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Methodologies for the Dating of Exegetical Works and Traditions: Can the Lost *Tafsīr* of Kalbī be Recovered from *Tafsīr Ibn ʿAbbās* (also known as *al-Wāḍiḥ*)?*

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Introduction

SCHOLARS HAVE LONG sought to recover genuine sources from the early Islamic period for what they might tell us about the contours of Islamic discourse before the imposition of normative standards and concepts associated with the construction of Sunni orthodoxy in the third/ninth and fourth/tenth centuries. Before the emergence of 'classical' Islam restricted and reshaped the parameters of acceptable thought and practice, the earliest generations of Muslims naturally entertained a broader spectrum of possibilities in the realms of devotional practice, law, historical recollection and interpretation of the Qur'an. The gradual articulation of orthodox standards led to active or passive censorship of received material, for example as presented in the Qur'an commentary of Abū Jaʿfar al-Ṭabarī (d. 311/923), the first great monument to the nascent ideology of Sunnism in the *tafsīr* genre. Thus, identifying authentically pre-classical literary works, or at least authentically pre-classical strata of material within works composed at a later time, has long been a priority for scholars of *tafsīr*, just as it has been for those working in other fields in the study of the early Islamic tradition.

* I would like to acknowledge the many helpful comments I have received on this paper from various scholars, especially Andrew Rippin and Gerald Hawting; Devin Stewart and Walid Saleh have also offered much-needed advice.

This is exactly the impulse that seems to have motivated several scholars' interest in the so-called *Tafsīr Ibn ʿAbbās*, a widely-used commentary attributed to ʿAbd Allāh Ibn ʿAbbās (d. 68/667), cousin of the Prophet Muhammad and the purported founder of the *tafsīr* tradition. Contemporary scholars have usually discounted the idea that Ibn ʿAbbās is really the text's author. However, in identifying the work as the lost commentary of the famous exegete and traditionist Abū'l-Naḍr Muḥammad b. Ṣāʾib al-Kalbī (d. 146/763), John Wansbrough (and some after him) have evidently hoped to preserve the text's status as an authentically early source of pre-classical *tafsīr*. As critics of Wansbrough's approach have shown, his use of literary style and exegetical methodology as criteria for asserting that Qur'an commentaries of uncertain dates and provenances are genuinely early is problematic. This chapter argues that other methods of analysis may be more reliable for determining the date and provenance of such texts, or at least of discrete traditions preserved in later works.

In the first part of this chapter, I will review previous scholarship on *Tafsīr Ibn ʿAbbās*, noting the significant debate over its provenance and authorship. It is now well established that the work is probably the *tafsīr* of Ibn al-Mubārak al-Dīnawarī, who lived in Khurāsān in the early fourth/tenth century. On this basis, I suggest that the identification of the text as *Tafsīr Ibn ʿAbbās* or *Tafsīr al-Kalbī* be permanently abandoned in favour of the title Dīnawarī gave the work, *al-Wāḍiḥ fī tafsīr al-Qurʾān al-karīm*. Determination of the real identity of the author appears to demonstrate that Wansbrough's use of literary criteria to date early Qur'an commentaries is unreliable; however, despite this, Dīnawarī's text may turn out to have some genuine connection to Kalbī after all.

In the second part of this chapter, I will show that using other methods to analyse material in the commentary – for example, consideration of its conceptual content, or comparison of some of its material with traditions attested in other texts – demonstrates that there may be authentically pre-classical traditions of exegesis preserved in *al-Wāḍiḥ*. These early traditions may be traceable back to the original work of Kalbī himself; at the very least, they may plausibly be claimed to date to his era, the mid-second/eighth century. My identification of authentically pre-classical material in the text,

however provisional, implies that the methods I employ in my analysis of Dīnawarī's work may potentially be of use in dating other putatively early works or traditions as well.

Part I: Literary Analysis and the Dating of Early *Tafsīr*: The Quest to Recover *Tafsīr al-Kalbī*

The Problem of Attribution

Determining the date and provenance of the text under consideration here has long been a task fraught with difficulty due to its torturously complex transmission and publication history.[1] From the outset, I should note that the work is not conventionally attributed to Kalbī at all, despite Wansbrough's straightforward designation of the work as *Tafsīr al-Kalbī*.[2] For the last two centuries or so, the work has generally circulated under the title *Tanwīr al-miqbās min tafsīr Ibn ʿAbbās*, and it continues to be published under this title today. Many editions give the author as Muḥammad b. Yaʿqūb al-Fīrūzābādī (d. 817/1414), the famous author of *al-Qāmūs al-muḥīṭ*, but others do not indicate any author at all except for Ibn ʿAbbās himself. Again, most scholars are inclined to see the attribution to the latter as pseudepigraphic, although some would argue that the text might plausibly have some connection to a 'school' of Qur'anic interpretation that traced its lineage back to Ibn ʿAbbās through one or more of his students among the Successors.[3]

The *Tanwīr al-miqbās* lacks an introduction – the first place one might plausibly seek information on a work's author and his milieu. Instead, the work begins abruptly with a brief hadith on the *basmala*, which is provided with a full *isnād*: ʿAbd Allāh al-Thiqa b. al-Maʾmūn al-Harawī ← his father [al-Maʾmūn] ← Abū ʿAbd Allāh ← Abū ʿUbayd Allāh Maḥmūd b. Muḥammad al-Rāzī ← ʿAmmār b. ʿAbd al-Majīd al-Harawī ← ʿAlī b. Isḥāq al-Samarqandī *ʿan* Muḥammad b. Marwān *ʿan* al-Kalbī *ʿan* Abū Ṣāliḥ *ʿan* Ibn ʿAbbās.[4] Notably, this chain provides some basis for the text's putative association with both Ibn ʿAbbās and Kalbī, but it also indicates that the text may have reached its final form as late as the fourth/tenth or even fifth/eleventh century, judging by its sheer length. Every other sura in the commentary is presumably

transmitted on the basis of the same *isnād*, for they all simply begin *wa bi-isnādihi ʿan Ibn ʿAbbās* – with one notable exception, for the commentary on *Sūrat al-Baqara* (Q. 2) begins with a significantly different *isnād* from that attested at the beginning of the work. While the upper part of the chain is the same, it now terminates in the fifth term with a name not mentioned in the previous *isnād*: Ibn al-Mubārak ← ʿAlī b. Isḥāq al-Samarqandī *ʿan* Muḥammad b. Marwān *ʿan* al-Kalbī *ʿan* Abū Ṣāliḥ *ʿan* Ibn ʿAbbās.[5] Thus, while this second *isnād* likewise asserts some connection to both Kalbī and Ibn ʿAbbās, at least some of the content of the text is now attributed to an authority who lived sometime in the mid-third/ninth century. The identity of this Ibn al-Mubārak will end up being quite important for determining the true date and provenance of the text.[6]

Numerous editions of the text attribute it to the lexicographer Fīrūzābādī, including some of the oldest ones still in circulation. So how did he end up being identified as the author or editor of this work? Printed editions of *Tanwīr al-miqbās* first appeared in the nineteenth century, and it was subsequently reprinted many times throughout the twentieth century, predominantly in Egypt and Lebanon, but also in India and Iran. It seems that many of the editions in circulation are probably derived from the 1863 Būlāq edition in particular, although the newer editions that began to appear in the 1980s and 1990s from contemporary publishers may be plagiarised from editions after 1863, or even from one another.[7] Furthermore, Andrew Rippin conjectures that the oldest known printed editions, the 1863 Bombay and Būlāq versions, were probably independently derived from an even older printed edition that is now lost.

All this is directly pertinent to our concerns here, inasmuch as none of the extant manuscript witnesses are actually entitled *Tanwīr al-miqbās min tafsīr Ibn ʿAbbās* or ascribed to Fīrūzābādī. Rippin speculates that this title and ascription came from the influential nineteenth-century edition that seems to stand behind both the Bombay and Būlāq versions; that attribution was then replicated in many of the subsequent printed editions, whether or not they are indirectly derived from it (as many of them surely are). Ironically, the identification of the text as the *Tanwīr al-miqbās* of Fīrūzābādī by the editor of that original printed edition appears to have been completely erroneous.[8]

The situation becomes even more confusing when we consult modern scholars for their bibliographic advice. Carl Brockelmann lists our text under the names of both Ibn ʿAbbās and Fīrūzābādī, on the basis of both the manuscripts of a *tafsīr* attributed to the former and the printed editions of *Tanwīr al-miqbās* attributed to the latter.[9] In turn, Fuat Sezgin identifies works attributed to both Fīrūzābādī and Kalbī as versions of a *tafsīr* that ultimately goes back to Ibn ʿAbbās or was transmitted on his authority.[10] Why does Sezgin suddenly connect this work with Kalbī if none of the extant witnesses are explicitly attributed to him? This appears to be an innovation of Sezgin's, presumably on the basis of Kalbī's prominence in some of the *isnād*s connected with the work, such as those I examined above taken from one of the modern printed editions of *Tanwīr al-miqbās*. Sezgin seems to want to have it both ways: thus he lists the printed editions of the work known to him under the name of Fīrūzābādī, to whom they are explicitly attributed; meanwhile, he lists a very large number of the manuscripts of the work also known to him – which obviously omit the name of Fīrūzābādī, since this name is attached only to the printed editions – under the name of Kalbī. However, I should emphasise that these manuscripts never bear the title *Tafsīr al-Kalbī* or directly assert that Kalbī was the work's author. Sezgin appears to have assumed that he was dealing with more or less identical recensions of a single *tafsīr* ultimately attributable to Ibn ʿAbbās or his school and which may have first appeared in Kalbī's time, or even been edited by him.

Thus, by the mid-twentieth century, a work sometimes ascribed to a first/seventh authority on *tafsīr* (Ibn ʿAbbās) and sometimes to a ninth/fifteenth-century authority (Fīrūzābādī) came to be associated, at least by one major scholar, with another major authority, the second/eighth century exegete Muḥammad b. Ṣāʾib al-Kalbī. The final wrinkle in this convoluted history is that in the 1970s, Wansbrough, who saw the work as genuinely that of Kalbī, identified yet another authority who might have had some substantial connection to the text. Wansbrough used the work in the form of two Turkish manuscripts (MS 118, Ayasofya Library, Istanbul, and MS 40, Hamidiye Library, Istanbul, dated to the tenth/sixteenth and twelfth/eighteenth centuries respectively) and consistently refers to the work as the *tafsīr*

of Kalbī, following Sezgin's previous identification of the manuscripts as such; he does not acknowledge the title *Tanwīr al-miqbās* or the attribution to Fīrūzābādī at all. However, Wansbrough does mention a text entitled *al-Wāḍiḥ fī tafsīr al-Qur'ān al-karīm*, ascribed to Abū Muḥammad ʿAbd Allāh b. Muḥammad b. Wahb al-Dīnawarī (d. 308/920), a well-known Sunni scholar of the fourth/tenth century, which he claims is a later recension of Kalbī's work.[11] It is worth noting that Brockelmann and Sezgin both have entries for *al-Wāḍiḥ*, but neither seems to have recognised it as identical to the texts of Kalbī or Fīrūzābādī known to them.[12]

It should be emphasised that the works under discussion here are not different texts, or even variant recensions of an original *Urtext*, but rather only wildly variable ascriptions to a single text that is almost uniform in all of its manifold witnesses, whether they are the unascribed manuscripts listed by Sezgin, the printed editions of *Tanwīr al-miqbās*, or the various manuscripts and printed editions of *al-Wāḍiḥ*. Despite being attributed to authors of the mid-second/eighth, early fourth/tenth and early tenth/sixteenth centuries, all the witnesses commonly claim to represent the exegesis of the first/seventh-century authority Ibn ʿAbbās through *isnād*s going back to him. (This, more than anything else, seems to justify calling the work *Tafsīr Ibn ʿAbbās* as Rippin and others prefer, though *Tafsīr Pseudo-Ibn ʿAbbās* would perhaps be more appropriate.)

Overall, Sezgin entertains the possibility that the work might have some genuine association with Ibn ʿAbbās, and thus sees the texts ascribed to Kalbī and Fīrūzābādī as later recensions of an ancient *tafsīr*. Wansbrough, on the other hand, seems to favour an identification of the work as substantially that of Kalbī, although he speculates that the extant text of the *tafsīr* may have undergone significant editorial intervention in the course of its transmission. It is therefore hardly surprising that Wansbrough sees Dīnawarī's *al-Wāḍiḥ* as yet another recension of a work that can still plausibly be connected to Kalbī, despite being altered or appropriated along the way.[13] But again, both Sezgin and Wansbrough maintain that Kalbī must have had something to do with the text's composition or redaction, although this actually involves a leap of faith, since this can at most only be inferred from his presence in the *isnād*s associated with the work.

Wansbrough's Literary Analysis of Early *Tafsīr*

Wansbrough's investigation of what he called *Tafsīr al-Kalbī* was the first serious scholarly attempt to evaluate this text and locate it in its proper context in the history of the *tafsīr* genre. In his classic discussion of early Muslim hermeneutics, Wansbrough focuses on the Qur'an commentaries of both Kalbī and Muqātil b. Sulaymān (d. 150/767). Both of these figures occupy a precarious place in traditional Islamic scholarship; both were accused of unreliable transmission of hadith as well as of doctrinal deviation – while Muqātil is often tarred with accusations of anthropomorphism (*tashbīh*), Kalbī is typically accused of Shi'i leanings, which actually might have been true. Both were stigmatised to the extent that barely a hundred and fifty years after their floruit, many exegetes, including Ṭabarī, supposedly refused to cite either of them in their *tafsīr*s, although later exegetes such as Aḥmad b. Muḥammad al-Tha'labī (d. 427/1035) and Fakhr al-Dīn al-Rāzī (d. 606/1209) did so freely and frequently.[14]

It seems clear that the unpopularity of Muqātil and Kalbī among some Sunni authors of later centuries has less to do with their lack of orthodoxy and more to do with ideology. *Tafsīr Muqātil* and *Tafsīr al-Kalbī* are both prominent examples of *tafsīr bi'l-ra'y* (running commentaries on scripture that do not acknowledge their sources, or do so only infrequently). By Ṭabarī's time in the early fourth/tenth century, *tafsīr bi'l-ma'thūr* had become the preferred format; here, the author's exegetical views are expressed through the compilation and strategic arrangement of discrete hadith reports given with full *isnād*. The implication is that *tafāsir bi'l-ma'thūr* are reliable, while *tafāsir bi'l-ra'y* are not, since they were seen as representing purely arbitrary exegesis based on the author's personal opinion. However, it is clearly unfair to judge early exegetes' work as wholly undependable based on this criterion, since the use of the legitimating device of the *isnād* to assert the authenticity of information supposedly handed down from the earliest generations of Muslims developed only in the later second/eighth century, becoming generally widespread in the third/ninth and fourth/tenth centuries. That is, despite the frequent claim of the antiquity of the *isnād* as a means of assuring the trustworthiness of received traditions, fully-documented hadiths do not seem

to have been used in juristic arguments until late Umayyad and early Abbasid times. It was this popularisation of the use of the *isnād* among Sunnis as a literary convention, especially in legal discourse, that eventually dictated its employment in other genres and discourses, *tafsīr* among them.

Thus, the distinction between *tafsīr bi'l-raʾy* and *tafsīr bi'l-maʾthūr* is now widely recognised as meaningless, at least among Western scholars, since it could only be made posterior to the establishment of *tafsīr bi'l-maʾthūr* as the preferred mode of composition for 'authoritative' Qur'an commentaries.[15] Nevertheless, the fact that later Sunni exegetes viewed both Muqātil and Kalbī with suspicion is not immaterial to our concerns, since it is the specifically pre-classical nature of their work that makes their commentaries so valuable to modern scholarship. Unfortunately, while Muqātil's *tafsīr* has survived to the present day in several partial manuscripts, that of Kalbī has not, despite Sezgin and Wansbrough's somewhat arbitrary decision to identify the work under consideration here as *Tafsīr al-Kalbī*.[16]

To Wansbrough, both *Tafsīr Muqātil* and *Tafsīr al-Kalbī* are authentic examples of the oldest form of Qur'an commentary, characterised by what he terms 'haggadic' exegesis.[17] In 'haggadic' exegesis, both concise glosses and long narrative passages are interspersed among Qur'anic verses or segments of verses in an attempt to produce a fluid exposition that clarifies and amplifies scriptural meaning, an approach Wansbrough also calls *narratio.* Several other exegetical methods or 'procedural devices' that Wansbrough highlights appear to be characteristic of this older form of *tafsīr* as well. These include *taʿyīn al-mubham*, the clarification of ambiguous references or obscure allusions; the consistent use of formulaic terms or 'connectives' (e.g. *ay*, *yaʿnī*, *yaqūlu*) to separate the text of scripture from the commentator's remarks; intratextual glossing, in which a given scriptural passage may be explained through the citation of corroborating verses from parallel passages; and *periphrasis*, in which the exegete more or less systematically produces substitutions for both readily comprehensible and more difficult words and phrases.[18]

Fundamental to Wansbrough's approach to the history of Qur'anic exegesis is the assumption that works from specific periods can be closely connected on the basis of their common exegetical methods

and stylistic features, and that they will exhibit clear affinities of format, shape and literary texture. Thus, an early commentary like *Tafsīr Muqātil* can be expected to take a certain kind of approach to explicating the Qur'anic text and to present its exegesis in certain ways; in turn, the appearance of similar features in other commentaries like *Tafsīr al-Kalbī* may be taken as evidence that they are also genuinely early.[19] This approach also assumes that a given work's most distinctive literary and exegetical traits are still recognisable even if the work has been subjected to significant editorial intrusion and manipulation – which in fact appears to be the case with the so-called *Tafsīr al-Kalbī*. Although he borrows the attribution of the text to Kalbī from Sezgin, Wansbrough attempts to justify it through stylistic analysis. However, Wansbrough's argument is troublingly circular: essentially, the work's association with Kalbī appears to be confirmed by its literary traits, held to be particularly characteristic of works of the second/eighth century; however, to identify and understand those traits, we must scrutinise the extremely small sample of available texts from this period in the history of the *tafsīr* genre, including *Tafsīr al-Kalbī* itself.

The exegetical methods Wansbrough identifies as typical of the earliest development of the *tafsīr* genre are of course sometimes found in later commentaries as well. For example, periphrastic exegesis seems to have been quite common in *tafsīr* after the fifth/eleventh century; it is one of the main techniques utilised in concise madrasa commentaries, which seem to have emerged at this time as an alternative to much longer compendious or encyclopaedic commentaries such as that of Ṭabarī.[20] Superficially, Wansbrough's *Tafsīr al-Kalbī* – which, to reiterate, is completely identical to the texts circulating under the titles *Tanwīr al-miqbās* and *al-Wāḍiḥ* – is quite similar in format, length and overall literary presentation and style to a number of medieval *tafsīr*s of this sort, including *al-Wajīz fī tafsīr al-Kitāb al-ʿazīz* of Abū'l-Ḥasan ʿAlī al-Wāḥidī (d. 468/1076), *Anwār al-tanzīl wa asrār al-taʾwīl* of ʿAbd Allāh b. ʿUmar al-Bayḍāwī (d. 685/ 1286) and *Lubāb al-taʾwīl* of al-Khāzin al-Baghdādī (d. 742/1341).[21] In terms of the overall balance between scriptural text and gloss, our work actually resembles that of Wāḥidī or Khāzin much more than that of Muqātil. The formal differences between our text and *Tafsīr*

Muqātil are pertinent here, since the crux of Wansbrough's argument is the reliability of considerations of format and style as criteria by which early commentaries may be identified as such.

