
A CRITICAL DISCOURSE ANALYSIS OF THE TRADITIONALIST-MODERNIST CONTROVERSY OVER THE RENEWAL OF RELIGIOUS DISCOURSE: A CASE STUDY OF THE FORMS OF “AZ-ZANN” IN THE QUR’AN (1)

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ABSTRACT: *Tackling the renewal of religious discourse (RD) is beyond the scope of the present research. So, the study deals with an important and vital area of religious discourse, namely the exegetic legacy. It addresses the interpretation of the forms of Az-Zann (i.e., the linguistic units which convey the meaning of conjecture) in the Qur’an. These forms are mentioned sixty-nine times in the Qur’an. They are divided into two groups according to their meanings: (a) fifty forms with a salient meaning and (b) the other nineteen forms have a pragmatic meaning. As for the present study, it provides an analysis for the fifty cases. The other nineteen cases will be dealt with in another paper. The present paper aims at providing an authentic interpretation of the linguistic units under analysis making an evaluation of the earlier scholars’ interpretation of the forms of conjecture. It checks their exegetic explanation to know whether they manage in reflecting the authentic meaning or not. (b) At the same time, it evaluates the claim of modernists regarding the relative truth of faith. In addition, it addresses their claim that faith is based on indeterminant proofs as well as determinant ones. Reaching the goals above helps in providing an answer for the general objective of the study by proving that religious discourse needs renewal or not. The study starts with scoping the fundamental reasons for conducting the study, providing a general background on the main schools of traditionalism, modernism, and reformism. In conclusion, the study finds that none of the cases has to do with faith. The interpretation given by the exegetes agrees with the established religious discourse except a few cases. On the contrary, the findings do not support the claim of modernists. Above all, the forms of conjecture are used for developing different discourses as demonstrated in the sections below.*

KEYWORDS: absolute faith, Az-Zann, interpretation, reformism, religious discourse, relative faith, salient meaning

INTRODUCTION

The study tackles an aspect of the running debate between the schools of traditionalism, modernism, and reformism over the issue of ‘the renewal of religious discourse’. In January 28-29, 2020, ‘Al-Azhar Al-Sharif organizes an international conference under the title of ‘‘The International Conference for ‘‘the Renewal of Islamic Thought and Sciences’’. Apparently, a dispute erupts between the Grand Imam of Al-Azhar Ahmed at-Tayyeb and Cairo university president Othman al-Khosht over the issue of reforming religious discourse. Recently, modernists have raised the call for reforming religious discourse claiming that traditional interpretations of the *Qur’an* and *Sunnah* are out-of-date ideas. Their stances are based on their own interpretation of the Qur’an. They regard the forms of Az-Zann as indeterminant proofs

for relative faith. On the contrary, traditionalists adhere to the traditional views. In addition to these two camps, there are moderate reformers whose views mediate between the two stances. They should be given a chance for expressing their views. One of the objectives of the study is to evaluate the stance of each camp revealing whether their views are in line with the divine values or not. The forms of 'Az-Zann' are used as a case study for providing potential answers to the key questions of the paper. It tackles the interpretations of both the earlier exegetes and modernists. The study makes use of a pragma-semantic analysis of the forms of Az-Zann with a view to arriving at an authentic interpretation. Such analytical samples help in revealing whether the traditional exegeses of the Qur'an are in line with the principles of the true creed of faith or they are in need for renewal. Also, it brings into light whether modernists are rightful or not.

Rationale of the Study

There are many fundamental reasons for undertaking the study of which are what follows:

- The controversy over the debate of renewing religious discourse. The issue of the renewal of religious discourse is important for combating extremism and all forms of violence. But the call for renewal has been received by different parties in a way that results in a raging controversy. Some parties are motivated by the lust for money. Other parties are characterized by a narrow mindset refusing any form of change assuming the perfection of all the traditional heritage. A third party mediates between the two parties, but it does not play its own role. Thus, the present study aims at proving the need for reforming religious discourse by moderate reformists.

