On the Edge of Bultmann's Demythologisation
Muḥammad 'Abduh's Hermeneutical Avicennism on the Qur'an as a Source of Scientific Knowledge

Mohammad Abu Shareea

Published online: 18 July 2019

Submit your article to this journal

View related and/or other articles in this issue

ON THE EDGE OF BULTMANN'S DEMYTHOLOGISATION: MUḤAMMAD 'ABDUH'S HERMENEUTICAL AVICENNISM ON THE QUR'AN AS A SOURCE OF SCIENTIFIC KNOWLEDGE

Mohammad Abu Shareea[*]

Abstract: This study explores Muḥammad 'Abduh's (d. 1905) attitude towards interpreting the Qur'an as a source of scientific knowledge through analysing the fruitful phase of his intellectual project in which he wrote a commentary on some chapters of the Qur'an. Relying on three arguments, the study concludes that 'Abduh rejects the notion that the Qur'an is a source of scientific knowledge since he claims such scientific phenomena are mentioned in the Qur'an for the sake of reasoning only and knowing God's blessings. The three arguments are: first, 'Abduh's hermeneutics in which he stands with the philosophers' ones against the scholars' polemics. Second, applying the rule "*al-dāl 'ala al-wuqū' dāl 'ala al-imkān*" (Its existence is a proof for its possibility to exist) on his commentary and thus a clear statement shall prove his attitude. Third, reading 'Abduh's project as an attempt to revive Avicenna's hermeneutics through modern science. In addition, the study compares 'Abduh with Bultmann's demythologisation and concludes that 'Abduh's medieval philosophical expertise – Kalām – in addition to the nature of the language of the Qur'an prevented him from fully rejecting the worldview of scripture as what Bultmann did. Lastly, I have argued that the Qur'anic concept of God in addition to the cosmographical one could be demythologised in accordance with 'Abduh's hermeneutics.

Keywords: *Hermeneutics, Muḥammad 'Abduh, Avicenna, Bultmann*

MUḤAMMAD 'ABDUH'S INTELLECTUAL CONTEXT[1]

Delving into 'Abduh's views on such a controversial topic without having a background regarding the sources of his intellectual project may confuse the reader. Therefore, highlights

---

[*]   Mohammad Abu Shareea is currently undertaking his PhD in systematic theology at the School of Divinity, University of Edinburgh. He completed his bachelor's and master's in Islamic studies (2014 and 2016, respectively) with the Faculty of Sharī'a at the University of Jordan.
[1]   I have analysed 'Abduh's project in this article through the edition of his complete works: *al-A'māl al-Kāmila Lil-Imām al-Sheikh Muḥammad 'Abduh* [The Complete Works of Sheikh Muḥammad 'Abduh] (Cairo: Dār al-Shurūq, 1993) by the notable Azhari scholar Muḥammad 'Amāra. For the most recent study on 'Abduh's thought, see: Kateman Ammeke, *Muḥammad 'Abduh and His Interlocutors: Conceptualizing Religion in a Globalizing World* (UK: Brill, 2019).

of 'Abduh's life shall be given, such as his engagements with the Western world and interactions with al-Azhar, in which he made contributions.[2]

As for his engagement with the Western world, 'Abduh visited it many times during his life. For instance, one of his journeys was to Sicily, which had an impact on his thought.[3] Second, he learnt French language to have access to Western literature in order to benefit from it.[4] Third, he had relations with Western leading figures by sending letters to them, such as priest Isaac Taylor and Russian philosopher Leo Tolstoy (d. 1910).[5] Furthermore, English philosopher Herbert Spencer (d. 1903) asked for a meeting with 'Abduh when the latter came to Brighton two months before Spencer's death.[6] Fourth, his well-known interaction with the Western world is his encounters with Gabriel Hanotaux and Ernest Renan polemics against Islam.[7] These engagements gave 'Abduh experiences regarding Western scholarship, which can be found through the following highlights: First, through his discussions, he shows expertise on Western scholarship since he mentions detailed information, quotations and works regarding central figures in Western tradition.[8] Second, he usually refers to Protestants through his discussions. This indicates how this school of thought influenced his thought since they adopt the notion that we should go back to the Bible and this is what he is calling for throughout his works.[9] In summary, 'Abduh has engaged well with Western thought. Furthermore, this attitude includes Western scholarship on Islam; he says: "It is better to track our intellectual history through the Western scholarship since they have information which we do not have through ours."[10]

Moving to his interactions with al-Azhar, the context was very complicated at that time; the Western world was developing through new philosophical approaches as the rise of empiricism had a huge impact on the development of thought and technology; 'Abduh states that empiricism and induction changed the history of knowledge[11] by the writings of Francis Bacon (d. 1626).[12] In contrast, the Islamic world was in a critical status. Therefore, 'Abduh's main project was to harmonise Western and Eastern intellectual contexts, which is why his commentary on the Qur'an was mainly focused on social change following the footsteps of Ibn Khuldūn (1406). However, his contributions were considered a way for the domination of Western thought over the Islamic one, namely al-Azhar, as what the grand scholar of al-Azhar

---

[2]   For other aspects of 'Abduh's project other than the religious reforms, refer to Kinda AlSamara, "Muḥammad 'Abduh: Islam and New Urbanity in the Nineteenth-Century Arab World," *Australian Journal of Islamic Studies* 3, no. 1 (2018).

[3]   'Abduh, *al-A'māl al-Kāmila*, vol. 2, 169.

[4]   Ibid, vol. 2, 329.

[5]   Ibid, vol. 3, 355-61; vol. 4, 728.

[6]   Ibid, vol. 3, 509. See: Kateman Ammeke, "Tellings of an Encounter: A Meeting between Muḥammad 'Abduh, Herbert Spencer and Wilfrid Blunt (1903)," *Philological Encounters* 3 (2018).

[7]   'Abduh, *al-A'māl al-Kāmila*, vol. 3, 217; 333.

[8]   For instance, he mentions Voltaire, Thomas Aquinas, Tertullian, John Draper, Gustave Le Bon, Delambre, Walter Scott, Max Nordau. See respectively: Ibid, vol. 3, 228; vol. 3, 260; vol. 3, 281; vol. 3, 286; vol. 3, 323; vol. 3, 323; vol. 3, 367; vol. 5, 495.

[9]   'Abduh, *al-A'māl al-Kāmila*, vol. 5, 36.

[10]   Ibid, vol. 2, 460.

[11]   Ibid, vol. 2, 445.

[12]   Ibid, vol. 3, 323.

stated through 'Abduh's discussion regarding the reconstruction of al-Azhar's thought that it should add natural sciences to be studied;[13] thus, 'Abduh's reformation is in terms of a primarily intellectual and positive renaissance of Islam.[14] In addition, the foremost leading figures of the Ottoman Empire criticised him; Muṣtafa Ṣabrī Efendī (d. 1954), who was the last "Shaykh al-Islām of the Ottoman Empire," considered his thought as the way for denying the concept of miracles, which is the central proof for religions[15] since one of 'Abduh's definitions of the prophethood is the natural knowledge and act of truth without mentioning anything related to miracles.[16] This is a part of a school of thought that focuses on the Prophet's intelligence rather than his miracles to avoid contradicting modern science and it emerged at that time as a response to the dominated scientific method supported by influential figures as the polymath 'Abbās al-'Aqqād (d. 1964).[17] Therefore, Muṣtafa Ṣabrī's main argument against this intellectual line – including 'Abduh – that any sign of the Prophet's life rather than his miracles is not considered as a clear one that he was sent by God.[18] Other accusations of 'Abduh's thought are found through other influential figures such as al-Kawtharī (d. 1952), who is the adjunct to the last "Shaykh al-Islām of the Ottoman Empire," in which he considers 'Abduh as a follower of the doctrine of *Waḥdat al-Wujūd* (the unity of being).[19] Others, such as the Mālikī scholar Muḥammad 'Illīsh (d. 1882), met 'Abduh and accused him of being a revival of the Mu'tazilite school of thought through spreading their views in al-Azhar.[20.] Furthermore, although he does not adopt all the views of his teacher Jamāl al-Dīn al-Afghānī (d. 1897), 'Abduh's attempt to defend al-Afghānī against stories of his unorthodoxy and irreligion,[21] besides justifying his masonic views since he had only political and social purpose,[22] played a significant role in having this attitude. The previous responses show how critical the context was at that time for 'Abduh, which made his intellectual contributions debatable.

