d. 104/722), etc. The second interpretation which with time has taken the first place has been considered the interpretation of the majority (*al-jumhūr*), probably under the influence of the legend of Muḥammad developed after his death, especially the narratives on the Ascension of Muḥammad transmitted by Anas b. Mālīk and others¹⁶⁷³.

In some traditions there is an essay to combine both interpretations: [...] 'Aṭā' b. al-Sā'ib al-Kūfī (d. 136/753): Muḥārib b. Dithār (al-Sadūsī al-Kūfī, d. 116/734) said to me: Has you not hear what *Sa'īd* b. Jubayr has told from Ibn 'Abbās about *al-kawthar* ? I said: I heard him saying that Ibn 'Abbās said: That is the abundant good. Muḥārib said: Praise God ! It is very rare that Ibn 'Abbās omits a speech (tradition) (*mā aqalla mā yasquṭu li-bni 'Abbās qawlun*) ! I heard ('Abd Allāh) Ibn 'Umar saying: When 'We have given thee the *kawthar*' was

Gotha und Leyden hrsg. von Ferdinand Wüstenfeld. Göttingen, Dieterichsche Universitäts-Buchhandlung, 1858-60, reprint. Frankfurt am Main, Minerva, 1961, p. 261/I-II, ed. Muṣṭafā al-Saqqā, Ibrāhīm al-Ibyārī and 'Abd al-Ḥafīz Shalabī, Cairo, Muṣṭafā al-Bābī al-Ḥalabī, 1955² (1355/1936¹), I, 394/trans. A. Guillaume, *The Life of Muhammad*, Lahore, Pakistan Branch of the Oxford University Press, 1955¹ ; reprint Karachi, 1978³, p. 180 ; al-Zabīdī, *Tāj*, *op. cit.*, IV, p. 204a, s.r. *lḥb*.

1673 Birkeland, *op. cit.*, p. 59.

revealed, the Messenger of God said: It is a river of Paradise whose two banks are of gold, it streams on stones of pearls and sapphire, its drunk is sweeter than honey, it is whiter than milk¹⁶⁷⁴, cooler than snow, its smell is better than musk. He said (i.e. Muḥārib b. Dithār): Ibn ‘Abbās told the truth, by God, it is the abundant good !¹⁶⁷⁵.

Another essay of “harmonization” of both interpretations is present in a tradition attributed to Sa‘īd b. Jubayr (d. 95/174): According to Abū Bishr¹⁶⁷⁶: “I said to Sa‘īd b. Jubayr: People are claiming that it is a river of Paradise. He said: The river which is in Paradise belongs to the Good which God has given to him (i.e. Muḥammad)¹⁶⁷⁷”.

We know that the exegetes cannot content with the generality of the first interpretation (the abundant good), according to their principle of *ta’yīn al-mubham* (identification of vagueness)¹⁶⁷⁸. With the time the list of interpretations has be-

1674 From « It is a river » to « milk », with variants, in al-Ṭabarī, *Tafsīr*, XXX, p. 320, first tradition, according to ‘Aṭā’ b. al-Sā’ib/ Muḥārib b. Dithār.

1675 Ibn Ḥanbal, *al-Musnad*, I-VI, ed. M. al-Zuhrī al-Ghamrāwī, Cairo, al-Maymaniyya, 1313/1895, reprint Beirut, al-Maktab al-Islāmī, 1978, II, p. 112/I-XX, ed. Shākir *et al.*, Cairo, Dār al-Ḥadīth, 1416/1995, V, p. 300-301, n°5913.

1676 Ja‘far b. a. Waḥshiyya, i.e. Ja‘far b. Iyās al-Yashkurī al-Baṣrī al-Wāsiṭī, d. 123/741, our 124, 125, 126 (according to Azdī, Ibn Zukra, *Ta’rīkh al-Mawṣil*, ed. ‘A. Habība, Cairo, al-Majlis al-A’lā li-al-Shu‘ūn al-Islāmiyya, 1387/1967, p. 53, has Ja‘far b. Waḥshiyya, which is a misprint : in 124 or 125, in Wāsiṭ); al-Mizzī, *Tahdhīb al-kamāl fī asmā’ al-rijāl*, I-XXIII, ed. A. ‘Alī ‘Abīd and Ḥ. Aḥmad Āghā, revised by Suhayl Zakkār, Beirut, Dār al-Kutub al-‘Ilmiyya, 1414/1994, III, p. 378-81, n° 915. Shu‘ba b. al-Ḥajjāj used to criticize his way of transmitting the exegesis of Mujaḥid. He came from Baṣra and there he was often. He went to Wāsiṭ where many attended his lessons for which he used « books » (*wa kāna ‘indahu kutub*).

1677 Al-Ṭabarī, *Tafsīr*, XXX, p. 321, tradition A 1 bis; Bukhārī, *Ṣaḥīḥ*, 65, *Tafsīr*, 108, *Kawthar*, tradition 3, *al-Jāmi’ al-ṣaḥīḥ* [*Recueil des traditions mahométanes*], I-IV, ed. L. Krehl, Th. W. Juynboll, *et al.*, Leyde, E.J. Brill, 1862-1908, III, p. 389/Ibn Ḥajar, *Fath al-bārī bi, op. cit.*, VIII, p. 731, n° 4966; al-Bukhārī, *Ṣaḥīḥ*, 81, *Riqāq*, 53, *Ḥawḍ*, tradition 3, ed. Krehl, IV, p. 247 ult.-248, l. 1-4/Ibn Ḥajar, *Fath*, XI, p. 463, n° 6578/el-Bokhārī, *Les Traditions Islāmiques*, *op. cit.*, IV, p. 315-6. Cf. Abū Ḥayyān al-Gharnāṭī, *Tafsīr al-Baḥr al-muḥīṭ*, I-VIII, Cairo, 1328-29/1911, reprint Beirut, Dār al-Fikr, 1983, VIII, p. 519, l. 26-27, without mention of Abū Bishr : *qīla li-Sā’idi bni Jubayrin inna unāsan...*; al-Zamakhsharī, *al-Kashshaf*, I-IV, Beirut, Dār al-Fikr, 1977, IV, p. 291; Rāzī, *Tafsīr*, XXXII, p. 128.

1678 Al-Suhaylī (d. 581/1185), *al-Ta’rīf wa l-i’lām fīmā ubhima fī l-Qur’ān min al-asmā’ al-a’lām*, éd. ‘Al. M. ‘A. al-Naqrāt, Tripoli of Libyā, 1401/1992, 462 p.; Ibn ‘Askar (M. b. ‘A. b. al-Khidr al-Ghassānī, d. 636/1239), *al-Takmil wa al-itmām [li-Kitāb al-Ta’rīf wa al-i’lām]*, éd. Ḥ. Ismā’īl Marwa, Beirut/Damascus, Dār al-Fikr, 1418/1997, 542 p.; Ibn Jamā’a (Badr al-Dīn, d. 733/1333), *Ghurar al-tibyān fīman lam yusammā fī l-Qur’ān*, éd. ‘Abd al-Jawwād

come impressive The exegete Maḥmūd al-Ālūsī (d. 1270/1854) declares in his Koranic commentary that the author of *al-Taḥrīr* has listed 26 different opinion on the interpretation of *al-kawthar*. Birkeland thought that it could be in the *Taḥrīr al-khayr al-kathīr* of Muḥammad ‘Āshiq¹⁶⁷⁹ (end of XVIIIth and beginning of XIXth century)¹⁶⁸⁰.

But we have shown¹⁶⁸¹ that it was in the Koranic commentary of the Ḥanafī Ibn al-Naqīb (d. 689/1298, in Jerusalem)¹⁶⁸², called *al-Taḥrīr wa al-taḥbīr li-aqwāl ‘ulamā’ al-tafsīr fī ma’ānī kalām al-samī’ al-baṣīr*, which counted ca. 100 volumes (or 80, 60, 50), whose introduction has been edited several times erroneously attributed to Ibn Qayyim al-Jawziyya, s.t. *al-Fawā’id al-mushawwiq ilā ‘ulūm al-Qur’ān wa ‘ilm al-bayān*¹⁶⁸³, and more recently attributed to its real author, s.t. *Muqaddimat al-Tafsīr [fī ‘ulūm al-bayān wa l-ma’ānī wa l-badī’ wa i’jāz al-Qur’ān]*¹⁶⁸⁴. Parts of Ibn al-Naqīb’s Tafsīr are extants in some libraries: Tunis, Marrakech, Rabat, Istanbul Fatih and Carrulah Veliyeddin¹⁶⁸⁵.