- Another fundamental reason is the issue of the absolute truth or relative truth raised by the rector of Cairo University, al-Khosht. It is a thorny issue in religious discourse that should receive adequate consideration. Modernists claim that the Qur'an makes place for a borderline belief. For them, faith makes place for relative truth since faith itself is based on indeterminant proofs. In their journey of defending their views of relativity, they assume that there are some Qur'anic verses that support their claims. So, they mock the interpretations of the earlier scholars. Moreover, they assume that faith must be taken from determinant texts as well as indeterminant ones. In his speech at Al Azhar International Conference for the renewal of religious thought, al-Khosht makes it clear that faith is based on indeterminant verses repeating thrice the *Qur'anic* verse that reads:(2:46) . الَّذِينَ يَطُنُّونَ أَنَّهُمْ مُلَاقُوا رَبِّهِمْ وَأَنَّهُمْ إِلَيْهِ رَاجِعُونَ. [They are those) who think that they are going to meet their Lord, and that unto Him they are going to return]. (*al-Baqarah* 2: 46 Al-Hilali & Khan). Al-Khosht makes an interpretation that is based on the salient meaning of the underlined mental process 'yazunūn'. He considers the use of the mental process an indeterminant proof claiming that the Qur'an opens the door for the relative truth. Contrary to this view, traditionalists do not admit the literal meaning of the mental process. They assume that the salient meaning is at variance with the established religious discourse. Therefore, they search for another interpretation that goes in line with their creed. However, the earlier interpretations sound unconvincing for modernists because it lacks a sound theoretical justification.

- It should be noted that the earlier exegetes have achieved a great job leaving a tremendous heritage. In the full sense of the word, they have left a mark that their knowledge forms our intellectual mindsets for centuries. The only defect regarding such heritage is the

lack of contribution by the subsequent generations. Therefore, the study attempts to check the interpretations given by the early exegetes regarding the verbal process ‘zanna’ and its derivatives in the *Qur’an*. Moreover, it helps in solving the conflict between traditionalists and modernists placing emphasis on the compelling need for cooperation among all parties. As for the indeterminant proof, Faris (2020, January 28) gives a news report of al-Khosht’s speech in which the latter states that the earlier exegetes are stubborn when they acknowledge one interpretation of the *Qur’an* giving a blind eye to diversity. He says:

فالقدماء كانوا يذكرون المعاني ويقولون إن هناك معنى واحداً وصحيحاً، وباقي المعاني كلها خاطئة، أي أنهم قسموا العالم إلى أبيض وأسود، وإلى صواب وخطأ، في حين أن هناك تعددية في الصواب يجب أن يعيها العلماء والباحثين. فالآيات السابقة أمثلة للآيات ظنية الدلالة. (فارس، 28 يناير 2020).

[The earlier scholars used to mention one meaning as the only correct interpretation while the other possible meanings are all wrong. Therefore, they categorized the world into white and black and into right and wrong while there is a diversity of opinions regarding the same issue of which the scholars and researchers must be aware. The verses above are examples of the indeterminant verses. (Faris, 2020, January 28)].

The underlined sentence refers to the verse blew by which al-Khosht buttresses his stance. He goes ahead repeating the same *Qur’anic* verse in his reply to the Grand Imam of Al Azhar. He recites the verse that reads: (2:46) الَّذِينَ يَظُنُّونَ أَنَّهُمْ مُلَاقُوا رَبِّهِمْ وَأَنَّهُمْ إِلَيْهِ رَاجِعُونَ. (They are those) who think¹ that they are going to meet their Lord, and that unto Him they are going to return. (*al-Baqarah* 2:46 Al-Hilālī & Khan).

al-Khosht quotes the verse to prove his view that there is no absolute truth as for belief in God. Also, he is not convinced that the interpretations of the earlier exegetes of the *Qur’an* are correct. To support this argument, he goes on rejecting the interpretations of the earlier scholars stating that:

ومن قال الذين يظنون أنهم ملاقوا ربهم وأنهم إليه راجعون؟! طبعاً هي قول يا دكتور الخشت ذاك التراث هتجد المفسرين يقولوا الظن هنا بمعنى اليقين وأنا أسأل لماذا لم يستخدم ربي لفظ يوقنون أنهم ملاقوا ربهم يظنون أنهم ملاقوا ربهم. الإمام الشافعي إذا عاد لعصرنا هيأتي بفقهاء مختلف طيب ليه الحديث عن هذا الرأي ومناقضته. (فارس).

