



## CHAPTER III

### THE BACKGROUND OF IBNU JARIR AT-T{ABARI AND ABU LAITH AS-SAMARQANDI

#### A. Ibnu Jarir at-T{abari

##### 1. Biography

His complete name was Muhammad bin Jarir bin Yazid bin Katsir bin Ghalib (in some source bin Yazid bin Khalid)<sup>1</sup> at-T{abari, Abu Ja'far. He was born in Amul<sup>2</sup> (Thabaristan)<sup>3</sup> on 224 H / 839 AD and passed away in 81 years old (in some source 85 years old) in Baghdad<sup>4</sup>. At-T{abari live in the glory of Islam, while the islamic civilization was increase. Its made him became a theologian of many branches of Islamic knowledges.

At-T{abari stayed from Amul in Thabaristan where his father Jarir seems to have been a moderately prosperous landowner. He provided his son with a steady income during the early part of his life, brought to the letter from Thabaristan to Baghdad by the annual pilgrimage caravan from Khurasan. And when he died (at unknown date), at-Thabari inherited a share of his estate. Whether the family was of indogenous stock or descended from Arab colonists in Thabaristan is unknown. At all events,

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<sup>1</sup>Ibn Khalkan Abul Abbas, *Wafayat al A'yan*, V. 4 (Beirut; Dar al-Shadir,1900-1994), p.191.

<sup>2</sup>Al Hamawi Yaqut, *Mu'jam al-Buldan*, V. 1 (Beirut; Dar al-Shadir, 1995), p. 57.

<sup>3</sup>*Ibid.*, v. 4, p. 13-14. Al Hamawi Yaqut, *Mu'jamul Udaba'*, V. 6 (Beirut; Dar al Ghorb al-Islami, 1993), p. 2446.

<sup>4</sup>In some source it was 225 H. This disagreement was because of the people of his country recorded the history by the events not year, so it may the informers differed one another, Some said: It was in the end of 224, and some said: on the beginning of 225. Al Baghdadi Khatib, *Tarikh Baghdad*, V. 2 (Beirut; Dar al Ghorb al-Islami,2002), p. 548.

at-T{abari's modest degree of financial family support enabled him to travel extensively as a student and then, when he was an established scholar, gave him some independence from outside pressures and influences and from the necessity which poorer scholars experienced of seeking patronage.<sup>5</sup>

At-T{oari spent his whole time to learn Islamic knowledge and the tradition of Arabs. He was the expert in fiqh, historic, letters, lexicoraphy, grammatical, logics, mathematics, medical and the owner of many great books.<sup>6</sup> At first he followed Shafi'i's flow for about ten years, then make his own flow.<sup>7</sup> At-T{abari was the personage that dominates some knowledges, he left the great Islamic inheritance that very rightfully proud of him. He got wide popularity on his work those are *Tarikh al Umam wa al Mulk* about history and *Jami' al-Bayan 'an Ta'wil Ayi al Qur'an* about tafsir. Those books according among many scientific references that most important. Whereas his tafsir became the principal reference that intended to *tafsir bil ma'thur*.

He was a precocious student who was, as him self states, a *hafiz* or memorizer of holy Qur'an aged seven, qualified as an *imam* or leader of the muslimworship aged eight and studied the prophetic traditions aged nine.<sup>8</sup> It seems well-authenticated that he left home aged twelve *fi talab al 'ilm*, and during a stay of five years in the metropolist of northern Persia,

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<sup>5</sup>PJ. Bearman, dkk, "al-Tabari," *Ensiklopaedia of Islam* (Leiden; Brill. 2000), p. 11.

<sup>6</sup>al Hamawi, *Mu'jamul ...* v. 6, p. 2441.

<sup>7</sup>Ta>j ad-Di>n Abdul Waha>b Taqyuddin As-Subki, *Thabaqatus Syafiiyatil Kubro*, v. 3 (?), p. 120.

<sup>8</sup>al Hamawi, *Mu'jamul ...*, v. 6, p. 2446.



Rayy. He received an intellectual formation which gave him solid grounding for his future career. The most significant of his teacher there was Abdullah bin Humayd al-Razy (d. 248/862), who as Ibn Humayd figures as an of quoted authority in at-T{abari's history, above all, for information going back to Ibnu Ishak. Since Ibnu Humayd was an authorised transmitter of Ibn Ishak's *Kitab al Mubtada' wa al-Maghazi* through Salama bin al-Fadl (d. After 190/805-6).<sup>9</sup> From Rayy, at-Thabari progressed naturally, at the age of less than seventeen, to intellectual centre of the Islamic world, Baghdad. According to the one story, in the expectation of studying with Ahmad bin Hanbal (unfulfilled, at it happened, since Ibn Hanbal died at that point). After a year in Baghdad, he seems to have left for shouthern Irak (by 242/856-7) to study with leading scholars of Wasit, Basra and Kufa, whom he was afterwards to cite in his own works, such as Muhammad bin Abd al-A'la al-Shan'ani (d. 255/869) and Muhammad bin Bashshar called Bundar (d. 252/866) in Basra, and Abu Kurayb Muhammad bin al-'Ala' (d.247 or 248/861-2) in Kufa.<sup>10</sup> He probably returned to Baghdad after less than two years away and spent eight further years there, including a spell as tutor to one of the sons of the caliph al-Mutawakkil's vizier 'Ubaydullah bin Yahya bin Khaqan,<sup>11</sup> hence at some point between 244/858-9 and 248/862.