Khalaf, Damascus/Beirut, 1410/1990, 620 p. ; al-Suyūṭī, *Itqān*, chap. 70 (*Fī al-mubhamāt*), IV, p. 93-118 ; Id., *Muḥḥamāt al-aqrān fī mubhamāt al-Qur’ān*, ed. Muṣṭafā Dīb al-Bughā, Damascus/Beirut, Mu’assasat ‘Ulūm al-Qur’ān, 1403/1982, 128 p., (p. 121, for *al-kawthar*) ; cf. Wansbrough, John E., *Quranic Studies. Sources and methods of Scriptural interpretation*, Oxford University Press, 1977, p. 135-7

1679 Birkeland, p. 73.

1680 GAL S II, p. 616.

1681 Gilliot, « L’embarras », p. 44-46.

1682 Jamāl al-Dīn Abū ‘Abd Allāh M. b. Sulaymān b. al-Ḥasan b. al-Ḥusayn al-Balkhī al-Maqdisī al-Ḥanafī, d. Muḥarram 698/inc. 9 Oct. 1298 ; al-Dhahabī, *Mu’jam al-shuyūkh. Al-Mu’jam al-kabīr*, I-II, ed. M. al-Ḥabīb al-Hīla, Ṭā’if, Maktabat al-Ṣiddīq, 1408/1988, II, 193-4, n° 734 ; al-Ṣafadī, *Wāfi*, III, p. 136-7, n° 1076 ; Id., *A’yān al-‘asr wa a’wān al-naṣr*, I-VI, ed. ‘A. Abū Zayd et al., Beirut, Dār al-Fikr al-mu’āṣir/Damascus, Dār al-Fikr, 1418/1998, IV, p. 453-4, n° 1579 ; Ibn Kathīr, *al-Bidāya wa al-nihāya*, XIV, p. 4-5 ; Ibn Abī al-Wafā’ al-Qurashī, *al-Jawāhir al-muḍīyya fī ṭabaqāt al-ḥanaḥfiyya*, I-V, ed. ‘Abd al-Fattāh M. al-Ḥulū, Cairo/Riyad, Dār Iḥyā al-kutub al-‘arabiyya/Dār al-‘Ulūm, 1978-88, Cairo, Hajar, 1993², III, p. 165-6, n° 1320. This Ibn al-Naqīb should not be confused with others Ibn al-Naqīb, especially : Shams al-Dīn Muḥammad b. a. Bakr b. Ibrāhīm b. ‘Abd al-Raḥmān al-Dimashqī al-Shāfi’ī who died 12 Dhū al-Qa’da 745/1345. He was *qāḍī* of Ḥims, Tripoli and Aleppo, and he wrote also a *Muqaddimat al-tafsīr* ; v. Kaḥḥāla, *Mu’jam al-mu’allifin*, IX, p. 104.

1683 GAL S II, p. 127, op. 37 ; v. Gilliot, « Textes arabes anciens édités en Égypte », *MIDEO*, 20 (1991), n° 72-73 ; 23 (1997), n° 50.

1684 Ed. Zakariyyā’ Sa’id ‘Alī, Cairo, al-Khānjī, 1415/1995, 687 p. ; v. Gilliot, « Textes arabes anciens édités en Égypte », *MIDEO*, 23 (1997), p. 321-323, n° 49.

1685 See the introduction of Zakariyyā’ Sa’id ‘Alī, to his edition of the *Muqaddima*, p. 38, n. 5, according to Muḥammad Aḥmad Ḥasan Maḥmūd.

Long before al-Ālūsī, Abū Ḥayyān al-Andalusī al-Gharnāfī (d. 745/1344), who, like Shams al-Dīn al-Dhahabī had been a pupil of Ibn al-Naṣīb, and had a license of transmission of his commentary¹⁶⁸⁶, had mentioned that his master had listed 26 opinions on the meaning of *al-kawthar*.

Shams al-Dīn al-Qurṭubī (d. 671/1273) has established a list of 16 interpretations¹⁶⁸⁷, even if he prefers to see in *al-kawthar* a river of Paradise (1) or/and the basin (2). He has taken them over from the commentary of Tha'labī who has not numbered them:

(3) “ The prophecy and the Book ” (‘Ikrima, d. 105/723)¹⁶⁸⁸, (4) the Koran (Ḥasan al-Baṣrī, d. 110/728)¹⁶⁸⁹, (5) *al-islām* (Mughīra)¹⁶⁹⁰ (or Ibn al-Mughīra: ‘Uthmān b. al-Mughīra al-Thaqafī ?, who transmitted from Mujāhid)¹⁶⁹¹, (6) “ the facilitation of the Koran and the alleviation of the canonical laws ” (*taysīr al-*

1686 Abū Ḥayyān al-Gharnāfī, *Tafsīr al-Baḥr al-muḥīṭ*, op. cit., I, p. 11, l. 7-15.

1687 Al-Qurṭubī, *Tafsīr*, op. cit., XX, p. 216-218. Many of these interpretations are also found in other commentaries, e.g. the Shī‘ī Mu’tazilī exegete al-Ṭabarī (or Ṭibrī), Amīn al-Dīn Abū ‘Alī al-Faḍl b. al-Ḥasan (d. 548/1153), *Tafsīr [Majma’ al-bayān fī tafsīr al-Qur’ān]*, I-XXX in 6, Introduction of Muḥsin al-Amīn al-Ḥusaynī al-‘Āmilī, Beirut, Dār Maktabat al-Ḥayāt, n. d. (reprint of the edition of Beirut, 1380/1961), XXX, p. 251-252. Lesse interpretations are found in al-Ṭūsī, Shayḥ al-Ṭā‘ifā Abū Ja‘far Muḥammad b. al-Ḥasan (the Shī‘ī Mu’tazilī exegete, d. 460/1067), *Tafsīr [al-Tibyān fī tafsīr al-Qur’ān]*, I-X, Introduction of Āghā Buzurg al-Ṭīhrānī, Beirut, Dār Iḥyā al-turāth al-‘arabī, n. d. (reprint of the edition of Najaf, 1367-83/1957-63), X, p. 417-418.

1688 Cf. al-Tha’labī. *Apud* al-Ṭabarī, *Tafsīr*, XXX, p. 323, tradition A 17, of ‘Ikrima : *Mā a’lā l-nabiyya [...] min al-khayri wa l-nubuwwati wa l-qur’āni* ; p. 322 : prophecy (tradition A 6) ; Koran and wisdom (tradition A 7) ; abundant good (tradition A 8) ; p. 323, tradition A 18 : *al-khayru lladhī a’lāhu Llāhu min al-nubuwwat wa al-islām* ; al-Baghawī, *Tafsīr*, p. 532 : *al-nubuwwa wa al-kitāb*, according to ‘Ikrima.

1689 In al-Tha’labī : *al-qur’ān al-aẓīm* ; Hūd b. Mūhakkam (or Muḥkim, al-Huwwārī, *viv. sec. med.* III^e/X^e s.), *Tafsīr*, I-IV, ed. Belḥājj Sa‘īd Sharīfī, Beirut, Dār al-Gharb al-islāmī, 1990, IV, p. 538.