[And who says “They are the ones who think that they are going to meet their Lord, and that unto Him they are going to return?! Of course, someone will say, O doctor al-Khosht, study the heritage so you will find the commentators state that ‘conjecture’ means ‘certitude’. If so, I am asking why My Lord did not use the lexeme of ‘certitude’ instead of the lexeme of ‘doubt’?! Moreover, they will tell you that if the Imam ash-Shāfi‘y had come back to our life, he would have changed his juristic school’. If so, why delivering the speech of a marked plurality of views and acting against it at the same time?!]. (*Translation is Mine*).

By delivering the speech above, al-Khosht aims at criticizing traditionalists accusing them of stubbornness. Moreover, he rebukes them for chanting the slogans of the diversity of ideas which they act against it. Above all else, he claims that the mental process ‘zanna’ in the verse means ‘doubt’. Using the verse, he aims at proving that faith is based on doubt. Herein lies the

problem: the interpretation of the Qur'anic text is in isolation from the general context in a way that undermines creed.

Objectives of the Study

There are some specific and general questions for which the study seeks to provide answers. These questions are interlinked that answering the specific questions leads to the answer of the general ones. Here are the main questions of the research:

Specific Objectives

- Is there any form of *Az-Zann* that conveys the meaning of doubting faith in God?
- Are the claims made by the earlier exegetes regarding the meaning of *Az-Zann* true or not? In other words, is it true that each form of *Az-Zann* means certitude as the earlier exegetes claim?
- Is it true that the linguistic forms of *Az-Zann* mean “doubt/incertitude” whenever they are attributed to the unbelievers? And is it true that *Az-Zann* means “certitude” whenever it is attributed to the believers?
- If the answer for the question above is ‘no’, what is the authentic interpretation of the forms of conjecture? Does our interpretation help in solving the controversy between traditionalists and modernists?
- Can modernists’ interpretation be regarded as a proof for indeterminacy in faith? Subsequently, does the Qur’an make place for a relative truth or an absolute truth?
- Clarifying the meanings of the forms of conjecture for readers in a way that helps in shaping their mindsets properly.

General Objectives

- Is the legacy of exegeting the Qur’an out-of-date?
- Is the call for renewing religious discourse right or not?

General Background

The lines below aim at getting the reader familiar with the main forces in the exegetic field. First, there is an overview on the types of exegeting the Qur’an. Second, there is a synopsis on the new trends regarding the interpretation of the Qur’an. Third, the paper sheds light on the role of the moderate reformers in the field of religious discourse.

Traditionalists and at-Tafsīr

The Qur’an receives different types of interpretation of which is ‘*at-Tafsīr bil-Ma’thūr*’ (i.e., Received Interpretation). It means interpreting the Qur’an by the Qur’an itself, the Prophetic tradition, the sayings of the companions of the Prophet (PBUH), and their followers. One of the most known interpretations of this kind is ‘*Jāmi‘ al-Bayān fī Tafsīr al-Qur’an*’ by al-Qurṭubī (2006). The other kind of interpreting the Qur’an is ‘*at-Tafsīr bir-Ra’y*’ (i.e., Opinion-based Interpretation) by which the exegete delivers his own views making use of his linguistic competence and background knowledge such as ‘*al-Baḥr al-Muḥīt*’ by Abu ḥayyān (2010).

Traditionalism includes all what have been written on the Qur'an and as-Sunnah by the earlier scholars. Traditionalists advocate such legacy which is passed down by generations. It includes the two types of interpretations above. Indeed, traditionalists can be classified into two main groups: (a) the narrow-minded group that rejects any form of reforming religious discourse, and (b) the open-minded group that stipulates that the job of reforming religious discourse should be achieved by specialists in the religious field.

Modernists

Nowadays, the earlier interpretations of the Qur'an have received too much criticism by modernists. These new trends attempt to examine the *Qur'anic* text and *Sunnah* according to the approaches of the contemporary philosophy. Faris (2020, January 28) quotes al-Khosht as saying: "ولا يمكن تجديد الخطاب الديني دون تكوين عقل ديني جديد، ولا أو من بإصلاح العقل القديم... لا تكوين لعقل" [It is not possible to renew religious discourse without forming a new religious mindset, nor do I believe in reforming the old mindset ... No formation of a new religious mind without changing the ways of thinking and renewing the science of the fundamentals of religion].

