

- **Qairat QURMANBAYEV**, *Linguistic Principles of Uşūl al-Fiqh Science in Works of Husām al-Dīn al-Sīgnāqī* (Хусам ад-Дин әс-Сығнақи еңбектеріндегі «Усұл әл-Фиқһ» ілімінің лингвистикалық негіздері), Munara Publications, 1st edition, Almaty 2018, 332 pg., ISBN: 978-601-7071-43-1.

Book review: Ozat SHAMSHIYEV*

The book is the first publication of “Islamic Studies” series which has been published by Munara Publ., in Almaty city, in 2018. The work has been discussed and licensed by academic board of Nur-Mubarak University on 12th December, 2017. It is doctorate dissertation of Dr. Qairat Qurmanbayev, the current pro-vice-chancellor¹ of “Nur-Mubarak Egyptian University of Islamic Culture”, the leading Islamic university of Central Asia in Islamic sciences and theological studies. As a matter of fact, it is the first and unique academic work made in Islamic sciences in Kazakhstan, during the post-Soviet period of time. The work has been written in monographic style of research. As it is known, the monography is academic type of work purposing a specialized and intensified exploring of a certain subject. It might be thought that this kind of work does not give much to the academia, due to its special character, but I would like to express that focusing on some critical topics or key people can give us authentic knowledge and sound picture about their backgrounds (i.e. historical period, world of science, scholars, academic achievements, states, demography, languages etc.). So did the author. He had focused on *Husām al-Dīn al-Sīgnāqī* as a key scholar in terms of inter-relation of linguistic principles of Arabic and uşūl al-fiqh science. Actually, I would like remark, that he based his work on *al-Sīgnāqī* aiming at revealing three main points: 1) fundamental correlation between Arabic linguistics and principles of uşūl al-fiqh; 2) importance of Arabic linguistics in determining legal norms from religious texts in the Ḥanafī Law school; 3) exposing the mastership and proficiency of medieval jurist and linguist, who has been originated from Kazakh steppe. It is stated, that the work is devoted to Islamologists, religious scholars, historians, orientalist, students and researchers of Arabic linguistics and Islamic Law. But, I would like to remark that understanding of the second, and especially of the third chapter requires a deep knowledge of Arabic and legal theory of Islamic Law. So, not everyone that is mentioned above is capable of benefiting from this work totally.

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Mr. Qurmanbayev is a graduate of Libyan International Islamic University of Tripoli (2006). In 2009, he gained master's degree in theological studies at al-Fārābī Kazakh National University. He is the first scholar who has gained PhD degree in Independent Kazakhstan. He has been teaching at "Nur-Mubarak" University since 2006, up till today. He also served as director of Institute of In-service Training of Anti-extremist Experts and advisor of "Abū Ḥanīfah" Research Center. The researcher is also author of academic books produced in Kazakh language such as "Human Rights in Islam", "Ḥadīth Science", "Introduction to Qur'anic Sciences" and many other scientific articles.

The work consists of an introduction, three main chapters, conclusion, two abstracts in English and Russian languages, appendixes that are indicating a) the map of travels and scientific journeys of al-Signāqī; b) detailed table of his works and information about their manuscripts; c) table of differences between fuqahā and mutakallimūn methods in terms of legal theory.

In introduction, the author refers to the importance of studying al-Signāqī and his works. Afterwards, he deals with the main sources of the work and mentions the literature, in which al-Signāqī had been studied. Finally, he concludes that there is no academic work on Central Asian scholars dating to pre-independence term of Kazakhstan (i.e. 1991), and that it is the present generation's duty to make study of their ancestry.

In the first chapter, the life of al-Signāqī, socio-political and scientific atmosphere of his era, his works and formation of his personality as a scholar has been analyzed.

Ḥusām al-Dīn Ḥusayn ibn 'Alī ibn Ḥajjāj ibn 'Alī ibn Muḥammad al-Signāqī (630-714 A.H.) is a great Hanafī scholar of medieval Central Asia. The Signāq city which Ḥusām al-Dīn Ḥusayn ibn 'Alī is related to, was known as one of the most famous cities of that era in terms of civilization, culture, trade and science. As one of the leading scholars of Māwarā'un-nahr's Hanafī-Maturidī stream, al-Signāqī, specialized in such fields like uşūl al-fiqh, fiqh, Arabic linguistics, kalām, and other Islamic sciences. He has significant works on various fields of Islamic sciences such as: *al-Wāfī fī Usūl al-Fiqh* (commentary of *al-Muntakhab* of al-Ḥusāmī), *al-Kāfī Sharḥ al-Bazdawī* (commentary on the most renowned *Usūl al-Bazdawī*), *al-Nihāyah fī Sharḥ al-Hidāyah* (the first exegesis of *al-Hidāyah* of al-Margīnānī), *al-Muwaşşal fī Sharḥ al-Mufaşşal* (commentary of al-Zamakhsharī's *al-Mufaşşal* in Arabic grammar), *al-Najāḥ al-Tālī tilwa al-Marāḥ* (commentary of *al-Marāḥ* in the morphology of Arabic language), *al-Tasdīd fī Sharḥ al-Tamhīd* (explanatory

work on *al-Tamhīd* of Abū al-Muʿīn al-Nasafī), *al-Mukhtaṣar* (tractate on the Arabic morphology) etc.