Wansbrough readily acknowledges that there are some significant formal differences between the various examples of early *tafsīr* he cites. However, overall, he seems to focus more on what *Tafsīr Muqātil* and *Tafsīr al-Kalbī* have in common than on what might distinguish them from each other.[22] For example, he notes that in *Tafsīr Muqātil*, *narratio* is given pride of place, and at times even seems to take precedence over explication of the scriptural verses that ostensibly provide the pretext or basis for the narrative. On the other hand, such extensive narrative passages are generally lacking in *Tafsīr al-Kalbī*, which balances text and gloss much more equitably.[23] This is significant precisely because it is this consistent and systematic emphasis on concise paraphrase that makes *Tafsīr al-Kalbī* much more similar to medieval examples of the madrasa commentary genre. Notably, Wansbrough repeatedly alludes to the fact that the formal differences between these works may in fact demonstrate that the work of Kalbī was subjected to significant editorial reshaping well after the lifetime of its author. The arbitrariness of explaining such dissimilarity as the result of later editorial intrusion and manipulation is quite apparent. Likewise, it seems problematic to highlight particular traits in the work under consideration as especially characteristic of supposedly early works in order to confirm that the very same text must itself be an early work. In fact, if we seek to categorise works solely on the basis of their prevailing 'procedural devices', exegetical methods, format and overall style, dating *Tafsīr al-Kalbī* to the second/eighth century or to the ninth/fifteenth century may seem equally feasible, depending on whether one thinks it bears a closer resemblance to the works of Muqātil or Bayḍāwī.

Scholarly Approaches to the Text and its Milieu after Wansbrough

If literary format and related characteristics actually turn out to be ambiguous and unreliable criteria for dating Qur'an commentaries, this has serious implications for Wansbrough's argument about the authorship of the so-called *Tafsīr al-Kalbī*, especially considering that

the *isnād*s that appear in the work – at least in the ubiquitous printed editions of *Tanwīr al-miqbās* – may indicate a date of composition in the third/ninth, fourth/tenth or even fifth/eleventh century. This is a point Rippin emphasises in his critique of Wansbrough's handling of the text. Contrary to Wansbrough, Rippin asserts that the work is not a 'haggadic' or narrative *tafsīr* at all, and specifically notes that it substantially lacks many of the traits that led Wansbrough to associate it with *Tafsīr Muqātil* and other early commentaries in the first place.

Drawing attention to the overall absence of the distinctive technical terms typically used as connectives to facilitate oral delivery – one of the most conspicuous features of the early 'haggadic' commentary according to Wansbrough's typology – as well as its striking tendency to cite alternative exegetical options serially, Rippin surmises that the work is basically 'academic' in nature. Significantly, it seems to presuppose that its audience has considerable knowledge not only of the Qur'an itself but also of major exegetical debates and ancillary issues such as the *qirā'āt* (variant readings). Thus, far from being one of a precious few authentic witnesses to the earliest phase of Muslim interpretation of the Qur'an, Rippin asserts that this *Tafsīr al-Kalbī*, which he prefers to call *Tafsīr Ibn ʿAbbās*, in fact appears to be an early forerunner of the genre of madrasa commentary – 'some sort of distillation of knowledge written for the purpose of introducing the complexity of the Qur'an to budding students, done with reference to al-Kalbī's *tafsīr*'.[24]

Rippin's approach to the work as a postclassical school text – specifically, as a digest of established interpretations of the text that might have been meant for the education of local *'ulamā'* – is a complete reversal of Wansbrough's treatment of it as a narrative-periphrastic *tafsīr* characterised by the exegetical style current during the first/seventh and second/eighth centuries.[25] Notably, this reassessment is based both on a reconsideration of its literary characteristics and on careful scrutiny of the attribution of the various witnesses. Rippin subjects both the extant manuscripts and the various printed editions of *Tanwīr al-miqbās* to a painstaking re-evaluation that demonstrates almost irrefutably that the work cannot in fact be that of Kalbī, to whom none of the extant witnesses are directly ascribed.[26] The connection with Fīrūzābādī and that with Kalbī thus

seem to be equally spurious; while the former is due to an error that proliferated in modern printed editions of the work, the latter is a scholarly fiction promulgated by Sezgin and Wansbrough, based solely on an erroneous inference from its *isnād*.

Rippin notes that Wansbrough was not entirely mistaken about the text, however, inasmuch as he did cite *al-Wāḍiḥ*, the fourth/tenth-century 'recension' of the work ascribed to ʿAbd Allāh b. Muḥammad b. Wahb al-Dīnawarī, as 'a nearly verbatim reproduction of Kalbī's commentary and like the latter transmitted on the authority of Ibn ʿAbbās'.[27] Through careful scrutiny of the *isnād*s associated with the various witnesses, Rippin concludes that Dīnawarī was in fact instrumental in the dissemination of the text, although he was not actually its author. Instead, he conjectures that the work really originated two generations before Dīnawarī, based on the crucial observation that Dīnawarī is not mentioned in all of the *isnād*s associated with the work. For example, as we have already seen, the main *isnād* from the printed edition of *Tanwīr al-miqbās* cited above totally omits him. Furthermore, many manuscripts of the *tafsīr* do not include him in their *isnād*s – that is, they lack the *isnād* that appears in the commentary to *Sūrat al-Baqara* (Q. 2) in many of the printed editions of the text.[28] This explains why there are so many extant manuscripts of the work, but only a couple that have been identified as the work of Dīnawarī; only MS 1651, Leiden University Library, and MS Ayasofya 221–222, Süleymaniye Library, Istanbul are explicitly attributed to him.

Rippin thus surmises that this divergence indicates that Dīnawarī appropriated the work and claimed it as his own, although it did not originate with him. The *isnād*s that obviate Dīnawarī would then presumably reflect transmissions of the work by other students of the shaykh whom Rippin identifies as most likely responsible for the final redaction of the work, ʿAlī b. Isḥāq al-Samarqandī (d. 237/852).[29] Thus, it is not that *al-Wāḍiḥ* is a later redaction of *Tafsīr al-Kalbī*, but rather that Sezgin and Wansbrough mistakenly projected a later work that is inconsistently credited to Dīnawarī back onto Kalbī.[30]

The final piece of the puzzle is provided by the recent work on the *tafsīr* by Harald Motzki, who criticises some of Rippin's conclusions about its authorship. First of all, on the basis of research by Josef van

Ess, Motzki claims, unlike Brockelmann, Sezgin and Rippin, that the author of the *tafsīr* entitled *al-Wāḍiḥ* is not ʿAbd Allāh b. Muḥammad b. Wahb al-Dīnawarī at all. Rather, its real author is a more obscure figure named ʿAbd Allāh b. al-Mubārak al-Dīnawarī, who has been confused with the other Dīnawarī due to the latter's greater fame. (The confusion between the two is compounded by the fact that the two men apparently had the same *kunya*, Abū Muḥammad.[31]) Motzki notes that when the name is included in *isnād*s in witnesses to the text, it is given as Ibn al-Mubārak al-Dīnawarī, not Ibn Wahb al-Dīnawarī.[32] Moreover, of the two *isnād*s that appear in the printed edition of *Tanwīr al-miqbās* that I have examined, that found in the commentary to *Sūrat al-Baqara* (Q. 2) leads back through ʿAlī b. Isḥāq al-Samarqandī (the author identified by Rippin) to Ibn ʿAbbās not through the chain of informants given in the *isnād* at the very beginning of the work, but rather from one Ibn al-Mubārak. One might thus conclude that this is the original *isnād* of the work, pointing to a definite date of composition for it sometime in the early fourth/tenth century.

We might conjecture that the manuscript upon which the original printed edition of *Tanwīr al-miqbās* was based had been tampered with; a new *isnād* omitting Ibn al-Mubārak was stuck onto the commentary on *Sūrat al-Fātiḥa* (Q. 1), while the true *isnād* that preserved its real pedigree remained attached to the commentary on *Sūrat al-Baqara* (Q. 2) (and somehow went unnoticed by the editor responsible for the intrusion). Notably, the work continues to be attributed to the wrong author, probably solely due to the force of convention; the error has been replicated once again by Aḥmad Farīd, the editor of the 2003 Beirut edition of *al-Wāḍiḥ*, who ascribes the work to ʿAbd Allāh b. Muḥammad b. Wahb al-Dīnawarī. The application of the unfortunate title *Tafsīr Ibn Wahb al-musammā al-Wāḍiḥ fī tafsīr al-Qurʾān al-karīm* would seem to open the door to even more confusion, inasmuch as the text might now also be mistaken for *al-Jāmiʿ*, the *tafsīr* of the second/eighth-century Egyptian exegete Ibn Wahb.[33]

Motzki's critique notwithstanding, some of Rippin's conclusions about the provenance of the work remain valid, especially insofar as the two Dīnawarīs lived at about the same time: ʿAbd Allāh b. Muḥammad died in 308/920, while Motzki concludes that ʿAbd Allāh

b. al-Mubārak was active around 300/912. On the strength of the arguments of both Motzki and Rippin, it seems quite clear that the original version of this work should probably be unambiguously identified as *al-Wāḍiḥ* of Ibn al-Mubārak al-Dīnawarī, produced in the first half of the fourth/tenth century; we simply cannot continue to attribute it to either Kalbī or Fīrūzābādī. Furthermore, the straightforward identification of it as *Tafsīr Ibn ʿAbbās* does not seem to be particularly helpful either. Perhaps the best possible title for the work would be *al-Wāḍiḥ fī tafsīr al-Qurʾān al-musammā Tafsīr Ibn ʿAbbās*, in recognition of the fact the work was claimed to represent the authentic exegesis of the Companion from the outset, at least judging from the original *isnād*s.

Two other aspects of Motzki's analysis are critical. First of all, by identifying ʿAbd Allāh b. al-Mubārak al-Dīnawarī as the real author of the *tafsīr*, Motzki is able to advance a compelling thesis regarding the reason for his removal from the *isnād*s of some of the manuscripts – initiating the process through which his *al-Wāḍiḥ* ultimately 'became' the *Tanwīr al-miqbās* of Fīrūzābādī. Examining biographical reports on Ibn al-Mubārak and figures associated with him as his students or teachers in *isnād*s – including the above-mentioned ʿAlī b. Isḥāq al-Samarqandī – Motzki determines that several of these people, and thus possibly Ibn al-Mubārak himself, were Karrāmīs, or at least identified as such by later transmitters of the *tafsīr*. Therefore, the inconsistency with which Dīnawarī is cited in the *isnād*s of our work is not due to his having appropriated a text that was not really his own and that was also transmitted by others, as Rippin argues. Rather, Dīnawarī's name may have been deliberately effaced from some (indeed, most) of the *isnād*s attached to the text because he was associated with a group that some deemed to be heretical.[34]

Second, despite the fact that they identify this *tafsīr* as a third/ninth or early fourth/tenth-century production, Rippin and Motzki both acknowledge – somewhat paradoxically – that it may have some authentic connection with the 'lost' commentary of Kalbī after all. Although he criticises Sezgin and Wansbrough for attributing the work to Kalbī, Rippin does note a curious remark found in the introduction of one of the manuscripts of Dīnawārī's *al-Wāḍiḥ*: 'Anything that is difficult for you in this abbreviated [*tafsīr*], look for [the explanation of]

that in the *tafsīr* of al-Kalbī in the transmission of Yūsuf [ibn] Bilāl.'[35] Both Rippin and Motzki acknowledge that this notice proves that – *pace* Sezgin and Wansbrough – the original *Tafsīr al-Kalbī* and *al-Wāḍiḥ* are entirely separate texts.[36] But this statement seems to signify that there is some substantial relationship between them as well. Attempting to clarify that relationship, Motzki notes van Ess' work on an anonymous *tafsīr* of the fourth/tenth century (MS Or. 8049, British Library), in which Dīnawarī appears as one of a number of prominent authorities whose exegetical traditions are cited. Some of the *isnād*s in which Dīnawarī appears in this text match those of *al-Wāḍiḥ*, indicating that some of the material therein derives from the work of Dīnawarī himself, but others go back through Dīnawarī to informants not cited in the extant witnesses to *al-Wāḍiḥ*. One of these in particular leads back to the above-mentioned Yūsuf b. Bilāl, who was well known as a transmitter of Kalbī's *tafsīr*.

Motzki therefore concludes that the British Library *tafsīr* features at least two kinds of material transmitted by Dīnawarī: one body of material that was 'his', that is, that was originally part of his commentary *al-Wāḍiḥ*, and another body of material associated with the recension of Kalbī's commentary that he transmitted. That Dīnawarī knew, used and handed down traditions in the name of Kalbī seems almost indisputable; but again, it is also clear that his commentary, although partially based on Kalbī's work, cannot in any way be assumed to be simply identical to it.[37] As Rippin notes, since Dīnawarī would have had no reason to make his own work into just another recension of *Tafsīr al-Kalbī,* the *isnād*s going back to Kalbī (and Ibn ʿAbbās) that appear in extant witnesses to *al-Wāḍiḥ* must have been imposed later by editors or copyists who wished to bolster the work's authority.[38] Ironically, this move, which reduced Dīnawarī's role from author to mere tradent, paved the way for a second transformation of the work, in which Dīnawarī was eventually removed from the *isnād* entirely (as in many manuscript copies) and even supplanted as author by Fīrūzābādī (as in most of the printed editions).[39]

Rippin and Motzki's evaluations of the text would seem to refute decisively Wansbrough's conclusions about what he called *Tafsīr al-Kalbī*. Curiously, despite the fact that the text might in the end have some authentic connection to the early exegete Kalbī, it cannot simply

be treated as if it were identical to his original *tafsīr*. Furthermore, it would appear that we cannot invest any great confidence in Wansbrough's proposed method of analysing Qur'an commentaries according to literary and stylistic criteria. Even if the elements and techniques Wansbrough highlights as particularly characteristic of early *tafsīr* (such as periphrasis and *narratio*) really are so, they were certainly not exclusively so. The case of the work he misidentifies as *Tafsīr al-Kalbī* demonstrates that even if a commentary looks like it might be genuinely early, appearances can be deceiving. Suffice to say that this also demonstrates that the supposed distinction between *tafsīr bi'l-ra'y* and *tafsīr bi'l-ma'thūr* cannot be thought to have much, if any, objective value either, since a running commentary that looks like it is based on an author's individual opinion may actually be derived from older commentaries compiled of exegetical hadith, and thus would technically be *ma'thūr*. This appears to be the case with our text, as it so often is for medieval madrasa commentaries in general. Furthermore, our observation that our text resembles those medieval madrasa commentaries as much as it does *Tafsīr Muqātil* – if not more so – ends up being vindicated by Rippin and Motzki's careful reconstruction of its transmission history, which places its date of composition sometime around the early fourth/tenth century.

However, all this raises other questions that I will attempt to address in the second part of this chapter. If Dīnawarī's text was partially based on the original work of Kalbī, do any discernible traces of early traditions of exegesis (i.e., dating to the second/eighth century) survive in *al-Wāḍiḥ*? If literary or methodological criteria such as the overall shape of the *tafsīr* or its deployment of one or another type of exegetical technique cannot provide a reliable basis for determining whether the work itself is of early date or provenance, are there other criteria that might help us identify content within the work that is genuinely early?

In what follows, I will employ three different analytical approaches to material from *al-Wāḍiḥ*: quantitative comparison of glosses of particular verses, qualitative comparison of conceptual content and corroboration of transmitted material in other sources. Use of these methods demonstrates that there does seem to be a substantial amount of authentically early material recoverable in *al-Wāḍiḥ*. Thus, some traces of the exegesis of Kalbī, or at least exegetical traditions

dating from his time or even earlier, can be uncovered in the work we have before us, despite the fact that the text itself was almost undoubtedly produced at least a hundred and fifty years after Kalbī's time. Even if a general appraisal of literary and stylistic features, as Wansbrough proposed, does not prove to be reliable for determining whether a particular commentary is on the whole early, other methods may be at least potentially useful for isolating early strands within it. Therefore, insofar as *al-Wāḍiḥ* may turn out to be a valuable source of early *tafsīr* material if we compare it carefully with other works, this would suggest that these methods of analysis may be utilised in performing this important task.

For example, although Rippin's critique of Wansbrough's stylistic and literary analysis of what he called *Tafsīr al-Kalbī* deals a lethal blow to the claim that the text is authentically early like *Tafsīr Muqātil,* there are nevertheless striking points of affinity between them. They may not in the end belong to the same basic genre of commentary ('haggadic' or 'periphrastic'); nor are *al-Wāḍiḥ*'s literary style or exegetical methodology all that similar to those of *Tafsīr Muqātil*. But a closer examination of certain passages in both texts demonstrates striking coincidences of both phrasing and ideas between them. Thus, although *al-Wāḍiḥ*'s status as a genuine *tafsīr* of the second/eighth century has been called into question, it does seem to preserve within it a significant amount of authentically early material that might possibly be associated with Kalbī himself, even though the text may not have been composed until at least a century later. (The specific connections between *al-Wāḍiḥ* and *Tafsīr Muqātil* seem to have gone unnoticed by previous scholars, even Wansbrough.) The problem then becomes one of determining the methods that might help us to identify that early material with precision.

Part II: Recovering Authentic Early Material from Dīnawarī's *al-Wāḍiḥ*

Quantitative Comparison of *al-Wāḍiḥ* with *Tafsīr Muqātil*

Upon close inspection, we find significant agreement between some passages from *al-Wāḍiḥ* and corresponding sections of *Tafsīr Muqātil*, so much so that it is difficult to resist concluding that there

is some direct relationship between them. There are a number of possibilities that might explain this.

i) Dīnawarī drew upon *Tafsīr Muqātil* directly;

ii) Dīnawarī's source or sources, possibly including Kalbī himself, drew upon *Tafsīr Muqātil* directly;

iii) Muqātil drew upon Kalbī or whatever Dīnawarī's source was;

iv) Some common source may have informed the exegesis of both Kalbī and Muqātil, traces of which can be seen in *al-Wāḍiḥ* and *Tafsīr Muqātil*.[40]

The last option is probably the most attractive hypothesis: *al-Wāḍiḥ* does in fact preserve substantial and conspicuous traces of material originally associated with Kalbī, and the agreement between this text and *Tafsīr Muqātil* reflects Kalbī and Muqātil's use of a common source in constructing their commentaries, or at least in developing their exegetical views.