The movement attempts to examine traditional heritage according to contemporary approaches of philosophy. al-Khosht adopts these approaches rejecting what he calls "the old mindset" and "all forms of the traditional knowledge". He states:

لا بد من تأسيس خطاب ديني من نوع مختلف، وليس تجديد الخطاب الديني التقليدي، فتجديد الخطاب الديني عملية أشبه ما تكون بترميم بناء قديم، والأجدى هو إقامة بناء جديد بمفاهيم جديدة ولغة جديدة ومفردات جديدة ... ولا يمكن تجديد الخطاب الديني دون تكوين عقل ديني جديد. ولا يمكن تجديد الخطاب الديني دون تكوين عقل ديني جديد، ولا أو من بإصلاح العقل الديني القديم. (فارس، فقرة 1).

[It is imperative to establish a different type of religious discourse, not to reform the traditional religious discourse. The process of renewal is like restoring an old building. It is much more useful to have a new building with new concepts, new language, and new vocabularies ... Religious discourse cannot be renewed without forming a new religious mindset, and I do not believe in reforming the old religious mindset]. (Faris, para 1).

Honestly speaking, al-Khosht has the right to call for the renewal of religious discourse. So, his views may be categorized under the Prophetic tradition that reads "whenever a judge arrives at a right decision after doing his best, he will have a double reward. But in case of missing out the right decision after doing his best, he will have one reward" (Muslim, 2006, p. 821). Moreover, the interpretation of some forms of "Az-Zann" given by the earlier exegetes are not convincing. However, his words convey the hardline stance by modernists against any traditional view. They are unwilling to acknowledge any contribution by the earlier scholars in all scientific fields. They have their own interpretation of the Qur'an as al-Khosht's understanding of the verse (2-46) upon which he builds his hypothesis of relative truth.

Moderate Reformers

Contrary to the hardline approach of modernists towards all what is traditional, there are moderate reformers who mediate between the traditional approach and the modernistic one.

The study is considered the voice of reformers who see that the renewal of religious discourse cannot be achieved without the co-operation between the two approaches together. The relationship between them is a complementary one that combines both the contribution of the earlier scholars and the subsequent generations. No one can deny the role of the earlier scholars in shaping minds over years. At the same time, the present generation must have its own contribution in this field. However, it is imperative upon the contemporary generation to make its contribution making use of the previous accumulated knowledge. They also should correct the areas of weaknesses to keep up with the current events. Accordingly, the renewal of religious discourse should spring from the original sources and keep up with the current era. The present study adopts such an approach for more than one reason. First, the traditional heritage is the umbrella under which the Muslim mindset is shaped over time. Second, nothing is perfect and if there is any defect, it is the role of the scholars to address it properly. Third, the cause of the troubles from which the Arabic and Muslim world suffers today is the failures of the present generation. So, they should have to contribute to the achievements of their predecessors. Honestly, the trends by secularists are not cooperative in a way that leads to conflict. In his report by Al Ahram Gate, ξabd el-Hady (2020, January 27) quotes the grand Imam at-Tayyeb as saying that:

واليوم لا يخامرني أدنى شك في أن التيار الإصلاحى الوسطى هو الجدير وحده بمهمة التجديد الذى تتطلع إليه الأمة ... وأعنى به التجديد الذى لا يشوه الدين ولا يلغيه.. وإنما يأخذ من كنوزه ويستضيء بهديه، ويترك ما لا يناسب من أحكامه الفقهيّة إلى فتراتنا التاريخية التى قبلت فيها وكانت تمثل تجديداً استدعاه تغير الظروف والأحوال يومذاك. (عبد الهادي، ش. 20 يناير 2020).

[Today, I have no doubts that the trend of moderate reformers is the only party to be charged with the task of the renewal of religious discourse to which our nation aspires. I mean a renewal that does not distort religion or cancel it. Rather it is a renewal that makes use of its treasures and gains enlightenment by its guidance. It also puts away any unacceptable juristic rulings that fit its historical periods in which they were produced. These rulings represent a renewal at the time of their production considering the conditions and circumstances of that time. (ξabd el-Hady 2020, January 20).