I'll move now to 'Abduh's commentary on the Qur'an to a general analysis of it before delving to the core point of this study, which is his attitude towards the Qur'an as a source of scientific knowledge.

---

[13]   Ibid, vol. 3, 205.

[14]   Fazlur Rahman. *Islam and Modernity: Transformation of an Intellectual Tradition* (USA: University of Chicago Press: 1982), 65.

[15]   Muṣtafa Ṣabrī, *Mawqif al-'Aqil wal-'Ilm wal-'Ālam min Rabb al-'Ālamīn wa-'Ibādihī al-Mursalīn* [The Attitude of Philosophy, Science, and the World Towards God and His Sent Messengers] (Beirut: Dār Iḥyā' al-Turāth al-'Arabī, 1981), 1, 99.

[16]   'Abduh, *al-A'māl al-Kāmila*, vol. 4, 40-41.

[17]   Ibid, vol. 4, 11-12.

[18]   Ibid, vol. 4, 161.

[19]   Muḥammad Zāhid al-Kawtharī, *Maqalat al-Kawtharī* [Al-Kawtharī's Writings] (Cairo: al-Maktabah al-Tawfīkiyyah, no ed.), 335.

[20]   'Abduh, *al-A'māl al-Kāmila*, vol. 3, 210.

[21]   Nikki Keddie, *Sayyid Jamāl al-Dīn al-Afghānī: A Political Biography* (USA: University of California Press: 1972), 5.

[22]   Elie Kedourie. *Afghani and 'Abduh: An Essay on Religious Unbelief and Political Activism in Modern Islam* (London: Frank Cass & Co. Ltd., 1966), 22.

MUḤAMMAD 'ABDUH'S COMMENTARY ON THE QUR'AN[23]

'Abduh starts his commentary with a demonstration through an introduction that new understandings of the Qur'anic text are always open since it is for all times and places;[24] he stands against *taqlīd* (blind imitation) through questioning central intellectual systems that dominated the rules of interpreting the Qur'an such as Sibawayh's and Khalīl's grammatical systems[25] besides Aristotelian logic.[26] However, to the best of my knowledge through reading his complete works, he has never mentioned that it is accepted to stand against modern science through its new definition if any verse contradicts it.[27] In addition, he states Greek philosophy does not have a place nowadays since science based on facts is leading.[28] Accordingly, it seems 'Abduh is starting a methodology of dealing with the interpretation of the Qur'an that is influenced by modern science, like Shrush stated it is to "revive the Qur'an."[29] In addition, 'Abduh claims his conception of belief in God opened the way to reject the theory of the God of gaps, which he criticised through his commentary on the verse: "Yes, whoever submits his face to Allah while being a doer of good will have his reward with his Lord. And not fear will there be concerning them, nor will they grieve" (Q. 2:112). He states those who believe in a superpower that controls everything will ascribe any phenomena to it if they do not know the reason behind it. On the other hand, those who believe in God know He guided humanity to track the reason behind anything that happens.[30]

Being fascinated by science and empiricism, 'Abduh critically approached many religious topics related to science. For instance, regarding Noah's flood, although he does not present a final attitude towards it, he states the answer cannot be known except by a deep knowledge of geology apart from knowledge of history and scripture.[31] Regarding miracles, he does accept the notion that miracles might be natural laws that have not yet been discovered.[32] Regarding the birds that were sent to stop the one who wanted to destroy Mecca, he says: "This could be

---

[23] 'Abduh started his commentary on the Qur'an in 1899 and died in 1905 before completing it. Therefore, he wrote full commentaries only on the first three chapters (*al-fātiḥa*, *al-baqara* and *āl-'imrān*) and part of the fourth chapter (*al-nisā'*) besides commentaries on the last small chapters of the Qur'an, which he wrote through his life. This means he had written it during his last phase; thus, any previous views that contradict his ones here are abrogated or understood in accordance to his views through the commentary. See: 'Abduh, *al-A'māl al-Kāmila*, vol. 1, 251; vol. 5, 269.

[24] 'Abduh, *al-A'māl al-Kāmila*, vol. 4, 9.

[25] Ibid, vol. 4, 721. The authority of Sibawayh has been examined across the Islamic intellectual history. See: Fakhr al-Dīn al-Rāzī, *al-Maḥṣūl Fī 'Ilm al-Uṣūl* [The Conclusion of the Principles of Islamic Jurisprudence] (Beirut: Mu'assasat al-Risāla, 1992), 1, 210.

[26] 'Abduh, *al-A'māl al-Kāmila*, vol. 4, 743. The Aristotelian logic has also been examined by Muslim intellectuals. See: al-Ṭabāṭbā'ī, *Al-Mufakkirūn al-Muslimūn Fī Muwājahat al-Manṭiq al-Ūnānī* [The Muslim Intellectuals Against the Greek Logic] (Beirut: Dār Ibn Ḥazm, 1990).

[27] This attitude is found through Islamic intellectual history as Ibn Taymiyya's through his polemics against Muslim scholars that they had rejected some true philosophical conclusions regarding the nature of spheres. See: Ibn Taymiyya. *Al-Radd 'Ala al-Mantiqiyyīn* [A Refutation of the Greek Logicians] (Lahore: Dār Turjumān al-Sunnah, 1976), 260.

[28] 'Abduh, *al-A'māl al-Kāmila*, vol. 1, 307-8.

[29] Mahmoud Sadri, *Reason, Freedom, & Democracy in Islam: Essential Writings of 'Abdilkarim Soroush* (UK: Oxford University Press: 2000), 29.

[30] 'Abduh, *al-A'māl al-Kāmila*, vol. 4, 263-4.

[31] Ibid, 532-3.

[32] Ibid, vol. 3, 416.

the microbes which convey smallpox."[33] Regarding magic, he states it is not an extraordinary thing and can be learned by anybody. He supports this attitude through the verse on magic by saying:

> The wisdom behind mentioning the magic in brief through this story is the fact that the Qur'an orders us to follow science to know it. In contrast, if the Qur'an had presented it in detail, then it would be valid for that age only since science is changeable.[34]

Furthermore, he states, regarding the verse on those who practice magic – "And they learn from them that by which they cause separation between man and his wife. But they do not harm anyone through it except by permission of Allah" (Q. 2:102):

> there is no indication through this verse that they – magicians – do up normal things. However, anything which can be proven by science would be considered as an interpretation for this verse.[35]

In addition, 'Abduh supports the pre-Adamite hypothesis that intellectual creatures existed before Adam. He supports his assumption through his views on archaeologists' findings that human communities developed through the usage of surviving tools across history until they reached a phase in which they could receive God's revelation.[36] In support of this, he states we should follow what the archaeologists conclude about the first "father" of humanity since the Bible claims he is Adam and the Chinese heritage claims another one.[37] This indicates how much the new scientific approach shapes his way of understanding scripture.