He then embarked on his major educational and research journey, this time to Syria, Palestine and Egypt. His precise itinerary is unknown,

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<sup>9</sup>*Ibid.*

<sup>10</sup>*Ibid.*

<sup>11</sup>Ad-Dhahabi, *Siyar A'lam al Nubala*, v. 11 (Kairo: Dar al-Hadith, 2006), p. 167.



but he was certainly in Beirut and the considerable number of scholars from connected or connected with such towns as Himsh (a particularly important centre, with its own special tradition of *hadith* transmission), al-Ramla and al-'Asqalan probably points to stay in those places and an interchange of views and information with the local scholars. At-T{abari's entry into Egypt seems to be fixable with some certainty as the year 253/867, he made a side-trip to the Syrian lands and then come back to Egypt, possibly in 256/870,<sup>12</sup> though this is much less sure than the first date. In Egypt he met the leading Egyptian *muhaddith* and authority in the *qira'at* Yunus bin 'Abd al-A'la (d. 264/877) and profited especially from contacts with the leading authorities there on Malikism and Shafi'ism, including with the Ibn 'Abd al-Hakam family, which had been especially close to the Imam Muhammad al-Shafi'i and whose head was the eminent scholar Muahammad bin 'Abd Allah bin 'Abd al-Hakam. Beside that in Egypt he serviced by Rabi' bin Sulayman (the nearest student of Imam shafi'i) and his students.<sup>13</sup>

At-T{obari returned from Egypt to Baghdad around the year 256/870. He may at some point have made the pilgrimage but cannot have made a prolonged stay there for study, since *Hijazi* scholars do not seem to figure amongst his teacher. His return to Baghdad marked the end of this student *Wanderjahre*, and he now settled down for the remaining fifty years of his life in order to devote himself to teaching and authorship,

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<sup>12</sup>al Hamawi, *Mu'jamul ...*, v. 6, p. 2449.

<sup>13</sup>*Ibid.*



producing an amount of high quality scholarship such as to evoke the admiration, in an age of prolific authors anyway, of both contemporaries and subsequent generations. During this half-century, he merely made two journeys to his native Thabaristan, the second in 289-290/902-3.<sup>14</sup>

He was now able to follow a career in a multiplicity of branches of knowledge. This was to embrace not only history, Qur'an exegesis, *hadith* and *fiqh*, but he also possibly wrote in the field of ethics and had an educated person's interest in Arabic poetry. His comfortable, if not luxurious, financial and economic circumstances enabled him to follow an even tenor of line in which he seems to have eaten temperately, dressed modestly and generally to have avoided excess in all things. Anecdotal evidence suggest that he never accepted any official employment (such of that *qadi* or judge, for which he would have been supremely well-equipped),<sup>15</sup> although his post as tutor to the son of a vizier would doubtless have given him the entree to such a career had he wished for it. These stories also stress his high moral standards and his great probity, with a reluctance to accept in return for services costly gifts which he did not feel he had earned or for which he could not give equally valuable presents in return. He did probably add to his income from teaching a wide circle of students, one increasingly attracted by his fame, although he does not seem energetically to have sought after such sources of income; and he may perhaps have received fees for legal advice and opinions, one

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<sup>14</sup>*Ibid.*

<sup>15</sup>Ad Dhahabi, *Tadzkirah al Huffadh*, V. 2 (Beirut: Dar al Kutub, 1998), p. 202; Idem, *Siyar A'lam al Nubala*, v. 11, p.170; As Subki, *Thabaqat as-Shafiiyah al Kubro*, v. 3, p. 125.



apparent instance being for services rendered to the caliph al-Muktafi. It does not appear that he ever married, but was wed to his scholarship; his continuator and biographer, the Andalusian Maslama bin al-Qasim al-Qurtubi (d. 353/964) says that he lived as an *hasur*, one leading a celibate life. On the sketchy evidence of one story, he may conceivably have had a son by a slave mother; his having a *kunya*, Abu Ja'far, does not of course imply in any way that he was a biological father. No progeny of his is mentioned, as one would certainly expect of a man of his celebrity, and all the evidence points to the fact that at-Thabari never married.

In Baghdad, he apparently installed himself on the eastern side of the city, in al-Shammasiya, certainly in this quarter by the year 290/903, and lived there till he died, aged about 85 lunar years, on Monday, 27 Shawwal 310/17 February 923. He was buried in his house on the next day; one of the encomia, by at-Thabari's acquaintance the philologist Ibnu Durayd, is preserved in its entirety.

The Baghdad years were filled with his various scholarly activities which, as noted above, embraced not only the traditional "Arab" sciences in which he excelled and with which he was primarily concerned, but also the "foreign" science of the medicine; he possessed a copy of the medical encyclopedia, *Firdaus al-Hikma*, of his older contemporary and compatriot Ali bin Rabban at-Thabari (d. 247/841),<sup>16</sup> and the occasionally

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<sup>16</sup>Az-Zarikli Khayruddin, *al A'lam*, V. 4 (Malaysia: Dar al Ilmi, 2002), p. 288.



prescribed medical treatment for friends and students.<sup>17</sup> All his surviving works indicate that he had a refence for scholarship and wished to present what must have already become, over the course of some two-and-a-half centuries, a formidable body of knowledge in such fields as *fiqh*, *tafsir*, *hadith*, and *akbar* in as concise and accurate a manner as possible. An anecdote says that he originally intended *History* and his *Commentary* to be much lengthier and more detailed, but cut them down to more manageable proportions for his students and later scholars.<sup>18</sup> This tale indicates at-Thabari's concern for conveying essentials in a form which could be used by the following generations.

In his approach to scholarship, most notable is his emphasis on *ijtihad* or independent exercise of judgement. After quoting his sources in his major works, he depended essentially on existing written works and reports he gives what considers to be the most acceptable view. His own dogmatic beliefs appear to have been basically within the framework of "orthodox" Islam as conceived, in the environtment of Ibn Hanbal just before at-Thabari's time and that of al-'Ash'ari after him. This is clear from his extant dogmatic writings such as the *Sharikh as-Sunna* and the partly-preserved *Tabsir uli al-nuha wa ma'alim al-huda*, and he further

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<sup>17</sup>Al Hamawi, *Mujamul ...*, V. 6, p. 2468.