In some of the passages from these *tafsīr*s, we see that very many glosses are identical, or at least extremely similar. As an example, we might consider the sections of these works that deal with the Golden Calf episode (Q. 2:51–54; Q. 7:148–152; and Q. 20:83–98).[41] (See the Appendix to this article, where I juxtapose glosses from *Tafsīr Muqātil* and *al-Wāḍiḥ* on these passages with corresponding glosses from other *tafsīr*s.[42]) Sometimes, the coincidences between the glosses found in these texts may seem to reflect the authors' mutual recourse to a fairly standard lexicon of synonyms, for example when both use forms of the verb *ẓalama* to gloss *ḍarra* (he wronged), or interpret *waʿd* as *mīqāt* (appointment), providing obvious substitutes for the terms used by scripture. Admittedly, other exegetes might also use the same terms in their own paraphrases of Qur'anic verses. But we also find verbatim or near-verbatim agreement between a large number of glosses that appear in both works in very specific contexts. That is to say, the fact that the word *mīqāt* occurs repeatedly as the word for 'appointment', especially Moses' 'appointment' on Sinai, in both commentaries, or that both tend to gloss *ẓalama* as *ḍarra*, may not be all that impressive; but the frequent resort to precisely the same glosses in commenting on precisely the same Qur'anic verses

certainly is, especially when some variation in glossing is evident in other works of a similar type.[43]

Sometimes both commentaries interpret the very same Qur'anic phrases with identical glosses; at other times, one might even find a complex verse subdivided into portions in almost exactly the same way in each commentary and then supplied with identical or nearly identical glosses. At other times, these glosses are not identical per se, but express virtually the same idea. Thus, at Q. 20:97, which portrays Moses' judgement upon the arch-idolater al-Sāmirī ('the Samaritan'), Muqātil interprets the key phrase *taqūlu lā misāsa* (usually rendered *you are cursed to say, 'no touching'*) as *lā tukhāliṭ al-nās* (*you will not mingle with other people*), and explains the following phrase, *wa-inna laka mawʿid lan tukhlafahu* (*there is for you a threat you will not be able to escape*), as eschatological in nature: '*and there is for you* in the next world *a threat* – that is, Judgement Day – *you will not be able to escape* – that is, that you will not avoid'.[44] In *al-Wāḍiḥ*, *lā misāsa* ('*no touching*') is glossed *lā tukhāliṭ aḥad wa-lā yukhāliṭuka* (*you will not mingle with anyone else, nor they with you*). Furthermore, the author's interpretation of *wa-inna laka mawʿid lan tukhlafahu* likewise underlines its eschatological significance: '*and there is for you a threat* – an appointed time, Judgement Day – *you will not be able to escape* – you will not receive any reprieve from it (*lan tujāwizahu*).'[45]

Considered individually, none of the coincidences we have noted here would really compel us to contemplate the possible connections between our texts. However, it is the sheer number of such coincidences that is noteworthy; when one reads one of these passages in *Tafsīr Muqātil* and then compares the corresponding passage in *al-Wāḍiḥ*, one gets a very strong impression of repetition. Because of the large amount of narrative exposition that occurs in *Tafsīr Muqātil,* the work is overall much longer than *al-Wāḍiḥ*; thus, we see much in the former that is nowhere to be found in the latter. But the reverse does not seem to be true: when one reads *al-Wāḍiḥ* and then looks back to *Tafsīr Muqātil*, it is difficult to avoid the conclusion that some relationship might exist between the two texts on account of the large number of word choices in Dīnawarī's work that are identical or very similar to those of Muqātil. This phenomenon is not

limited to the passages on the Golden Calf cited here, but appears to be a more widespread occurrence in these two works.

The exceptional degree of coincidence between the works is difficult to quantify precisely, but it would not be hyperbolic to assert that in at least some passages of *al-Wāḍiḥ*, at least a third of the glosses agree verbatim with corresponding glosses in *Tafsīr Muqātil*. (This figure appears to be much lower in some places, but may be higher in others.) This is to say nothing of the large degree of substantial agreement between them (probably as high as 80–90 per cent), where Dīnawarī's basic interpretations are fundamentally synonymous with Muqātil's. To be sure, it is difficult to determine exactly how much correspondence there may be between the *tafsīr*s with any precision, for the reason that in *Tafsīr Muqātil* (as with so many other works in the genre) the exegesis of a verse or part of a verse may appear wherever Muqātil happens to quote it. While the exegesis of a particular verse is almost always found in a predictable place in *al-Wāḍiḥ*, in *Tafsīr Muqātil* the corresponding interpretation may not appear where one would expect to find it, due to the high volume of intratextual glossing.[46] Thus, comparing the two works is not as simple as just setting them side-by-side and proceeding sura by sura – although this is in itself also a productive enterprise.

Admittedly, one might argue that the coincidences between *Tafsīr Muqātil* and *al-Wāḍiḥ* are due solely to the predictable, commonsensical character of these glosses. After all, perhaps it seems obvious to gloss *ẓalama* (he wronged), *fatana* (he tested) or *āsif* (saddened, regretful) as, respectively, *ḍarra*, *ibtalā* or *ḥazīn* (all words meaning essentially the same thing). However, as it turns out, when we proceed to compare some of the readings from *al-Wāḍiḥ* with corresponding passages from other 'periphrastic' or madrasa commentaries, the agreement between this work and *Tafsīr Muqātil* becomes even more conspicuous.[47] As previously noted, there are a number of extant *tafsīr*s that are basically similar in format to *al-Wāḍiḥ*. Hypothetically, if the agreement between its glosses and the periphrastic sections of *Tafsīr Muqātil* is simply coincidental, due to the natural or conventional use of certain Arabic words and phrases to explain others, then we should expect to find a similar degree of agreement between *al-Wāḍiḥ* and other examples of the madrasa commentary genre.

But when we examine the corresponding passages on the Golden Calf narrative in *Anwār al-tanzīl* of Bayḍāwī and *Tafsīr al-Jalālayn* of Jalāl al-Dīn al-Maḥallī (d. 864/1459) and Jalāl al-Dīn al-Suyūṭī (d. 911/1505), later 'periphrastic' commentaries to which *al-Wāḍiḥ* appears to be similar, at least superficially, this is simply not the case.[48]

While the overall presentation of the Golden Calf episode is often substantially the same in these works as in *Tafsīr Muqātil* and *al-Wāḍiḥ*, the actual glosses they supply for the pertinent Qur'anic verses and phrases match those found in *Tafsīr Muqātil* and *al-Wāḍiḥ* only occasionally, whereas, as I have already noted, well over half of the corresponding glosses in *al-Wāḍiḥ* on these verses seem to agree with those in *Tafsīr Muqātil*. Furthermore, even when we do find significant agreement between the glosses of Bayḍāwī or *Tafsīr al-Jalālayn* on the one hand and those of Dīnawarī and Muqātil on the other, this very seldom translates to verbatim agreement, whereas instances of verbatim agreement between *al-Wāḍiḥ* and *Tafsīr Muqātil* are relatively common in these passages. Thus, the lack of an even remotely analogous degree of agreement between these *tafsīr*s and other works refutes the argument that the coincidences between *al-Wāḍiḥ* and *Tafsīr Muqātil* are insignificant or that they simply reflect a common reliance on 'standard' or 'natural' interpretations. The most plausible explanation for why *al-Wāḍiḥ* exhibits so many commonalities with the second/eighth-century text of Muqātil is either that Dīnawarī used *Tafsīr Muqātil* extensively, or that the exegesis of both was directly or indirectly derived from some common source.

Another text we might include in the comparison is the concise periphrastic commentary of Wāḥidī entitled *al-Wajīz fī tafsīr al-Kitāb al-ʿazīz*, one of the earliest – if not the earliest – extant examples of the madrasa commentary genre.[49] Curiously, there does seem to be a somewhat greater degree of agreement with *Tafsīr Muqātil* and *al-Wāḍiḥ* in this work than with the later *tafsīr*s; sometimes *al-Wajīz* agrees with one but not the other; somewhat less often, it will agree with both. There are a number of different ways to explain this. For example, it is surely worth noting the intellectual genealogy of Wāḥidī's commentary: Wāḥidī was the student of Thaʿlabī, whose compendious commentary *al-Kashf wa'l-bayān* seems to reflect a significant degree of reliance on Kalbī's *tafsīr*.[50] That said, it must be

acknowledged that Thaʿlabī also knew and used *al-Wāḍiḥ*.[51] It is at least hypothetically possible that when Wāḥidī's gloss agrees with that of Dīnawarī, this somehow represents the far-reaching influence of Kalbī (although we cannot know for certain if Wāḥidī is quoting Thaʿlabī quoting Kalbī, or rather if Wāḥidī is really quoting Thaʿlabī quoting Dīnawarī himself). However, one could also argue that this agreement is due to the fact that *al-Wajīz* is simply earlier than the other madrasa commentaries I have mentioned: it would not be unreasonable to suggest that the Qur'an was conventionally glossed a certain way in the second/eighth century (Muqātil's time), and that clear echoes of that era's exegetical conventions were still perceptible in the following centuries, in the time of both Dīnawarī and Wāḥidī.

Qualitative Comparison of *al-Wāḍiḥ* and *Tafsīr Muqātil*

There are other means that may be used to demonstrate that the agreement between *Tafsīr Muqātil* and *al-Wāḍiḥ* is more than just coincidental. Looking more closely at the passages in question, we find that there is also some significant conceptual similarity in the way both exegetes understand the Golden Calf narrative. This conceptual similarity seems for the most part to set them apart in a substantial way from the later commentaries I have mentioned here, including that of Wāḥidī.

In considering both the evaluation of exegetical method and the tracing of *isnād*s as criteria for dating the so-called *Tafsīr Ibn ʿAbbās* (that is, *al-Wāḍiḥ*), Rippin notes that an analysis of the substantive content or 'intrinsic factors' found in the *tafsīr* would be at least hypothetically possible as well. However, he discounts the search for 'a covert reference to a historical period or even an event at the time of the author' as not really feasible in this case.[52] What he seems to have in mind here is a direct or indirect reference to a specific dateable event or person in the text, the kind of analysis that has been productive for dating religious literature in numerous other contexts.[53]

However, one might also reasonably suppose that early *tafsīr*s would reflect the nascent state of Muslim doctrine and ideology at that time, and that we thus might detect certain conceptions in early works that we would not expect to find in later texts. An obvious example of this would be presented by Twelver Shiʿi texts of the

second/eighth to fifth/eleventh centuries, which reflect significant developments in the conception of the Imamate throughout this period. Another, suggested by Rippin, would be the interpretation of *ḥikma* (wisdom) as *sunna* (the path of the Prophet), which is attested in a tradition on Q. 2:129 cited by Ṭabarī. As Rippin notes, assuming that one accepts the arguments of Ignaz Goldziher and Joseph Schacht concerning the development of *fiqh* (jurisprudence) and the emergence of the use of hadith as the primary basis for jurisprudential decisions only in the late second/eighth or early third/ninth centuries, interpreting *ḥikma* as *sunna* 'must be post-al-Shāfiʿī' (since it was this jurist, who died in 204/820, whose work led to the establishment of the authority of *sunna*).[54] However, Rippin concludes that there is an overall lack of conceptual distinctiveness in the *tafsīr* under discussion that would allow us to date it by means of such criteria.

That said, sometimes such distinctiveness is extremely subtle and can only be discerned through careful examination and comparison of texts. Returning to the case of the presentation of the Golden Calf episode in *al-Wāḍih*, several aspects of it coincide with the most exceptional and idiosyncratic elements in Muqātil's interpretation of the same passages, as the following should illustrate.

A Lifeless Calf

One of the most striking aspects of early and classical *tafsīr* on the Golden Calf is the insistence that, despite the Qur'an's reference to the Calf as *ʿijl jasad lahu khuwār* (*a calf, a body/image that lows*, Q. 7:148 and Q. 20:88), the Calf was actually lifeless, a statue that was magically or technologically enabled to mimic life. This emphasis on the Calf's illusory life is in stark contrast to later *tafsīr* on the episode; from the time of Thaʿlabī onwards, virtually all exegetes made note of an earlier tradition, sometimes attributed to the Successor Qatāda b. Diʿāma (d. 118/736) but seemingly suppressed by commentators of the second/eighth to fourth/tenth centuries, that the Calf had been miraculously transmuted from metal to flesh and blood.[55] Muqātil's exegesis is a sterling example of this trend: commenting on Q. 7:148, Muqātil glosses *ʿijl jasad lahu khuwār* with *ṣūrat ʿijl jasad*, *yaqūlu laysa rūḥ fīhi* (a tangible image of a calf, that is, without soul); when the phrase recurs at Q. 20:88, Muqātil states simply *lā rūḥ fīhi*.

Strikingly, in *al-Wāḍiḥ*, Dīnawarī glosses the key phrase as *mujassad ṣaghīr* (a small cast figure), basically synonymous with Muqātil's *ṣūrat ʿijl jasad*, at Q. 7:148. At Q. 20:88, Dīnawarī glosses the same phrase as *mujassad ṣaghīr bi-lā rūḥ* (a small cast figure without soul), echoing Muqātil exactly.[56] In contrast, *Tafsīr al-Jalālayn* specifies that the Calf was transmuted into flesh and blood in both places, as does Bayḍāwī at Q. 20:88. Wāḥidī does the same, which seems significant given *al-Wajīz*'s occasional verbatim or substantial agreement with one or both of the earlier texts.

The Waṣiyya *of Moses*

In *Tafsīr Muqātil*, when Moses confronts Aaron over his apparent dereliction of duty in allowing the Israelites to go astray by worshipping the Golden Calf, the author gives an unusual gloss in explaining Aaron's reply: '*I was really afraid you might say*, *You have created a rift among the children of Israel; you did not pay heed to my command* (Q. 20:94) – that is, you did not uphold my *waṣiyya*.'[57] The term *waṣiyya* may be rendered as 'legacy', 'trust' or 'testament'; in early Islamic culture, it has a certain political-theological resonance in addition to its obvious juridical meaning.[58] In particular, especially among the early Shiʿa, the term signified the legacy of spiritual authority, virtue and knowledge that the prophets bequeathed to one another in succession; for the Shiʿa, it also represents one aspect of the authority that Muhammad was thought to have transmitted to ʿAlī b. Abī Ṭālib (d. 40/661) as his legitimate heir, and subsequently passed on from ʿAlī to the other imams.[59] This is the only reference to the *waṣiyya* transmitted from Moses to Aaron in Muqātil's version of the episode. As used here, the term not only designates the authority that Moses entrusted to Aaron when he left to commune with God on Sinai, but it also seems to have a certain moral connotation: poor leadership violates the trust implicit in the bestowal of the *waṣiyya* (or perhaps even the explicit instructions given as part of the legacy), and thus a *waṣiyy* (legatee) can apparently let his predecessor down by not living up to the expectations that go along with bestowal of the *waṣiyya*.[60]

As Uri Rubin has shown, the political-theological concept of *waṣiyya* as symbolising the transmission of legitimate authority was not limited to the Shiʿa, but, as with so many other characteristic

aspects of Shiʿi doctrine, was originally much more widespread in the early Muslim community. For example, Ṭabarī and Abū ʿAbd Allāh Muḥammad Ibn Saʿd (d. 230/845) both preserve traditions transmitted from Muḥammad Ibn Isḥāq (d. 150/767) that describe the *waṣiyya* being communicated from Adam to his descendants. Likewise, Ibn Isḥāq apparently transmitted a well-known tradition in which Muhammad is said to have publicly designated ʿAlī as his brother, *waṣiyy* and *khalīfa* (successor). Although numerous Shiʿi sources preserve this tradition, Sunnis were more ambivalent about it, for obvious reasons. Thus, Ṭabarī gives the tradition in full in his *Taʾrīkh al-rusul waʾl-mulūk*, but he abbreviates it in his *tafsīr*, *Jāmiʿ al-bayān ʿan taʾwīl āy al-Qurʾān*, so as to exclude the specific reference to the *waṣiyya*; Suyūṭī does the same in his *Khaṣāʾiṣ al-nabawiyya al-kubra*; and ʿAbd al-Malik Ibn Hishām (d. 218/833) omits the tradition altogether in his recension of Ibn Isḥāq's *Sīra*.[61] This seems to indicate that Sunnis may have started contesting this concept of *waṣiyya*, which Rubin holds to have emerged already by the end of the first/seventh century, in the late second/eighth or early third/ninth centuries due to its conspicuous association with the Shiʿa and their claims regarding the special authority of their imams.

Muqātil is almost unique in his invocation of the term here in his commentary on the Calf episode. It does not appear in any of Ṭabarī's copious traditions on the narrative, and it seldom appears in treatments of the episode by other major Sunni sources after him. Thus, it is rather remarkable that the term appears no fewer than three times in the dialogue between Moses and Aaron in Dīnawarī's commentary on *Sūrat Ṭā Hā* (Q. 20) in *al-Wāḍiḥ*.[62] Notably, it does appear once in Wāḥidī's comments on the episode, also at Q. 20:94; in this, he may be directly dependent upon Thaʿlabī (who likewise uses the term once, in commenting on the previous verse) and thus, perhaps, indirectly dependent on Kalbī – or upon Muqātil himself.

The Sound of Fitna *and Aaron's Dereliction of Duty*

In one of the long narrative passages he inserts into his commentary on the Calf episode in *Sūrat al-Baqara* (Q. 2), Muqātil portrays a curious event that occurs as Moses returns from Mount Sinai to the Israelite camp with the seventy elders who are said to have accompanied him on

his journey. As they approach the camp, Moses' companions hear the tumult surrounding the worship of the Calf, and they remark that they hear the sound of battle (*qitāl*) in the camp. Moses retorts that it is not the sound of battle, but rather a divine trial (*fitna*) that they hear.[63] This tradition also occurs in *al-Wāḍiḥ* at Q. 20.86, commenting on the phrase, *So Moses returned to his people full of anger and regret…* The commentary in *al-Wāḍiḥ* reads: '*So Moses returned* – [that is,] when Moses returned – *to his people* with the seventy, he heard the sound of *fitna*; then he became *full of anger and regret*, [that is,] saddened.'[64] This explanation is found in some later commentaries as well, so its appearance in these works is hardly distinctive in and of itself.[65] What is more interesting, however, is that the use of the term *fitna* in this context may have an ironic resonance in these earlier works, inasmuch as both *Tafsīr Muqātil* and *al-Wāḍiḥ* seem to embrace what might be termed a 'secessionist' reading of the Calf episode. They both seem to presuppose that Aaron was criticised by Moses for not suppressing the idolatrous people among his community by force, taking up arms with those who remained loyal to him and fighting the idolaters, even to the point of breaking with them entirely.[66] This situation of division and strife within the community is exactly what the term *fitna* would connote for many later Muslim authors.