1690 It is the seventh interpretation given by al-Rāzī, *Tafsīr*, XXXII, p. 126, l. 20-5, but without the name of Mughīra. It could be the Companion al-Mughīra b. Shu‘ba (d. 50/670) ; al-Dhahabī, *Siyar*, III, p. 21-32. However as al-Qurṭubī seems to give the beginning of this list according to a chronological order, he could be for example the Follower of the second generation (*min ṣiḡḥar al-tābi‘īn*) Abū Hishām Mughīra b. Miqṣam al-Ḍabbī al-Kūfī al-A’mā (d. 133/750) ; v. al-Dhahabī, *Siyar*, VI, p. 10-3. He transmitted traditions from ‘Ikrima, al-Sha‘bī, Ibrāhīm al-Nakhā‘ī, etc. He appears in exegetical chains of transmission of al-Ṭabarī, *Tafsīr*, ed. Shākir, I, p. 22, n° 10 ; p. 53, n° 54 ; IV, p. 65, n° 3349-50 (of Mujāhid) ; VIII, p. 282-3, n° 9291-2 ; X, p. 26, n° 11340 ; XI, p. 564, n° 13623 ; XIV, p. 103, n° 16368, etc.

1691 Ibn ‘Ādil, Sirāj al-Dīn Abū Ḥafṣ ‘Umar b. ‘Alī b. ‘Ādil al-Dimashqī al-Ḥanbalī (*scrib.* 880/1475), *al-Lubāb fī ‘ulūm al-Kitāb*, I-XX, éd. ‘Ādil A. ‘Abd al-Mawjūd and ‘Alī M. Mu‘awwad, Beirut, Dār al-Kutub al-‘ilmiyya, 1419/1998, XX, p. 520. This Koranic commentary, written by a Ḥanbalī, is a kind of « abridgment » of the commentary of Fakhr al-Dīn al-Rāzī (Ibn al-Kahtīb).

qur'ân wa takhfiḥ al-sharā'î ; according al-Ḥusayn b. al-Faḍl, d. 282/895)¹⁶⁹², (7) “ the great number of the Companions, partisans¹⁶⁹³, and people of the Community ” (Abū Bakr b. ‘Ayyāsh, d. 193/808¹⁶⁹⁴, and Yamān b. Ri’āb, IInd/VIIIth century)¹⁶⁹⁵, (8) “ the preference ” (or election/choice) (*al-ithār* ; Ibn Kaysān)¹⁶⁹⁶, (9) “ the high rank of renown or in naming him ” (*rif’at al-dhikr* ; Māwardī, d. 450/1058)¹⁶⁹⁷, (10) “ a light in your heart which guides you to Me and separa-

1692 In al-Ta’labī, *Tafsīr* : *al-kawthar shay’ān* : *taysīr al-qur’ān wa takhfiḥ al-sharā’î* “ The ms. of Tha’labī has : al-Ḥasan b. al-Faḍl, *leg.* : al-Ḥusayn b. al-Faḍl (b. ‘Umayr al-Bajalī al-Kūfī al-Nīsābūrī). He died at the age of 104, in Sha’bān 282. He was a well-known traditionist and exegete ; al-Dhahabī, *Siyar*, XIV, p. 414-6.

1693 In al-Qurṭubī : *al-ashyā’* ; Rāzī, *Tafsīr*, XXXII, p. 126, l. 25 : *kathrat al-atbā’ wa al-ashyā’* ; Ibn ‘Aṭīyya, al-Qāḍī Abū M. ‘Abd al-Ḥaqq (d. 541/1147 or 542), *al-Muḥarrir al-wafīz*, I-V, ed. ‘Abd al-Salām ‘Abd al-Shāfi Muḥammad, Beirut, Dār al-Kutub al-‘ilmiyya, 1413/1993, V, p. 529 ; Abū Ḥayyān, *Baḥr*, VIII, p. 519 : *al-atbā’*.

1694 Correct the ed. of Abū Ḥayyān, *Baḥr*, p. 519, l. 28, which has : « Abū Bakr b. ‘Abbās », *leg.* Abū Bakr b. ‘Ayyāsh, *i.e.* Shu’ba b. ‘Ayyāsh (d. 193/308), the celebrated reader of the Koran ; v. Gilliot, *Exégèse langue et théologie en Īslām*. L’exégèse coranique de Tabarī, Paris, Vrin, 1990, p. 20-1.

1695 Al-Yamān b. Ri’āb (or Rabāb, less sure), a Khorasanian theologian and Khārījī heresiographer, who was first tha’labite (*min al-tha’āliba*), then bayhasite (*bayhasiyya*) ; Ibn al-Nadīm, *Fihriṣ*, ed. Flügel, p. 182, l. 8-12 ; van Ess, Josef, [TG] *Theologie und Gesellschaft im 2. und 3. Jahrhundert Hidschra*. Eine Geschichte des religiösen Denkens im frühen Islam, Berlin, Walter de Gruyter, I-VI, 1991-97, II, p. 599-600 ; Shahrastānī, *Lrs* = Shahrastānī (Shahrastānī Tāğ al-Dīn Abū al-Faṭḥ M. b. ‘Abd al-Karīm, m. 548/1153), *Livre des religions et des sectes*, I, traduction, introduction and notes par D. Gimaret et G. Monnot, Paris/Louvain, UNESCO/Peeters, 1986 I, p. 392, n. 44, 415. He was also an exegete, author of a *Tafsīr* and of *Ma’ānī l-Qur’ān*, not mentionned in the list of Ibn al-Nadīm, but according to Abū Bakr al-Naqqāsh (M. b. Ḥusayn b. M. b. Ziyād al-Mawṣilī al-Baghdādī, the author of a Koranic commentary entitled *Shifā’ al-ṣudūr*, d. 3rd Shawwāl 351/4th November 962 ; Dhahabī, *Siyar*, XV, p. 573-6), in al-Dāraqutnī, *al-Mu’talif wa l-mukhtalif*, I-V, éd. Muwaffaq b. ‘Abd Allāh b. ‘Abd al-Qādir, Beirut, Dār al-Gharb al-islāmī, 1986, II, p. 1052. His brother was the Shī’ī theologian ‘Alī b. Ri’āb al-Ṭahhān al-Sa’dī (van Ess, TG, I, 382-3), so he lived in the IInd/VIIIth century.

1696 Cf. al-Tha’labī, *al-Kashf wa al-bayān ‘an tafsīr al-Qur’ān*, ms. Istanbul, Ahmet III 76 (from surah 5 to the end of the Koran) : *huwa kalimatun mina al-nubuwwati al-ūlā wa ma’nāhā al-ithār*. We shall examine this interpretation and the identification of his author *infra*.

1697 Al-Māwardī, Abū al-Ḥasan (d. 450/1058), *al-Nukat wa al-‘uyūn (fī l-tafsīr)* [corr. : *al-Nukat wa l-‘uyūn fī tafsīr al-Māwardī*, *leg.* : (...) *fī al-tafsīr li-al-Māwardī*], I-VI, ed. al-Sayyid b. ‘Abd al-Maṣṣūd b. ‘Abd al-Raḥīm, Beirut, Dār al-Kutub al-‘ilmiyya/Mu’assasat al-Kutub al-thaqāfiyya, 1412/1992, VI, p. 355 : among the nine interpretation given by him, only this one is not attributed to an ancient exegete ; cf. Rāzī, *Tafsīr*, XXXII, p. 127, l. 10-11. Allusion to Koran 94, *Sharḥ*, 4 : *Wa rafa’nā laka dhikraka*. It is interpreted by Qatāda : *Rafa’a Llāhu dhikraku fī al-dunyā wa al-ākhirā* (al-Ṭabarī, *Tafsīr*, XXX, p. 235) ; hence one of the interpretations : *al-khayr al-kathīr fī al-dunyā wa al-ākhirā*.

tes you from all but M” (*annahu nūrun fī qalbika dallaka ‘alayya wa qaṭa’aka ‘ammā siwāyā*)¹⁶⁹⁸, (11) “the intercession” (*al-shafā’a*)¹⁶⁹⁹ [It should be noticed that the Andalusī exegete Ibn al-Zubayr (d. 708/1308)¹⁷⁰⁰ associates in his interpretation of *al-kawthar* the intercession with *al-maqām al-mahmūd* of Muḥammad, followed in this by Fakhr al-Dīn al-Rāzī (d. 606/1210)¹⁷⁰¹, then by Burhān al-Dīn al-Biqā’ī (d. 885/1480)¹⁷⁰², who quotes Ibn al-Zubayr directly] (12) “mirac-

1698 Al-Qurṭubī does not give the author of this interpretation. It is found in al-Tha’labī, *Tafsīr*, X, p. 310, l. 10, attributed to a Ja’far al-Šādiq; v. Nwyia, Paul, «Le Tafsīr mystique attribué à Ġa’far al-Šādiq. Édition critique», *MUSJ*, XLIII (1968), p. 181-230 (according to the *Tafsīr* of Sulamī), p. 230; al-Sulamī, Abū ‘Abd al-Raḥmān (d. 412/1021), *Tafsīr* = *Haqā’iq al-tafsīr*, I-II, ed. Sayyid ‘Imrān, Beirut, Dār al-Kutub al-‘ilmiyya, 2001, 456+438 p., II, p. 422; Id., *Ziyādāt Haqā’iq al-tafsīr*, in Böwering, Gerhard (ed. with introduction by), *The Minor Qur’ān Commentary of Abū ‘Abd al-Raḥmān Muḥammad b. al-Ḥusayn al-Sulamī*, Beyrouth, Dar El-Machreq, 1995, 23+255 p. p. 230: *Qāla Ja’far: a ‘ṭaynāka nūran fī qalbika fa-staghanayta bihi ‘an jamī’i man siwāya*.