<sup>18</sup>At-Thabari said to his companions/students: "Are you ready to write interpretation of Quran?" They said: "How much is the amount?" He said: "Thirty thousand (30.000) paper." They said: "This is a task which we die before we complete it." So he briefed it in about three thousand (3000) paper. It means his *commentary* we received today is 10% of its proper size. The same story was also happened with his history book. See: al Baghdadi, *Tarikh Baghdad*, v. 2 (Beirut: Dar Ghorb al Islami), p. 548; Al Hamawi, *Mujamul ...*, v. 6, p. 2442; As Subki, *Thabaqatus ...*, V. 3, p. 123.



appears as a firm opponent of all “heretical innovations” (bid’a). On the question of the *imamate* or headship and leadership of the muslim community, the most hotly-disputed dogmatic question of his time, when *Shi’ism* was becoming a force not only in peripheral areas like the Caspian provinces and Yemen but also in the heartland of the caliphate itself, he was a resolute defender of the pre-eminence of all four of the Rightly-Guided Caliphs, venerating Abu Bakr and Umar and defending the rights of Ali equally. Nevertheless, since accusations of *Shi’i* sympathies, however ill-founded, were a standard weapon at this time against opponents, at-Thabari seems to have found himself accused of such sympathies by his Hanbali opponents, who were to stir up the Baghdad mob against at-Thabari on more than one occasion. Yet despite his origin from Thabaristan which had not, in any case, become in the early 3rd/9th century so closely identified with Zaydi Shi’ism as it was later to become there is no evidence whatever of any inclination by at-Thabari towards Shi’ism beyond the admiration for Ali as a person which was often found in the staunchest of *sunnis*. In *fiqh*, at-Thabari was at first a *Shafi’i*, but as his views developed into a distinct and self-sustaining corpus of law, he and his followers came to constitute themselves as a separate *madhhab*, that of the *Djaririya* (named after his father, a not uncommon feature of the nomenclature of sects and schools, cf. the Kharidjite ‘Adjarida and ‘Azarika. In at-Thabari’s later years, his students were considered as adherents of the *Djaririya*, and the school’s rank included several leading





scholars of the age; but its principles do not seem to have been distinctive enough from *Shafi'ism* to have ensured its future growth and development after at-T{abari's death, especially since the intellectual environment was one in which the three well-established Sunni *madhahib* of the Malikiyya, Hanafiyya and Shafi'iyya were by now firmly entrenched and competing for supremacy in various regions of the Islamic world.<sup>19</sup>

He learned hadith from Muhammad bin Humaid al Razy and Mutsanna bin Ibrahim al Ibily and also Muhammad bin Ahmad bin Hammad al-Daulaby to learn *tarikh* in Rayy city. In Baghdad he learned from Ahmad bin Hanbal and took *qira'ah* from Ahmad bin Yusuf al Taghliby. Whereas in Kufah he took *qira'ah* from Sulaiman al-Tulkhy and *hadith* from one community that took from Ibrahim Abi Kurayb, Muhammad bin al A'la al Hamdany, one of the great intellectual muslims of *hadith*. He also learned *fiqh syafi'iyah* from al Hasan bin Shabah al Za'farani and Abi Sa'id al-Astakhari.<sup>20</sup>

Actually, the biography of Ibn Jarir at-Thabari is much and long, therefore Ad Dzahabi said: "If I want, I am able to write twenty sheets in biography of this Imam."<sup>21</sup> But, these all are more than enough for us to know and understand who Ibn Jarir at-T {obari is.

## 2. His Work

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<sup>19</sup> P.J. Bearman, "al-Tabari," *Ensiklopaedia of Islam* (Leiden; Brill, 2000), p. 12.

<sup>20</sup> Al Hamawi, *Mu'jamul ...*, v. 6, p. 2446-2448.

<sup>21</sup> Ad Dzahabi, *Tadzkirah ...*, v. 2, p. 202.

As stated above, that at-T{obari decided the time after midday for writing and composing, and the sources also mentioned that At-Thabari was being active in writing during 40 years and capable to write 40 sheets,<sup>22</sup> its about 1.768.000 sheets his work calculated. Even Ad-Dhahabi mentioned him as the owner of many wonderful books.<sup>23</sup> Some of those books are:<sup>24</sup>

- 1) His great interpretation named “*Jami' al Bayan an Ta'wil Ayi al Quran*” (which this research is about the interpretation of first verse of surah al Maun of it).
- 2) His history book named “*Tarikh ar Rusul wa al Muluk wa Akhbaruhum*”. Abul Hasan Ibn al Maghlas said: Nobody writes a history and comprehend all of its topic like what Abu Jafar did. This book was one of rare books in the world, for its superiorities and excellences. It contains of many of sciences and religion. It was about 5000 papers.<sup>25</sup>
- 3) “*al Fas}l Bayn al Qiraah*”, in differences among *Qurra'* in letters of Quran. It was of his good books, he detailed the names of the *Qori'* and the city like Mecca, Kufa, Basra and Sham and others.
- 4) “*Dhayl al Mudhayyal*”, contains of the history of shahaba who killed or died in Rosulullah PBUH lifetime or after.

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<sup>22</sup>Al Baghdadi, *Tarikh ...*, v. 2, p. 548.

<sup>23</sup>Ad Dzahabi, *Siyar ...*, v. 11, p. 165.

<sup>24</sup>Most of them were mentioned by Khatib al Baghdadi and Yaqut al Hamawi. see: Al Baghdadi, *Tarikh Baghdad*, v. 2, p. 548; Al Hamawi, *Mujamul Udaba'*, v. 6, p. 2444-2462, and the others.

<sup>25</sup>Al Hamawi, *Mujamul ...*, v. 6, p. 2456-2457.