Thus, in Muqātil's comments on the exchange between Moses and Aaron in *Sūrat Ṭā Hā* (Q. 20), we find the following gloss on Q. 20:92–3: 'When Moses returned, *he said* to Aaron, *O Aaron, when you saw that they had gone astray* – that is, that they became idolaters – *what hindered you from following me?* – that is, so that you did not obey my command, and therefore disavow them? *Did you not disobey my command?* – that is, so that you disregarded what I said…'[67] Dīnawarī likewise interprets this passage as indicating that Aaron had been obligated to resist the idolaters by force, but failed to do so; notably, here too we find that Moses specifically rebukes him for his unwillingness to resort to violence. When Moses asks Aaron, *What hindered you from following me? Did you not disobey my command?* (Q. 20:93), the gloss in *al-Wāḍiḥ* is strongly reminiscent of Muqātil's: '*from following me* – why did you not follow my *waṣiyya*, nor engage them in battle (*wa-lam tunājizhum al-qitāl*)? *Did you not disobey* – [that is,] did you not disregard – *my command* – [that is,] my *waṣiyya*?'[68] Likewise, in

the following verse, when Aaron replies that he was afraid that Moses would accuse him of causing division among the Israelites, Dīnawarī adds simply, 'through bloodshed (*bi-qatl*)'. The longest gloss is appended to the last phrase in the exchange: '*You did not pay heed to my command* – you did not anticipate my return, and for that reason you gave up on fighting them.'[69]

Notably, such an understanding of Aaron's offence appears to be generally lacking in later *tafsīr*s, which tend to give only the blandest interpretations of the verses that incriminate him. The most likely explanation for this is the extreme horror of *fitna* that we find among Sunni authors of the fourth/tenth century and later.[70] For Muqātil, it appears that secession from a community of wrongdoers and armed opposition to injustice – the sectarian impulse – simply does not have the extreme negative associations it would for later exegetes, who generally avoid indicting Aaron for his apparent failure in this situation. It seems extremely significant that although the wording of the corresponding glosses in *al-Wāḍiḥ* differs from that in *Tafsīr Muqātil*, the sentiment is nevertheless the same; for both, the condition of *fitna* is not automatically seen as execrable. Herein lies the aforementioned irony, inasmuch as for both Muqātil and Dīnawarī, the 'sound of *fitna*' Moses detects upon his return to the camp cannot refer to a situation of civil strife or fighting; it is not *qitāl* as his companions thought, or, judging by his remarks to Aaron, as he would have hoped. In both *Tafsīr Muqātil* and *al-Wāḍiḥ*, *ṣawt al-fitna* can only mean 'the sound of trial' in this context.[71]

The three foregoing examples demonstrate the subtle ways in which the interpretation of the Golden Calf episode in *al-Wāḍiḥ* seems to be similar to that of *Tafsīr Muqātil* and distinct from that of later exegetes. The insistence that the Golden Calf did not possess an animating *rūḥ*, the allusion to the *waṣiyya* of Moses, and the expectation that Aaron should have violently resisted the idolaters, even to the extent that he would cause *fitna*, are all elements that it is natural to find in Muqātil's commentary, given the author's early date. But it is somewhat surprising to find these elements in Dīnawarī's commentary, where they appear anomalous, or at least somewhat anachronistic. It should also be noted that these points of agreement are not due solely to the mere verbatim repetition of the glosses found in *Tafsīr*

Muqātil; it is thus reasonable to conclude that Dīnawarī might be quoting another source of similar antiquity to Muqātil, but not identical in its wording. It is also possible, of course, that Dīnawarī has simply reformulated Muqātil's interpretation.

Additionally, it is worth noting that in one important respect, the interpretation of the Calf episode in *Tafsīr Muqātil* is actually more in line with later trends in exegesis than that in *al-Wāḍiḥ*. Regarding the portrayal of Aaron's involvement in the episode, the latter generally conforms to a trend found in later commentaries of attempting to exonerate Aaron of guilt as much as possible. Long before the emergence of *ʿiṣma* (impeccability) as a formal article of faith, Muslim authors tried to absolve prophetic figures of sin whenever possible, and often polemicised against Jews and Christians on account of the candour of their scriptures in depicting the lapses of Israel's patriarchs, prophets and leaders. Muqātil's attempt to exonerate Aaron is somewhat moderate compared to that of later authors, who were often quite insistent about Aaron's innocence; in contrast, Dīnawarī actually appears to be unusually strident in his criticism of Aaron.

Thus, whereas Muqātil barely comments on the verses from *Sūrat al-Aʿrāf* (Q. 7) and *Sūrat Ṭā Hā* (Q. 20) that cast aspersions on Aaron's character, Dīnawarī inserts a number of telling glosses here that make plain Aaron's partial responsibility for the episode.[72] It is difficult to avoid the impression that apologetic for Aaron's involvement in the affair was simply not a priority for Dīnawarī. Insofar as absolving Aaron of blame is of greater concern to Muqātil, his perspective, at least in this regard, is far more congruous with the future development of commentary on this episode than that of Dīnawarī, whose work may thus reflect an earlier attitude towards the issue of prophetic infallibility – although, as we shall see, this is not consistently the case.

Tracing the Strands of *Tafsīr* al-Kalbī in Dīnawarī's *al-Wāḍiḥ*

The apparent affinities of theological and political outlook found in *Tafsīr Muqātil* and *al-Wāḍiḥ* are critical for my argument that the latter appears to preserve some authentic echoes of early traditions of Qur'an interpretation, although it cannot continue to be identified simply as the *tafsīr* of the second/eighth-century exegete Muḥammad

b. Ṣāʾib al-Kalbī. My comparison of the treatment of the Golden Calf episode in each of these texts shows that although *al-Wāḍiḥ* is the work of the fourth/tenth-century author Ibn al-Mubārak al-Dīnawarī, it does seem to contain some markedly pre-classical concepts, attitudes and positions on exegetical issues of interest. Indeed, not only does it seem to reflect earlier trends in interpretation, thus corroborating what appear to be distinctively early aspects of *Tafsīr Muqātil*, it even seems to exceed it in this regard, as in the case of its portrayal of Aaron's involvement in the Calf episode. Comparison with *Tafsīr Muqātil* thus appears to be critical for evaluating the question of the early material preserved in *al-Wāḍiḥ*. This is not only because of the former's relative antiquity, but also because the most logical reason for the appearance of anachronistic positions and attitudes in *al-Wāḍiḥ* would be Dīnawarī's substantial dependence on an older source, probably the *tafsīr* of Kalbī, roughly contemporary with *Tafsīr Muqātil.* Therefore, it seems that discerning points of agreement between *Tafsīr Muqātil* and *al-Wāḍiḥ* would be a productive method for uncovering distinctly early elements within the latter.

It is also feasible that comparing the material found in *al-Wāḍiḥ* with traditions quoted in the name of Kalbī in other works might help us to isolate strands of early interpretation, especially material that might plausibly have come from the lost *tafsīr* of Kalbī himself. But when we attempt to do so, the problematic nature of seeking to reconstruct older traditions on the basis of later quotations becomes clear. Sometimes the material found in *al-Wāḍiḥ* and various traditions attributed to Kalbī found in other sources do not seem to agree very much, or else do so only very inconsistently. This makes it unlikely that such comparison could ever yield totally predictable results in uncovering material that could unambiguously be connected with Kalbī. Moreover, as we shall see upon further investigation, even the seemingly close relationship between *Tafsīr Muqātil* and *al-Wāḍiḥ* that I previously observed appears to be unpredictable as well.

Kalbī on the Night Journey

One case discussed by Motzki in his analysis of *al-Wāḍiḥ* demonstrates the problems involved in attempting to compare various texts and traditions attributed to early sources in the hope of isolating

genuinely early material or untangling the complex relationships between those sources. Motzki cites a hadith preserved by Muhammad b. Ahmad Ibn Shadhan al-Qummī (d. 412/1021–2) in his commentary on the verse, *Ask those of Our messengers We sent before you if We have appointed any gods to be worshipped besides al-Raḥmān* (Q. 43:45). The hadith connects the verse to an event that took place during the Prophet's Night Journey and portrays Muhammad as questioning earlier messengers about the purpose behind his mission. The *isnād* of this hadith runs back through Dīnawarī and Yūsuf b. Bilāl to Kalbī, culminating in Ibn ʿAbbās, which would seem to indicate that the tradition derives from the original *Tafsīr al-Kalbī* in the recension of Yūsuf b. Bilāl as it was transmitted by Dīnawarī.[73]

Assuming that Qummī's quotation of Dīnawarī's quotation of Kalbī is authentic, the question is: does Dīnawarī's commentary on the same verse in *al-Wāḍiḥ* agree with what Qummī attributes to him? If so, the obvious conclusion would be that the exegesis represented in *al-Wāḍiḥ* is, essentially, that of Kalbī. Notably, the comments on this verse found in *al-Wāḍiḥ* do connect it with a conversation between Muhammad and some older prophets that supposedly occurred during the Night Journey, just as the Kalbī tradition that Qummī quotes in Dīnawarī's name in his work does. Although Dīnawarī's account in *al-Wāḍiḥ* is far pithier and differs in some details, it is substantially the same as that given by Qummī, and it would thus be quite reasonable to assume that in this specific instance Dīnawarī preserved the substance of Kalbī's original commentary in *al-Wāḍiḥ*. But the passage in *al-Wāḍiḥ* is by no means a direct quote of Kalbī, at least judging by the later quotation in Qummī; at most, we get the gist of Kalbī's authentic exegesis here.

Moreover, if we seek to corroborate the authenticity of the Kalbī tradition in Qummī by also comparing it with the interpretation found in *Tafsīr Muqātil*, we end up disappointed. As it turns out, Muqātil does not have anything like this in his commentary on Q. 43:45, nor does the verse in question appear to be linked to the episode portrayed in the Kalbī tradition anywhere else in Muqātil's *tafsīr*.[74] Muqātil's short commentary on the verse has nothing at all to do with the Night Journey, explaining, '*Ask those of Our messengers* – that is, ask the believers among the People of the Book (*ahl al-Kitāb*), O Muhammad,

if messengers ever came to them summoning them to anything other than the worship of God'.[75] There is nothing resembling this concise gloss on Q. 43:45 to be found in the corresponding passage in *al-Wāḍiḥ*.

One might suppose that a relatively reliable – and simple – method for recovering authentic Kalbī traditions would be to check the very large number of surviving citations of Kalbī in later sources against *al-Wāḍiḥ*. When they agree, this would presumably indicate instances in which Dīnawarī was following Kalbī's *tafsīr* more or less faithfully. If we could directly correlate passages in *al-Wāḍiḥ* and the corpus of Kalbī traditions extant in later works, possible agreement – or the lack of the same – between *al-Wāḍih* and *Tafsīr Muqātil* might become less relevant. However, just as it is sometimes difficult to trace connections between these two texts, it is also sometimes difficult to correlate extant traditions attributed to Kalbī in various other sources with the content of *al-Wāḍiḥ*.

The Muqtasimūn *(Those Divided into Groups)*

Motzki discusses another tradition quoted in the name of Kalbī by a later author that proves to be quite difficult to relate with any precision to any other extant sources or traditions. There appear to be certain similarities between a tradition concerning an event in the life of Muhammad attributed to Kalbī by Abū'l-Faraj Ibn al-Jawzī (d. 597/1200) in his *Zād al-masīr fī ʿilm al-tafsīr* and accounts about this episode found in both *Tafsīr Muqātil* and the *Sīra* of Ibn Isḥāq. As quoted by Ibn al-Jawzī in his *tafsīr*, this tradition comments upon the *muqtasimūn* mentioned in the Qur'an at Q. 15:89–91: *Say: I am the clear warner, akin to what We sent down to those divided into groups* (*al-muqtasmīna*)*, those who dismembered the Qur'an*, identifying them as a particular group of opponents of Muhammad from the tribe of Quraysh.[76] Motzki notes that the Kalbī tradition given by Ibn al-Jawzī bears especially close resemblance to what appears in a passage from the commentary of Muqātil; furthermore, he conjectures that the material informing both accounts might constitute evidence of a common source used by both Muqātil and Kalbī, which might be dated to sometime around the end of the first/seventh century.[77] As I have noted, positing a common source that informed

the works of both Muqātil and Kalbī would explain both the conceptual agreement and the frequent coincidence in the wording of specific glosses we observed in *Tafsīr Muqātil* and *al-Wāḍiḥ*. It would also establish that *al-Wāḍiḥ* does reliably preserve at least some aspects of the original exegesis of Kalbī, and thus that the work accurately represents something of the commentary tradition as it was known in the second/eighth century.

Unfortunately, the situation proves to be more complicated than that. As was the case with Qummī's tradition from Kalbī, when we compare Ibn al-Jawzī's tradition from Kalbī to Dīnawarī's comments on Q. 15:89–91 in *al-Wāḍiḥ*, the latter are at most a summary of the Kalbī tradition; they are by no means identical to it. Furthermore, while Dīnawarī may have drawn on Kalbī's interpretation, he also seems to have used other sources.[78] In particular, there are certain elements in the passage from *al-Wāḍiḥ* that Ibn al-Jawzī's tradition from Kalbī lacks, but that agree with the exegesis of the passage found in *Tafsīr Muqātil,* as well as with similar glosses found in the *Maʿānī al-Qurʾān* of the early grammarian Abū Zakariyyāʾ Yaḥyā al-Farrāʾ (d. 207/822).[79] A close comparison of all of these texts demonstrates that it is certainly possible that their similarities can all be attributed to their reliance on a conjectured common source; however, the ways in which the account in *al-Wāḍiḥ* specifically differs from the others suggests that it cannot be based on that common source alone. What this implies is that without all of these other sources for comparison, it would be virtually impossible to discern which elements of the interpretation Dīnawarī presents in *al-Wāḍiḥ* are authentically early.

Attempting to trace all the connections between the various traditions on the *muqtasimūn* proves to be a frustrating exercise. In some ways, Muqātil's account seems to be the most anomalous, in that he brings up the story of the Qarashī *muqtasimūn* not in his comments on Q. 15:89–91 – which he claims refers to the Jews and Christians – but rather in commenting on the verse *We are sufficient protection for you against those who mock* (*al-mustahziʾīna*)*, those who make others god besides Allāh; they will surely come to know* (Q. 15:95–6).[80] What seems to have happened here is that Muqātil has conflated the story of the *muqtasimūn* and their attempt to interfere with the Prophet's

mission and the story of the *mustahzi'ūn* (mockers), a group from Quraysh who were individually destroyed by Gabriel for daring to malign Muhammad.[81] Most sources keep these two groups separate, including *al-Wāḍiḥ*; obviously, in this case, we would not expect to see the high degree of agreement between the *tafsīr*s of Dīnawarī and Muqātil that I have observed elsewhere. There are a few significant points of similarity between the accounts in *Tafsīr Muqātil* and *al-Wāḍiḥ* that they do not share in common with other sources on the episode; the problem, however, is that those points do not entirely match up with the information provided by Ibn al-Jawzī's quotation of Kalbī, which means that it is rather questionable whether those commonalities are derived from Kalbī's original *tafsīr*.[82]

The Kalbī tradition cited by Ibn al-Jawzī and the gloss in *al-Wāḍiḥ* give lists of the individuals identified as the *muqtasimūn* that are overall compatible (although the former gives many more). However, Dīnawarī's account in *al-Wāḍiḥ* cannot simply be a straightforward adaptation of Kalbī's material, at least if the tradition quoted by Ibn al-Jawzī represents Kalbī's original exegesis accurately. For example, in the interpretation in *al-Wāḍiḥ*, it is claimed that the *muqtasimūn* were all killed at the Battle of Badr (2/623); this is extremely unusual in the *tafsīr* tradition on the episode, since all of the other versions (including that of Kalbī in Ibn al-Jawzī) indicate that their punishment took place before the Hijra, and thus, obviously, before Badr.[83] Dīnawarī's insistence that the *muqtasimūn* were in fact punished for their actions by being killed at Badr therefore distinguishes his account from all the others quite conspicuously.

What all this demonstrates is either that Dīnawarī's interpretation of the passage in *Sūrat al-Ḥijr* (Q. 15) cannot be based solely on Kalbī, or else that the tradition as preserved in Ibn al-Jawzī does not preserve Kalbī's original exegesis accurately. Furthermore, in contrast to Motzki's conclusions, Kalbī and Muqātil do not seem to be drawing on a single common source here; nor can the content of this conjectured common source be reconstructed with any certainty by comparing these texts with parallels from other sources, for example from Farrāʾ or Ibn Isḥāq. All of these sources appear to be connected on some level, constructing their interpretations of the episode by drawing on a common pool of material, yet the differences between

them all are substantial enough to undermine any simple explanation of the relationship between them. Again, the exegesis in *al-Wāḍiḥ* resembles that of both Muqātil and Kalbī to some degree, but it also deviates significantly from both, and new material not found in either of the older works (and thus potentially traceable back to the original common source) seems to have been adduced by Dīnawarī as well.[84] Quite apart from the issue of his sources, it is also entirely possible that Dīnawarī may simply have adjusted the received material as he wished and partially ignored the tradition as he knew it. And again, insofar as we have no way to ascertain how authentic or 'original' Ibn al-Jawzī's Kalbī tradition really is, ultimately we have no way of knowing for sure what the true relationship between these various texts might be.

Kalbī's 'Horse of Life'

A third tradition associated with Kalbī points to similarly complex relationships between a number of early texts. However, in contrast to the last example, this tradition – once again relating to Kalbī's exegesis of the Qur'anic Golden Calf episode – perhaps inspires more confidence in the possibility of potentially identifying authentic traditions of exegesis from the second/eighth century through comparative analysis.

The account of the animation of the Golden Calf in *al-Wāḍiḥ* supplies a few details that are lacking in *Tafsīr Muqātil.* The *tafsīr* tradition in general attributes the animation of the Calf to a malevolent outsider named al-Sāmirī ('the Samaritan') who deliberately sought to mislead the Israelites and trick them into worshipping it. Commentators have always explained the cryptic remarks of al-Sāmirī in the verse, *I perceived what they did not perceive*; *I picked up a handful of dust from the track of the messenger and threw it, for the idea seemed attractive to me* (Q. 20:96), as an allusion to a baroque story about how al-Sāmirī saw Gabriel passing by on his angelic steed after the Israelites crossed the Red Sea. Al-Sāmirī recognised Gabriel and picked up some of the dirt trodden upon by him or his horse; secreting this away, he later deployed it to animate the Calf by tossing it into the Calf's golden form. We thus find the following gloss on Q. 20:96 in *Tafsīr Muqātil*:

> Al-Sāmirī *said, I perceived what they did not perceive* – that is, I understood what they did not understand; that is, I knew what they did not know regarding the matter of the steed of Gabriel; *I picked up a handful of dust from the track of the* steed of the *messenger*, that is, trod upon by the steed of Gabriel, *and threw it* into the fire with the remains of the golden ornaments; *for the idea seemed attractive to me* [lit., *my soul suggested it to me*] – that is, my soul prompted me to do so.[85]

In contrast, Dīnawarī seems to be rather more specific about certain details of these events:

> Al-Sāmirī *said, I perceived what they did not perceive* – that is, I saw what the Israelites did not see. So Moses said to him, What did you see that they did not? He replied, I saw Gabriel upon a piebald mare, the Horse of Life. *I picked up a handful of dust from the track of the messenger* – from the earth upon which the hoof of Gabriel's horse trod – *and threw it* – I cast it into the mouth of the Calf and into its posterior, and then it lowed – *for the idea seemed attractive to me* [lit., *thus my soul suggested it to me*] – thus did it prompt [me].[86]

While Muqātil only calls this steed by the generic term *faras*, Dīnawarī is far more descriptive, calling it a 'piebald mare' (*balqāʾ unthā*), and the 'Horse of Life' (*dābbat al-ḥayāt*). It might be argued that the surprising occurrence of these terms militates against the conclusion that this *tafsīr* is genuinely early; given his predilection for including such elements, it is odd that they are lacking from Muqātil's *tafsīr,* and it would not be unreasonable to see these details as later legendary accretions.[87]

Terminology very similar – but not identical – to *balqāʾ unthā* and *dābbat al-ḥayāt* appears in various traditions on the Golden Calf found in both Ṭabarī's *Jāmiʿ al-bayān* and Thaʿlabī's *al-Kashf wa'l-bayān*.[88] Furthermore, other aspects of Thaʿlabī's exegesis of this episode coincide with aspects of Dīnawarī's exegesis as well. For example, in his comment on Q. 7.148 Thaʿlabī glosses *ʿijl jasad* as 'a small cast figure without soul' (*mujassad lā rūḥ fīhi*).[89] The notion that the Calf lacked authentic life is found in both *Tafsīr Muqātil* and *al-Wāḍiḥ*, but *mujassad*, it will be recalled, is a term unique to the

latter's treatment of the episode. This seems noteworthy, given Thaʿlabī's frequent use of Kalbī's *tafsīr* in his own work (although again, he also knew and used *al-Wāḍiḥ*).