There are some narrations of his disciples and contemporary scholars on behalf of him, that express his proficiency and profound knowledge at Qurʾanic sciences and ḥadīth as well.

In spite of the fact that we do not have sufficient knowledge about his life and details of his scholarly journeys, merely taking a look at the titles of al-Siġnāqī's works gives us a deep understanding about his importance in Islamic sciences. For instance, *al-Kāfī Sharḥ al-Bazdawī*, of which is published in five volumes is a commentary on *Uṣūl al-Bazdawī* that is a masterpiece of juristic methodology of Ḥanafī school. Similarly, *al-Nihāyah fī Sharḥ al-Hidāyah* is the first commentary on *al-Hidāyah* as far as we know, which is known to be one of the main resources of Ḥanafī law school and exaggeratedly praised to be a book that has replaced whole preceding fiqh literature. Likewise, *al-Muwaṣṣal fī Sharḥ al-Mufaṣṣal* on Arabic grammar and *al-Najāḥ al-Tālī tilwa al-Marāḥ* on Arabic morphology, that are based on substantial works of related fields. Eventually, having been chosen such important works as a basis of his scientific acts, al-Siġnāqī had presented excellence of his extensive knowledge. Moreover, he had taken a part in transmitting of many books and tractates in fiqh, ḥadīth and ʿaqāid and reported in *Tabaqāt al-Ḥanafīyyah* to be the fourteenth scholar in narration chain of Ḥanafī law school heritage.

In the second chapter, an introduction to uṣūl al-fiqh as an Islamic science has been given, the importance of understanding of Arabic language in order to get authentic meanings of the religious texts has been highlighted, structural interrelations of Islamic law methodology and Arabic linguistics have been investigated. It must be noted, that one of the parallel works with this research at this point is Dr. Osman GÜMAN's doctorate dissertation named "Nahiv – Fıkıh Usūlü İlişkisi (İsnevî Örneği)", which is made in Marmara University, in 2006. As far as we noticed, the author referred to this thesis as one of the main resources in this chapter.

Finally, in the third part of the research, the author focused on al-Siġnāqī's works related to Arabic linguistics, al-Siġnāqī's methods of interpretation of juristic texts, linguistic modes of determining legal norms from the religious texts according to al-Siġnāqī's works, formal and verbal usages of Arabic words, general techniques of interpretation such as explicit-implicit meanings of words, real-metaphoric usages of the words, and semantics and it's effects on understanding of texts etc. With all due respect, I would like to make an objection to usage of new concepts like semantics and hermeneutics in classical Islamic sciences. There is no doubt, that the researcher

uses these terms merely with their lexical meanings, not in terminological sense. However, if we consider that “Semantics was first used by Michel Bréal, a French philologist in 1883, and can be used to describe how words can have different meanings for different people, due to their experiential and emotional backgrounds” (A Brief History of Semantics, Dataversity) and “Hermeneutics is the theory and methodology of interpretation. The tradition of Western hermeneutics starts in the writings of Aristotle and continues to the modern era” (History of Hermeneutics, Wikipedia) it would be appropriate not to use the terms which are likely to be anachronic and alien to *uṣūl al-fiqh*, both historically and geographically.

As to importance of the work, we could summarize it in some points as:

- Giving a wholistic picture of life, travels and works of al-Signāqī.
- Presenting authentic knowledge about old cities, historic events and socio-political background of that day.
- Using primary and original sources in Arabic, English, Russian, Turkish and Kazakh languages.
- Revealing the fundamental relation between Islamic methodology and Arabic linguistics.
- Forwarding essential examples of corelation of *uṣūl al-fiqh* and Arabic linguistics, out of *uṣūl* works of al-Signāqī.

Mr. Qurmanbayev used fluent, though scientific language throughout the book. He gave Arabic examples from religious texts at required points and successfully used Kazakh meanings of related words. Chapters and topics are given in logical consistency. However, length and content of chapters are not given in proper order. For instance, the third chapter thrice longer than the first one. Nevertheless, there is no problem in logical sequence of subjects and topics in general. The work is full of interesting knowledge and meaningful examples regarding the main subject of the research. Still, it would be more useful if there was an index of terms, scholars, and places. The most significant feature of the research is that the author used almost all resources in different languages available to him, as already mentioned above.

To conclude, with the consideration of difficulties that the researcher had to face during the process like translating Arabic and juristic terms and concepts into Kazakh language and being the first one who had to draw a roadmap of scientific works in post-Soviet Kazakhstan, we would like to state that this work is an appreciable piece of effort of its author that ought to be followed by analogous and more extensive works of next generations.

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