One of 'Abduh's well-known controversial interpretations is his metaphorical one of the story of creation in the Qur'an. In the Islamic context, there are no signs for any metaphorical interpretations of this story. That is to say, all commentaries on this verse accept it as a real event that had happened.[38] Furthermore, even the mystical interpretation "*al-Tafsīr al-Ishārī*" of this story is not considered as a metaphorical one since it does not deny it as an event that existed; it goes further to add another mystical meaning without rejecting the first one. For instance, Ibn 'Ajībah (d. 1809), the well-known mystical exegete, accepts this story. However, he adds a mystical interpretation that claims the soul of a human being is part of the "greatest soul" of Adam.[39] This attitude of Muslim theologians towards accepting the story of creation is due to the lack of any scientific objection against it at that time; thus, there is no need to have a metaphorical interpretation. For instance, the verse that comes before the verses on the story

---

[33]   Ibid, vol. 5, 505.
[34]   Ibid, vol. 4, 245.
[35]   Ibid, vol. 4, 245.
[36]   Ibid, vol. 4, 537-40.
[37]   Ibid, vol. 5, 160-1.
[38]   See: Al-Ṭabarī, *Jāmi' al-Bayān 'An Ta'wīl Āy al-Qur'ān* [The Comprehensive Demonstration of the Qur'anic Interpretation] (Beirut: Mu'assasat al-Risāla, 1994), 1, 161; Al-Zamakhsharī, *Tafsīr al-Kashshāf* [The Unveiled Interpretation] (Beirut: Dār al-Ma'rifah, 2009), 1, 70.
[39]   Ibn 'Ajībah, *Al-Baḥr al-Madīd Fī Tafsīr al-Qur'ān al-Majīd* [The Huge Sea of Interpreting the Glorious Qur'an] (Cairo: al-Hay'a al-Maṣriyyah al-'Āmmah Lil-Kitāb, 1999), 1, 95. See also: Najmuddīn Kubrā, *Al-Ta'wīlāt al-Najmiyya Fī al-Tafsīr al-Ishārī al-ṣūfī* [The Mystical Interpretations of Najmuddīn] (Beirut: Dār al-Kutub al-'Ilmiyya, 2009), 1, 141; Ismail Ḥuqqī, *Rūḥ al-Bayān* [The Soul of Manifestation] (Beirut: Dār Iḥyā' al-Turāth al-'Arabī, no ed.), 1, 92. Shihāb al-Dīn al-Alūsī, *Rūḥ al-Ma'ānī* [The Soul of Meanings] (Beirut: Dār Iḥyā' al-Turāth al-'Arabī, no ed.), 1, 218.

of creation states the heavens are seven and the scientific community at that time accepted the existence of nine spheres. Therefore, the influential exegete al-Baydāwī (d. 1286) mentions this scientific objection and tries to compromise it with the seven heavens. However, he does not mention any scientific objection regarding the story of creation while interpreting it.[40] This indicates that the story of creation was accepted due to the lack of any scientific objection.

As for 'Abduh, his views on the story of creation are controversial since he suggests a metaphorical understanding of this story[41] and this has opened a whole debate regarding his project. Influential scholar of Qur'anic studies Fadl Ḥasan 'Abbās (d. 2011) expressed the feelings of those who appreciate 'Abduh but disagree with him regarding this interpretation by saying: "We wished that 'Abduh could have accepted what have been accepted by all Muslim scholars regarding the interpretation of this story without going far away in this figurative one."[42] This indicates that what 'Abduh has presented is not found through the whole of Islamic tradition. As for 'Abduh's metaphorical interpretation, he suggests:[43] God's telling the angels that He will create a human being means that all creatures will be tools for this unique creature – human being – in order to guide this existence to its highest level of perfection. Second, the angels' response that this unique creature may corrupt the earth means human beings have powerful abilities and the freedom to do anything. Third, teaching Adam the "Names" means providing him with the abilities to benefit from the earth. Fourth, presenting the "Names" to the angels means the angels have limits on their abilities. Fifth, the prostrating of the angels means the facilitation of those natural powers to Adam. Sixth, Satan's refusal to prostrate to Adam means human beings cannot control the evil in this world. 'Abduh applies the same method to the second part of the story of creation regarding Adam's sin after eating from the tree through the theory of the "aṭwār" (phases) of humanity through history.[44] Accordingly, this indicates 'Abduh's passion towards the new scientific method.

---

[40] Al-Baydāwī, *Anwār al-Tanzīl wa-Asrār al-Ta'wīl* [The Lights of Revelation and the Secrets of Interpretation] (Beirut: Dār Ihyā' al-Turāth al-'Arabī, no ed.), 1, 66.

[41] 'Abduh, *al-A'māl al-Kāmila*, vol. 4, 134-9; vol. 4, 126-7.

[42] Fadl Ḥasan 'Abbās, *Qaṣaṣ al-Qur'ān al-Karīm* [The Stories of the Qur'an] (Amman: Dār al-Nafā'is, 2010), 148.

[43] 'Abduh, *al-A'māl al-Kāmila*, vol. 4, 144-5.

[44] Ibid, vol. 4, 145-7. It is worth commenting on Mark Sedgwick's statement regarding 'Abduh: "He – 'Abduh – defended Darwin, arguing that natural selection was a device used by God, citing Qur'an 2:251, which states that 'If God had not repelled some men by means of others, the earth would have been corrupted'". See: Mark Sedgwick, *Muḥammad 'Abduh* (Oxford: Oneworld, 2010), 87. This is questionable for two reasons. First, Mark did not distinguish between the words of 'Abduh and Rashīd Rida, since he refers to *al-Manār Tafsīr* which is ascribed to both figures without distinguishing between them as what Muḥammad 'Amāra did in the edition of the complete works of 'Abduh. This is the same confusion that happened to Charles C. Adams through his study on 'Abduh, although he did not claim 'Abduh supports Darwinism (See: Charles Adams. *Islam and Modernism in Egypt: A Study of the Modern Reform Movement Inaugurated by Muḥammad 'Abduh* (UK: Oxford University Press: 1933), 141-2). Second, Sedgwick thought that using the word "*al-intikhāb al-ṭabī'ī*" (natural selection) in this context means Darwinism. In fact, 'Abduh did not even mention this word; it was used by Rida. Furthermore, the context of using *al-intikhāb al-ṭabī'ī* by both figures is about history not science, which is the story of Goliath and David; both figures meant the social laws – put by God – through history in which righteous and bad people must always be in struggle in order to prevent the corruption of the earth. Rashīd Rida says: "And that is what sociologists call "*al-Intikhāb al-Ṭabī'ī*" (natural selection) which prevents the corruption of earth." Accordingly, the natural selection as is known in scientific communities has not been mentioned in

MUḤAMMAD 'ABDUH ON THE QUR'AN AS A SOURCE OF SCIENTIFIC KNOWLEDGE

Proving whether 'Abduh accepts this notion requires certain criteria that shall be referred to in case of contradictory views through his complete works. Thus, this study is based on three arguments; First, 'Abduh's hermeneutics in which he justifies the philosophers' views on bodily resurrection against scholars' polemics since philosophers argued it is impossible for the body to exist after death.[45] Second, it will apply one of the intellectual rules to prove 'Abduh's position, which is "*al-Dāl 'Ala al-Wuqū' Dāl 'Ala al-Imkān*" (Its existence is a proof for its possibility to exist)[46] and thus one clear sample is enough for proving this attitude. Third, comparing his project with Avicenna's shall support the results of this study since the latter accepted it through philosophy, namely regarding the concept of God. Accordingly, this would probably give a certain attitude towards his project.