Turning to earlier works, we discover other evidence that the above-quoted passage from *al-Wāḍiḥ* might represent the genuine interpretation of Kalbī. In the *tafsīr* of ʿAbd al-Razzāq al-Ṣanʿānī (d. 211/827) at Q. 20:87–88, we find the following short hadith in which ʿAbd al-Razzāq's shaykh, Maʿmar b. Rashīd, cites Kalbī: 'The horse which Gabriel rode was *al-Ḥayāt* ('Life'), so al-Sāmirī took a handful of dirt from its track and then tossed it into the Calf, and it lowed.'[90] One is struck by this tradition's agreement with the gloss from *al-Wāḍiḥ* ('I saw Gabriel upon a piebald mare, the Horse of Life … I cast [the handful of dirt] into the mouth of the Calf … and then it lowed'), despite the seeming confusion here over whether *al-ḥayāt* was the horse's name, or rather an epithet for it.[91] The most compelling piece of evidence, however, is found in the *Maʿānī al-Qurʾān* of Farrāʾ:

> Regarding the verse: *But we were made to carry the loads of ornaments belonging to the people* … (Q. 20:87) – that is, the objects of gold and silver and iron they took from the people of Pharaoh when the sea vomited them up – [it means,] 'Then we threw them in the fire, for al-Sāmirī had done so, and we followed him'.
>
> Then when the silver that they threw in became refined, and the gold as well, al-Sāmirī fashioned it into a calf. He had taken a handful [of dirt] from the track of the horse which Gabriel rode ...
>
> Farrāʾ said that in the *tafsīr* of Kalbī it says that the horse was the Horse of Life. Al-Sāmirī said, 'It occurred to me that if I threw this handful [of dirt] upon something that was inanimate, it would come to life.' So he threw this handful into the snout of the bull, and into its posterior as well, and it came to life and lowed.[92]

Although the interpretation found in Farrāʾ lacks the specific terminology *balqāʾ unthā,* it not only uses the term *faras al-ḥayāt*, but it also specifies that al-Sāmirī is supposed to have thrown the magical dirt into both the Calf's mouth and its posterior. This seemingly trivial (and even ludicrous) detail is nevertheless important, inasmuch as it

is lacking in most accounts of the animation of the Calf – including that in *Tafsīr Muqātil* – but does appear in *al-Wāḍiḥ*; furthermore, this account is explicitly attributed to Kalbī.[93] Thus, in this instance, we appear to have a clear case in which Dīnawarī has reliably preserved essential and distinctive aspects of Kalbī's *tafsīr* on this episode that can be corroborated through reference to citations of Kalbī in other works.[94]

Conclusion

Our examination of previous scholarship on the so-called *Tafsīr Ibn ʿAbbās*, which cannot be identified simply as *Tafsīr al-Kalbī* and should most likely henceforth be identified as *al-Wāḍiḥ* of Dīnawarī, demonstrates the complexity of the questions of its provenance, original context and possible sources. The previous studies by Wansbrough and Rippin in particular show how subjective the attempt to date the work based primarily on its literary style and prevailing exegetical methods has been, and thus, perhaps, that analysis of this sort will always prove to be arbitrary and unconvincing. My investigation of possible echoes of the original *tafsīr* of Kalbī, to which this work seems to be related in a substantial but inconsistent way, within *al-Wāḍiḥ* shows that 'haggadic' traditions transmitted from Kalbī may have been adapted and repurposed in this work, which had the effect of significantly altering their original shape. Thus, in emphasising this text as the work of Kalbī himself, Wansbrough's analysis is surely misguided, although the connection to the second/eighth-century exegete ends up being partially vindicated. Wansbrough – like Sezgin before him – turns out to have been right, although for the wrong reasons; however, this does nothing to further his goal of establishing a reliable methodology and framework for studying the evolution of early *tafsīr* by means of stylistic criteria.

In the second half of this article, I proposed other ways in which the possible relationship of this text to the original *tafsīr* of Kalbī might be examined, using such methods as quantitative analysis of phraseology, qualitative analysis of conceptual content and comparison between various witnesses to what we might tentatively call the 'Kalbī tradition'. These approaches are surely more objective and

rigorous than attempting to ascertain the date and provenance of either discrete works or extant traditions through scrutiny of overarching literary style or underlying exegetical method. Rippin's claim that the text is only incidentally associated with the work of Kalbī seems less convincing than Motzki's conjecture that the text is some sort of *mukhtaṣar* (abbreviation) of the original *tafsīr* of Kalbī that also draws on other works, or perhaps an even older source or sources that are now lost. But charting the relationship between *al-Wāḍiḥ* and other works often seems to be an uncertain and arduous enterprise.

My observation of various points of connection between *al-Wāḍiḥ* and *Tafsīr Muqātil* on the one hand, and *al-Wāḍiḥ* and extant traditions attributed to Kalbī on the other, does appear to establish potentially productive avenues for further exploration of this undoubtedly important work. But the sheer complexity of tracking the connections between this text and various other sources must be acknowledged as a serious impediment. As we have seen, sometimes there is a high degree of agreement between Dīnawarī's text and other early works, which suggests both that authors of the second/eighth century may have drawn on a common source or sources and that authentically early traditions of interpretation, presumably (but not unambiguously) associated with the exegesis of Kalbī, are at times recoverable in *al-Wāḍiḥ*. This, at least, seems to be what our close analysis of traditions on the Qur'anic Golden Calf episode in *al-Wāḍiḥ* and other texts suggests. However, it is the inconsistency and unpredictability of the material that frequently foils our attempts to ascertain clear lines of affiliation and influence in the extant sources of the early *tafsīr* tradition.

The examples studied by Motzki indicate not only that *al-Wāḍiḥ* may be a kind of synopsis of Kalbī's original work, but that Kalbī, Muqātil and others may have all drawn on a common source dating from the first/seventh century. This may explain why *al-Wāḍiḥ* agrees so closely with *Tafsīr Muqātil* in some places but not others, as well as why its points of agreement with other early sources seems to vary so much. If all of these sources are directly or indirectly citing some kind of *Urkommentar* from the first century, but using it only selectively, then we are bound to see frequent but apparently arbitrary points of coincidence between them. Perhaps more useful is the

observation that comparison of passages from *al-Wāḍiḥ* and *Tafsīr Muqātil* can sometimes uncover not only substantial quantitative agreement between these texts, but also qualitative agreement, particularly regarding interpretations of scripture that are at odds with the standard interpretations found in classical and medieval Sunni commentaries. That is, if our reading of the passages on the Calf episode that pertain to Aaron's culpability and the animation of the Calf is correct, then *al-Wāḍiḥ* contains surprisingly anachronistic (or atavistic) attitudes towards subjects that were, or would later become, pressing doctrinal issues (at least for Sunnis) such as *muʿjizāt* (evidentiary miracles), *ʿiṣma* and *fitna*.

However, even this observation must be tempered by a couple of caveats. For one thing, it must be kept in mind that although *Tafsīr Muqātil* may be early and distinctly 'pre-classical', it is by no means completely free of all considerations of doctrinal orthodoxy. That is, it reflects the particular state of Muslim theological reflection in the second/eighth century, which was relatively rudimentary compared to the sophistication that classical Islamic thought would eventually achieve, and yet was not wholly undeveloped at the time. Insofar as *al-Wāḍiḥ* may preserve the original exegesis of Kalbī, we would expect it to echo this early outlook to an analogous degree, but this does not mean that it lacks any theological reflection. The fact that both *Tafsīr Muqātil* and *al-Wāḍiḥ* emphasise the Golden Calf's lifelessness demonstrates exactly this point, and we should thus perhaps characterise them both not as 'pre-orthodox' but rather as 'proto-orthodox'. Even here we must be careful, however, and this is the second important caveat. Despite its seeming anachronism in at least some instances, *al-Wāḍiḥ* is not wholly consistent in this respect either, for while Dīnawarī's approach to the Calf episode matches the 'proto-orthodox' view of *Tafsīr Muqātil*, other examples show that the work is more deeply conditioned by developed theological considerations than Muqātil's work – as we would naturally expect given its much later date.

For example, Muqātil's commentary provides us with one of our most important early witnesses to the so-called Satanic Verses tradition, which he cites in two apposite places, at Q. 53:19–26, the passage mentioning the 'daughters of God', where Muhammad was

supposedly tempted to acknowledge these goddesses as worthy intercessors due to satanic interference during the revelation of these verses, and at Q. 22:52, the famous verse that seems to both acknowledge the possibility of such interference and guarantee that God will always set things straight: *Every messenger and prophet we sent before you, Satan cast something corrupt into his consciousness when he was tempted, but God always abolishes what Satan casts*.[95] Two extant *tafsīr*s, those of Yaḥyā b. Sallām (d. *c*. 200/815) and Hūd b. Muḥakkam (fl. fourth/tenth century), preserve an account of Muhammad's temptation that is attributed to Kalbī; the former cites it at Q. 22:52, the latter at Q. 53:19, but they seem to be essentially the same tradition.[96] In contrast, there is no trace of this tradition in *al-Wāḍiḥ*; in fact, Dīnawarī does not acknowledge this controversial episode at all. At Q. 53:19, Dīnawarī's glosses provide some basic 'ethnographic' data about the goddesses and which clans worshipped them, but for the most part his exegesis simply reflects his understanding of the passage as a polemic against the *jāhilī* belief in intermediary deities or angels.[97] His interpretation of Q. 22:52 is more interesting, inasmuch as he seems to acknowledge at least the hypothetical possibility of such corruption – as any exegete must, given the evident sense of the Qur'anic verse here – but he does not correlate the verse to any specific episode in the life of Muhammad, in contrast to Muqātil, Ibn Sallām and numerous other early commentators.[98]

Perhaps the most reasonable conclusion to draw from all of this is that *al-Wāḍiḥ*, which continues to be widely used and exerts a broad influence in its guise as '*Tafsīr Ibn ʿAbbās*', is a text that defies easy categorisation. It has some material which seems likely to represent genuine material taken from the *tafsīr* of Kalbī; it has strong points of connection with other early works such as *Tafsīr Muqātil*; yet, in its extant form, it cannot be straightforwardly characterised as either early or free from later doctrinal considerations, as we would expect given that its most likely author, Ibn al-Mubārak al-Dīnawarī, lived in the early fourth/tenth century. Dīnawarī was surely as complex and defiant of easy categorisation as his work; in redacting older material in his *tafsīr*, sometimes he did not see fit to eliminate its seemingly archaic aspects, although at other times he no doubt did so.[99] What this suggests is that if the text is used cautiously, with the data it yields

compared carefully with evidence drawn from other texts, it may regain its place alongside the work of Muqātil as a potential source for authentically early *tafsīr* traditions – even if it cannot be restored to its former putative status as the original work of Kalbī, or held up as an example of a genuinely early 'periphrastic' or 'haggadic' commentary on the basis of exegetical method or literary style.

NOTES

1 Here, I will give only the most basic information about the witnesses to the text and its publication history. These issues are dealt with much more thoroughly in Andrew Rippin, '*Tafsīr Ibn ʿAbbās* and Criteria for Dating Early *Tafsīr* Texts', *Jerusalem Studies in Arabic and Islam* 18 (1994), pp. 38–83.

2 Abū'l-Naḍr Muḥammad b. al-Ṣā'ib al-Kalbī, who was active in the first half of the second/eighth century, was a specialist in *tafsīr* as well as *sīra* and *maghāzī* (biographical traditions on the life and career of Muhammad); he should not be confused with his son Hishām (d. 204/819), usually known simply as Ibn al-Kalbī, who is known for his work on tribal genealogy, the *Jamharat al-nasab*, as well as the notorious *Kitāb al-Aṣnām* or *Book of Idols*, which appears to have been deliberately suppressed in Abbasid times. Nevertheless, classical and medieval authors often did confuse them, so that sometimes one is uncertain whose traditions are meant when the name 'Kalbī' is invoked in a text.

3 Rippin discusses the question of the ascription of the text to Ibn ʿAbbās in '*Tafsīr Ibn ʿAbbās*', pp. 56–9, 71–4, citing the classic study of Claude Gilliot, 'Portrait "Mythique" d'Ibn ʿAbbās', *Arabica* 32 (1985), pp. 127–84. For a more recent treatment of the question, see Herbert Berg, *The Development of Exegesis in Early Islam: The Authenticity of Muslim Literature from the Formative Period* (Richmond, 2000), pp. 129–36.

4 Ibn ʿAbbās (attrib.), *Tanwīr al-miqbās min tafsīr Ibn ʿAbbās* (Beirut, 2000), p. 3. The upper part of the *isnād* is sometimes termed the 'chain of deceit' (*silsilat al-kadhib*) by later traditionists who considered it especially tendentious; to hadith scholars concerned with strict standards of veracity, Muḥammad b. Marwān (also known as al-Suddī al-Ṣaghīr), Kalbī and Abū Ṣāliḥ Bādhām (sometimes Bādhān) were all disreputable liars, and so the traditions connected to Ibn ʿAbbās through this chain could in no way be held to be reliable. Abū Ṣāliḥ has thus tended to be excluded from discussions of the so-called 'school of Ibn ʿAbbās' by Western scholars since the time of Ignaz Goldziher (d. 1921). On this controversial figure, a *mawlā* of Umm Hāniʾ bt. Abī Ṭālib, see Josef van Ess, *Ungenützte Texte zur Karrāmīya: Eine Materialsammlung* (Heidelberg, 1980), pp. 46–7, and Tilman Nagel, 'Die Qiṣaṣ al-Anbiyā': Ein Beitrag zur arabischen Literaturgeschichte' (PhD dissertation, Universität Bonn, 1967), pp. 53–6 (where he is identified, along with the similarly notorious *mawlā* of Ibn ʿAbbās, ʿIkrima, as a representative of *der volkstümliche Tafsīr*). He should be distinguished from Abū Ṣāliḥ Māhān al-Ḥanafī, one of Kalbī's sources for genealogical traditions, although they are sometimes confused in the classical sources, and the epithet *Ṣāḥib al-Kalbī* seems to be applied to both indiscriminately.

5 *Tanwīr al-miqbās*, p. 4.

6 Despite the obvious complexity of the question of attribution, the recurring invocation of the name of Ibn ʿAbbās continues to be taken by some to indicate an authentic association with the Companion himself, or at least that the work is genuinely very early. In the recent Royal Aal al-Bayt Institute for Islamic Thought translation of the work, the series editor, Yousef Meri, casually asserts that the work is a *tafsīr bi'l-maʾthūr*, even though the text is clearly not organised or presented as such. I infer that Meri takes for granted that the assertion of a connection to the Companion in the *isnād*s ensures the authority of the interpretations found in the work. See Meri's introduction in *Tafsīr Ibn ʿAbbās*, tr. Mokrane Guezzou (Louisville, KY, 2008), p. x. One wonders if Meri is attempting to rehabilitate the work as 'orthodox', and thus counter the stigma that is sometimes attached to it due to its connection with the 'chain of deceit', or Kalbī specifically.

7 Meri asserts that the version of the work available online at www.altafsir.com is the 'authoritative Arabic text' (see *Tafsīr Ibn ʿAbbās*, p. xi); however, when one consults the website, there is no *tafsīr* of Ibn ʿAbbās listed at all, only a *tafsīr* of Fīrūzābādī that seems to be identical to the print versions of *Tanwīr al-miqbās* in general circulation.

8 See Rippin, '*Tafsīr Ibn ʿAbbās*', pp. 40–7 for his case against identifying Fīrūzābādī as the real author. The crux of his argument is that early modern bibliographers such as Ḥājjī Khalīfa (Kâtip Çelebi, d. 1067/1657) ascribed a work entitled *Tanwīr al-miqbās min tafsīr Ibn ʿAbbās* to Fīrūzābādī, and the first printer of the work, noting the prominence of Ibn ʿAbbās in the *isnād*, concluded that the work in his hands must be the *tafsīr* of Fīrūzābādī to which the bibliographic authorities referred. Due to his immense prestige in the discipline of Qur'an commentary, many *tafsīr*s have been attributed to Ibn ʿAbbās or his students over the centuries, so there is no compelling reason why one would accept that this particular text must be that of Fīrūzābādī just because of the appearance of the Companion in the *isnād*s.

9 Carl Brockelmann, *Geschichte der Arabischen Literatur* (*GAL*) (Leiden, 1937–49), Supp. I, p. 331, no. 8.2.1 (Ibn ʿAbbās) and Supp. II, p. 235 (Fīrūzābādī). Under the entry for the *tafsīr* attributed to Ibn ʿAbbās, Brockelmann actually lists some of the printed editions of *Tanwīr al-miqbās*, but makes no mention of Fīrūzābādī.

10 Fuat Sezgin, *Geschichte des Arabischen Schriftums* (*GAS*) (Leiden, 1967–84), vol. I, p. 27 (Būlāq and Cairo editions of *Tanwīr al-miqbās* of Fīrūzābādī) and pp. 34–5, no. 14 (*tafsīr* of Kalbī *zurückgehenden auf* Ibn ʿAbbās). The information given by Brockelmann and Sezgin is extremely confusing, but may be deciphered with the help of Rippin's comprehensive list of known witnesses to the text in '*Tafsīr Ibn ʿAbbās*', pp. 75–6.

11 John Wansbrough, *Quranic Studies: Sources and Methods of Scriptural Interpretation* (Oxford, 1977; repr. Amherst, NY, 2004), p. 146, citing MS Ayasofya 221–222, Süleymaniye Library, Istanbul.

12 Specifically, Brockelmann lists *al-Wāḍiḥ* as *hauptsächlich nach* Ibn ʿAbbās, but does not acknowledge it as identical to the works he lists elsewhere under the names of Ibn ʿAbbās or Fīrūzābādī. See *GAL*, vol. I, p. 204, no. 8b; cf. *GAL*-S, vol. I, p. 334, no. 8.3b. This is very strange, inasmuch as he makes note of the entry for the Hyderabad manuscript of *al-Wāḍiḥ* in the Āṣafiya catalogue under headings for both Ibn ʿAbbās and Dīnawarī. Sezgin's entry on Dīnawarī likewise observes

the entry in the Āṣafiya catalogue, although once again no connection between *al-Wāḍiḥ* and the aforementioned work(s) of Ibn ʿAbbās, Kalbī and/or Fīrūzābādī is made. See *GAL*, vol. I, p. 42, no. 19.

