Ahl al-Hadith Methodologies on Qur'anic Discourses in the Ninth Century: A Comparative Analysis of Ibn Hanbal and al-Bukhari

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Abstract
The depth focus of mufassirun on linguistic sciences creates the pattern and nature of Qur’anic discourse in the ninth century. However, it was not only mufassirun who appeared to direct their focus on lexical explanation in their tafsir, the massive production of Qur’anic works that concentrate on literary analysis indicates clearly the nature and tenor of Qur’anic discourse within this period. This includes the works of ahl al-hadith of the early century. This study aims to (1) explore ahl al-hadith methodology in Qur’anic discourse, particularly of Ahmad ibn Hanbal and al-Bukhari,(2) extract their idiosyncratic approaches and (3) elucidate their personal style on certain issues regarding the Qur’an. The study is qualitative in nature in which the researcher employed both critical and analytical methods. The study in its finding asserts that Ahmad and al-Bukhari provide a different explanation of the Qur’anic verses from that of the mufassirun and sira’s authors. For instance, in the interpretation of 94:1, Ahmad ibn Hanbal and al-Bukhari clearly demonstrates his arrival at a different interpretation and perspective.

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Section
Employing a comparative-contrastive methodology, the author examines traditional and rational schools of thought – such as the Mu’tazili, Shi’i, Ibadi, Sufi, metaphysical, modern, and scientific approaches to the interpretation of the Qur’an – to give a detailed analysis of the similarities and differences in their theological views. The study spans a broad period, covering exegetical techniques adopted in Qur’anic exegesis from its infancy during the 1st/7th century up to the beginning of the 15th/21st century. The book aims to provide a practical analysis of Qur’anic discourse. The views of different exegetes are put into practice in the form of a comparative-contrastive analysis of ayahs and surahs.