- 5) "*Ikhtilafu Ulama al Amshar fi Ahkam Syara il Islam*". It was intended to mention intellectual muslims opinions, they were Malik, al Awzaa'i, at Tsawri, as Shafi'i, Abu Hanifa and Ibrahim al-Kalbi. He made it to remember views of whom he had debated. He often preferred this Book, and it was the first books he wrote. He always says: I have two books which the *Faqih* can not leave them: "*al Ikhtilaf*" and "*al Lati>f*".
- 6) "*Amthilah al 'Udul*".
- 7) "*Lathi>f al Qawl fi Ahkam Syara il Islam*", which was a summary of his doctrine, which all his students relied upon it.
- 8) Three books: "*Kitab al Libas*", "*Kitab Ummahat al Awlad*", "*Kitab as Shurb*". these were also his best.
- 9) "*Khafi>f al Qawl fi Ahkam Syara al Islam*" it was summary of "*al Lati>f*".
- 10) "*Tahz}ibul Athar wa Tafd}il as Thabat an Rasulillah –S{allalla}hu Alayhi wa Salla}m- min Akhbar*".
- 11) "*Basit} al Qawl fi Ahkam Shara al Islam*" his book that prefaced by his other book "*Kitab Maratib al Ulama*".
- 12) "*Adab al Qad}a*".
- 13) "*Adab an Nufus al Jayyidah wal Akhlaq al Nafisah*" or "*Adab an Nufus as Sharifah wa al Akhlaq al Hamidah*".
- 14) "*Kitab al Musnad al Mujarrad*".



- 15) “*ar Radd 'ala Z{fi al Asfar*”, a respons to Daud bin Ali ad Z{ahiri, then son of Daud replied back to al T{oari for his respons to his father.
- 16) “*Risalah at Tabs}irah fi> Maalim ad Di>n*”.
- 17) “*Sharih as Sunnah*” contained his doctrine and belief.
- 18) “*Fad}ail Ali bin Abi Thalib*”.
- 19) “*Fad}ail Abi Bakr wa Umar*”, not finished.
- 20) “*Fad}ail Abbas*”.
- 21) “*Kitab fi> Ibarati ar Ru'ya*” contained of hadiths, but he passed away before finished it.
- 22) “*Mukhtas}ar Manasik al Hajj*”.
- 23) “*Mukhtas}arul Faraid*”.
- 24) “*Kitab fi ar Radd 'ala ibn Abdi al Hakam 'ala Malik*”.
- 25) “*al Mujaz fi Us}ul*”.

### 3. Tafsir at-T{oari

This tafsir named *Jami' al Bayan 'an Ta'wil Ayi al Qur'an*. Written on the half of 3rd century. It was the first of *tafsir bi al ma'tsur* and also became the first reference for interpreters who payed much attention to the *tafsir bi al ma'tsur*. At-T{oari worked in this, too, over many years, and it was not ready for dissemination till some date between 283/896 and 290/903. At-Thabari said:

I told me myself about it when I was a little. And said: I have asked guideline (*istikharah*) to Allah in writing a book of interpretation and asked



His help for what I have intended for about three years before I did it, therefor He helped me.<sup>26</sup>

It was immediately regarded very highly, and probably considered as at-Tabari's outstanding achievement, even more so than his works on law and tradition, it has retained its importance for scholars till the present day. In his work, at-Tabari in general treated the Qur'anic verses from a grammatical and lexicographical standpoint, but also made dogmatic theological and legal deductions from the Qur'an text. The commentary's (*tafsir*) great value and its popularity ensured that supercommentaries upon it and epitomes early appeared, with an abridgement speedily made by the Baghdadi scholar of Turkish origin, Ibn al Ikhshid (d. 326/938, cf. Sezgin, i, 624, and D. Gimaret).<sup>27</sup>

This *tafsir* consist of 30 volumes with the big size. At first, this *tafsir* got lost then found one manuscript that saved by Amir Mahmud bin Abd Rasyid, the ruler of Najd. Afterwards, the *tafsir* published to become an encyclopedia of *tafsir bil ma'tsur* and it spreaded widely. The *tafsir* was the oldest complete *tafsir* that we ever get, because the other *tafsir* did not reached to us completely as well as this *tafsir*.

The *tafsir* uses *Tahlili* method, because the interpretation according to the verse structure and *surah* as there is in *moshaf*. Beside that, even it contents was composite of *tafsir bil ma'tsur* and *tafsir bil ra'yi* but most of them took commentary either from Al Qur'an, or sunnah and the opinions

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<sup>26</sup> Al Hamawi, *Mujamul ...*, v. 6, p. 2452.

<sup>27</sup> P.J. Bearman, "al-Tabari," ..., p. 14.

of followers (*tabi'in*) so that this tafsir included of *tafsir bil ma'tsur's* category.

To interpret the ayat of Al Qur'an, at first would be explained the meaning of the words in terminology in Arabics side, described the linguistics structure by completed *shawahid* (testimony) of Arabics poem. Afterwards, to interpret the with the *shawahid* in the form of narrative that got from *s'ahabah* or *tabi'in* with the complete *sanad* as there in *bi al ma'thur* method.

All of narrative that related to ayat would be described completely to compare among one and other. About *sanad* would be criticized the *ta'dil* or *jarh*,<sup>28</sup> but commonly it did not describe *s'ahih* (valid) or *d'aif* (weak) about the narrative. Its also consists some kinds of *qiraat* and it consequences to the differences result that may be had. Eventhough the *qiraats* verified before about its value, and would be refused by the intelektual of moslem if unacceptable to be an *hujjah*. Perhaps, some *israiliyah* history also consisted in this tafsir and became a narrative source, either from Ka'ab al Ahbar, Wahab bin Munabbih, Ibnu Juraij, or Al-Sudy etc. As Mahmoud Sha>kir said in his publication of this book it is only to strengthen the linguistic meanings just like quoting poetry, even these *israiliyah* narratives -from this side- are better and stronger in *isnad* than any poetries, because we could not compare the quality of poetry and hadith or the narratives. This tafsir also consists of language structures,

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<sup>28</sup>*Ta'dil* is the verification of sunnah's value that find the truth. *Jarh* is the verification of sunnah's value to find the flawed of narrative.