The First Argument: 'Abduh's Hermeneutics

Across Muslim intellectual history, there have been three main approaches to the verses in the Qur'an. First, the acceptance of the outward wording of scripture. This is known as "*ithbāt*" (affirmation).[47] This was widely accepted through early Islam before the interactions with other traditions such as Greek philosophy. Second, the acceptance of the outward wording of scripture if it does not contradict reason, and if it does, then it should be interpreted figuratively.[48] This is known as "*ta'wīl*" (allegorical interpretation) and was applied by Muslim scholars after their engagement with Greek tradition, although some of its applications can be traced back to the Prophet's time in which some of his companions asked him about specific verses considered as *mutashābihāt* (ambiguous). Third, the rejection of the Qur'an as a source of detailed knowledge of things since it was revealed in accordance to the intellectual context of people to guide them through what they could understand; thus, philosophy is the reference for such investigations. This is known as "*tamthīl*" (likenesses) and applied by Muslim philosophers[49] since they claim that, although some verses could be understood figuratively,

---

this context. See: Rashīd Rida, *Tafsīr al-Manār* [Al-Manār's commentary] (Cairo: Dār al-Manār, 1947), 2, 497. Note: 'Abduh was aware of this term since he translated the work *al-Rad 'Ala al-Dahriyyīn* (A Refutation of Naturalists) by his teacher, Jamāl al-Dīn al-Afghānī, in which the latter rejects the theory of evolution. See: Jamāl al-Dīn al-Afghānī. *al-Rad 'Ala al-Dahriyyīn* [A Refutation of the Naturalists] (Egypt: Maṭba'at al-Mawsū'āt, 1902), 9-12; Nikki Keddie, *An Islamic Response to Imperialism* (USA: University of California Press: 1983).

45 This topic is known through Muslim intra-faith discussion as *i'ādat al-ma'dūm* (the return of the annihilated). See: Al-Ṭūṣī. *Talkhīṣ al-Muḥaṣṣal* [The Conclusion of the *Muḥaṣṣal*] (Beirut: Dār al-Adwā', 1985), 390.

46 See: Al-Ījī, *Al-Mawāqif Fī 'Ilm al-Kalām* [The Positions of the Muslim Scholasticism] (Beirut: 'Ālam al-Kutub, 1999), 342. Although it is meant in a different context, it can be used here for demonstrating that one clear sample is enough to track a certain method; thus, the other unclear samples, which may indicate other views, shall be understood in accordance to this.

47 Some scholars argue the attitude of early Islam scholars was "*tafwīḍ*" (delegating the meaning to God).

48 Henrik Lagerlund (ed.). *Encyclopaedia of Medieval Philosophy: Between 500 and 1500* (Netherlands: Springer, 2011), 1, 344.

49 This method could be traced back across Islamic intellectual history to the time of al-Kindī (d. 873), who defined its basis. See: Fāṭima Ismā'īl, *Manhaj al-Baḥth 'Ind al-Kindī* [Al-Kindī's Research Method] (Virginia: International Institute of Islamic Thought, 1998), 76.

other verses cannot due to the nature of language and original hearers' understanding;[50] thus, scriptures should be understood through this way.

Muslim scholars, such as al-Ghazālī, declared the *kufr* (infidelity) of Muslim philosophers like Avicenna. The central argument for this is the philosophers' rejection of topics that cannot be figuratively interpreted due to the large number of verses found through the Islamic tradition regarding the same topic[51] as bodily resurrection since Muslim philosophers reject it.[52] For instance, Jalāl al-Dīn al-Dawānī (d. 1502), the influential philosophical theologian, states the philosophers' rejection of bodily resurrection is a rejection of the Qur'anic teachings. Then comes 'Abduh's approach while he was writing a commentary on it: he states the philosophers' interpretation of bodily resurrection is like al-Dawānī's one regarding the detailed information of Islamic eschatology; thus, their hermeneutical approach is accepted.[53]

One last point regarding 'Abduh's hermeneutics is his attitude towards the concept of God. He differentiates between the hermeneutics regarding the verses on the concept of God: he states there are two ways for Muslim scholars to demonstrate the transcendence of God if there is any verse that may indicate a meaning against it.[54] First, the way of the *salaf* (predecessors), which is the belief that nothing is like God and to delegate the meaning to Him. Second, the way of the *khalaf* (latter), which is to use the figurative interpretation. 'Abduh chooses the first way; however, his demonstration of the way of the *salaf* may be questioned since he says: "But we should know that God teaches us through meanings that are close to our intellectual abilities, so we can benefit from them in our acts."[55] In my view, this is not the way of the *salaf*; it is the way of philosophers like Avicenna who repeated this notion many times through his epistle on resurrection. As for the vast majority of the *salaf* and *khalaf* – excluding Muslim philosophers – they accepted the notion that we know God the same way he knows Himself.[56] 'Abduh was familiar and well-rooted in the philosophical tradition, namely the Avicennan

---

[50]   Avicenna, *Al-Risāla al-Aḍḥawiyya Fī al-Ma'ād* [Al-Aḍḥā Epistle on Resurrection] (Tehran: Mu'assasat Shams Tabrīzī, 1962), 99.

[51]   This is known in Islamic terminology as "*ma'lūm min al-dīn bil-ḍarūra*" (the non-negotiable commonly known matters of religion).

[52]   See: al-Ghazālī, *Tahāfut al-Falāsifa* [The Incoherence of Philosophers] (Cairo: Dār al-Ma'ārif, 1966), 292-3; al-Ghazālī, *Qānūn al-Ta'wīl* [The Rule of Interpretation] (Damascus:1993), 21.

[53]   Muḥammad 'Abduh, *al-Sheikh Muḥammad 'Abduh Bayna al-Falāsifa wal-Kalāmiyyīn* [Sheikh Muḥammad 'Abduh Between the Philosophers and the Scholastics] (Cairo: Dār Iḥyā' al-Turāth al-'Arabī, 1958), 606. 'Abduh's attitude could be interpreted in two ways. First, he was switching between two hermeneutical approaches, which are the *tamthīl* of philosophers and *ta'wīl* of scholars, before accepting *tamthīl* through stating the Qur'an does not teach scientific knowledge. The second way of interpreting it is to claim he had already adopted the conception of *tamthīl*; however, he uses this argument for the sake of arguing according to scholars' rules only. However, this does not matter for this study since the following sections shall prove he adopted *tamthīl* while approaching the Qur'an as a source of scientific knowledge.

[54]   'Abduh, *al-A'māl al-Kāmila*, vol. 4, 122.

[55]   Ibid.

[56]   Fakhr al-Dīn al-Rāzī, *Nihāyat al-'Uqūl Fī Dirayat al-Uṣūl* [The Pinnacle of the Intellects in Knowing the Principles of Religion] (Beirut: Dār al-Dhakhā'ir, 2015), 3, 211; Ibn Taymiyya, *al-Risālah al-Tadmuriyya* [The Epistle of Palmyra] (Cairo: Maktabat al-Sunnah al-Muḥammadiyya), 34.

one;[57] thus, I argue that his whole project is mostly to revive Avicenna's hermeneutics through modern science not philosophy.[58]

The Second Argument: 'Abduh's Statement on the Qur'an and Science

'Abduh does not consider the Qur'an as a source of scientific knowledge arguing: "The Qur'an mentions the natural phenomena not as a demonstration of natural facts; it is for the sake of knowing God through his blessings found in this nature."[59] Furthermore, he supports this notion while he was demonstrating the rationality of Islam compared to Christianity,[60] since the latter claims the Bible has the knowledge of everything even the science of "*al-ma'ādin*" (mineralogy), according to him.[61] This methodology is repeated many times through his commentary. For instance, his views on the verse: "Or it is like a rainstorm from the sky within which is darkness, thunder and lightning" (Q. 2:19). First, he criticises al-Sayūṭī's commentary on it that the thunder is an angel and the lighting is his whip. This was a step for demonstrating his method on the scientific verses in the Qur'an; he says:

> Regarding the reality of thunder, lighting, and the thunderclaps; it is not a part of the Qur'anic topics; it is a part of "*'Ilm al-Ṭabī'ah*" (physics) in which the intellect knows it without the interference of revelation, and thus those verses on the scientific phenomena are mentioned for the sake of reasoning only.[62]

The central sample that shall be a proof for adopting this position is 'Abduh's commentary on the chronological order of creating the heavens and earth in the Qur'an. He says, after suggesting a way to reconcile this issue since some verses are apparently contradictory:

> All in all, God has mentioned the creation of the earth and the heavens in the Qur'an for the sake of knowing his power, wisdom, and his blessings upon us; *lā li-bayān tarīkh takwīnihimā bil-tartīb, li'anna hāthā laysa min maqāṣid al-dīn* (Not for demonstrating the chronological order of their creation since it is not a part of the religious purposes). The one who wants to know more about this topic should ask the cosmologists.[63]

---

[57]   This is clearly found through his defence of their approaches. See 'Abduh, *al-Sheikh Muḥammad.*

[58]   I think, due to the critical context found through al-Azhar while presenting his commentary on the Qur'an, 'Abduh could only present ideas without referring them to the origins since the Muslim philosophers are considered as unbelievers according to the religious tradition applied by al-Azhar, which is the Ash'arites. I have mentioned through the first section 'Abduh's interactions with al-Azhar, and one of them was the Mālikī scholar, Muḥammad 'Allīsh, accusation of 'Abduh as being a revival of the Mu'tazilite school of thought. Therefore, it would be more problematic for 'Abduh if he supported some ideas of philosophers, such as Avicenna, since the Mu'tazilites are considered Muslims according to Muslim scholars not as philosophers. Accordingly, there is a possibility 'Abduh has done this to avoid being prevented from teaching at al-Azhar or it could be his own interpretation of early Islam scholars.

[59]   'Abduh, *al-A'māl al-Kāmila*, vol. 1, 186-7.

[60]   Ibid, vol. 3, 297.

[61]   Ibid, vol. 3, 281.

[62]   Ibid, vol. 4, 119-20. More precisely, this is not al-Sayūṭī's view only; it is the views of Muslim scholars from early Islam. See: Markaz al-Dirāsāt wal-Ma'lūmāt al-Qur'āniyya, *Mawusū'at al-Tafsīr Bil-Ma'thūr* [Encyclopedia of the Traditional Interpretation] (Beirut: Dār Ibn Ḥazm, 2017) 2, 130. This again questions his attempt to define his hermeneutics as being the same as the *salaf.*

[63]   'Abduh, *al-A'māl al-Kāmila*, vol. 4, 119-20.

This is a very clear statement regarding his hermeneutics; it cannot be *ta'wil* (figurative interpretation) for two reasons. First, the figurative interpretation cannot be applied on the verse of the chronological order of creating heavens and earth due to its nature through language, and 'Abduh did not apply it. Second, 'Abduh did not mention anything regarding the scholars' *al-mu'āridh al-'aqlī* (the objection from reason) in order to be a reason behind saying his statement. 'Abduh was only compromising the apparent contradiction of the two verses; he is not saying it should be understood figuratively nor be accepted as it is and he states the Qur'an does not mention such phenomena for demonstrating a knowledge but for encouraging reasoning and remembering His blessings. Accordingly, this cannot be read except by Avicenna's *tamthīl* and this leads us to the third argument, which is the comparison between 'Abduh and Avicenna.

The Third Argument: 'Abduh and Avicenna

This new method adopted by 'Abduh is not known through the history of the Qur'anic commentaries of Muslim theologians, even the closest ones to philosophy as the neo-Ash'arite Fakhr al-Dīn al-Rāzī or the Mu'tazilite al-Zamakhsharī (d. 1144) who use the scientific verses in the Qur'an as a source of scientific knowledge. For instance, al-Rāzī's commentary on the verse – "It is He who created for you all of that which is on the earth. Then He directed Himself to the heaven, and made them seven heavens" (Q. 2:29) – is full of discussions regarding the problematic issues of whether the earth was created first or the heaven in which he tries to compromise the Qur'anic verses with reason.[64] As for 'Abduh, he concludes the Qur'an was not revealed to discuss such topics because it is related to cosmologists. This is Avicenna's hermeneutics in which he states the Torah and Qur'an were revealed in accordance to people's intellectual contexts; thus, you find anthropomorphic language therein regarding the concept of God. However, the reality of the conception of God is known through philosophical investigation.[65] It could be said that Avicenna's focus on the topic of the concept of God is due to the dominant intellectual method at that time, which was the Greek philosophical tradition, since one of the most debatable issues between philosophy and theology in the Middle Ages is God and the eternity of the world. Accordingly, I argue through this study that 'Abduh's rejection of the Qur'an as a source of scientific knowledge could be traced back to Avicenna's hermeneutics for one common notion, which is the reliance on other branches of knowledge as philosophy or science for knowing the reality of things rather than what scripture states since the latter was revealed in accordance to the intellectual context of people.[66] As for 'Abduh, he

---

[64]   Fakhr al-Dīn al-Rāzī, *Mafātīḥ al-Ghayb* [The Keys to the Unseen] (Beirut: Dār al-Fikr, 1981), 2, 170.

[65]   Avicenna does not accept the conception of "*ta'wīl*" (allegorical interpretation) of scholars as a way for compromising reason with scripture since he claims there are verses that cannot be interpreted figurately due to the nature of language. Therefore, he suggests the methodology of "*tamthīl*" (likenesses), which means that scriptures are not meant as sources of detailed knowledge but general and the rest should be done through philosophy. Avicenna, *Al-Risāla al-Aḍḥawiyya,* 97-8. For more discussion regarding Avicenna's hermeneutics and its reception, see Yahya Michot, "A Mamlūk Theologian's Commentary on Avicenna's 'Risāla Aḍḥawiyya,'" *Journal of Islamic Studies* 14, vol. 2 (2003).

[66]   al-Dhahabī, the author of the most well-known work on the history of Islamic commentary on the Qur'an, attempts to distinguish between *al-tafsīr al-falsafī* (philosophical interpretation) and *al-tafsīr al-'ilmī* (scientific interpretation) is questionable since science was a part of philosophy and Muslim philosophers

did not focus on the concept of God through his approach because he was mainly focused on science and empiricism as the dominant intellectual method in the modern world; thus, most of his interpretations relied mainly on scientific matters as the story of creation.[67]

'Abduh and Bultmann on the Worldview of Scripture

'Abduh's approach to scientific matters in the Qur'an is controversial, as mentioned before, and this opened the way for various interpretations of it especially what is related to unseen beings mentioned in the Qur'an as angels because he sometimes accepts their existence and in other cases interprets them figuratively.[68] This is still debatable due to 'Abduh's unclear attitude towards interpreting scientific matters in the Qur'an, although you may find some statements that support his denial of the Qur'an as a source of scientific knowledge, as mentioned before regarding the story of creating the earth and heavens chronologically. However, the question whether 'Abduh rejects the worldview of the Qur'an is the main one that will be explored since focusing on certain topics regarding scientific matters in the Qur'an may not indicate his full attitude since it could be only an application of figurative interpretation. Accordingly, this study will present a further way for interpreting 'Abduh's attitude through comparing his views with the views of Rudolf Bultmann (d. 1976), one of the most influential Biblical scholars in the 20th century regarding the issue of modern science and the Bible, who is known for the project of demythologising the New Testament, which is to interpret it existentially without mythical statements.[69]

Choosing to compare 'Abduh's project with Bultmann's is for their similar context in which they had passion towards the rise of modern science, which shaped a new worldview that was different from the classical one. This is mainly found in Bultmann's interpretation of the mythical world of the New Testament; "he recognizes the impossibility of simply repristinating the mythical world-picture of the New Testament because the modern scientific age has no room within it for recourse to the spirit world of the New Testament."[70] As for 'Abduh, it is found through his support of modern science compared with his doubts of other traditions that shaped the Middle Ages, such as Greek tradition. In addition, 'Abduh's critique of ascribing

---

interpreted the Qur'an scientifically. See: Muḥammad Hussein al-Dhahabī, *Al-Tafsīr wal-Mufassirūn* [The Exegesis and the Exegetes] (Cairo: Maktabat Wahba, 2000), 2, 308; 2, 416. Accordingly, 'Abduh and Avicenna should be in the same category according to their hermeneutics in addition to the fact science was part of philosophy.