In a nutshell, the Grand Imam at-Tayyeb does not mind reforming religious discourse. He moves on to reject the hypothesis of relativity emphasizing that a believer cannot be a true believer unless he has absolute faith in God saying: "لا يمكن للمسيحي أن يكون مسيحي إلا إذا كان يعلم أن عقيدته مطلقة". [A Christian cannot be a true Christian unless he knows that his creed is an absolute truth].

at-Tayyeb's view is adopted by the followers of all religions. In her article "What is the Difference Between Absolute and Relative Truth?", Crain (2014, March) states that absolute truth is an intrinsic feature of Christianity. It means that Christians believe firmly that Christianity is the only true religion. Holding a belief like this is not in contradiction with respect for other people of different affiliations because each party believes that his religion has an absolute truth. Therefore, these words echo the view of at-Tayyeb that does not contradict with the principle of co-existence. Then, at-Tayyeb concludes his speech criticizing the ones who are not specialized in religious discourse stating (ironically):

هذا وإن موضوع تجديد الفكر الإسلامي، أو الخطاب الديني، لهو موضوع واسع الأرجاء مترامي الأطراف، وقد بات في الآونة الأخيرة مفهومًا غامضًا وملتبسًا، لكثرة تناوله في الصحف وبرامج الفضاء، وممن يدري ومن لا يدري، ومن المهووبين في مهارة التحدث في أي موضوع، دون دراسة كافية أو إعداد علمي سابق. (عبد الهادي، 27 يناير 2020).

[The topic of renewing Islamic thought, or religious discourse, is a wide-ranging topic. It has recently become an ambiguous concept due to its frequent use in newspapers and satellite programs by those who know and those who do not know, and those who are gifted at the skill of speaking on any topic without sufficient study or previous scientific preparation. (Abd el-Hady, 2020, January 27).

METHODOLOGY OF THE STUDY

The process of analysis uses a complementary pragma-semantic approach in the analysis of the forms of *Az-Zann*. Therefore, it starts with spotting the default interpretation that comes into mind once reading the forms. Searle (1979, p. 29) defines it as the simplest cases of meaning in which there is a complete correspondence between what a speaker says and what he intends. The determination of the default interpretation requires the analysis of the forms of conjecture at the level of expression meaning. It is the abstraction from the use of the expressions in concrete contexts according to Jaszczolt (2005, p. 6). The meaning is obtained by the linguistic knowledge stored in our minds. The fifty cases of *Az-Zann* have the salient meaning of conjecture because they are in line with the available divine evidence of the Qur'an and as-Sunnah. The default interpretation does not work when it comes to the problematic ninety cases that will be addressed in part two in another paper. So, a heuristic strategy is used for testing the salient meaning. As leech (1983, p. 41) states that 'if a test fails, a new hypothesis is formed. This hypothesis process is cyclically repeated until a solution is arrived at'. It starts with spotting the problem with the interpretation given by the earlier scholars or modernists, if any. The second step is the rejection of this interpretation. The third step is searching for a new interpretation that goes in line with the authentic religious discourse. Finally, finding a new interpretation, and checking that it is in consistent with the established religious discourse. Therefore, the process of interpretation is a process of guesswork, by hypothesis formation (Leech, p. 30). Such strategy is used to know whether there is a meaning shift from conjecture into certainty or not. Moreover, it is used for digging for the theory of the divine meaning.

Data of the Study

The primary data is obtained from the All-Glorious *Qur'an*. The lexical forms of the verbal process '*zanna*' and its derivatives are mentioned sixty-nine times in the *Qur'an*. The study divides the data into two groups: (a) the verbal processes, and (b) the nominal forms. The verbal process is mentioned forty-seven times, and the nominal form is mentioned twenty-two times. With reference to meaning, the forms of *Az-Zann* are grouped into: (a) fifty cases with the salient meaning of conjecture, and (b) nineteen cases have an illocutionary function. Under the common meaning of conjecture, four cases are attributed to the believers, seventeen cases attributed the unbelievers, four cases to the people of the Book, three cases are used for general discourses, and two cases are attributed to the hypocrites. As for the nominal form, four cases are used in the framework of belief, sixteen cases in the framework of unbelief, one case in the