1699 This interpretation is also attributed to a Ja’far al-Šādiq by al-Tha’labī and al-Ṭabarsī, *Majma’ al-bayān*, XXX, p. 252; v. Nwyia, «Le Tafsīr mystique» (from the commentary Sulamī), p. 230 (*al-dhafā’a li-ummatika*); Sulamī, *Tafsīr*, II, p. 422; Id., *Ziyādāt*, p. 230: *Qāla Ibn ‘Aṭā’* (Abū al-‘Abbās A. b. M. b. Sahl b. ‘Aṭā’ al-Adamī al-Baghdādī, d. 309/922; al-Sulamī, *Ṭabaqāt al-Šūfiyya*, ed. Nūr al-Dīn Shurayba, Aleppo, Dār al-Kitāb al-Nafīs, 1406/1986² (1372/1953¹), 67+571 p., p. 265-72; al-Dhahabī, *Siyar*, XIV, p. 255-6): *a ‘ṭaynāka l-shafā’ata li-ummatika*, but without mention of Ja’far al-Šādiq. In Nwyia, *Trois œuvres inédites de mystiques musulmans*, Šaqīq al-Balḥī, Ibn ‘Aṭā’, Niffarī, édition critique avec introductions, Beirut, Dar El-Machreq, 1973, 12+343 p., p. 180, we find the three following interpretations from Ibn ‘Aṭā’: 1. «Mission and prophecy (*al-risāla wa l-nubuwwa*); cf. al-Sulamī, *Tafsīr*, II, p. 422, mentions this interpretation from Ibn ‘Aṭā’. 2. «The knowledge of my Godship, especially of my Unicity, of my Power, and my Will». It is evident that the Ibādī Hūd b. Muḥkim/Muḥakkam, *Tafsīr*, IV, p. 538, does not mention the intercession for theological reasons pertaining to the Ibādī doctrine. On his opinions concerning intercession, v. Gilliot, «Le Commentaire coranique de Hūd b. Muḥakkam/Muḥkim», *Arabica*, XLIV (1997), p. 193-9. However he quotes a part of the narrative concerning the night journey of Muḥammad and the tradition transmitted by Thawbān b. Bujdad, *mawlā* of Muḥammad on the benefits who result of drinking this water; cf. Ibn Kathīr, ‘Imād al-Dīn, *Jāmi’ al-masānīd wa al-sunan al-hādī li-aqḥam sunan*, I+XXXVII, éd. ‘Abd al-Mu’ṭī Amīn Qal’ajī, Beirut, Dār al-Kutub al-‘ilmiyya, 1415/1994, II, p. 449-50, n° 1092.

1700 Abū Ja’far A. b. Ibrāhīm b. al-Zubayr al-Thaqafī al-‘Āšimī al-Andalusī al-Gharnāṭī an-Naḥwī, in his *al-Burhān fī tartīb suwar al-Qur’ān*, ed. M. Sha’bān (Master dissertation) Rabat, Wizārat al-Awqāf, 1410/1990, 415 p., to which we could not have access.

1701 Al-Rāzī, *Tafsīr*, XXXII, p. 127, l. 13, his 13th interpretation: *al-kawthar huwa al-maqāmu l-mahmūdu lladhī huwa al-shafā’atu*, without mentioning al-Šādiq or Ibn al-Zubayr.

1702 Al-Biqā’ī, Burhān al-Dīn, *Naḥm al-durar fī tanāsib al-āyāt wa al-suwar*, I-VIII, ed. ‘Abd al-Razzāq Ghālib al-Mahdī, Beirut, Dār al-Kutub al-‘ilmiyya, 1415/1995, VIII, p. 548.

les of the Lord of the guidance which are abundant upon people whose claim is answered because of your prayer ” (*mu’jizāt Rabbi al-hudā [aktharat]*¹⁷⁰³ *bihā ahlū al-ijābati li-da’watika*) (Tha’labī)¹⁷⁰⁴, (13) “ There is no god but God and Muḥammad is the Messenger of God ” (or: the confession of the unity of God, *al-tawḥīd*, in Ibn ‘Aṭiyya al-Andalusī, *al-Muḥarrir*, V, p. 529) (Hilāl b. Yasāf)¹⁷⁰⁵, (14) “ understanding in religion ” (*al-fiqh fī al-dīn*), (15) “ the five prayers ”¹⁷⁰⁶, (16) “ the great man in the situation ” (*al-’aẓīm fī al-amr*, selon Ibn Ishāq)¹⁷⁰⁷.

Qurṭubī like most the exegetes chooses the interpretations number 1 (a river of Paradise) and 2 (the basin/cistern of the Prophet) because “ they are the most sound, they are well established coming from the Prophet in his declaration on *al-kawthar* ” For him all the other interpretations given are “ a surplus to the cistern ”¹⁷⁰⁸.

1703 *Aktharat* is missing in the edition of Qurṭubī, but not in Tha’labī’s.

1704 In the manuscript of al-Tha’labī : « It has been said : the numerous miracles resulting from answering to your appeal » (*mu’jizāt kathurat bihā al-ijāba li-da’watika*) ; al-Sulamī, *Tafsīr*, II, p. 422 : *Wa qāla ba’duhum : mu’jizatum (sic !)* *aktharat bihā ahl al-ijābati li-da’watika*.

1705 Cf. al-Tha’labī, *Tafsīr*. In Ibn ‘Aṭiyya, *Muḥarrir*, V, p. 529, de Hilāl b. Yasāf : *al-tawḥīd* ; also in Abū Ḥayyān, *Baḥr*, p. 519, l. 28. Abū l-Ḥasan Hilāl b. Yasāf (ou Isāf) al-Ashja’ī al-Kūfī, a traditionist who lived in the second half of the 1st/VIIIth century ; al-Mizzī, *Tahdhīb*, XIX, p. 328-9, n° 7228.

1706 Cf. al-Tha’labī, *Tafsīr*. The second verse of the surah was probably the reason of this interpretation. Already Muqātil b. Sulaymān (m. 150/767), *Tafsīr*, IV, p. 880, le glossed it : « That is the five prayers » ; taken over by Ibn al-Jawzī (d. 597/1201), *Zād al-masīb fī ‘ilm al-tafsīr*, I-VIII, texte established (!) by A. Shams al-Dīn, Beirut, Dār al-Kutub al-‘ilmiyya, 1414/1994, VIII, p. 332 ; he gives also two other interpretations : « Pray your Lord » : the prayer of the ‘īd (*ṣalāt al-aḏḥā*, Qatāda), and the morning prayer (*ṣalāt al-ṣubḥ* at al-Mudḥalifa, Mujāhid) ; cf. al-Ṭabarī, *Tafsīr*, XXX, p. 325-7.

1707 Actually, Ibn Ishāq, *Sīra*, éd. Wüstenfeld, p. 261, a : *al-’aẓīm*. Here al-Qurṭubī takes over the expression of Tha’labī before his quotation of the verse of Labīd quoted by Ibn Ishāq.