Arabic poem and faith (*aqidah*). Because of his capacity as *mujtahid* (seeker) who explained about *fiqh* problems became the tendency of this tafsir.

#### 4. Ulama' Appraisal

Tafsir At-T{obari has a high value, beside that it based on tafsir narratives and also there was conclusion (*istinbat*) of law from the verses that interpreted. The precious of this tafsir proved by intellectual muslims commentary that made it as mainly important source. As Suyuthi commented: "Tafsir At T{obari was exalted and the best one, because it consists of some commentary to compare (*tarjih*) one of them, then to describe language structure (*i'rab*) and there is the conclusions of law until become the superior of other tafsir before". Al Nawawy said: "The intellectual of muslim agreed that there is no the highest value of tafsir Qur'an except tafsir at-T{obari". Ibn Hajar al 'Asqalani in *Lisan al-Mizan* told that Ibnu Huzaimah ever borrowed this tafsir from Ibnu Khaluih during two years then he said: "There is no an author that more clever except at-T{obari".<sup>29</sup> Abu Hamid al-Isfirayiny said: "If only someone come to China state to get tafsir at-T{obari, it doesn't make any problems".<sup>30</sup> Ibnu Taimiyah said: "Well the tafsir spreaded among humans, but the best is tafsir Ibnu Jarir At-T{obari. Because it explains the commentary of previous interpreters with sturdily, there is no *bid'ah* and

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<sup>29</sup>See also: al Baghdadi, *Tarikh Baghdad*, v. 2, p. 548.

<sup>30</sup>*Ibid.*



also doesn't narrate of liars." Ibn Kamil said: "This book was so popular, and Ibn Jarir carried this book to east and west, all of scholars in his time have read it and all of them praised and preferred it." Abu Omar az-Zahid: "I have never found in this book any error characters in its grammatical or linguistic." Ibn Afif said: "I saw in dream as if I am in Abu Jaafar's community, and the people read to him his interpretation book, then I heard a voice between sky and earth said: Who wanted to listen the Quran as it revealed, let him listen this book.<sup>31</sup>

## B. Abu Laith as-Samarqandi

### 1. Biography

His complete name was Nasr bin Muhammad bin Ahmad bin Ibrahim bin al-Khattab, Abu Laith al-Tudhi as-Samarqandi. He was popular as *Imam al-Huda* (the leader of the Guidance), *faqih* (master of Islamic law), *zahid* (self denying; astetic),<sup>32</sup> *mohaddith* (master of *hadith*), and interpreter.<sup>33</sup> His name al-Tudhi related to Todh (توذ)<sup>34</sup> a village of Samarqand, and also his father's name related to Rasani>n (رسنين).<sup>35</sup>

There were three persons who have *kunyah* (surname) "Abu Laith" in Hanafiah. One of them were Abu Laith Nasr bin Muhammad as-

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<sup>31</sup>Al Hamawi, *Mujamul ...*, v. 6, p. 2453; Ad-Z{ahabi, *Siyar ...*, v. 11, p. 169.

<sup>32</sup>Hans Wehr, *A Dictionary of Modern Written Arabic* (London; George Allen and Unwin Ltd., 1971), p. 383.

<sup>33</sup>Al Adnahwi, *Thabaqat al-Mufasssirin* (Saudi; Maktabah al Ulum wa al Hikam, 1997), p. 92; Ad-Z{ahabi, *Siyar ...*, v. 12, p. 333.

<sup>34</sup>Todh is a village which its far about three *farsakh* of Samarqand. Al Hamawi, *Mu'jam al-Buldan*, v. 2, p. 57.

<sup>35</sup>Rasani>n (رسنين) with *fathah* of *Ra* and *Sin*, *kasrah* of *Nun*, and *sukun* of *Ya*. Which is one of Samarqand villages, mentioned by *ar-Rasani>ni*; because of he stayed there before, then moved to Todz. See; Al-Hamawi, *Mu'jam ...*, v. 5, p. 327.



Samarqandi, and al-Hafidz Nasr Abu Laith as Samarqandi who lived before the biographed one and deceased on 294 H.<sup>36</sup> But the biographed one was the most famous with this *kunyah*.<sup>37</sup>

His birth was unknown by historian, but on supposition he was born in 301 H. Related with his death, the intellectual of moslem was in different opinion. According to al-Dawawy in “*T{abaqat al-mufassiri>n*” explained that he was death in Monday night in 11th of Jumadil Awwal 293 H. The author of *Madina al-Ulum* said that his decease was on Monday night, eleventh of Jumada al-Akhir year 393 H.<sup>38</sup> Ali al-Qari said in his *T{abaqa>t*: “He deceased in Balkh year 376 H, and in *Sharhu as-Shifa* deceased in 373 H. Haji Khalifa said in *Kashf az-Z{unun*, sometimes his death was 375 H (while mentioned in *al-Bustan* and *Tafsir* and *Tanbih al-Ghafilin*)<sup>39</sup>, other chances mentioned in year 383 H (in *Khazanat al-Fiqh*)<sup>40</sup> and other time he said 382 H (when he mentioned *Hashru Masail fil Furu’*)<sup>41</sup> and mentioned year 376 H (in *Uyun al-Masail*), also in another time he did not comment about his death while mentioned in *al-Muqaddimah*. Ad Dzahabi in *al Moqtana fi Sard al Kuna* stated that Abu Laith as-Samarqandi was deceased year 378 H”.<sup>42</sup>

<sup>36</sup>Al Qurasyi Muhyiddin, *Al-Jawahir al-Mudiyyah*, v. 2, p. 196.

<sup>37</sup>*Al-Mausu’ah al-Fiqhiya al-Kuwaitiyah*, V. 1 (Kuwait; Wizar al-Awqaf wa as-Syuun al-Islamiyah, 1404-1427 H), p. 338.

<sup>38</sup>Bahrul Ulum (Preface), v. 1, p. 3.

<sup>39</sup>Haji Khalifa, *Kasyfu ad-Dhunun*, v. 1, p. 441.