case of the People of the Book, and one case in the framework of hypocrisy. Some cases have a default interpretation that is (to say) the initial and most likely accepted interpretation. The other cases have a pragmatic meaning that explains the relation between the literal meaning and the illocutionary meaning. The second primary data consists of the four traditional exegeses of the Qur'an: al-Wahidī (1995), an-Nasafy (1998), ibn Kathīr (2000), and at-Tabary (2000). The selection of the exegeses considers a main point of time that each exegetist of the Qur'an represents a specific point of time to know whether they are influenced by each other or not. Furthermore, it aims at bringing into light whether they manage in correcting the mistakes of each other or not?

Az-Zann: Definition

“Az-Zann” (i.e., conjecture) is one of the forms that conveys a specific degree of cognition. Sometimes, it reflects the higher end of certitude. In other times, it conveys the lowest end of certitude. According to Majmaʿ al-Lughati al-ʿarabiah (1989, p. 401), “Az-Zann” is “‘idrāku athihni ‘ash-shay’a maʿa tarjīhi wa qad ta’ty bimaʿna al-yaqīn” (i.e., the awareness of something through the mind with a possibility of being true or not. Also, it may mean certitude). The first part of the definition is to the point. It goes in line with the definition given by al-ʿaskary (1997, p. 99) who states that “Az-Zann” is the state of mind where one case of belief outweighs the other. It is the state of mind when a person believes strongly that something is true or false. Therefore, “Az-Zann” (i.e., conjecture) is higher than “ash-Shakk” (i.e., doubt) since the latter reflects the state of being uncertain about the truth or reliability of something. It is the last part of the definition that needs to be rechecked regarding the meaning of certainty. It echoes the definition used by the earlier exegetes in their interpretation of the verbal process ‘zanna’ in the Qur’an. The exegetes assume that it is Arabic usage that counts in the interpretation of the case. It is known that the production of Arabic dictionaries starts in the second century after hijra. In their journey of noting down words, early Arab linguists make use of the Qur’an and exegesis to produce dictionaries. Such definition raises questions such as ‘are Arabic lexicons influenced by the exegetic interpretations of the Qur’an or vice versa?’ Indeed, Arabic dictionaries are influenced by the exegetic interpretations of the Qur’an. So, the definition of the forms of Az-Zann by Arabic lexicons echoes the interpretations of the exegetes. Accordingly, an accurate linguistic analysis is required to arrive at an authentic interpretation of the data under analysis.

Default Interpretation

According to Bach (1984, p.38), default interpretation is “the first option that comes to mind without being immediately followed by the thought of a reason against it or of an alternative to it”. In other words, it is the process of jumping to conclusions instead of thinking twice. The definition applies to all the cases below because their interpretation does consider context according to Griffiths (2006, p.6). In addition, they are not problematic since the face-value meaning is not in contradiction with the established religious discourse. Under the frame of default interpretation, the verbal process of ‘conjecture’ has been attributed to the believers in four cases. Also, the infinitive form is used in the context of belief in four cases with the same meaning. Under the frame of hypocrisy, it has been used three times: two cases in the infinitive form and one case in the verbal process with the common meaning. In the context of belief,

there are nine cases of ‘conjecture’ that have a default interpretation. These are five verbal processes and four infinitive forms which are used for developing the frames below.

Believers and Default Meaning

Once reading the six cases below, the process of decoding the message takes no time since the reader jumps to conclusions initially. That interpretation is realized by the verbal process *zanna* in six cases if the verse (1:230) is dealt with under the framework of default interpretation. Otherwise, they are five cases of which two processes pose a problem for the exegetes even though their meanings revolve about worldly affairs. The problem results from the exegetes’ incompetence to interpret these cases correctly. They assume that the salient meaning contradicts with the creed of absolute faith which they have. Thereby, they attempt to find a way out that agrees with their creed.