13 Cf., e.g., *Quranic Studies,* pp. 132–3, where Wansbrough discusses the obtrusive nature of apparently 'masoretic' (text-critical and grammatical) material in Kalbī's 'haggadic' (narrative) commentary, even going so far as to speculate that the interest in variant readings exhibited by the extant text may betray the final editor's familiarity with the work of the grammarian Abū Zakariyyāʾ Yaḥyā al-Farrāʾ, who died in 207/822.

14 Note that Ṭabarī's putative rejection of both Muqātil and Kalbī is actually overstated, due to errors made by his biographer Yāqūt; see Herbert Berg, *Development of Exegesis*, pp. 124–5. While a close examination of Muqātil's *tafsīr* shows that the accusation of anthropomorphism has no basis in fact, at least judging by his extant writings (as established by Paul Nwyia, *Exégèse coranique et langage mystique* [Beirut, 1970], *passim*), there does seem to be better evidence that Kalbī did have Shiʿi leanings, although his works were generally transmitted by Sunni exegetes and not the Shiʿa. On the allegation that Kalbī was specifically among the *ghulāt* or radical Shiʿa, see Sean W. Anthony, *The Caliph and the Heretic: Ibn Sabaʾ and the Origins of Shīʿism* (Leiden, 2011), pp. 244–5.

15 See Walid A. Saleh, *The Formation of the Classical* Tafsīr *Tradition: The Qurʾan Commentary of al-Thaʿlabī (d. 427/1135)* (Leiden, 2004), pp. 16–17. Notably, many works that are essentially *tafāsir biʾl-raʾy* could be presented as *tafāsir biʾl-maʾthūr* through the imposition of *isnād*s reaching back to Companions, or through other means. This seems to be the case with *Tafsīr Muqātil*, for while the *isnād* attached to the hadiths that occasionally appear in the work reaches back only to Muqātil himself, in the introduction, Muqātil is claimed to have transmitted his commentary from (*ʿan*) thirty older authorities, including twelve Successors, among whom we find several of the most acclaimed scholars and traditionists of the age (including ʿAṭāʾ, ʿIkrima, Nāfiʿ and Ibn Sīrīn). The consensus seems to be that this pedigree was imposed on the work by one of Muqātil's students at some point in the course of its transmission.

16 Kalbī's *tafsīr* ceased to be copied and transmitted at some point, despite having been widely disseminated and quoted for centuries. On Kalbī's place in later Islamic scholarship, see Marco Schöller, '*Sīra* and *Tafsīr*: Muḥammad al-Kalbī on the Jews of Medina', in Harald Motzki, ed., *The Biography of Muḥammad: The Issue of the Sources* (Leiden, 2000), pp. 18–23. Regarding the extant *Tafsīr Muqātil*, while the author himself died in the mid–second/eighth century, the *isnād* associated with the 'Baghdādī' recension of his *tafsīr* may indicate a date of final redaction several generations later. Nevertheless, the work was supposedly already 'published' in the time of his student Hudhayl b. Ḥabīb (d. *c.* 190/805), if not in Muqātil's own lifetime. The work is thus probably one of the earliest genuine examples of the *tafsīr* genre still extant; on its transmission and authenticity, see Cornelius [Kees] H.M. Versteegh, 'Grammar and Exegesis: The Origins of Kufan Grammar and the *Tafsīr Muqātil*', *Der Islam* 67 (1990), pp. 207–9.

17 The other two works considered in this discussion are the *tafsīr*s of Sufyān al-Thawrī (d. 161/778) and Mujāhid b. Jabr (d. 104/722); Wansbrough pays less attention to them than to *Tafsīr Muqātil* and the so-called *Tafsīr al-Kalbī.* They are both almost certainly significantly later than the authorities to whom they are

attributed; for example, *Tafsīr Mujāhid* should probably be seen as a product of the third/ninth century, although Georg Stauth has argued for a date of final redaction around 120/738 (see the discussion in Herbert Berg, 'Weaknesses in the Arguments for the Early Dating of *Tafsīr*', in Jane D. McAuliffe, Barry D. Walfish and Joseph W. Goering, eds., *With Reverence for the Word: Medieval Scriptural Exegesis in Judaism, Christianity, and Islam* [Oxford, 2003], pp. 332–8).

18 Wansbrough, *Quranic Studies*, pp. 145–8. *Tafsīr Muqātil* seems to have been Wansbrough's model of what an early *tafsīr* should look like; all four of the characteristic traits or exegetical procedures noted here are very prominently and consistently represented in it.

19 See the introductory comments in Chapter 4 of Wansbrough, *Quranic Studies*, pp. 119–21.

20 On the distinction between encyclopaedic and madrasa commentaries, see Saleh, *The Formation of the Classical* Tafsīr *Tradition,* pp. 16–22, and compare Karen Bauer's remarks in the Introduction to this volume, esp. pp. 9–10.

21 See Abū'l-Ḥasan ʿAlī al-Wāḥidī, *al-Wajīz fī tafsīr al-Kitāb al-ʿazīz*, ed. Ṣafwān ʿAdnān Dāwūdī (Damascus and Beirut, 1995); Nāṣir al-Dīn ʿAbd Allāh b. ʿUmar al-Bayḍāwī, *Anwār al-tanzīl wa asrār al-taʾwīl*, publ. as *Tafsīr al-Bayḍāwī* (Beirut, 1990); al-Khāzin al-Baghdādī, *Lubāb al-taʾwīl* (Beirut, 1970–79).

22 For Wansbrough's dense but extremely insightful discussion of the similarities and differences between these two works, see *Quranic Studies,* pp. 130–6.

23 'The *narratio* was not, however, entirely obscured', as Wansbrough points out in his analysis of Kalbī's exegesis of the Joseph story; see *Quranic Studies,* pp. 134–5. Here he emphasises that *Tafsīr al-Kalbī* and *Tafsīr Muqātil* are both at their core 'haggadic' commentaries, and that they ultimately differ only in the amount of extraneous narrative material they bring to exegesis.

24 Rippin, '*Tafsīr Ibn ʿAbbās*', pp. 62–71 (quotation on p. 71). An obvious objection to Rippin's approach would be that the third/ninth and fourth/tenth centuries may seem rather early for us to be talking about 'school texts' and the formalisation of *tafsīr* as a discipline for study as part of a set curriculum, since the madrasa system was just coming into being at that time. On the other hand, the madrasa system did originate in the eastern Islamic world, and the prevalence of *nisba*s like Rāzī, Samarqandī and Harawī in the *isnād*s associated with the work do seem to point to a specifically eastern provenance for the text. Furthermore, even *Tafsīr Muqātil* might be seen as presuming some kind of pedagogical structure or intent, insofar as it may represent a digest of established interpretations of the Qur'an in general circulation in its time, but Rippin quite clearly has in mind a formal educational setting as the context that generated our *tafsīr*.

25 Obviously, it cannot be characterised as an early *tafsīr bi'l-raʾy* either – although not for the reasons that lead Meri to identify it as a *tafsīr bi'l-maʾthūr* based on a putative association with the Companion Ibn ʿAbbās (see note 6).

26 Admittedly, manuscripts are often preserved without formal titles or clear ascriptions, but again, none of the extant manuscripts contain any indication that the contents are allegedly the *tafsīr* of Kalbī. Although the work has been printed under the title *Tafsīr Ibn ʿAbbās* (e.g. *Tafsīr Ibn ʿAbbās al-musammā al-Wāḍiḥ fī tafsīr al-Qurʾān al-karīm*) and sometimes under the title *Tanwīr al-miqbās min Tafsīr Ibn ʿAbbās liʾl-Fīrūzābādī*, to my knowledge, it has never been printed as *Tafsīr al-Kalbī*.

27 Wansbrough, *Quranic Studies,* p. 146.

28 According to the information in Rippin, '*Tafsīr Ibn ʿAbbās*', pp. 75–6, 82–3, it seems that most of the printed editions he has examined do preserve this secondary *isnād*.

29 This figure's *nisba* is sometimes given as al-Ḥaḍramī or al-Ḥanẓalī. Note that if the text were in fact to be the authentic work of ʿAlī b. Isḥāq al-Samarqandī, the mid–third/ninth century is implausibly early to speak of a formalisation of education in the Qur'anic sciences, as Rippin seems to imagine.

30 '*Tafsīr Ibn ʿAbbās*', pp. 47–50, 60–2. Rippin gives a detailed chart of the *isnād*s through which the various extant witnesses to the text were handed down; see pp. 82–3. The question of the relationship between *al-Wāḍiḥ* and the authentic *tafsīr* of Kalbī is nevertheless complicated by Dīnawarī's own statement about that relationship; see the discussion on pp. 406–7.

31 Sezgin (*GAS*, vol. I, p. 42) gives the name as Abū Muḥammad ʿAlī b. Muḥammad b. Wahb al-Dīnawarī, but Brockelmann has Abū Muḥammad ʿAlī b. Muḥammad b. Wahb b. Mubārak al-Dīnawarī (*GAL*, vol. I, p. 204, no. 8b; Supp. I, p. 334, no. 8.3b).

32 Harald Motzki, 'Dating the So-Called *Tafsīr Ibn ʿAbbās*', *Jerusalem Studies in Arabic and Islam* 31 (2006), pp. 147–52. Throughout the body of his article, Rippin names 'his' Dīnawarī as ʿAbd Allāh b. Muḥammad, following Brockelmann and Sezgin, although the name actually appears as ʿAbd Allāh b. al-Mubārak in his chart of *isnād*s at the end of the article, presumably following the name as given in the manuscripts. Rippin no doubt assumes that the discrepancy in the names reflects the normal flux one finds in *isnād*s in general, although the consistency with which the name appears as Ibn al-Mubārak in the chains is striking. This includes the *isnād* for the manuscript witness to *al-Wāḍiḥ* that Rippin cites (MS Leiden 1651), which states that it is transmitted through ʿAbd Allāh b. Mubārak al-Dīnawarī.

33 Abū Muḥammad ʿAbd Allāh b. Muḥammad b. Wahb al-Dīnawarī [sic], *Tafsīr Ibn Wahb al-musammā al-Wāḍiḥ fī tafsīr al-Qur'ān al-karīm*, ed. Aḥmad Farīd (Beirut, 2003). This edition is based on the manuscript in the Āṣafiya library in Hyderabad (now the State Central Library) known to both Brockelmann and Sezgin. Strangely, this is an example of a manuscript of the *tafsīr* that omits Dīnawarī from the *isnād*s completely, which raises the question of how it could ever have been identified as Dīnawarī's *al-Wāḍiḥ* in the first place. Farīd seems to have been following the Āṣafiya's own identification of the manuscript. He reproduces its '*unwān* (ascription) from the title page or cover on page 10 of his edition; although it is difficult to read, one can in fact make out *fī* [*tafsīr*?] *al-Qur'ān…* [*Abū Muḥammad*?] '*Abd Allāh … al-Dīnawarī raḥimahu Allāh* here. In his introduction, Farīd mentions a number of older bibliographic references to the work; he also states that the *isnād*s of the work go back to Kalbī (with whose known exegetical traditions the work agrees), but that the connection with Ibn ʿAbbās is uncertain. Presumably because he sees the attributions found in older bibliographic authorities as credible, Farīd states that the work is unambiguously Dīnawarī's (*lā yūjad adnā shakk muṭlaqan fī ṣiḥḥat nisbat al-kitāb li-Ibn Wahb*); see p. 9 of Farīd's edition. But this still leaves the question of how or why the manuscript was initially identified as *al-Wāḍiḥ* totally unanswered, given Dīnawarī's complete absence from the text. Here, he is missing not only from the incipit and the *isnād* that

precedes the exegesis of *Surāt al-Fātiḥa* (Q. 1), but also from the *isnād* attached to *Surāt al-Baqara* (Q.2), which merely repeats the same chain as before; almost every other sura from *Sūrat Āl ʿImrān* (Q. 3) to *Sūrat al-Nās* (Q. 114) begins *ʿan Ibn ʿAbbās*, with *Sūrat al-Zumar* (Q. 39) and *Sūrat al-Ikhlāṣ* (Q. 112) beginning *qāla Ibn ʿAbbās*. Fortunately for us, the Āṣafiya manuscript was identified as the work of Dīnawarī at some point in its conservation, but how this could have happened completely eludes me.

34 Motzki, 'Dating the So-Called *Tafsīr Ibn ʿAbbās*', pp. 150, 161. On the Karrāmiyya, see Margaret Malamud, 'The Politics of Heresy in Medieval Khurasan: The Karramiyya in Nishapur', *Iranian Studies* 27 (1994), pp. 37–51 and bibliography therein.

35 As rendered in Rippin, '*Tafsīr Ibn ʿAbbās*', p. 55. I have not had access to either MS Leiden 1651 or the catalogue in which this note is reproduced; is Dīnawarī referring to his work as a *mukhtaṣar* (abbreviation) of that of Kalbī? The Hyderabad manuscript omits the note, which is unsurprising since it eliminates all traces of Dīnawarī from the *isnād*s. This cannot simply be Farīd's omission, since it is missing from the photo-reproduction of the first page of the manuscript as well as from the beginning of the edited text. See Dīnawarī, ed. Farīd, *Tafsīr Ibn Wahb*, pp. 11 and 13, respectively. Nor is the note included in the Istanbul manuscript attributed to Dīnawarī that was used by Wansbrough (MS Ayasofya 221–222), as van Ess attests in *Ungenützte Texte*, p. 53, n. 222; MS Ayasofya 221–222 is van Ess' source for the *tafsīr* as well, although he has to rely on MS Leiden 1651 for the text of Dīnawarī's introduction.

36 However, compare the recent work of Marco Schöller, '*Sīra* and *Tafsīr*', in which the author takes for granted the basic identity of Dīnawarī's *al-Wāḍiḥ* and Kalbī's *tafsīr*, and does not comment on the complexities of the work's transmission at all, despite Rippin's critique. The copious evidence he cites for the continuing prominence of *Tafsīr al-Kalbī* well into the medieval period appears to refute Rippin's assertion that the work was lost early on. However, it is unclear why Schöller thinks that evidence for the wide circulation of a commentary attributed to Kalbī would necessarily refute Rippin's conclusions about the actual authorship of the work that we have before us. He refrains from mentioning that neither his manuscript nor any other is actually ascribed to Kalbī, and merely assumes, as so many others have done, that the work really is his *tafsīr* simply on the basis of Kalbī's appearance in the *isnād* attached to some copies. Schöller's main witness, MS Chester Beatty Ar. 4224, Dublin, is, like many of the other manuscripts, simply attributed to Ibn ʿAbbās: see Arthur J. Arberry, *Chester Beatty Library: A Handlist of the Arabic Manuscripts* (Dublin, 1955), vol. V, p. 70, where MS Chester Beatty Ar. 4224, dated to Jumādā I 1159/1746), is listed as '*Tafsīr al-Qur'ān*, attr. to ʿAbd Allāh b. al-ʿAbbās (d. 68/668)'.

37 Motzki, 'Dating the So-Called *Tafsīr Ibn ʿAbbās*', pp. 151–2.

38 One might thus argue that it is actually irresponsible to identify the work as *Tafsīr Ibn ʿAbbās*, as Dīnawarī probably did not in fact originally attribute *al-Wāḍiḥ* to the ultimate authority of the Companion.

39 Motzki, 'Dating the So-Called *Tafsīr Ibn ʿAbbās*', pp. 159–61. Thus, if not for the copies of *al-Wāḍiḥ* that survive with the correct attribution (MS Leiden 1651 and MS Ayasofya 221–222, representing only a tiny fraction of the extant witnesses to this work), the only way we could discern that Dīnawarī was its true author would be

to deduce this from his prominence in the *isnād*s. However, this phenomenon is itself undermined by the many copies of the work in which the *isnād*s have been altered to partially or totally obviate him, which is precisely what leads Rippin to identify ʿAlī b. Isḥāq as the probable author of the work one or two generations earlier.

40 Curiously, a gossipy anecdote recorded in the *rijāl* literature points to the reverse pattern, namely that Muqātil claimed to be passing on traditions from Kalbī that the latter had not in fact transmitted to him. Supposedly, when Kalbī had the opportunity to reprove Muqātil for transmitting things in his name that he had not actually heard from him, Muqātil is said to have responded: 'The method by which we make a hadith interesting is the *isnād*'. See Ibn Ḥajar al-ʿAsqalānī, *Tahdhīb al-tahdhīb* (Hyderabad, 1325–27/1907–9; repr. Beirut, 1968), vol. X, pp. 282–3. However, it is unlikely that we should give this report much credence.

41 In pursuit of a larger project in which I trace the evolution of Muslim understandings of the Golden Calf story, I have been able to discern conspicuous patterns in the *tafsīr* traditions on the episode, which has invited comparative analysis of material found in numerous texts from throughout the history of the tradition. Close examination of the diachronic development of the interpretation of this one story has allowed me the opportunity to observe striking continuities and discontinuities in exegesis over the centuries. Moreover, attempting close readings of as many of the available sources as possible has given me different insights into the relationship between texts than might be gained from focusing on a single work, or limiting my investigation to texts from a specific period. The narrow focus involved in such research has its advantages, but I readily acknowledge its limitations as well, inasmuch as a much wider sample of material from *al-Wāḍiḥ* must be examined before any definite conclusions about its relationship to other sources can be reached.

42 The editions used are: Muqātil b. Sulaymān, *Tafsīr Muqātil b. Sulaymān*, ed. ʿAbd Allāh Maḥmūd Shiḥāta (Cairo, 1967); Abū'l-Ḥasan ʿAlī b. Aḥmad al-Wāḥidī, *al-Wajīz fī tafsīr al-Kitāb al-ʿazīz*, ed. Ṣafwān ʿAdnān Dāwūdī (Damascus and Beirut, 1995); Nāṣir al-Dīn ʿAbd Allāh b. ʿUmar al-Bayḍāwī, *Tafsīr al-Bayḍāwī* (Beirut, 1990); Jalāl al-Dīn al-Maḥallī and Jalāl al-Dīn al-Suyūṭī, *Tafsīr al-Qurʾān al-Karīm* [*Tafsīr al-Jalālayn*] (Būlāq, 1882). Finally, for readings from *al-Wāḍiḥ,* because I have not had access to manuscript witnesses, I have worked eclectically by comparing the Dār al-Kutub al-ʿIlmiyya edition of the *Tanwīr al-miqbās* (Beirut, 2000) with Farīd's edition of *al-Wāḍiḥ* (*Tafsīr Ibn Wahb*). There is almost no significant deviation between the two texts in the passages from *al-Wāḍiḥ* I have studied, except in one case (at Q. 2:51) where the gloss as attested in *Tanwīr al-miqbās* is noticeably augmented in *Tafsīr Ibn Wahb*. Forms are given exactly as they appear in the printed editions, which are sometimes fully vocalised and other times not. Since glosses from verses in *Tafsīr Muqātil* are not always given in the predictable place, I have included volume and page numbers where helpful. A dash denotes there is no specific gloss in this *tafsīr*.