<sup>40</sup>*Ibid.*, v. 1, p. 703.

<sup>41</sup>*Ibid.*, v. 1, p. 668.

<sup>42</sup>Ad-Dzahabi Abu Abdullah, *Al-Moqtana fi Sard al Kuna* (Madinah; al Majlis al Ilmi-Islamic University, 1408 H), v. 2, p. 36.



The word “As-Samarqandi” that became his epithet was took from Samarqand<sup>43</sup> a place he borned. This city is according to Khurasan now (Uni Soviet Authority). In Arabic called by Saran where plateau resident area and wide plantage area. The poet said “every moslems will meet in the heaven later, and the earthly paradise is Samarqand”. Khatib al-Baghdadi in *Tarikh Baghdad* related Abu Laith to Bukhara city, said "Abu Laith al Bukhari".<sup>44</sup> Whereas Bukhara is not one of the villages of Samarqand, and Samarqand is not one it villages, but both are an independent country separated by a distance for about seven days or Thirty seven *farsakh*.<sup>45</sup>

The history about his family was undetectable except Abu Laith As-Samarqandi and his father, Muhammad bin Ibrahim al-Tudhi as his first teacher. He took much his father commentary in his tafsir and other work of his. Beside that he also sat under Abu Ja'far al-Handawany or Abu Ja'far al-Balkhy, al-Khalil bin Ahmad al-Qadly al-Sajazy -an expert in sunnah and fiqh Hanafi flow-, Muhammad bin al-Fadl al-Balkhy, Abu Ibrahim at Tirmidzi and many other.<sup>46</sup>

Some source mentioned a *sanad* of his in fiqh Hanafi flow, that he took from Abu Jafar al Hinduani from Abul Qasim as Saffar from Nasir bin Yahya from Mohammed bin Samaah from Abu Yusuf, student of Abu

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<sup>43</sup>al Hamawi, *Mujamul ...*, v. 3, p. 246.

<sup>44</sup>Al Baghdadi, *Tarikh ...*, v. 15, p. 411.

<sup>45</sup>Al Hamawi, *Mujamul ...*, v. 1, p. 353.

<sup>46</sup>Ibn Qathlubaga, *Taj at-Tarajim*, v. 2, p.118; Al Qurasyi, *Al-Jawahir al-Mudiyah*, v. 2, p. 196; Ad Dzahabi, *Siyar A'lam an-Nubala*, v. 12, p. 333; *Tarikh al-Islam*, v. 26, p. 583; *Mujamul Buldan*, v. 2, p. 57.



Hanifa.<sup>47</sup> "The Circle of Islamic Knowledge" has made a fault when included him into Hanbali flow.<sup>48</sup> It is very strange to see such as this big association fell in this fault, besides Abu Laith's works expressly authorized in his affiliation to Hanafiya flow.

Abu Laith also got out from his hometown and went to Baghdad, looking for science and hadith then took hadith over there from Muhamed bin Mohamed bin Sahl An Naysaburi.<sup>49</sup>

In his era Abu Laith was a direction of intellectual muslims. Because of many intellectual muslims and *sufi* ever study and dropped in there. Beside that Samarqand was the center of Islamic culture and the reference. Therefor, Samarqand city was a scientific city among another Islamic city. This condition gave many contribution to Abu Laith as-Samarqandi to be the great teacher.

Either in *fiqh* side or *ushuluddin* (theology) he outvied of another intellectual muslims in his era. The student of his were Luqman bin al-Hakim al-Farghani, Abu Malik Nu'aim al-Khatib, Muhammad bin Abd al-Rahman al-Zubairi, Abu Sahl Ahmad bin Muhammad an Abu Abdillah al-Harari, Abu Bakr Muhammad bin Abd ar-Rahman al-Tirmidzi,<sup>50</sup> Abu al-Bahr Sufyan Ibn al-Asi al-Asadi,<sup>51</sup> Muhammad bin Muhammad bin Said

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<sup>47</sup>Bahrul Ulum (Preface), v. 1, p. 3.

<sup>48</sup>*Ibid.*

<sup>49</sup>Al Baghdadi, *Tarikh ...*, v. 15, p. 411.

<sup>50</sup>Ad Dzahabi, *Siyar ...*, v. 12, p. 333; *Tarikh al-Islam*, v. 26, p. 583.

<sup>51</sup>Al Kattani, *Fahras al-Faharis*, v. 2 (Beirut: Dar al-Ghorb al-Islami, 1982), p. 998.

as- Samarqandi<sup>52</sup> and Ali bin Ahmed ar Razzaz, within his trip to Baghdad.<sup>53</sup>

Abu Laith also participated in authoring in disagreement *fiqh* (fikih khilaf) or the known today by "Comparative Fiqh", in his book *Mukhtalafur Riwayat* in disagreement among Abu Hanifa, Malik and as-Syafi'i. He also has a big contributions in tafseer, hadith, tashawuf, legal decision (*fatwa*), theology, debate, etc.

## 2. His Work

Abu Laith was a very succesful author in several fields of the Islamic sciences, and his books have become popular from Marocco to Indonesia. Abu Laith understood many kind of knowledge deeply untill became an intellectual and productive writer. His works are;

- 1) *Bahr al-Ulum* (tafsi>r), printed Cairo 1310/1892-3; this was translated into old Ottoman Turkish by Ibn Arabshah (d. 854/1450 I), and Ibn Arabshah's work was expanded by Abu al-Fadhl Musa al Izniqi, a contemporari under the title *anfas al jawahir*; manuscripts of these Turkish editions are among the oldest dated Ottoman Turkish Manuscript.<sup>54</sup>
- 2) *Khazanah al-Fiqh* (a handbook of Hanafi law), it contains of fiqh.
- 3) In mystical (tasawuf) were *Tanbih al-Ghofilin*, *Bustan al-Arifin*, both on ethics and piety, often printed.