1708 Al-Qurṭubī, *Tafsīr*, XX, p. 218 ; cf. Id., *al-Tadhkira fī aḥwāl al-mawtā wa umūr al-ākhira*, I-II, ed. al-Sayyid al-Jumaylī, Beirut/Cairo, Dār Ibn Zaydūn/Madbūlī, 1406/1986, 925 p., I, p. 413-4 ; Ibn Abī l-Dunyā (d. 281/894), *K. Ṣifat al-janna*, ed. Ṭāriq Tanṭāwī, Cairo, Maktabat al-Qur’ān, n.d. (1994), 128 p., p. 36, n° 66 (Ibn ‘Umar) ; p. 37-8, n° 74 (according to Anas b. Mālik) ; al-Baghawī, Muḥyī al-Sunna (d. 516/1122), *Maṣābīḥ al-sunna*, I-IV, ed. Yūsuf ‘Abd al-Raḥmān al-Mar’ashlī et al., Beirut, Dār al-Ma’rifa, 1407/1987, p. 26, *Aḥwāl al-qiyāma wa bad’ al-khalq*, 4, *al-Ḥawḍ wa al-shafā’a*, III, p. 536-7, n° 4312-4 ; al-Tibrizī, Walī al-Dīn (*ob. post* 737/1336), *Mishcāt-ul-Masābih*, or a Collection of the “most authentic traditions”, regarding the actions and sayings of Muhammed, exhibiting the origin of the manners and customs; the civil, religious and military policy of the Muslemans, I-II, trans. from the original Arabic, Captain A.N. Matthews, Bengal artillery, Calcutta, 1823, p. 603-4 (or, p. 605-19, on basin and intercession) ; Wolff, Maurice, *Muhammedanische Eschatologie* [i.e. ‘Abd al-Raḥīm b. Aḥmad

Fakhr al-Dīn al-Rāzī (d. 606/1210), seems to accept the “ traditional ” interpretation, within 15 interpretations, but he turns above all to a theological apologetic discourse on the alleged “ inimitability ” (*i'jāz*) of the Koran which is familiar to him: “ What is intended by *al-kawthar* is this surah itself. Indeed in spite of its brevity it contains fully and sufficiently all the benefits of this world and the hereafter ” ” (*al-murādu bi-al-kawthari huwa hādhihi al-sūratu, wa dhālika li-annahā ma'a qaṣrihā wāfiyatun bi-jam'i manāfi'i al-dunyā wa al-ākhirā*)¹⁷⁰⁹. “ If nobody was able to imitate it in spite of its brevity (*annahum 'ajazū 'an mu'aradatihā ma'a ṣuḡrihā*), that means that the whole Koran is inimitable ”¹⁷¹⁰.

As for Ibn Kathīr (d. 774/1373)¹⁷¹¹, he swamps or shrouded the reader in a stream of Prophetic traditions, *ca.* 30, on the river of Paradise, taken over from the books of *hadīth*, so that the interpretation “ the abundant good ” should be forgotten by him !

III. Al-Māturidī and *al-kawthar*

One of the exegetes who was at most put in a predicament by the interpretation of *al-kawthar* and who expressed clearly his puzzlement is al-Māturidī. He distinguishes four categories of interpretation:

a) The abundant good: “ The abundant good, that is prophecy and mission which were granted (to the Prophet) ; something without which nobody can be saved from God's anger/wrath(*sukhṭ*), that is faith in him and assent to him (*wa huwa al-īmān bihi wa al-taṣdīq lahu*), what made him known and mentioned among the angels (*ma'rūfan madhkūran fī al-malā'ika*), what in which his mention is joined with His mention (*i.e.* the mention of God) (*mā qarana dhikrahu bi-dhikrihi*)¹⁷¹², what in which his grade and rank has been exalted above all the

al-Qāḍī, *Kitāb aḥwāl al-qiyyāma*] [called : *Daqā'iq al-akhbār fī dhikr al-janna wa l-nār*], nach der Leipziger und der Dresdener Handschrift zum ersten Male arabisch und deutsch und mit Anmerkungen, hrsg. von M. Wolff, Leipzig, Brockhaus, 1872, p. 106-7 (Arabic), p. 191-6 (trans.) ; El-Ṣaleḥ, *La vie future selon le Coran*, Paris, Vrin (Etudes Musulmanes, XIII), 1971, p. 36.

1709 Al-Rāzī, *Tafsīr*, XXXII, p. 127 *ult.*-8, l. 1.

1710 Rāzī, *Tafsīr*, XXXII, p. 128, l. 6.

1711 Ibn Kathīr, 'Imād al-Dīn, *Tafsīr*, I-VIII, ed. 'Abd al-'Azīz Ghunaym, M. A. 'Āshūr, M. Ibrāhīm al-Bannā, Cairo, Dār al-Sha'b, 1390/1971 VIII, p. 519-23.

1712 Cf. Q, 94 : 4 : *Wa raḥa'nā laka dhikraka* ([Have we not...])... and exalted thy fame ?) According to Abū Sa'īd al-Khudrī : The Messenger of God said : Gabriel came to me and

creatures, and other innumerable [qualities]. It is what God says: [Have we not] exalted thy fame ? ”¹⁷¹³.

b) “ Some [exegetes] have said that *al-kawthar* is a river of Paradise, and there are traditions (*akhbār*) in this way in which the Messenger of God, being asked about it said: It is a river of Paradise, or he declared it without being asked about it. If these traditions are well established, it is sufficient to mention it [because in this case they are strong traditions]. But if these traditions are not well established, the first interpretation (*i.e.* the abundant good) is more relevant (*aqṛab*) to us. Indeed granting a river is not a specific way of honouring and giving, because God has promised more than that to His community, according to the traditions transmitted from the Messenger of God who has said: ‘The inhabitants of Paradise have in the Paradise what neither eye has seen, nor ear has heard, nor has come into the heart (or mind) of any man (*wa lā khaṭara ‘alā qalbi basharin*)’¹⁷¹⁴.

said : My Lord and your Lord says : How did I exalt your fame ? He answered : Only God knows it. Gabriel said : [God said] : If I am mentioned, you are mentioned with me » ; Tabarī, *Tafsīr*, XXX, p. 235 ; Ibn Hibbān, *Ṣaḥīḥ*, *Tartīb* of ‘Alā’ al-Dīn ‘Alī b. Balbān al-Fārisī, I-XVIII, ed. Shu’ayb al-Arna’ūt, Beirut, Mu’assasat al-Risāla, 1404-12/1984-91, 1418/1997³, VIII, p. 175, n° 3382. According to al-Ḍaḥḥāk b. Muzāḥim/Ibn ‘Abbās : He (God) says to him : Whenever I am mentioned, you are mentioned with me : *fī al-adhān wa al-iqāma wa al-tashahhud, wa yawm al-jumu’a ‘alā al-manābir, wa yawm al-ḥajj, wa yawm al-aḥdā, wa ayyām al-tashrīq, wa yawm ‘arafa, wa ‘inda al-jimār, wa ‘alā al-Safā wa Marwa, wa fī khiṭbat al-nikāḥ, wa fī mashāriq al-arḍ wa maghāribihā...* ; al-Qurtubī, *Tafsīr*, XXX, p.106-7

1713 Al-Mâtûrîdî, *Āyât wa sunwar min Ta’wîlât al-Qur’ân*, ed. Ahmet Vanlioğlu and Bekir Topaloğlu, Istanbul, Acar Matbaacılık (İmâm Ebû Hanîfe ve İmâm Mâtûrîdî Araştırma Vakfı), 2003, p. 73 (Arabic text, surah 108).