[67]   This could be more broadly understood through Christian intellectual history. While Thomas Aquinas (d. 1274) was focusing mainly on topics regarding the conception of God such as Avicenna, Rudolf Bultmann (d. 1976) was mostly like 'Abduh that is related to the scientific method, which led to his conception of demythologisation of the New Testament.

[68]   See: 'Abbās, *Qaṣaṣ al-Qur'ān al-Karīm*, 150.

[69]   See Rudolf Bultmann, *New Testament and Mythology and Other Basic Writings* (Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1984) for the whole demonstration of his method. For an overview of Bultmann's project, see: David W. Congdon, *Rudolf Bultmann: A Companion to His Theology* (Eugene: Wipf and Stock Publishers: 2015). For the philosophical-theological origins of demythologising, see: Roger A. Johnson, *The Origins of Demythologizing: Philosophy and Historiography in the Theology of Rudolf Bultmann* (Leiden: Brill, 1974), 31.

[70]   Brent A. R. Hege, *Myth, History, and the Resurrection in German Protestant Theology* (Eugene: Pickwick Publications: 2017), 43.

phenomena to supernatural powers is repeated many times through his commentary on the Qur'an, such as his attack on al-Sayūtī's commentary that the thunder is an angel, the lighting is his whip and so forth. However, the main purpose behind comparing the two scholars is to ask a theoretical question regarding 'Abduh's project, which is: If 'Abduh had the same passion towards modern science as Bultmann for interpreting scripture, why he did not reach the same results, namely rejecting the worldview of the Qur'an?

There are two main reasons that shapes 'Abduh's attitude compared with Bultmann's. First, 'Abduh's medieval philosophical expertise, namely *kalām* (Islamic scholarsip),[71] had shaped his views on applying modern science while approaching the Qur'an. That is to say, if 'Abduh did not apply other intellectual methods, he probably would have rejected some elements in the Qur'an that are not proved by modern science. Although he interpreted their acts in this world metaphorically, as mentioned through the story of creation, 'Abduh accepts the reality of angels and their existence in another parallel level that we do not know since this is *mumkin 'aqlan* (contingent through reason).[72] As for Bultmann, he

> maintained that the whole thought-world of the New Testament was mythical. The alleged three-decker universe of heaven, earth and hell, angels and demons, divine interventions, the heavenly redeemer, salvation, resurrection and judgment-in short, the entire conceptuality and language of the New Testament was drawn from the world of mythology.[73]

This is because philosophical terms such as *mumkin 'aqlan* are not found through the terminology of modern science.[74] This is to say, if Bultmann had shaped his project with medieval philosophy, then he would not have had this attack on every aspect of the New Testament. However, his source was mainly modern science and its limits. Joshua Jipp says: "Karl Jaspers argued that Bultmann's hermeneutical program operated with a superficial understanding of science which exaggerates the surety and finality of its results, as well as the differences between the ancient world and the modern."[75]

The second reason is the differences between the text of the New Testament and Qur'an, since 'Abduh considers the nature of the language of the Qur'an as being the literal word of God according to Muslims; thus, he applies this point while approaching scripture. For instance, while Bultmann rejects many central miracles in the Christian tradition as Jesus'

---

[71]   For instance, 'Abduh wrote a commentary on *Al-Baṣā'ir al-Nuṣairiyyah,* which is a medieval text on formal logic.

[72]   'Abduh, *al-A'māl al-Kāmila*, vol. 4, 123.

[73]   Colin Brown, "Bultmann Revisited," *The Churchman* 88 (1974): 172.

[74]   Note that I am reading 'Abduh through Bultmann not vice versa; therefore, I am not saying this is the main reason behind Bultmann's attitude since his project is a mixture of various reasons and why I will not mention the other reasons that shaped Bultmann's project of demythologisation as his concept of the term "myth," since it is probably the most problematic issue through his project. For more information on Bultmann's discussion of the term "myth," see: David W. Congdon. *The Mission of Demythologizing: Rudolf Bultmann's Eschatological Dialectical Theology* (PhD. diss., Princeton Theological Seminary, 2014), 328.

[75]   See: Joshua Jipp, "Myth, Science, and Hermeneutics: Rudolf Bultmann on Creation," Carl F. H. Henry Center for Theological Understanding, February 28, 2018.

resurrection,[76] 'Abduh accuses those "Who do not like miracles," using his term, since they claim for instance that Moses parted the Red Sea during a low tide. He rejects this and then says: "We have already demonstrated through *Risālat al-Tawḥīd* (Epistle on the oneness of God) that miracles are accepted through reason '*Jā'iza 'Aqlan*.'"[77] Here he relies on his medieval philosophical expertise, which is the first point. However, he adds something related to the nature of the language of the Qur'an by saying: if the whole story was interpreted figuratively, there still some parts of it that cannot be figuratively interpreted such as the verse: 'And each portion was like a great towering mountain' (26:63). Accordingly, the main difference here between 'Abduh and Bultmann is the departure point; while Bultmann was involved in the historical criticism of the gospels which became one of the reasons for his project of demythologisation, 'Abduh did not mention anything regarding the historical criticism of the Qur'an as a reason for his method through his complete works, and this is also found through the writings of other Muslim figures who had similar attitudes as Avicenna's views on the concept of God; however, he did not mention anything regarding the historical criticism of the Qur'an while demonstrating his and even defended the text of the Old Testament from being fully corrupted while presenting his ones in which Ibn Taymiyya (d. 1328) agrees with him.[78]

Lastly, I'll go further in examining 'Abduh's attitude through asking: Could the worldview of the Qur'an be demythologised in accordance with 'Abduh's hermeneutics? The answer is yes by applying a criticism that has been applied to the influential philosophical theologian al-Taftazānī (d. 1390) who stated the Qur'an mentions God's location as being above heaven since this is the best way to call the masses to adhere to the truth.[79] This is one of the central issues between the Muslim philosophers and theologians who rejected this notion, which is why al-Taftazānī was criticised by Muslim theologians for accepting this notion. Al-Ma'lamī says:

> And some commentators on *al-Mawāqif* have critically traced al-Taftazānī's statement by saying: This shall open the way for Gnostics' interpretation; because if it is allowed that the wrong meaning of the text is seen as right in accordance to the original hearers because of their short intellectual abilities, then it is allowed too on other topics as eschatological ones.[80]

Therefore, the same objection could be applied here on 'Abduh's claim that such verses regarding the creation of the heavens and earth are not meant as a source of scientific

---

[76]   Bultmann, *New Testament and Mythology*, 32-42.