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<sup>52</sup>Al Hamawi, *Mu'jam* ..., v. 2, p. 57.

<sup>53</sup>Al Baghdadi, *Tarikh* ..., v. 15, p. 411.

<sup>54</sup>*Ensiklopedi Islam* (Jakarta; PT. Ichtiar Baru Van Hoeve, 2005), p. 137.

- 4) and in theology (*ushul al-din*) were *Ushul al-Din*, *Risalah fi al-Hukm*, *Risalah fi al-Ma'rifah wa al-Iman*, etc.
- 5) *Tasiis an-Nadhair*, it was one of Islamic laws' branches, he stated about a disputing among the *eight imams*. First, it mentioned the disagreement part between Abu Hanifa and his two companions.<sup>55</sup> In *Khazana at-Turath* contains of jurisprudence principle, in manuscript.
- 6) *Umdat al-Aqaid*, in manuscript.
- 7) *Fadhail Ramadhan*, in manuscript.
- 8) *Al-Muqaddimah fi al-Fiqh*, known as "Abu Laith's introduction" or "the Introduction of as-Samarqandi". It was the best known introduction among the creatures with its blessings. Explained by Dhun Nun (d. 677 H) named "*at-Tawdiih*", and al Qarmani (d. 809 H), Khalil al-Malqami, Hasan at-Tuluni and Jibril al-Kanjani (d. 752 H) named "*Kitab al-Taqdimah fi Syarh al-Muqaddimah*", and made by Abdul Wahab al-Othmani al-Anshari (d. 901 H) the poem named "*al Minah al-Muaddhomah fi Nadhmi Masail al-Muqaddimah*". Printed.<sup>56</sup>
- 9) *Syarhu al-Jami' al-Shaghir* belong to as-Syaybani, in jurisprudence. Mentioned by al-Babani and az-Zarikli. In Manuscript.<sup>57</sup>
- 10) *Uyun al-Masail*, one of Islamic law branches based on Hanafiya view. or mentioned by *Hashru al Masail wa Qashru ad-Dalail*. Explained by Alauddin al-Asmandi (d. 552 H), In manuscript.

<sup>55</sup>Haji Khalifa, *Kasyfud ...*, v. 1, p. 334.

<sup>56</sup> *Idem.*, p. 1975.

<sup>57</sup> Az Zarikli Khoiruddin, *Al-A'lam*, v. 8, p. 28-27; al-Babani, *Hadiyatul Arifin*, v. 2, p.

- 11) *Daqaiq al-Akhbar fi Bayani ahlu al-Jannati wa ahlu al-Nar*. In manuscript.
- 12) *Mukhtalaf ar-Riwayah*, in disagreement among Abu Hanifa, Malik and Shafi'i (God's mercy be upon them). In manuscript.
- 13) *Syari'at al-Islam*, in jurisprudence. In manuscript.
- 14) *An-Nawazil fi al-Fatwa* also known as *Abu Laith Fatwas* or *The Fatwas of as-Samarqandi*. Haji Khalifa said: "The author mentioned that this book collected the words of Muhammad bin Syuja at-Thalji, Muhammad bin Muqatil ar-Razi, Muhammad Ibn Salamah, Nasir bin Yahya, Muhammad Ibn Salam, Abu Bakr al-Iskafi, Ali bin Ahmad al-Farisi and the Faqih Abu Ja'far Muhammad bin Abdullah. In manuscript.
- 15) *Interpretation of Juz Amma*, a great summary. In manuscript.
- 16) *Khazana al-Amal*, in jurisprudence, mentioned in *Taj at-Tarajim*, perhaps it was *Khazana al-Fiqh* it self.
- 17) *Mabs}ut fi al-Furu'*, mentioned in *Kasyfu ad-Dhunun* and *Hadiyat al-Arifin*.
- 18) *Hashru al-Masail*, in Law's branches.
- 19) *Nawadir al-Fiqh*, mentioned by Riyadh Zadeh (d. 1078 H) in *Asma al-Kutub al-Mutammim li Kasyfu ad-Dhunun*<sup>58</sup> and al-Babani in *Hadiyat al-Arifin*.<sup>59</sup>

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<sup>58</sup>Riyadh Zadah, *Asma' al-Kutub al-Mutammim li Kasyf ad-Dhunun* (Syuria; Dar al-Fikr, 1983), p. 141.

<sup>59</sup>al-Babani, *Hadiyatul Arifin*, v. 2, p. 490.



- 20) *Syarhu Musykilat al-Qadduri*, the author said; "It was a great explanation". such it was said and need to be discussed. Perhaps it is explanation of Abu Bakr Alauddin Mohammed bin Ahmad as Samarqandi (d. 552 H).<sup>60</sup>
- 21) *Qurrah al-Uyun wa Mufarrih al-Qalbi al-Mahzun*, it was printed by side margin of "Mukhtashor Tadzkiroh of Imam Abu Abdillah al-qurtubi" belong to Sheikh Abdul Wahab as-Sha'rani, it also mentioned in *Mu'jam al-Mathbuin*.<sup>61</sup>
- 22) *Mukhtashor Kitab Thib al-Qulub*, in mystic.
- 23) *Message in Basmalah*, in commentary.
- 24) *Hidayat al-Ghafilin*, in advices.
- 25) *Risalah fi Adab al-Bahtsi*, a message in research's ethic (and debate).
- 26) *Qut an-Nafs fi Ma'rifat Arkan al-Khoms*.
- 27) *Tuhfat al-Anam fi Manaqib al-Aimmat al-arba'ah al-Alam*, in biography of *Shahabah*.
- 28) *Syarh al-Fiqh al-Akbar*, in theology.
- 29) *Syarh al-Jami' al-Kabir*, in jurisprudence.
- 30) *The Interpretation of surah Yusuf*, in commentary.
- 31) *Asrar al-Wahyu*, in theology.
- 32) *Syarh al-Islam*.
- 33) *Al-Kafir Humu ad-Dhalimun*, in commentary.