1714 Muslim, *al-Ṣaḥīḥ*, I-V, ed. M. Fu’ād ‘Abd al-Bāqī, Cairo, 1955-57, reprint Beirut, Dār al-Fikr, 1398/1978, 51, *K. al-Janna*, 5, IV, p. 51, n° 2825, according to [...] Abū Ḥāzim/Sahl b. Sa’d al-Sā’idī : *Fthā (i.e. al-janna) mā lā ‘aymun ra’at...*, during a session in which the Prophet describes Paradise ; same wording and transmission in Ibn Ḥanbal, *Musnad*, V, p. 334/XVI, p. 439-40, n° 22724. But mostly it appears as a Divine saying (*ḥadīth qudsī*), which has been integrated in the ṣaḥīfa of Hammām b. Munabbih : Ibn Ḥanbal, *Musnad*, II, p. 313/VIII, p. 206, n° 8128, where the text begins as follows : « God said : I have prepared for my upright servants what neither... » ; al-Bukhārī, *Ṣaḥīḥ*, 65, *Tafsīr*, ad Koran 32 : 17/el-Bokhārī, *Les Traditions islamiques*, III, p. 415-6 ; al-Bukhārī, *Ṣaḥīḥ*, 97, *Tawḥīd*, 35, éd. Krehl, IV, p. 479, l. 12-5/Ibn Ḥaḡar, *Fath*, XIII, p. 465, n° 8498/el-Bokhārī, *Les Traditions islamiques*, IV, p. 622 ; Graham, W. A., *Divine word and prophetic word in early Islam*, Paris: Mouton & Co., 1977, p. 117-119, Saying 2. This particular saying is very ancient in the religious traditions of the Near East, *e.g.* Isaiah 64, 4 ; I Cor 2, 9, where Paul writes : « Things beyond our seeing... ». It came to Islam possibly through one of the channel of the (Apocryphal) « Gnostic » *Gospel of Thomas* (mid-second-century) as seen in its Coptic version, 17 : « Jesus said : I shall give you what no eye

c. "Some [exegetes] have said that *al-kawthar* is something that God has given to his Messenger and which is not known (*lā yu'rafu*). It is at the origin something which He has told to him and which he (the Messenger) knew. It is not obligatory to burden oneself to know it and to interpret it, because in doing so one could do a mistake, and the result should be a damage (*lahiqahu al-ḍarar*). On the contrary, if one says the right interpretation (*aṣāba*), he would not acquire a great benefit" ¹⁷¹⁵.

d. "It has been said that *al-kawthar* is a word ¹⁷¹⁶ borrowed from the ancient books (*huwa ḥarfūn ukhidha minā l-kutubī al-mutaqadimmatī*)".

e. Commenting the second verse of the surah Mātūrīdī repeats that God addresses the Messenger of God concerning prayer, "sacrifice" (?) (*al-naḥr*) and *al-kawthar*, and that: "we have not to burden ourselves in interpreting that, for fearing of lying about what God has said, unless we repeat the opinions of the exegetes (*aqāwīl ahl al-ta'wīl*)" ¹⁷¹⁷.

f) Commenting the third verse he declares: "Fundamentally what we say is that God addressed the Messenger with these words, and the Messenger knew it (i.e. what it means); but we do not know what was the object of this narrative (*lā na'lamu fī ayyi shay' in kānat al-qīṣṣatu*), and also not the circumstance of the revelation of this verse (*fīma nazalati l-āyatu*). Only God knows" ¹⁷¹⁸.

Some remarks on this exegesis of Mātūrīdī:

1) The exegesis (b) (river of paradise) does not find great credence with Mātūrīdī, like with some exegetes before him and after him, and particularly with Mu'tazilites, even if he cannot reject traditions attributed to the Prophet. It could seem that the interpretation (a) has his favour. But he must confess that he does not know (c): God know it and the Prophet knew it, and there is no disadvantage in not knowing it.

has seen and what no ear has heard and no hand has touched, and what has no come into the heart of man » ; Elliott, James Keith, *The Apocryphal New Testament*. A collection of apocryphal Christian literature in an English transl. (based on M.R. James), Oxford, 1993, paperback ed. 2007, p. 138.

1715 Al-Mātūrīdī, *op. cit.*, p. 74.

1716 On *ḥarf*, v. *infra*.

1717 Al-Mātūrīdī, *op. cit.*, p. 77.

1718 *Ibid*.

2) But what is particularly interesting for us is (d):

“ It has been said that *al-kawthar* is a word borrowed (or: taken over) from the ancient books (*huwa ḥarfūn ukhidha min al-kutubī al-mutaqadimmatī*) ”¹⁷¹⁹. First of all, this opinion is an old one, but in another form, found in the commentary of Tha’labī¹⁷²⁰. According to Ibn Kaysān (i.e. the Baṣrī Mu’tazilī exegete, theologian and jurist, Abū Bakr ‘Abd al-Raḥmān b. Kaysān al-Aṣamm, d. 200/816 or 201/817)¹⁷²¹: “ It is a word coming from the first books (in some versions: from the first prophecy) which means the preference (probably better say: election or to honour somebody)¹⁷²² ” (*huwa kalimatun min al-nubuwwati al-ūlā wa ma’nāha al-ithār*).

It should be noticed that the name of Ibn Kaysān is associated with the interpretation *al-ithār* in the commentaries of Qurṭubī (d. 671/1273)¹⁷²³, of Abū Ḥayyān al-Gharnāṭī (d. 745/1344) and of the Ḥanbalī Ibn ‘Ādil al-Dimashqī (*scrib.* 880/1475)¹⁷²⁴, in the commentary of Shawkānī (d. 1250/1834), here without the name of Ibn Kaysān¹⁷²⁵. But only Tha’labī (d. 427/1035) gives the “ complete ” utterance of al-Aṣamm: “ It is a word coming from the first books which means the election ”. It seems to us that it refers to the Old Testament in which the prophets are elected (chosen) by God, to be put in relation with the interpretation (3) (Qatāda) given by Qurṭubī. No wonder if Qurṭubī, or his source, but we have seen that is source is Tha’labī, has suppressed “ coming from the first books ”, because this suggests that this word was borrowed from the Old Testament (or from the New Testament).

1719 *Ḥarf* means in many contexts : « written representation of a consonant, word, phrase, text » ; Versteegh, Kees, *Arabic grammar and Qur’anic exegesis*, Leiden, Brill, 1993, XI+230 p., p. 157. Or it came to be use in the sense of « something represented in writing, e.g., a consonant, a word, a phrase, a passage, specifically a texte from the *Qur’ān* », *op.cit.*, p. 103.

1720 Al-Tha’labī, *al-Kaṣḥf wa al-bayān*, X, p. 310, l. 8-9.

1721 *Van Ess*, TG, II, 396-418

1722 Freytag, G.W., *Lexicon Arabico-Latinum*, praesertim ex Djeuharii Firuzabadiique et aliorum Arabum operibus, adhibitis Golii quoque et aliorum libris confectum, Halle, 1830-37; réimpr. I-IV en 2, Beirut, Librairie du Liban, 1975, I, p. 12b : *elegit* (to elect, to choose), *praehebit* (to prefer), *maluit* (to prefer) ; Lane, Edward William, *An Arabic-English Lexicon*, Book I, I-II, Cambridge, Islamic Texts Society Trust, 1984 (1860!), I, p. 18b, s.r. *athr*.

1723 This interpretation of Abū Bakr al-Aṣamm was possibly also in the commentary of Ibn al-Naṣībī (d. 689/1298), one of the masters of Abū Ḥayyān who had got a licence of transmission of this work.

1724 Ibn ‘Ādil, *Lubāb*, *op. cit.*, XX, p. 520.

1725 Al-Shawkānī, Abū ‘Abd Allāh Muḥammad b. ‘Alī, *Tafsīr Faṭḥ al-qadīr al-jāmi’ bayna fan-nay r-riwāya wa al-dirāya fī ‘ilm at-tafsīr*, I-V, Cairo, Muṣṭafā al-Bābī al-Ḥalabī, 1349/1930, reprint Beirut, Dār al-Fikr, 1973³, V, p. 502.

As for Māturīdī, he says: “It has been said that *al-kawthar* is a word borrowed (or: taken over) from the ancient books”, not mentioning Abū Bakr al-Aṣamm, but perhaps he had another source, and without giving the meaning. It is clear that he distances from the “traditional” interpretation (a river of Paradise), or better say from the interpretation which has become the traditional one, and he prefers to say that he does not know what it means.