[77]   'Abduh, *al-A'māl al-Kāmila*, vol. 4, 174.

[78]   Ibn Taymiyya presents his affirmation of Avicenna's statement that it is impossible to claim *al-Kitāb al-'Ibrī* (The Hebrew book – Old Testament) has been fully corrupted by saying: "And what Avicenna had stated regarding the impossibility of fully corrupting the Old testament is definitely true since the prophet – Peace be upon him – had presented certain types of corruption namely ascribing *Naqā'iṣ* (Deprecation) to God such as God's rest after creating the heavens and the earth". See: Ibn Taymiyya, *Dar' Ta'ārud al-'Aqil Wa al-Naqil* [Reconciling Reason and Revelation] (Al-Riyadh: Imām Muḥammad Ibn Saud Islamic University, 1991), 5, 78.

[79]   Al-Taftazānī, *Sharḥ al-Maqāṣid* [A Commentary on al-Maqāṣid] (Beirut: 'Ālam al-Kutub, 1989), 4, 50-51.

[80]   Al-Ma'lamī al-Yamānī, *Al-Qā'id Ilā Taṣḥīḥ al-'Aqā'id* [The Guide for Correcting the Doctrines] (Beirut: al-Maktab al-Islāmī, 1984), 218.

knowledge since they have already been understood as they are in accordance with the original hearers: thus, this could be applicable on the whole worldview of the Qur'an.

In addition, 'Abduh's statement that such phenomena are not part of the purposes of religion is questionable due to two reasons. First, the Qur'anic concept of God relies mainly on Qur'anic cosmography, such as saying the throne is above the heavens and so forth. Therefore, applying demythologisation to Qur'anic cosmography will lead to demythologising the concept of God. This relationship between the Qur'anic concept of God and the cosmographical one is found through the writings of Muslim thinkers while presenting their doctrines. For instance, influential philosopher Fakhr al-Dīn al-Rāzī (d. 1210) claims that accepting the spherical earth will lead to a rejection of the doctrine that God is above His creation, namely in a certain *jiha* (location).[81] Therefore, what I'm trying to say here is that rejecting the Qur'an as a source of scientific knowledge will have an impact on the concept of God; thus, it examines further results of 'Abduh's statement.

The second reason is the claim that such phenomena are not meant because they are not a part of religious purposes since they are mentioned for the sake of guidance and reasoning. This claim could also be applied to the Qur'anic concept of God since in fact the only thing that shapes people's religious life is the general description of God as being merciful and so forth because the central aim of religions is, as what Avicenna states, "the practical aspect of the individual in which he does good with oneself and the others."[82] Therefore, the Qur'anic description of God, namely the revealed attributes as God's hands, could be understood as what 'Abduh did in regard to the natural phenomena since *al-Mufawwida* (Who delegate the meaning of ambiguous verses to the knowledge of God) had claimed this as Ibn Qudāma (d. 1223) who says: "There is no need to know what God meant by His attributes."[83]

CONCLUSION

Having finished analysing 'Abduh's views on the Qur'an as a source of scientific knowledge, I summarise the main ideas that have been demonstrated through this article. First, Muḥammad 'Abduh's intellectual project was shaped from various sources whether through the Islamic tradition or Western one and opened the way for reconstructing Islamic thought in accordance to his expertise, which led to consider him as the father of Islamic modernism. In addition, 'Abduh had his intellectual project at al-Azhar in which he faces various challenges due to his views that have been considered as controversial by mainstream Muslim scholars.

Second, 'Abduh's intellectual project had its impact mainly on his commentary on the Qur'an in which it was shaped through two main themes, which are the social aspects and the use of modern science for understanding the text. This led to one of his controversial views,

---

[81]   Fakhr al-Dīn Al-Rāzī. *Asās al-Taqdīs* [The Principles of God's Transcendence] (Cairo: Maktabat al-Kulliyyāt al-Azhariyya, 1986), 74.
[82]   Avicenna, *Al-Risāla al-Aḍḥawiyya*, 110.
[83]   Ibn Qudāma, *Taḥrīm al-Nathar Fī Kutub al-Kalām* [The Prohibition of Checking the Works of Scholasticism] (Al-Riyadh: Dār 'Ālam al-Kutub, 1990), 51-52.

which is his metaphorical understanding of the story of creating Adam in which he was criticised by the vast majority of Muslim scholars at his context.

Third, 'Abduh's intellectual project shaped his hermeneutics, which are read through this study as being Avicennan that is the rejection of the notion that the Qur'an is a source of detailed knowledge since it was revealed to the masses; thus, it argued that he rejects the notion that the Qur'an is a source of scientific knowledge due to three arguments, most importantly his commentary on the chronological creation of earth and the heavens that it is not meant but for reasoning and knowing God's blessings.

Lastly, the study argued that 'Abduh could have reached Bultmann's demythologisation if he did not apply his medieval philosophical expertise in addition to the nature of the Qur'anic text compared with the Biblical one. However, I have argued that the Qur'anic concept of God in addition to the cosmographical one could be demythologised in accordance with 'Abduh's hermeneutics.

BIBLIOGRAPHY

ʿAbbās, Fadl Ḥasan. *Qaṣaṣ al-Qurʾān al-Karīm* [The Stories of the Qurʾan]. Amman: Dār al-Nafāʾis, 2010.

ʿAbduh, Muḥammad. *al-Sheikh Muḥammad ʿAbduh Bayna al-Falāsifa wal-Kalāmiyyīn* [Sheikh Muḥammad ʿAbduh Between the Philosophers and the Scholastics]. Cairo: Dār Iḥyāʾ al-Turāth al-ʿArabī, 1958.

ʿAbduh, Muḥammad. *al-Aʾmāl al-Kāmila Lil-Imām al-Sheikh Muḥammad ʿAbduh* [The Complete Works of Sheikh Muḥammad ʿAbduh], 5 vols. Cairo: Dār al-Shurūq, 1993.

Adams, Charles. *Islam and Modernism in Egypt: A Study of the Modern Reform Movement Inaugurated by Muḥammad ʿAbduh.* UK: Oxford University Press: 1933.

al-Afghānī, Jamāl al-Dīn. *al-Rad ʿAla al-Dahriyyīn* [A Refutation of Naturalists]. Egypt: Maṭbaʾat al-Mawsūʾāt, 1902.

Ibn ʿAjībah. *Al-Baḥr al-Madīd Fī Tafsīr al-Qurʾān al-Majīd* [The Huge Sea of Interpreting the Glorious Qurʾan]. Cairo: al-Hayʾa al-Maṣriyyah al-ʿĀmmah Lil-Kitāb, 1999.

Al-Alūsī, Shihāb al-Dīn. *Rūḥ al-Maʾānī* [The Soul of Meanings]. Beirut: Dār Iḥyāʾ al-Turāth al-ʿArabī.

Ammeke, Kateman. "Tellings of an Encounter: A Meeting between Muḥammad ʿAbduh, Herbert Spencer and Wilfrid Blunt (1903)." *Philological Encounters* 3 (2018): 105-128.

Ammeke, Kateman. *Muḥammad ʿAbduh and His Interlocutors: Conceptualizing Religion in a Globalizing World* (UK: Brill, 2019).

AlSamara, Kinda. "Muḥammad ʿAbduh: Islam and New Urbanity in the Nineteenth-Century Arab World." *Australian Journal of Islamic Studies* 3, no. 1 (2018): 63-79.

Avicenna. *Al-Risāla al-Aḍhawiyya Fī al-Maʾād* [Al-Aḍhā Epistle on Resurrection]. Tehran: Muʾassasat Shams Tabrīzī, 1962.