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<sup>60</sup>Haji Khalifa, *Kasyfud Dhumun*, v. 2, p. 1631.

<sup>61</sup>Sarkis Yusuf, *Mu'jam al-Mat'buat*, V.2 (Egypt; Mathbaah Sarkis, 1928), p. 1046.



- 34) *Risalah fi Inzal al-Qur'an 'ala Sab'ati Ahruf*, a message in qur'anic knowledge.
- 35) *Majalis fi an-Nukat wa al-Isyarat wa al-Hikayat fi Qishshati Yusuf*, in commentary.
- 36) *Kitab fi al-Hadith*, in hadith.

### 3. Tafsir Bahrul Ulum

Its complete name is *Bahr al-Ulum* contains of three volumes. This tafsir was in Dar al-Kutub al-Misriyah, while in al-Azhar library there were 2 writing forms, in one complete chapter and other in three chapters. In the beginning of this tafsir explained about suggestion of study and its stead. And also the prohibition of al-Qur'an interpretation without linguistic knowledge and how was al-Qur'an descended. All should be with argumentation that based on traditional Islamic scholar.

This tafsir uses *tahlili* method, because it based on verse structure or *surah* within *mushaf* structure. In this tafsir abu Laith collected both *al-ma'thur* method and *al-ra'yi* method, even though the explanation of *al-ma'thur* was dominant. The explanation on this book stated by the commentary of previous intellectual Muslims, by the side of *sahabah* commentary, *tabi'in* commentary, and who were after them. But, it was often happened no putting down the person who was narrated the commentary. Sometimes there were the explanation in differences commentary about certain verse without the *sanad*. Beside that it contains



of *qiraat* and linguistic structure simply and also the history of *israilliyah*, without selection. Most of his comment; “Some intellectual muslims told thus ...”. This *tafsir* also narrated by the weak (*dhoif*) person sometimes, such as narrated by al-kalaby from Ashbath from al-Sudy and other who were contrasted with their validity. Generally, the explanation of this *tafsir* firstly were looking for other first which explains the main verse.

In the fact, there were opinions according to this *tafsir*. Some intellectual muslims such as Haji khalifa (the author of *Kasyfu ad-Dhunun*) and Khairuddin az-Zarikli (the author of *al-A'lam*) said that *Bahrul Ulum* did not belong to Abu Laith, but it belonged to other Samarqandi who passed away about 860 H, named Ali bin Yahya as-Samarqandi.<sup>62</sup> Az-Zarikli said; “The true is that *Bahrul ulum* is book of other Samarqandi named Ali bin Yahya who lived in the ninth century.”<sup>63</sup> Then he said: "Its mentioned in *Fahras al Azhar* and *Fahras Dar al Kutub* the book *Bahrul Ulum* belonged to Abu Laith Nasr bin Muhammad as-Samarqandi, it was incorrect.”<sup>64</sup>

Those the researcher found within the research about the relation of *Bahrul Ulum* and its author exactly. Then whose interpretation book *Bahrul Ulum* was? Is it right *Bahrul Ulum* belongs to Ali bin Yahya as-Samarqandi (d. 860 H) or to Abu Laith Nashr Muhammad as-Samarqandi? To answer this question the researcher would like to take the narrate what

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28. <sup>62</sup>Haji Khalifa, *Kasyfud ...*, v. 1, p. 225; Az Zarikli, *Al-A'lam*, v. 5, p. 32 and v. 8, p. 27-

<sup>63</sup>Az Zarikli, *Al-A'lam*, v. 8, p. 28.

<sup>64</sup>*Ibid.*, v. 5, p. 32.

the publisher of *Bahrul Ulum* (who has printed its manuscript) said about it. After narrated az-Zarikli's opinion, the publisher said; "The true one, *Bahrul Ulum* is belong to Abu Laith Nashr bin Muhammad as-Samarqandi. However, what Haji Kholifah stated that *Bahrul Ulum* belonged to Ali bin Yahya as-Samarqandi al Qarmani who passed away in Larandah, and he was a student of Alauddin al-Bukhari is also true. But he did not aware that there were two *tafsirs* of two Samarqandi within the same name. It was mentioned in "*as-Syaqaiq an-Nu'maniya*" that he (Ali bin Yahya) did not finished it (ended in *surah Al-Mujadalah*). While *Bahrul Ulum* which written by Abu Laith Nasr Muhammad was finished completely."<sup>65</sup> Then he mentioned some proofs for his claim. So *Bahrul Ulum* belongs to Abu Laith as-Samarqandi with no doubt, and also there was another *Bahrul Ulum* belong to other Samarqandi (Ali bin Yahya). To prove this statements more, the researcher would like to summery all the proofs mentioned by the publisher and other proofs that found by the researcher, those are below;

- a. Many intellectual muslims related *tafsir Bahrul Ulum* belongs to Abu laith, as in *Fahras al-Azhar*<sup>66</sup> and *Fahras Dar al-Kutub*.<sup>67</sup>
- b. The publisher of *Bahrul Ulum* has assured that it is correct to attribute it to Abu Laith as-Samarqandi.<sup>68</sup>

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<sup>65</sup>*Bahrul Ulum* (preface), v. 1, p. 3-4.

<sup>66</sup>*Fahras al-Azhar*, v. 1, p. 178.

<sup>67</sup>*Fahras Dar al-Kutub*, v. 1, p. 37.

<sup>68</sup>*Bahrul Ulum* (preface), v. 1, p. 3-4.



- c. Wrote on some manuscript of this tafsir, that this was written by Abu Laith.<sup>69</sup>
- d. It mentioned in Encyclopedia “*Khazana at-Turath*” list of a number of manuscript of Bahrul Ulum attributed to Abu Laith Nasr as-Samarqandi. these manuscripts was in King Faishal Center for Research and Islamic Studies, Riyadh, Saudi Arabia.

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<sup>69</sup>*Ibid.*, v. 1, p. 5-10.