43 Due to the wealth of intratextual glossing in *Tafsīr Muqātil*, one often finds the same verse or part of a verse explained differently in different contexts. In my discussion here, I will for the most part only refer to those readings in *Tafsīr Muqātil* that correspond closely to those found in *al-Wāḍiḥ*; the significance of the frequent coincidence between the two works is hardly undermined just because Muqātil sometimes happens to offer more than one option for interpreting a given verse or part of a verse.

44 *Tafsīr Muqātil*, vol. III, p. 40.

45 *Tafsīr Ibn Wahb*, vol. II, p. 12/*Tanwīr al-miqbās*, p. 334. The third form of the root *j-w-z* (i.e. *jāwaza*) means 'to surpass' and thus by extension 'to avoid' or 'to elude', but since the root generally connotes permission or license, I have taken this phrase to refer to receiving pardon.

46 Thus, there are serious obstacles to any attempt to chart the amount of agreement between *al-Wāḍiḥ* and *Tafsīr Muqātil* with any precision. Even if one narrows one's focus to the interpretations of a specific Qur'anic episode or theme, one hypothetically has to check every passage of *Tafsīr Muqātil* where a given topic may be discussed (and an apposite verse quoted) to find possible parallels with the exegesis of *al-Wāḍiḥ*. This task has recently become much easier due to the fact that www.altafsir.com now provides fully searchable versions of *Tafsīr Muqātil* and numerous other texts; at the very least, one can now attempt to track every instance in which a particular verse or part of a verse is cited in a given work.

47 Limiting ourselves to works of this genre is partially dictated by pragmatic concerns: in *tafsīr*s that feature a concise running paraphrase of scripture (whether or not this is supplemented by other material, such as hadith, extended narrative passages, philological material, etc.), it is simply easier to spot coincidences in phrasing. However, one might also argue that engaging in *periphrasis* requires exegetes to be as terse as possible, and so one would be most likely to see the resort to 'natural' synonyms for Qur'anic terms in precisely this context.

48 Note that Rippin compares the glosses in what he calls *Tafsīr Ibn ʿAbbās* on *Sūrat al-Fātiḥa* (Q. 1) with those found in the commentaries of Wāḥidī and *Tafsīr al-Jalālayn*, and concludes that all three works are fundamentally analogous in style and exegetical approach. Rippin, '*Tafsīr Ibn ʿAbbās*', pp. 77–81. However, Rippin is not looking for verbatim agreement here; rather, his point is to show the similarities in literary format and presentation between this text and other works to bolster his argument that it is not genuinely an early example of 'haggadic' exegesis as Wansbrough claimed.

49 On this important and underappreciated exegete, see Walid Saleh, 'The Last of the Nishapuri School of Tafsir: Al-Wāḥidī (d. 468/1076) and his Significance in the History of Qur'anic Exegesis', *Journal of the American Oriental Society* 126 (2006), pp. 223–43, and also Saleh's article in this volume, Chapter Three.

50 Thaʿlabī used Kalbī's *tafsīr* in three different recensions. See Abū Isḥāq Aḥmad al-Thaʿlabī, *al-Kashf wa'l-bayān fī tafsīr al-Qur'ān*, ed. Sayyid Kasrawī Ḥasan (Beirut, 2004), vol. I, p. 7. A cursory search of *al-Kashf* on www.altafsir.com indicates well over six hundred instances of Thaʿlabī citing Kalbī explicitly.

51 Thaʿlabī , *al-Kashf*, vol. I, p. 14. Note that Thaʿlabī gives the author's name as Abū Muḥammad ʿAbd Allāh b. al-Mubārak, and the text is referred to simply as *Kitāb Ibn al-Mubārak*.

52 '*Tafsīr Ibn ʿAbbās*', p. 60.

53 A classic example of this phenomenon is the apparent 'prophecy' of the destruction of the Second Temple in Mark 13, which establishes a *terminus post quem* of 70 CE for the gospel. For an analogous case from the hadith literature, see Michael Cook, 'Eschatology and the Dating of Traditions', *Princeton Papers in Near Eastern Studies* 1 (1992), pp. 23–47.

54 And thus the tradition's attribution to the Successor Qatāda b. Diʿāma would be impossibly anachronistic; see Rippin, '*Tafsīr Ibn ʿAbbās*', p. 60.

55 It appears that at some point in the second/eighth century, early traditions on the animation of the Calf, specifically those that attributed the transmutation of the golden statue into a flesh-and-blood animal to Moses' rival al-Sāmirī, began to be seen as objectionable on the basis of their crediting him with what seemed too much like an evidentiary miracle (*muʿjiza*), and were thus abandoned. By the fifth/eleventh century, for whatever reason, these traditions ceased to be suppressed and the transmutation tradition again became widespread. Possibly this has to do with the close association of this critique with the Muʿtazila, who almost certainly originated it, although it is also possible that the doctrinal establishment of the revelation of the Qur'an itself as Muhammad's evidentiary miracle simply made arguing over the exact nature of al-Sāmirī's animation of the Calf a moot point.

56 *Tafsīr Muqātil*, vol. II, p. 64 and vol. III, p. 38; *Tafsīr Ibn Wahb*, vol. I, p. 278 and vol. II, p. 11/*Tanwīr al-miqbās*, pp. 179, 333. All translations from primary sources, including the Bible and the Qur'an, are mine.

57 *Tafsīr Muqātil*, vol. III, p. 39.

58 Cf. Rudolph Peters, 'Waṣiyya', *EI²*, vol. XI, pp. 171–2, which only discusses the term's significance in *fiqh*.

59 See the magisterial treatment of Uri Rubin, 'Prophets and Progenitors in the Early Shīʿa Tradition', *Jerusalem Studies in Arabic and Islam* 1 (1979), pp. 41–65.

60 According to Q. 7:142, Moses made Aaron his *khalīfa*: *Take my place* (*akhlufnī*) *among my people, and deal justly; and do not follow the path of those who spread corruption*. Not only could *waṣiyya* be readily associated with *khilāfa* on the basis of this verse, but the 'testamentary' aspect of the *waṣiyya* is explicit.

61 See Rubin, 'Prophets and Progenitors', pp. 48–9, esp. n. 43. The concept of formal prophetic succession, especially among the antediluvians, has important precedents in Jewish and Christian literature in Late Antiquity, for example in the Syriac *Cave of Treasures*.

62 *Tafsīr Ibn Wahb*, vol. II, pp. 11–12/*Tanwīr al-miqbās*, p. 334.

63 *Tafsīr Muqātil*, vol. I, p. 105. This tradition appears to be an allusion to the Biblical Calf narrative: *And when Joshua heard the sound of the people shouting, he said to Moses, There is a sound of war in the camp! He replied: It is not the sound of the winners winning, nor the sound of the losers overcome; rather, it is the sound of rejoicing that I hear* (Exodus 32:17–18).

64 *Tafsīr Ibn Wahb*, vol. II, p. 11/*Tanwīr al-miqbās*, p. 333 on Q. 20:86; cf. vol. I, p.278/p.180 on Q. 7:150.

65 For example, Thaʿlabī quotes Muqātil's version of the tradition in both his *tafsīr* and his *qiṣaṣ* work. Ṭabarī's version of the tradition, cited in the name of Ibn ʿAbbās, is closer to the wording of the Biblical precursor, but notably omits the term *fitna* entirely: 'When Moses returned to his people, as he drew near to them, he heard their voices (*aṣwātahum*; note that both Arabic *ṣawt* and Hebrew *qôl* can be either 'sound' or 'voice'), and he said: Verily, I hear the voices of people rejoicing …' Muḥammad b. Jarīr al-Ṭabarī, *Jāmiʿ al-bayān ʿan taʾwīl āy al-Qurʾān*, ed. Maḥmūd Muḥammad Shākir and Aḥmad Muḥammad Shākir (Cairo, 1954–68), vol. XIII, pp. 122–3, no. 15129.

66 Although the term *hijra* is not mentioned in either *tafsīr* in this connection, one might presume that the precedent of Muhammad's breaking with his tribe, the Quraysh, would be an obvious subtext here.

67 *Tafsīr Muqātil*, vol. III, p. 39.

68 *Tafsīr Ibn Wahb*, vol. II, p. 12/*Tanwīr al-miqbās*, p. 334.
69 Ibid.
70 To be more precise, although later authors sometimes say that Aaron conceded to the idolatrous demands of the people in order to avoid *fitna*, the direct and strident endorsement for causing bloodshed and *fitna* that both *Tafsīr Muqātil* and *al-Wāḍiḥ* attribute to Moses is extremely unusual. Perhaps this is merely a matter of nuance, but the directness with which these early texts confront the issue is quite conspicuous.
71 I have devoted a separate study to the changes in the Muslim attitude regarding violence within the community that these texts seem to reflect: '"Turn in Repentance to your Creator, then Slay Yourselves": The Levitical Election, Atonement, and Secession in Early and Classical Islamic Exegesis', *Comparative Islamic Studies* 6 (2010), pp. 101–50. The sense of *fitna* as 'trial' tends to be paramount in exegesis of the episode on account of Q. 20:85, [*God*] *said: We have subjected your people to a trial in your absence* (*qad fatannā qawmaka min baʿdika*), *and al-Sāmirī has led them astray*.
72 Cf., e.g., the brief gloss at Q. 7:150 and Q. 20:84 about Aaron's specific appeal to Moses as *ibn ummī*, 'son of my mother', being a deliberate tactic employed to beseech Moses to be merciful; this seems to imply that Aaron was fully cognisant of his guilt (*Tafsīr Ibn Wahb*, vol. I, p. 278 and vol. II, p. 12/*Tanwīr al-miqbās*, pp. 180, 334).
73 Motzki, 'Dating the So-Called *Tafsīr Ibn ʿAbbās*', pp. 155–7, citing Muḥammad b. Aḥmad Ibn Shādhān al-Qummī, *Miʾat manqaba min manāqib amīr al-muʾminīn* (Qumm, 1987), pp. 149–50. Cf. *Tafsīr Ibn Wahb*, vol. II, p. 289/*Tanwīr al-miqbās*, p. 521.
74 The question then arises: is it possible that Muqātil may have the story from Kalbī somewhere else in his *tafsīr*, applied to the interpretation of a different verse?
75 *Tafsīr Muqātil*, vol. III, p. 796.
76 The exegesis of these verses and the reports about the *muqtasimūn* have been studied closely by Herbert Berg: see 'Competing Paradigms in the Study of Islamic Origins: Qurʾān 15:89–91 and the Value of *Isnād*s', in *Method and Theory in the Study of Islamic Origins*, ed. Herbert Berg (Leiden, 2003), pp. 259–90.
77 Motzki, 'Dating the So-Called *Tafsīr Ibn ʿAbbās*', pp. 152–3.
78 This is entirely predictable. Motzki emphasises the point that although Dīnawarī certainly used Kalbī's *tafsīr* in writing his own commentary, *al-Wāḍiḥ* is by no means identical to it, so naturally Dīnawarī must have also drawn on other texts and traditions in composing his *tafsīr*. In claiming that Ibn al-Jawzī's tradition attributed to Kalbī is more likely to be original than the exegesis represented in *al-Wāḍiḥ*, Motzki observes, quite trenchantly, that the former is stylistically congruous with other extant traditions attributed to Kalbī, in contrast to the general laconism of *al-Wāḍiḥ*. Rippin makes a similar point about the incongruity of the straightforward, austere style of presentation of *al-Wāḍiḥ* and the extended narrative traditions usually attributed to Kalbī by later authors. This seems to corroborate his argument regarding the date and provenance of the *tafsīr*, in contrast to Wansbrough's identification of the commentary as the authentic work of Kalbī.
79 Motzki, 'Dating the So-Called *Tafsīr Ibn ʿAbbās*', pp. 153–5. In this connection, it is worth noting Cornelius [Kees] Versteegh's theory regarding the origin of *Tafsīr Muqātil*: he posits that various members of the Kūfan school of grammar, including

Farrāʾ, as well as Muqātil made use of a common source, namely a *tafsīr* authentically stemming from Ibn ʿAbbās, which was considerably augmented in later stages of transmission (See Versteegh, 'Grammar and Exegesis', pp. 234 ff.). One could conjecture that Versteegh would probably see the similarities between *al-Wāḍiḥ* and *Tafsīr Muqātil* I have observed here as proof that the former in some way represents – at least in part – the genuine *Tafsīr Ibn ʿAbbās* that Muqātil knew and transmitted.

80 *Tafsīr Muqātil*, vol. II, pp. 436–7. There is a whole complex of extant traditions cited in later sources that follows Muqātil's anomalous interpretation of these verses; Berg speculates that the narrative found in *Tafsīr Muqātil* explaining how the Jews and Christians became 'divided into groups' may actually have been the source for numerous hadiths on the subject that were later attributed to other authorities (Berg, 'Competing Paradigms', pp. 278–9).

81 *Tafsīr Muqātil*, vol. II, pp. 437–40. Muqātil's conflation of the stories seems to me to be entirely deliberate, intended to weave what were originally two separate accounts together. Muqātil says that the *muqtasimūn* were sixteen men led by al-Walīd b. al-Mughīra (the others are not specified; the Kalbī account in Ibn al-Jawzī specifies sixteen men including Walīd), but he then calls them *al-mustahziʾūn min Quraysh*, practically in the same breath (*Tafsīr Muqātil*, vol. II, p. 438). Later on this latter group is specified as being made up of seven men, so presumably Muqātil thinks they were a subset of the first group.

82 In the passage as given by Ibn al-Jawzī, the *muqtasimūn* allege that Muhammad is a soothsayer, a sorcerer, a poet and a seducer; most of these insults are found in the account in *Tafsīr Muqātil* as well, which also adds 'liar' (*kadhdhāb*) and 'bedeviled' (*majnūn*) to the list. In *al-Wāḍiḥ*, the imprecations are instead made against the Qur'an – another seemingly unique feature – although the list of insults is perhaps somewhat closer to Muqātil's, and includes *kadhb*. On the other hand, in the Ibn al-Jawzī passage, the Qur'an is also alleged to consist of 'fables' (*asāṭīr al-awwalīn*), an element that again links it with Muqātil, who cites the verse *When they are asked, 'What has your Lord sent down?' they reply, 'Just fables'* (Q. 16:24) as one of the statements of the *muqtasimūn*.

83 *Tafsīr Ibn Wahb*, vol. I, p. 427/*Tanwīr al-miqbās*, p. 281. The context of the story as it is usually recounted makes it clear that the crime of the *muqtasimūn* must have occurred while Muhammad was still in Mecca. Dīnawarī's version clearly contradicts Muqātil's account, since according to Muqātil the *muqtasimūn*, at least those who were also among the *mustahziʾūn*, were all picked off individually by Gabriel and thus could not have died at Badr. In Dīnawarī's account, the only one who is explicitly mentioned as being in both groups is Walīd, but this is clearly internally inconsistent since he cannot have been killed by Gabriel with the other 'mockers' – 'among them was al-Walīd b. al-Mughīra al-Makhzūmī; an arrow struck his ankle and he died from it' – and have died at Badr. Cf. the accounts of Farrāʾ, *Maʿānī al-Qurʾān*, ed. Ibrāhīm Shams al-Dīn (Beirut, 2002), vol. II, p. 24 at Q. 15:89–90, and Ibn Isḥāq, in Abū Muḥammad ʿAbd al-Malik Ibn Hishām, *al-Sīra al-nabawiyya*, ed. Muḥammad Nabīl Ṭarīfī (Beirut, 2003), vol. I, pp. 198–200 on the *muqtasimūn* and vol. II, pp. 28–9 on the *mustahziʾūn*; cf. the translation of this work by Alfred Guillaume, *The Life of Muhammad: A Translation of Isḥāq's* [sic] *Sīrat Rasūl Allāh* (Oxford, 1955), pp. 121–2 and 187.

84 In particular, the list of the *muqtasimūn* given by Dīnawarī does not seem to agree exactly with that of Muqātil nor of Ibn Isḥāq, nor with that of any other extant

early source I have examined.

85 *Tafsīr Muqātil*, vol. III, p. 40.

86 *Tafsīr Ibn Wahb*, vol. II, p. 12/*Tanwīr al-miqbās*, p. 334.

87 The image of Gabriel's *faras balqāʾ unthā* also appears in one other passage in *al-Wāḍiḥ*, in commenting on Q. 67:1–2 (*Tafsīr Ibn Wahb*, vol. II, p. 423/*Tanwīr al-miqbās*, p. 606): here, the *faras* appears as the avatar of Life itself, as God is here described as creating Life in the likeness of a white mare and Death in the likeness of a black ram.

88 Ṭabarī, *Jāmiʿ al-bayān*, vol. II, pp. 63–4, no. 918 (from Ibn ʿAbbās: *faras unthā wadīq*, a mare in heat); vol. II, pp. 64–5, no. 919 (from al-Suddī: *faras al-ḥayāt*); and vol. II, pp. 67–8, no. 922 (from Ibn Zayd: *dābbat Jibrīl*, *faras unthā*). Thaʿlabī, *al-Kashf*, vol. I, pp. 112–13 (at Q. 2:50, *faras unthā wadīq*; at Q. 2:51, *faras al-ḥayāt*). Cf. also Thaʿlabī's *Qiṣaṣ al-anbiyāʾ al-musammā biʾl-ʿArāʾis* [*al-majālis*] (Cairo, 1921), bottom of p. 138 (*ramaka bayḍāʾ*, a gray-white mare, and *faras unthā wadīq*) and pp. 144–5 (from al-Suddī: *faras yuqālu lahā faras al-ḥayāt wahiya balqāʾ unthā lā tuṣību shayʾan illā ḥayiya*, a horse called the 'Horse of Life', a piebald mare, everything it touched came to life; from Kalbī: *faras balqāʾ khuṭūṭuhā madd al-baṣar ʿalayhā tarakkaba al-anbiyāʾ kullahum*, a mare that ranged as far as the eye can see, upon whom all the prophets rode).

89 Thaʿlabī, *al-Kashf*, vol. III, p.74.

90 ʿAbd al-Razzāq b. Hammām al-Ṣanʿānī, *Tafsīr ʿAbd al-Razzāq*, ed. Maḥmūd Muḥammad ʿAbduh (Beirut, 1999), vol. II, p. 375, no. 1825.

91 The horse is typically called *faras al-ḥayāt* in other traditions that refer to it, while in *al-Wāḍiḥ*, it is *dābbat al-ḥayāt*. It is possible that the comment in the printed edition of *Tafsīr ʿAbd al-Razzāq* has been corrupted due to haplography, causing the omission of the second *faras*; that is, the reading is not *innaʾl-faras allatī kāna ʿalayhā Jibrīl kānat al-ḥayāt* but *innaʾl-faras allatī kāna ʿalayhā Jibrīl kānat faras al-ḥayāt*.