Finally it should be noticed, in relation with the interpretation attributed to Ibn Kaysān (a word borrowed from the ancient scriptures), that Christoph Luxenberg¹⁷²⁶ thinks that this surah is based on the Christian Syriac liturgy. “From it arises a clear reminiscence of the well-known passage, also used in the compline [evening’s prayer] of the Roman Catholic canonical hours of prayer, from the first Epistle of Peter (1, Pe. 5, 8-9): “(8) Wake up and be vigilant, because your *adversary*, the *devil*, as a roaring lion, walketh about, seeking whom he may devour. (9) Whom *resist steadfast* in the faith”. To him, *al-kawthar* is the transliteration of the Syro-Aramaic *kuttāra*, which is the nominal form of the second stem *kattar* (to persevere). So the whole surah’s meaning should be: “We have given you [the virtue of] *constancy*/So pray to your Lord and *persevere*¹⁷²⁷ [in prayer]/Your *adversary* [the devil] is [then] the *loser*¹⁷²⁸”.

C. Māturīdī and heresiographical material. An Ismā’īlī interpretation of the look of Abraham to the star

We have dealt elsewhere with the look of Abraham at the star, the moon and the sun, particularly in the Koranic commentary of Māturīdī (Q 6, *al-An’ām*, 76-79)¹⁷²⁹:

“(76) When the night grew dark upon him he beheld a star. He said: This is my Lord (*fa-lammā janna ‘alayhi l-laylu, ra’ ā kawkaban. Qāla: hādha rabbī*). But when it set, he said: I love not things that set (*Fa-lammā afala qāla: lā uḥibbu al-āfilīna*). (77) And when he saw the moon uprising, he exclaimed: This is my

1726 Luxenberg, Christoph, *Die syro-arāmäische Lesart des Koran*. Ein Beitrag zur Entschlüsselung der Koransprache, Berlin, Das Arabische Buch, 2000, p. 271-276/second revised ed., 2004, p. 304-311/*The Syro-Aramaic Reading of the Koran*, Berlin, Verlag Hans Schiler, 2007, p. 292-301.

1727 Syriac : *nḡar* : to wait, to hold out, to persist.

1728 *Batara* (to break off, to ampute), should be a metathesis of Syro-Aramaic *tḥar* : to be broken, defeated, destroyed

1729 Gilliot, Claude, « Abraham eut-il un regard peccamineux ? » [Had Abraham a peccaminous/sinful/guilty look ?], in *Mélanges Gimaret*. Autour du regard, ed. by E. Chaumont *et al.*, Leuven, Peeters, 2003, p. 33-51

Lord. But when it set, he said: Unless my Lord guide me, I surely shall become one of the folk who are astray. (78) And when he saw the sun uprising, he cried: This is my Lord! This is greater! And when it set he exclaimed: O my people! Lo! I am free from all that ye associate (with Him). (79) Lo! I have turned my face toward Him Who created the heavens and the earth, as one by nature upright, and I am not of the idolaters ”.

According to one of the interpretations listed by Mâturîdî: Thanks a favour of God one can attain different degrees, and also thanks His will different stations (*manâzil*) of the favour and honour can be reached (cf. Q 6,83: “ That is Our argument. We gave it unto Abraham against his folk. We raise unto degrees (*narfa’u darajâtin*) whom We will. Lo ! thy Lord is wise, aware ”)¹⁷³⁰.

This interpretation is illustrated by the following Imâmî (Ismâ’îlî)¹⁷³¹ exegesis:

“ Some adherents of the Imama¹⁷³² have given an interpretation of this verse¹⁷³³ maintaining that they have taken it over from the commentary of ‘Alî (*wa qad qāla ba’du aşhābi al-imāmati fî ta`wili al-āya, za’ama annahum akhadhūhu min sharhi ‘Alīyin anna*):

[In the “ edition ” (?) of Beirut we read the following nonsense: *wa qad qāla ba’du aşhābinā: al-imāmatu fî ta`wili l-āyati, raghma annahum akhadhūhu min sharhīn, ‘alā anna ta`wila l-najmi*... It means that a *madhhab*-fellow of Mâturîdî should have given this Imâmî/Ismâ’îlî interpretation ! Moreover *raghma* has to be read: *za’ama* ; *min sharhīn*, ‘*alā anna* has to be read: *min sharhi ‘Alīyin anna*].

Mâturîdî continues quoting: “ [For him] The interpretation of the star ist the Licenciate/Licensee (*al-ma’dhūn*, French: *Mandataire*)¹⁷³⁴ ; the mond is the Ad-

1730 Al-Mâturîdî, *Ta’wîlât* (Berlin Ms. Or fol. 4156, 565 folios), f. 142v, l. 36-7. The edition of Fâtima Yûsuf al-Khaymî, I-V, Beirut Mu’assasat al-Risāla, 1425/2004, is a very bad one. It has been established on the basis of two mss. : Zâhiriyya 495, 661 folios ; DK 6 tafsîr, 656 folios, copied by Muşţafâ 2. b. Muḥammad b. Aḥmad, in 1165 H.

1731 For a good introduction to the allegoric interpretation (*ta’wîl*) among the Ismâ’îlîs, v. Poonawala, Ismail K., « Ismâ’îlî *ta’wîl* of the *Qur’ân* », in Rippin, Andrew (ed. by), *Approaches to the history of the interpretation of the Qur’ân*, Oxford, Clarendon Press, 1988, p. 199-222

1732 The Ismâ’îlîs consider themselves Imâmîs. Only with the predominancy of Twelver Shî’a the expressions *ithnâ’ashariyya* and *imâmiyya* have become progressively synonyms ; v. Daftary, Farhad, *The Ismâ’îlîs*. Their history and doctrines, Cambridge, CUP, 1990, p. 596 (n. 19 of p. 95).

1733 Al-Mâturîdî, *Ta’wîlât*, f. 142v, l. 36-143r, l. 3.

1734 *Al-ma’dhūn al-muṣṭlaq* (the Chief Licenciate) is sometimes simply called *al-ma’dhūn*. He was authorized to administer the oath of initiation (*‘ahd* or *mithāq*) ; Daftary, *The Ismâ’îlîs*, op.

junct (*lāḥiq*) ; the sun is the Imam (*al-imām*)¹⁷³⁵. Iti is in that sense that Abraham said to the Licenciate: “This is my Lord/Master (*rabbī*)”, meaning with that the master in instruction (*rabb al-tarbiyya*), the one who instructed him in science. “When it set”: This means: When came to nought what he had (*fanā mā ‘indahu*) [to instruct him in it], Abraham disliked him (*raghiba ‘anhu*) and said: “I do not like this” (*lā uḥibbu ḥādḥā*)”.

“Then he got what he wished [or what belongs to the science of] from the Adjunct (*thumma ṣafīra bi-al-lāḥiqī*) [in the manuscript, and probably in all the manuscripts of *Ta’wīlāt: ṣahara bi-al-lāḥiqī*], then in the same way from the Imam”.

Ṣahara bi- could be understood in several ways: 1. To seek help, assistance, support, with the meaning of *istāḥara* ou de *ṣāhara* (on could read here: *zāhara*) ; v. *Tāg*, XII, p. 485b-86a ; Lane, p. 1927c, *sub* 10th form. In this sense we could read in the text *ṣahara*. 2. *Tāg*, XII, p. 480b: *iftakhara bihi ‘alā ghayrihi* ; Lane, p. 1926c. In this sense Abraham prefers successively the Adjunct, then the Imam. 3. To appear: in this sense Abraham appears successively as Adjunct, then Imām, i.e. attains these ranks. 4. The meaning of *ghalaba ‘alā* does not seem to be the right one in this context.

“Then he turned his face to the Follower (*al-tālī*)¹⁷³⁶ to receive [science] from the Messenger (*thumma tawajjaha naḥwa al-tālī bi-al-qabūli min al-rasūli*) (*al-rasūl*, i.e. the Speaking-prophet/Speaker-prophet or Enunciator, *al-nāṭiq*)¹⁷³⁷, because the Follower for them comprehends what has been told (*faṭīna*¹⁷³⁸ *mā dhukira*)”.

cit., p. 229. Or according to the *dā’ī* Abū Tammām (IV/Xth century) : « The least rank (*aṣghar al-ḥudūd*) is that of the novices (*al-mustajībūn*) above which the Ma’dhūn passes (*yamurru faṣqahu al-ma’dhūn*) » ; Madelung, Wilferd, and Walker, Paul E., *An Ismaili heresiography*. The Bāb al-Shayṭān from Abū Tammām’s *Kitāb al-shajara*, Leiden, Brill (IHC, 23), 1998, p. 120 (Arabic part, p. 132).