Psychological Management of Evil Suspicions

The first case in which the common meaning is admitted is the verse that reads: يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا اجْتَنِبُوا كَثِيرًا مِّنَ الظَّنِّ إِنَّ بَعْضَ الظَّنِّ إِثْمٌ. (49:12). [O you who believe! Avoid much suspicion; indeed, some suspicions are sins]. (*al-Hujurāt* 49: 12). On one hand, the verse does not prohibit all kinds of doubt because it is one of many normal human emotions. The Qur’an provides a proper management for entertaining doubts by forbidding the most part of suspicions concerning others. The prohibition of all the evil suspicions aims at avoiding cognitive dissonance of harbouring a thought about someone which may be right or wrong. The Qur’an aims at getting the believers away from any kind of cognitive dissonance. According to Vaidis (2014, p. 1), cognitive dissonance is the inconsistencies among cognitions. Therefore, the verse aims at the prevention of entertaining two opposed views about someone because it may create enmity and negative impact upon oneself and others. On the other hand, it is a kind of psychological management that goes in line with normal feelings. al-Wahidy (1995, p.758), an-Nasafy (1998, p. 493), at-Tabary (2001, p. 374), and ibn Kathīr (2000, p. 192) state that the believers are considered one soul. Their interpretations suggest that they should not entertain evil suspicions against each other. Thusly, the interpretation is accurate since the use of ‘conjecture’ aims at developing positive attitudes towards others. Once you read the forms of conjecture in the verse, you jump to the conclusion that the salient meaning is the intended meaning.

The Psychology of Human Nature

This is one of the problematic cases for the exegetes because they find it impossible to attribute to the believers. The attribution of conjecture to believers is at variance with their creed of true faith according to their understanding. They assume that a believer is not to entertain suspicions because he should have an absolute trust in God in all his worldly life. They attempt to find a way-out for such a problematic issue. Therefore, they reject the face-value interpretation providing the interpretation of certainty. The lines below show how the exegetes interpret the linguistic units of ‘conjecture’ and what is the accurate evaluation of the case. The verse reads: ... وَتَطْنُونَ بِاللَّهِ الظُّنُونًا. (33:10). [... and you were harboring doubts about Allah]. (*al-Aḥzab* 33: 10). Attempting to solve the apparent problematic issue, the exegetes attribute the mental process of conjecture to different participants other than the believers. On one hand, an-Nasafy (p. 21) and al-Wahidy (p. 860), and at-Tabary (p. 235) state that the intended addressees are the hypocrites who think that Prophet Muḥammad (PBUH) and his companions will be

eradicated in the battle of the allied parties. On the other hand, al-Wāhidy and at-Tabary assert that the believers ‘*ayqanū*’ (realize with certitude) that God will make them victorious; however, some believers thought that Allah tests them. Their interpretation aims at avoiding the attribution of the meaning of conjecture to believers. ibn Kathīr (p. 128) states that some believers think that they will be defeated. The believers entertained all thoughts in a way that brought hypocrisy into light. He reports that one of the believers say, “Muhammed promises us the treasures of Khosrow and Caesar and we cannot go to toilet now”.

The accurate interpretation indicates that the addressees are the believers. The verse reminds them of the difficult time they pass by at the battle of the allied parties, al-Aḥzāb. Indeed, it was a difficult time for the Prophet (PBUH) and Muslims that they were besieged by many enemies of the disbelievers, some Arab tribes, and the Jews of Medina. Such hard times make them entertain different thoughts of victory and defeat. It is the human nature that counts here. All the contextual elements refer to specific time, place, and addressee in the preceding verses. First, the relative pronoun in the vocative case in the verse (33:9): ‘*yā ayuha ’al-lathīna ’āmanu*’ (O, you who have believed...). Second, the state of fear which is realized by the metaphorical structures: ‘*zāghat al-absār*’ (i.e., the eyes grew wild) and ‘*balaghat al-qulūbu al-hanājir*’ (i.e., hearts reached to throats) in the verse no. (33:10). These structures convey the believers’ state of overwhelming fear. Third, there is a specific reference to the believers by name in the verse that reads: therein the believers were tested, and they were shaking with a tremendous shaking” (33:11). Fourth, these verses are concluded with the verse (33:12) that reads: “And behold! The Hypocrites and those in whose hearts is a disease (even) say: "Allah and His Messenger promised us nothing but delusion!”. In reference to the verse, the hypocrites comment on the state of the believers above stating that God and His messenger promised them nothing but delusion. Putting these pieces together, the second person in the sentence ‘*wa tazunnūna*’ refers to the believers. The mental activity of harbouring mixed feelings of doubt and certainty is a natural response. Whenever there is a threat, such as besiege, fear activates areas involved in preparation for fight. It is a means of protection once perceiving a threat. Fear is a fundamental, deeply wired reaction, evolved over the history of biology, to protect organisms against perceived threat to their integrity or existence” according to Javanbakht and Saab (2017, October 27, para 1). Therefore, the mental activity of this type has nothing to do with the degree of faith. On the contrary, it has to do with fear and worries over the future of religion, on one hand, and fear and worries over themselves, on the other hand. The use of the form of ‘conjecture’ depicts the state of agony which the believers endure at this occasion. Pain and fear are necessary and valuable components of life. Suffering and worry are destructive and unnecessary components of life according to (Becker, p. 282). So, God reminds the believers of His favours upon them for saving their lives from these difficult times. In conclusion, the salient meaning is not in contradiction with faith.