92 The different editions of this work give varying arrangements of this passage. I am following the alternative arrangement noted by the editors in Farrāʾ, *Maʿānī al-Qurʾān*, ed. Aḥmad Yūsuf Najātī and Muḥammad ʿAlī al-Najjār (Beirut, 1980), vol. II, p. 189, inasmuch as this seems to me to be the correct order based on the parallel versions of this tradition. As cited by Farrāʾ, this seems at most to be a paraphrase of Kalbī, given the differences in phrasing from most versions of this tradition (such as calling the Calf *thawr* and not *ʿijl*). Note that Farrāʾ himself is cited, which indicates redaction of the work at a point after his lifetime; Wansbrough notes that no trace of this work is extant before the emergence of the main recension in the third/ninth century.

93 Notably, the characteristic emphasis on the lifelessness of the Golden Calf found in both *Tafsīr Muqātil* and *al-Wāḍiḥ* is also found in the work of Farrāʾ. Thus, at Q. 7:148, he first glosses *ʿijl jasad* as *jasad mujawwaf* (hollow body), and then explains *lahu khuwār* by noting that 'in the *tafsīr* it is stated that it lowed only once'. The latter statement agrees with a corresponding gloss in Muqātil (*khāra marra wāḥida* [it lowed once], *Maʿānī al-Qurʾān*, vol. I, p. 393; cf. *lam yaṣūt ghayr marra wāḥida* [it lowed but once], *Tafsīr Muqātil*, vol. II, p. 64). But the acknowledgment that the Calf actually came to life (*ḥayiya*) here in his comments on the version of the episode in *Sūrat Ṭā Hā* (Q. 20) is anomalous in this respect.

94 Rippin notes that quotations of the *tafsīr* of Kalbī by later authors do not match the corresponding material in *al-Wāḍiḥ*, citing the study of Giorgio Levi della

Vida, 'Al-Kalbī e gli scismi cristiani', *Revista degli studi orientali* 12 (1932), pp. 327–31 ('*Tafsīr Ibn ʿAbbās*', pp. 52–3). Judging by both Motzki's discussion of the tradition on the Night Journey and the example I have provided here, this does not seem to be entirely true. I do not wish to imply that the quotations present in classical texts necessarily function as a reliable 'control' for the Kalbī tradition, since such attributions could be totally fabricated. However, I should note that Kalbī's poor reputation among later scholars might lead us to conclude that attributions to him are by and large genuine, since there was nothing to be gained by associating *tafsīr* traditions with him.

95 *Tafsīr Muqātil*, vol. IV, pp. 161–2; vol. III, pp. 132–3; cf. Shahab Ahmed, 'The Satanic Verses Incident in the Memory of the Early Muslim Community: An Analysis of the Early *Riwāyahs* and their *Isnāds*' (Unpublished PhD dissertation, Princeton, 1999), pp. 179–88. The key phrase *idhā tamannā alqā'l-shayṭān fī umniyyatihi* is often translated as something like *when he recited Satan casts something into it* …, but in early exegesis this phrase was clearly understood to refer to the cognitive process, and I have translated it thus here. Ahmed also notes that a similar tradition, regarding a different episode in which Muhammad was tempted to make a concession to idolatry, appears at Q. 17:73 in *Tafsīr Muqātil*, vol. II, pp. 542–4 ('Satanic Verses Incident', pp. 272–6).

96 Ahmed, 'Satanic Verses Incident', pp. 172–4. Hūd used Yaḥyā's *tafsīr* extensively, and thus probably got this tradition from him.

97 *Tafsīr Ibn Wahb*, vol. II, p. 354/*Tanwīr al-miqbās*, p. 562. That Dīnawarī specifies the form in which each goddess was worshipped and by whom is interesting given Kalbī's purported interest in both genealogy and pre-Islamic religion, but the information provided here is quite generic (e.g. 'Allāt was a statue worshipped at Ṭā'if by Thaqīf') and cannot be thought to bear the particular stamp of Kalbī.

98 While Dīnawarī's gloss admits the possibility of satanic intervention in a general way, he interprets two of the most critical terms in such a manner as to mitigate their implications: *Every messenger* – one who transmits scripture [*mursil*] – *and prophet* – one who only speaks [*muḥaddith*], and does not transmit scripture – *We sent before you* – O Muhammad – *Satan cast something corrupt into what he revealed* [this must be the sense of *umniyya* here] – into the recitation of the messenger or the speech of the prophet – *when he was revealing something* [this must be the sense of *tamannā* here] – the messenger by reciting, the prophet by speaking … (*Tafsīr Ibn Wahb*, vol. II, p. 43/*Tanwīr al-miqbās*, pp. 354–5).

99 In this, Dīnawarī is profitably compared with Ṭabarī, of whom he was a contemporary. Despite Ṭabarī's image as one of the architects of Sunni orthodoxy, even his work contains a significant amount of 'proto-orthodox' exegesis. Cf., e.g., Abdulkader Tayob's discussion of Ṭabarī's attitude towards *fitna*, which he interprets as not entirely partaking of the quietistic ethic typical of later Sunni approaches to the subject: Abdulkader Tayob, 'An Analytical Survey of al-Ṭabarī's Exegesis of the Cultural Symbolic Construct of *Fitna*', in Gerald R. Hawting and Abdul-Kader A. Shareef, eds., *Approaches to the Qur'ān* (London, 1993), pp. 157–72. Inasmuch as Ṭabarī preserves the Satanic Verses tradition and Dīnawarī rejects it, it is actually the latter who is more in line with later standards of Sunni orthodoxy, despite his apparent marginalisation as a suspected Karrāmī.

Appendix: Comparison of Glosses in *Tafsīr Muqātil* and *al-Wāḍiḥ* of al-Dīnawarī with other Commentaries on the Golden Calf Episode (Q. 2:51–4; Q. 7:148–52; Q. 20:83–98)*

Verse number	Qur'anic text	*Tafsīr Muqātil*	*al-Wāḍiḥ* of Dīnawarī	*al-Wajīz* of Wāḥidī	*Tafsīr* of Bayḍāwī	*Tafsīr al-Jalālayn*
Q. 2:51	ثُمَّ اتَّخَذْتُمُ الْعِجْلَ	—	عبدتم العجل	معبوداً وآلهاً	إلها ومعبودا	الذي صاغه لكم السامري إلها
	مِن بَعْدِهِ	من بعد انطلاق موسى إلى الجبل (1.104)	من بعد انطلاقه إلى الجبل	من بعد خروجه عنكم للميقات	من بعد موسى عليه السلام أو مضيه	بعد ذهابه إلى ميعادنا
	وَأَنتُمْ ظَالِمُونَ	—	أى ضارون لأنفسهم بالمعصية وواضعون العبادة في غير موضعها**	واضعون العبادةَ في غير موضعها ...	بإشراككم	باتخاذه لوضعكم العبادة في غير محلها
Q. 2:54	إِنَّكُمْ ظَلَمْتُمْ أَنفُسَكُم	ضررتم (1.106)	ضررتم أنفسكم	—	—	—
	بِاتِّخَاذِكُمُ الْعِجْلَ	إلها	بعبادتكم العجل	إلهاً	—	إلها

خالقكم من عبادته	فاعزموا على التوبة والرجوع إلى من خلقكم براءٍ من التفاوت ...	يعني خالقكم قالوا كيف نتوب؟ قال ...	إلى خالقكم قالوا كيف نتوب فقال لهم ...	يعنى خالقكم فقالوا كيف لنا بالتوبة يا موسى		فَتُوبُوا إِلَىٰ بَارِئِكُمْ
أي ليقتل البريءُ منكم المجرم	إتماماً لتوبتكم بالبخع	أَي ليقتلِ البريءُ منكم المجرم	فليقتل الذي لم يعبد العجل الذي عبده	يعنى يقتل بعضكم بعضاً		فَاقْتُلُوا أَنفُسَكُمْ
—	—	—	صاغ	بني إسرائيل (2.64)	**Q. 7:148**	وَاتَّخَذَ قَوْمُ مُوسَىٰ
بعد ذهابه إلى المناجاة	من بعد ذهابه للميقات	من بعد انطلاقه إلى الجبل	من بعد انطلاق موسى إلى الجبل	حين انطلقوا إلى الطور		مِن بَعْدِهِ
الذي استعاروه من قوم فرعون بعلَّة عرس فبقي عندهم	التي استعاروا من القبط حين هموا بالخروج من مصر	التي بقيت في أيديهم ممَّا استعاروه من القبط	من ذهبهم	—		مِنْ حُلِيِّهِمْ
صاغه لهم منه السامري بدل لحما ودما	بدنا ذا لحم ودم أو جسدا من الذهب خالياً من الروح ونصبه على البدل	لحماً ودماً	مجسدا صغيرا	صورة عجل جسد يقول ليس فيه روح		عِجْلًا جَسَدًا

* For the sources and conventions used in this appendix, see p. 439, n. 42.

** In *Tanwīr al-miqbās,* the gloss here reads simply: ضارون

Verse number	Qur'anic text	*Tafsīr Muqātil*	*al-Wāḍiḥ* of Dīnawarī	*al-Wajīz* of Wāḥidī	*Tafsīr* of Bayḍāwī	*Tafsīr al-Jalālayn*
Q. 7:148 (cont.)	لَّهُ خُوَارٌ	له صوت البهائم ثم لم يصوت غير مرة واحدة	صوت صاغ لهم السامري	صوت	صوت البقر	صوت يسمع
	أَلَمْ يَرَوْا	بني إسرائيل	ألم يعلم قوم موسى	يعني قوم موسى	—	—
	اتَّخَذُوهُ	العجل إلها	عبدوه بالجهل	أَي إلهاً ومعبوداً	تكرير للذم أي اتخذوه إلها	إلها
	وَكَانُوا ظَالِمِينَ	مشركين	صاروا ضارين لأنفسهم بعبادتهم إياه	مشركين	واضعين الأشياء في غير مواضعها فلم يكن اتخاذ العجل بدعا منهم	باتخاذه
Q. 7:149	وَلَمَّا سُقِطَ فِي أَيْدِيهِمْ	ندامة وندموا	ندموا على عبادتهم العجل	أَي ندموا على عبادتهم العجل	كناية عن اشتداد ندمهم ...	ندموا على عبادته
	وَرَأَوْا	وعلموا	علموا وأيقنوا	—	وعلموا	علموا
	أَنَّهُمْ قَدْ ضَلُّوا	أشركوا بالله (1.106) عن الهدى (2.64)	عن الحق والهدى	قد ابتلوا بمعصية الله	باتخاذ العجل	بها وذلك بعد رجوع موسى

—	[قراءات]	—	بالعقوبة	في العقوبة	الْخَاسِرِينَ	
من جهتهم شديد الحزن	شديد الغضب وقيل حزينا	حزيناً	حزينا حين سمع صوت الفتنة	حزينا في صنع القوم في عبادة العجل	غَضْبَانَ أَسِفًا	Q. 7:150
إلها	—	يعني اليهود الذين كانوا في عصر النبي	عبدوا ... ومن اقتدى بهم	إلهاً (2.65)	إِنَّ الَّذِينَ اتَّخَذُوا الْعِجْلَ	Q. 7:152
عذاب	وهو ما أمرهم به من قتل أنفسهم	عذاب في الآخرة	سيصيبهم سخط	يعني عذاب	سَيَنَالُهُمْ غَضَبٌ مِّن رَّبِّهِمْ	
فعذبوا بالأمر بقتل أنفسهم وضربت عليهم الذلة إلى يوم القيامة	وهي خروجهم من ديارهم وقيل الجزية	وهي الجزية	مذلة بالجزية	يعني مذلة فصاروا مقهورين إلى يوم القيامة	وَذِلَّةٌ فِي الْحَيَاةِ الدُّنْيَا	
على الله بالإشراك وغيره	على الله ولا فرية أعظم من فريتهم وهي قولهم هذا إلهكم وإله موسى	كذلك أعاقب مَن اتَّخذ إلهاً دوني	الكاذبين على الله	يعني الذين افتروا فزعموا أن هذا إلهكم يعني العجل وإله موسى	وَكَذَلِكَ نَجْزِي الْمُفْتَرِينَ	

Verse number	Qur'anic verse	*Tafsīr Muqātil*	*al-Wāḍiḥ* of Dīnawarī	*al-Wajīz* of Wāḥidī	*Tafsīr* of Bayḍāwī	*Tafsīr al-Jalālayn*
Q. 20:84	قَالَ هُمْ أُولَاءِ	يجيئون من بعدي (3.36)	يجيئون	يجيئون بعدي	ما تقدمتهم إلا بخطأ يسيرة لا يعتد بها عادة ...	بالقرب مني يأتون
Q. 20:85	فَإِنَّا قَدْ فَتَنَّا قَوْمَكَ	يعنى الذين خلفهم مع هارون على ساحل البحر سوى السبعين	ابتلينا	أَي ألقيناهم في الفتنة واختبرناهم	ابتليناهم بعبادة العجل	—
	مِن بَعْدِكَ	بالعجل	من بعد انطلاقك إلى الجبل	من بعد خروجك من بينهم	بعد خروجك من بينهم ...	بعد فراقك لهم
	وَأَضَلَّهُمُ السَّامِرِيُّ	أمرهم بعبادة العجل (1.105, 3.37)	أمرهم بذلك السامري	بدعائهم إلى عبادة العجل	باتخاذ العجل والدعاء إلى عبادته	فعبدوا العجل
Q. 20:86	فَرَجَعَ مُوسَىٰ إِلَىٰ قَوْمِهِ	—	فلما رجع ... مع السبعين سمع صوت الفتنة وصار ...	—	بعد ما استوفى الأربعين وأخذ التوراة	—
	غَضْبَانَ أَسِفًا	حزينا لعبادتهم العجل (3.37)	حزينا	شديد الحزن	حزينا بما فعلوا	من جهتهم شديد الحزن

يجب	يجب عليكم	أن يجب ... باتّخاذ العجل	يجب عليكم ... سخط وعذاب	أن يجب عليكم عذاب (3.37)	أَرَدتُّمْ أَن يَحِلَّ عَلَيْكُمْ غَضَبٌ مِّن رَّبِّكُمْ	
حلى فرعون	من حلي القبط	أثقالاً من حلي آل فرعون	من حلي آل فرعون	من حلي آل فرعون الذهب والفضة (3.37)	أَوْزَارًا مِّن زِينَةِ الْقَوْمِ	Q. 20:87
صاغه من الحلي لحما ودما	من تلك الحلي المذابة	لحماً ودماً	مجسدا صغيرا بلا روح	بالجسد أنه لا روح فيه (3.38)	عِجْلًا جَسَدًا	Q. 20:88
صوت يسمع	صوت العجل	صوت	صوت	له صوت (3.38)	لَّهُ خُوَارٌ	
السامري وأتباعه ... موسى ربه هنا وذهب يطلبه	السامري ومن افتتن به ... فنسيه موسى وذهب يطلبه عند الطور	فتركه ها هنا وخرج يطلبه	أى شئ هذا قال لهم السامري فترك السامري طاعة الله وأمره ويقال قال السامري ترك موسى الطريق	قال السامري وحده ... فترك موسى ربه وهوهذا ... (3.38)	فَقَالُوا هٰذَا إِلَـٰهُكُمْ وَإِلَـٰهُ مُوسَى فَنَسِيَ	
—	ولا يقدر على إنفاعهم وإضرارهم	—	لا يقدر لهم	لا يقدرالعجل (3.38)	وَلَا يَمْلِكُ لَهُمْ	Q. 20:89
—	بالعجل	ابتليتم بالعجل	ابتليتم بالخوار وعبادة العجل	ابتليتم بالعجل (3.39)	إِنَّمَا فُتِنتُم بِهِ	Q. 20:90

Verse number	Qur'anic verse	*Tafsīr Muqātil*	*al-Wāḍiḥ* of Dīnawarī	*al-Wajīz* of Wāḥidī	*Tafsīr* of Bayḍāwī	*Tafsīr al-Jalālayn*
Q. 20:90 (cont.)	فَاتَّبِعُونِي	على ديني (3.39)	في دينه	على ديني	في الثبات على الدين	في عبادته
	وَأَطِيعُوا أَمْرِي	قولي (3.39)	قولي ووصيتي	—	—	فيها
Q. 20:91	لَن نَّبْرَحَ عَلَيْهِ	لن نبرح على العجل واقفين نعبده كقوله ... لا أبرح يعني لا أزال (3.39)	لن نزال على عبادة العجل	على عبادته مقيمين	على العجل وعبادته	نزال
Q. 20:93	أَلَّا تَتَّبِعَنِ	ألا اتبعت أمري فانكرت عليهم (3.39)	لم لا تتبع وصيتي ولم تناجزهم القتال	أن تتبعني وتلحق بي وتخبرني	أن تتبعني في غضب لله المقاتلة مع من كفر به	لا زائدة
	أَفَعَصَيْتَ أَمْرِي	افتركت قولي (3.39)	أفتركت ... وصيتي	حيث أقمتَ فيما بينهم وهم يعبدون غير الله	بالصلابة في الدين والمحاماة علية	بإقامتك بين من يعبد غير الله تعالى
Q. 20:94	وَلَمْ تَرْقُبْ قَوْلِي	ولم تحفظ وصيتي (3.39)	لم تنظر قدومي فمن ذلك تركت القتال معهم	لم تحفظ وصيتي في حسن الخلافة عليهم	—	تنتظر ... فيما رأيته في ذلك

شأنك الداعي إلى ما صنعت	ثم أقبل عليه وقال له منكرا ما خطبك أي ما طلبك له أو ما الذي حملك عليه	فما قصَّتك وما الذي تخاطب به فيما صنعت	فما الذي حملك على عبادة العجل	فما أمرك؟ ... فما حملك على ما أرى (3.40)	قَالَ فَمَا خَطْبُكَ يَا سَامِرِيُّ	Q. 20:95
زينت	زينته وحسمته لي	حدَّثتني نفسي	زينت	زينت لي نفسي (3.40)	سَوَّلَتْ لِي نَفْسِي	Q. 20:96
لا تقربني فكان يهيم في البرية وإذا مس أحدا أو مسه أحد حما حميعا	خوفا من أن يمسك أحد فتأخذك الحمى ومن مسك فتتحامى الناس ويتحاموك وتكون طريدا وحيدا كالو حش النافر	لا تخالط أحداً ولا يخالطك	لا تخالط أحدا ولا يخالطك	لا تخالط الناس (3.40)	تَقُولَ لَا مِسَاسَ	Q. 20:97
لعذابك	في الآخرة	لعذابك	أجلا يوم القيامة	في الأخرة ... يوم القيامة (3.40)	وَإِنَّ لَكَ مَوْعِدًا	
مقيما تعبده	ظللت على عبادته مقيما	معبودك	أقمت عليه عابدا	العجل ... أقمت عليه عابدا له (3.40)	إِلٰهِكَ الَّذِي ظَلْتَ عَلَيْهِ عَاكِفًا	
بالنَّار	[قراءات]	بالنَّار	بالنار ويقال لنبردنه بالمبرد	فبرده بالمبرد وأحرقه بالنار (1.106) بالنار وبالمبرد (3.40)	لَّنُحَرِّقَنَّهُ	