1735 According to Abū Tammām, in Madelung and Walker, *An Ismaili heresiography*, *op. cit.*, p. 120 : Above the *ma’dhūn* are : « Next are the Wings (*al-ajniḥa*), the the Adjuncts (*al-lawāḥiq*), the the Imāms (*al-a’imma*), then the Founders (*al-usus*), and then the Speaking-prophets (*al-nuṭaqā’*) ».

1736 Our manuscript has : *al-thānī*, *leg.* : *al-tālī*. In the Ismā’īlī hierarchy however, comes after the ‘*aql*’ (Intellect) which is called *al-awwal*, *al-qalam*, *al-sābiq*, *al-shams*, etc., *al-naḥs* (Soul), which is called *al-lawḥ*, *al-malik*, *al-thānī*, *al-tālī*, etc. ; v. Abū Ya’qūb al-Sijzī (al-Sijistānī, d. soon after 361/971, *scribens* his *Iftikhār* in 361), *Tuḥfat al-mustajībīn*, in *Thalāth Rasā’il ismā’īliyya*, ed. ‘Ārif Tāmir, Beirut, Dār al-Āfāq al-jadīda, 1983, p. 13-14.

1737 Speaker-prophet or Enunciator, according to Daftary, *Ismā’īlīs*, p. 139.

1738 F.Y. Khaymī reads erroneously : *bi-ṣanni mā*.

Al-Sābiq (the Preceder) appears regularly in Abū Ya'qūb al-Sijistānī's works. It refers to the Intellect (*al-'aql*) in its position vis-a-vis the Soul (*al-nafs*) which is called the Follower (*al-tālī*)¹⁷³⁹.

The next hypostasis is sometimes called the Follower (*al-tālī*) or the Second (*al-thānī*). It seeks to grasp the whole of Intellect but cannot, and it must therefore "study" this higher thing which it cannot know all at once. For this reason Soul is called "the One seeking Instruction" (*al-mustafīd*) and the Intellect is called the Instructor (*al-mufīd*)¹⁷⁴⁰.

"When passed to the degree of the Completer/Fulfiller (*fa-lammā jāwaza darajat al-mutimm*¹⁷⁴¹), which is the Imam, he attained the degree of the Message (*ṣāra ilā darajati al-risālati*), and to them he is the one who receives from the Second (*al-thānī* or *al-tālī*, the Follower) by the Vision/Imagination, and the one who et celui qui donne forme aux lois (*wa huwa al-qābilu*¹⁷⁴² *mina al-tālī bi-al-ḥayālī wa muṣawwiru*¹⁷⁴³ *al-sharā' i' i*)¹⁷⁴⁴.

The Imams, the Fulfillers of the work for the Speaking-prophet (*al-a'imma al-mutimmūn li-amrihi*)¹⁷⁴⁵. Between two Speaking-prophets (*nāṭiq-s*) there are six Imams. Every Speaking-prophet has a *waṣī*, the one of Abraham was Ismael. The *waṣī* is also the first Imam of a Zyklus. Every Imam is a Fulfiller (*mutimm*), because he "completes" the revelation that the Speaking-prophet brings by the way of the interpretation (*ta'wīl*)¹⁷⁴⁶.

1739 Walker, Paul Ernest, « Cosmic Hierarchies in Early Ismā'īlī Thought : the View of Abū Ya'qūb al-Sijistānī », *MW*, LXVI (1976), p. 14-28, p. 18, n. 21.

1740 Wallker, *art. cit.*, p. 20.

1741 F.Y. Khaymī reads erroneously : *al-ma'ūm*, *leg.* : *al-mutimm*.

1742 After correction of the manuscript which has : *al-qā'ilu*.

1743 *I.e.* : *dator formarum*.

1744 Most of this Ismā'īlī terminology is in Stern, S.M., *Studies in early Ismā'īlism*, Jerusalem/Leiden, 1983 and in Heinz Halm, Heinz, *Kosmologie und Heilslehre der frühen Ismā'īliyya*, Wiesbaden, Franz Steiner (in Kommission), 1978, p. 225-7, according to Abū 'Abd Allāh M. b. A. al-Nasafī (d. 331/942). For this terminology, v. also Abū Ya'qūb al-Sijzī, *Tuhfat al-mustafībīn*, in *Thalāṭ rasā'il ismā'īliyya*, *op. cit.*, p. 10-20 (or in *Khams rasā'il ismā'īliyya*, ed. 'Arif Tāmir, 1956, p. 145-56). Concerning the Law, Abraham is supposed to have abrogated the Law of Noah ; v. *Ja'far* b. Maṣṣūr al-Yaman, *Sarā'ir wa asrār al-nuṭaq*, *op. cit.*, p. 70 : *inqaṭa'a 'an shar'i'ati Nūḥa wa aqāma li-nafsihi shar'i'atan nasakha biḥa shar'i'ata Nūḥa*.

1745 Halm, *Kosmologie*, p. 25, according to the *K. al-Kashf* which has often been attributed to *Ja'far* b. Maṣṣūr al-Yaman (viv. sec. dim. IV/Xth century). But W. Madelung has shown that the six treatises of this book are not from the same author ; Halm, p. 169.

1746 Halm, p. 31.

“ To them (*i.e.* the Ismā’īlīs), the adoration of the Lords/Masters us necessary and the ascent from degree to degree is fulfilled by these¹⁷⁴⁷ .

For Mātūrīdī this Imāmī interpretation is a contradictory one. There is no use to go from degree to degree, because every owner of a degree has received what has the owner of the superior degree. How could Abraham have said “ I do not like ”, when he had reached the degree of the Fulfiller ? How could one of these entities have been his Lord/Master before having instructed him ? Then having been instructed, how could Abraham reject the Lordship/Mastership¹⁷⁴⁸?

A question arises now, that of the source of Mātūrīdī for this Ismā’īlī exegesis of Q 6: 76-79. Our hypothesis is that it could be Abū ‘Abd Allāh M. b. A. al-Nasafī (al-Nakhshabī), from Bazda (al-Bazdawī), a locality in the neighbourhood of Nasaf (Nakhshab)¹⁷⁴⁹ (the reading al-Barda’ī is false) (d. 331/942). He wrote *K. al-Maḥṣūl* which is no longer extant, but we have parts of it in the work of another Ismā’īlī, Abū Ḥātim al-Rāzī Aḥmad b. Ḥamdān (d. 322/933), in his *K. al-Iṣlāḥ*, in which he criticizes him, and in the work of the Zaydī Mu’tazilī, Abū al-Qāsim al-Bustī, *Mīn kashf asrār al-bāṭiniyya*. In the second part of his Book, Nasafī has an interpretation of Q 6: 76-79, not wholly similar to the text of Mātūrīdī, but with several points which are identical¹⁷⁵⁰.

The *Kitāb al-Ifṭikhār*, written after 360/971 by the Ismā’īlī Abū Ya’qūb al-Sijistānī (al-Sijzī) Iṣḥāq b. Aḥmad¹⁷⁵¹, being to late cannot of course be taken into account here. It remains also the possibility that Mātūrīdī’s source could be an non-Ismā’īlī one, refuting these doctrines.

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1747 Al-Mātūrīdī, *Ta’wīlāt*, f. 142v, l. 37-42.

1748 Mātūrīdī, *Ta’wīlāt*, f. 142v, l. 42-143r, l. 5.

1749 He is often also called al-Barda’ī, from Barda’a in the Caucasus, which has to be rejected, Stern, *op. cit.*, p. 219

1750 Halm, p. 225-227 (Arabic), partly translated p. 70.

1751 Stern, S.M., « Abū Ya’qūb al-Sidjzī », *ET*² (French ed.), I, p. 164-5 ; *GAS*, I, p. 574-575 (*op. nr.* 4 of Sezgin).

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