Al-Baydāwī. *Anwār al-Tanzīl wa-Asrār al-Taʾwīl* [The Lights of Revelation and the Secrets of Interpretation]. Beirut: Dār Ihyāʾ al-Turāth al-ʿArabī.

Brown, Colin. "Bultmann Revisited." *The Churchman* 88 (1974): 167-187.

Bultmann, Rudolf. *New Testament and Mythology and Other Basic Writings*. Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1984.

Congdon, David W. *Rudolf Bultmann: A Companion to His Theology.* Eugene: Wipf and Stock Publishers: 2015.

Congdon, David W. *The Mission of Demythologizing: Rudolf Bultmann's Eschatological Dialectical Theology.* PhD diss., Princeton Theological Seminary, 2014.

al-Dhahabī, Muḥammad Hussein. *Al-Tafsīr wal-Mufassirūn* [The Exegesis and the Exegetes]. Cairo: Maktabat Wahba, 2000.

al-Ghazālī. *Tahāfut al-Falāsifa* [The Incoherence of Philosophers]. Cairo: Dār al-Maʾārif, 1966.

al-Ghazālī. *Qānūn al-Taʾwīl* [The Rule of Interpretation] (Damascus: 1993).

Hege, Brent A. R. *Myth, History, and the Resurrection in German Protestant Theology* (Eugene: Pickwick Publications: 2017).

Ḥuqqī, Ismail. *Rūḥ al-Bayān* [The Soul of Manifestation]. Beirut: Dār Iḥyāʾ al-Turāth al-ʿArabī.

Al-Ījī. *Al-Mawāqif Fī ʿIlm al-Kalām* [The Positions of Muslim Scholasticism]. Beirut: ʿĀlam al-Kutub, 1999.

Ismāʾīl, Fāṭima. *Manhaj al-Baḥth ʿInd al-Kindī* [Al-Kindī's Research Method]. Virginia: International Institute of Islamic Thought, 1998.

Jipp, Joshua. "Myth, Science, and Hermeneutics: Rudolf Bultmann on Creation." Carl F. H. Henry Center for Theological Understanding, February 28, 2018.

Johnson, Roger A. *The Origins of Demythologizing: Philosophy and Historiography in the Theology of Rudolf Bultmann* (Leiden: Brill, 1974).

al-Kawtharī, Muḥammad Zāhid. *Maqalat al-Kawtharī* [al-Kawtharī's Writings]. Cairo: al-Maktabah al-Tawfīkiyyah.

Keddie, Nikki. *Sayyid Jamāl al-Dīn al-Afghānī: A Political Biography.* USA: University of California Press: 1972.

Keddie, Nikki. *An Islamic Response to Imperialism* (USA: University of California Press: 1983).

Kedourie, Elie. *Afghani and ʿAbduh: An Essay on Religious Unbelief and Political Activism in Modern Islam.* London: Frank Cass & Co. Ltd., 1966).

Kubrā, Najmuddīn. *Al-Taʾwīlāt al-Najmiyya Fīal-Tafsīr al-Ishārī al-ṣūfī* [The Mystical Interpretations of Najmuddīn]. Beirut: Dār al-Kutub al-ʿIlmiyya, 2009.

Lagerlund, Henrik, ed. *Encyclopaedia of Medieval Philosophy: Between 500 and 1500* (Netherlands: Springer, 2011).

Markaz al-Dirāsāt wal-Maʾlūmāt al-Qurʾāniyya. *Mawusūʾat al-Tafsīr Bil-Maʾthūr* [Encyclopedia of the Traditional Interpretation]. Beirut: Dār Ibn Ḥazm, 2017.

Michot, Yahya. "A Mamlūk Theologian's Commentary on Avicenna's 'Risāla Aḍḥawiyya.'" *Journal of Islamic Studies* 14, vol. 2 (2003): 149-203.

Ibn Qudāma. *Taḥrīm al-Nathar Fī Kutub al-Kalām* [The Prohibition of Checking the Works of Scholasticism]]. Al-Riyadh: Dār ʿĀlam al-Kutub, 1990.

Rahman, Fazlur. *Islam and Modernity: Transformation of an Intellectual Tradition.* USA: University of Chicago Press: 1982.

al-Rāzī, Fakhr al-Dīn. *Mafātīḥ al-Ghayb* [The Keys of the Unseen]. Beirut: Dār al-Fikr, 1981.

al-Rāzī, Fakhr al-Dīn. *Asās al-Taqdīs* [The Principles of God's Transcendence]. Cairo: Maktabat al-Kulliyyāt al-Azhariyya, 1986.

al-Rāzī. Fakhr al-Dīn. *al-Maḥṣūl Fī ʿIlm al-Uṣūl* [The Conclusion of the Principles of Islamic Jurisprudence]. Beirut: Mu'assasat al-Risāla, 1992.

al-Rāzī, Fakhr al-Dīn. *Nihāyat al-ʿUqūl Fī Dirayat al-Uṣūl* [The Pinnacle of the Intellects in Knowing the Principles of Religion]. Beirut: Dār al-Dhakhā'ir, 2015.

Rida, Rashīd. *Tafsīr al-Manār* [al-Manār's Commentary]. Cairo: Dār al-Manār, 1947.

Ṣabrī, Muṣtafa. *Mawqif al-ʿAqil wal-ʿIlm wal-ʿĀlam min Rabb al-ʿĀlamīn wa-ʿIbādihī al-Mursalīn* [The Attitude of Philosophy, Science, and the World Towards God and His Sent Messengers]. Beirut: Dār Iḥyā' al-Turāth al-ʿArabī, 1981.

Sadri, Mahmoud. *Reason, Freedom, & Democracy in Islam.* UK: Oxford University Press: 2000.

Sedgwick, Mark. *Muḥammad ʿAbduh.* Oxford: Oneworld, 2010.

Al-Ṭabarī. *Jāmiʿ al-Bayān ʿAn Ta'wīl Āy al-Qur'ān* [The Comprehensive Demonstration of the Qur'anic Interpretation]. Beirut: Mu'assasat al-Risāla, 1994.

al-Ṭabāṭbā'ī. *Al-Mufakkirūn al-Muslimūn Fī Muwājahat al-Manṭiq al-Ūnānī* [The Muslim Intellectuals Against the Greek Logic]. Beirut: Dār Ibn Ḥazm, 1990.

Al-Taftazānī. *Sharḥ al-Maqāṣid* [A Commentary on al-Maqāṣid]. Beirut: ʿĀlam al-Kutub, 1989.

Ibn Taymiyya. *Al-Radd ʿAla al-Mantiqiyyīn* [A Refutation of the Greek Logicians]. Lahore: Dār Turjumān al-Sunnah, 1976.

Ibn Taymiyya. *al-Risālah al-Tadmuriyya* [The Epistle of Palmyra]. Cairo: Maktabat al-Sunnah al-Muḥammadiyya.

Ibn Taymiyya. *Dar' Taʿārud al-ʿAqil Wa al-Naqil* [Reconciling Reason and Revelation]. Al-Riyadh: Imām Muḥammad Ibn Saud Islamic University, 1991.

Al-Ṭūsī. *Talkhīṣ al-Muḥaṣṣal* [The Conclusion of al-Muḥaṣṣal]. Beirut: Dār al-Adwā', 1985.

al-Yamānī, Al-Ma'lamī. *Al-Qā'id Ilā Taṣḥīḥ al-ʿAqā'id* [The Guide for Correcting the Doctrines]. Beirut: al-Maktab al-Islāmī, 1984.

Al-Zamakhsharī. *Tafsīr al-Kashshāf* [The Unveiled Interpretation]. Beirut: Dār al-Ma'rifah, 2009.