Andreas Görke and Johanna Pink (eds.)

*Tafsīr and Islamic Intellectual History* pursues its main objective of providing “a framework for understanding the boundaries of *tafsīr* and its interaction with other disciplines of learning, as well as the subgenres and internal divisions within the genre” (p. i). It is based on papers presented at the conference “Tafsīr: The Evolution of a Genre in the Framework of Islamic Intellectual History”, held in Berlin, 15-17 September 2010, and is completed by some additional articles. As the editors state in the introduction, “*tafsīr* was often regarded merely as an auxiliary science to the correct understanding of the Qur’anic text and not as a genre of Islamic scholarship in its own right” (p. 1). Furthermore, the research interest in this field mostly focused on the sixth to eighth and nineteenth to twentieth centuries. Nevertheless, in recent years a number of monographs and articles on individual exegetes or on particular themes of the Qurʾan have been published, so that *tafsīr* studies is now regarded as an autonomous subject of research (although very few studies on Qurʾan commentaries of the fourteenth to nineteenth centuries, or on supercommentaries, exist).¹

The volume’s contributors include well-known experts in the field of Qurʾanic studies, such as Claude Gilliot and Andrew Rippin, as well as young academics. The articles cover from the formation of *tafsīr* as a theological genre to the present and are arranged in five sections, following a note on transliteration, conventions, and abbreviations (p. xix), acknowledgements (p. xxi), and an exceptional and informative introduction by Johanna Pink and Andreas Görke (pp. 1-23).

The articles in Section I, “The Formation of Boundaries: Early Evolution of the Genre,” concentrate on “the emergence of *tafsīr* as an independent genre distinguishable from, but interwoven with non-Islamic religious traditions, hadith scholarship, storytelling, linguistics and early theological controversies” (p. 11). In her contribution, “Eve in the Formative Period of Islamic Exegesis: Intertextual Boundaries and Hermeneutic Demarcations” (pp. 27-61), Catherine Bronson demonstrates the relationship between Qurʾan commentaries, historical and prophetic tradition, and late antique Jewish and Christian

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literature during the formative period of Islamic exegesis, analyzing some Sunni exegetical works of the first/seventh–fourth/tenth centuries. In his article, “Mujāhid’s Exegesis: Origins, Paths of Transmission and Development of a Meccan Exegetical Tradition in Its Human, Spiritual and Theological Environment” (pp. 63-111), Claude Gilliot concentrates on one of the most important early transmitters of *tafsīr*, whose Qadarite orientation he demonstrates on the basis of texts that have so far been neglected. As Gilliot shows, the combination of popular storytelling and Qur’anic verses reflects the emergence of *tafsīr* in an early period of Islamic theology. This approach is further executed by Nicolai Sinai in his article, “The Qur’anic Commentary of Muqātil b. Sulaymān and the Evolution of Early *Tafsīr* Literature” (pp. 113-43). Using the example of the interpretation of Q 84 (*Sūrat al-Inshiqāq*), he traces the historical development of *tafsīr* from popular stories about prophets to the growing interest in Qur’anic exegesis.

The focus of Section II, “Disciplinary Boundaries and Their Permeation: The Place of *Tafsīr* in Islamic Scholarship,” is presented as the elucidation of “issues of the emergence, affirmation and permeation of disciplinary boundaries already alluded to in the first section” (p. 12). In the section’s first chapter, “Inter-relations and Boundaries between *Tafsīr* and Hadith Literature: The Exegesis of Mālik b. Anas’s *Muwatṭa‘* and Classical Qur’anic Commentaries” (pp. 147-85), Roberto Tottoli focuses on this treatise, rather infrequently taken notice of in *tafsīr* literature. Tottoli demonstrates that exegetes generally used specific textual material, and that authorities in *hadith* did not necessarily have to be accepted as *tafsīr* scholars – in contrast to the case of Muqātil, who, as Gilliot explains in his contribution, was essentially accepted as an exegete but mostly rejected as a traditionist. In his contribution, “Shāfi‘ī Hermeneutics and Qur’anic Interpretation in al-Jāhiẓ’s *Kitāb al-ʿUthmāniyya*” (pp. 187-221), Ignacio Sánchez turns the reader’s attention to a scholar known as a Muʿtazilite theologian, a characterization that apparently did not influence his *tafsīr*. Sánchez points out that *tafsīr* was an integral constituent of hermeneutic, epistemological, and source-critical discourses in the ‘Abbasid period. Rebecca Sauer’s article, “*Tafsīr* between Law and Exegesis: The Case of Q. 49:9 (the Rebellion Verse/ʿayat al-baghy)” (pp. 223-50), treats the relation between *fiqh*, political theory, and exegesis, based on six Sunni commentaries from the fourth/tenth–seventh/thirteenth centuries. The author shows that the exegesis of individual legal verses does not necessarily correspond to legalistic readings of the Qur’an.

Section III, “Boundaries of Dogma and Theology: The Expression of Ideas through *Tafsīr*,” concentrates on the observation that “*tafsīr* can be used as a vehicle of self-assertion, in order to express dogmatic ideas and to set up