The Cognate Object and the Diversity of Thoughts

The use of the infinitive form ‘*Az-Zunūna*’ supports the interpretation of the human nature above. Its plural form indicates that the believers entertain different feelings. Therefore, the intended meaning is that the believers have mixed feelings of the fear of defeat and the certitude of God’s victory. Moreover, it was not a general case of the believers, but it was a response of some believers to what happens. There were believers who take a firm position as the verse

below indicates: *مِنَ الْمُؤْمِنِينَ رِجَالٌ صَدَقُوا مَا عَاهَدُوا اللَّهَ عَلَيْهِ فَمِنْهُمْ مَن قَضَىٰ نَحْبَهُ وَمِنْهُمْ مَن يَنْتَظِرُ وَمَا بَدَّلُوا* (33:23). [Among the believers are men who have been true to their covenant with Allah ..., and showed not their backs to the disbelievers]; of them some have fulfilled their obligations (*i.e.*, have been martyred); and some of them are still waiting, but they have never changed [*i.e.*, they never proved treacherous to their covenant which they concluded with Allah] in the least. (*Al-Ahzāb* 33: 23).

In a nutshell, the attribution of the form of conjecture to the believers is normal since it reflects a human feature. Salient meaning should be admitted instead of twisting the text by searching for different interpretations or attributing the form of conjecture to different participants.

Limited Human Knowledge

In the same vein, some exegetes find it improper to attribute that salient meaning to the believers in the verse that reads: "... فَإِن طَلَّقَهَا فَلَا جُنَاحَ عَلَيْهِمَا أَن يَتَرَاجَعَا إِن ظَنَّا أَن يُقِيمَا حُدُودَ اللَّهِ" (2-230). [Then, if the other husband divorces her, it is no sin both of them that they reunite, provided they feel that they can keep the limits ordained by Allah...]. (*al-Baqarah* 1: 230). The question frequently raised in this research is that 'is there a meaning shift from certitude into doubt?' Some exegetes such as ibn Kathīr (p. 230) and an-Nasafy (p. 192) admit the literal meaning of 'doubt' assuming that doubt is used instead of certitude because future is known by God only. However, their assumption is incorrect because man has nothing about the future except hope and expectation. Furthermore, the interpretation of certainty is at variance with the principle of holiness that the second paper tackles. It is at-Tabary (p. 176) who manages in grasping the true meaning stating that conjecture has the illocutionary function of hope and expectation. He rejects the interpretation of 'certitude' because knowing the future is at the hands of God.

The Negative Mindset of Hypocrisy

The following cases of conjecture refer to the negative mindsets which the hypocrites harbour about God. There are three cases in which the salient meaning is admitted. In the verse below, the verbal process and the infinitive form have the common meaning of conjecture. It reads: "...وَمَا ظَنُّوا أَن يُصَلِّبَهُمُ الْكُفْرَ الَّذِي كَفَرُوا بِهٖ وَلَا يَحْسَبُونَ أَنَّهُم مُّجْرِمُونَ" (3:154). [...while the other party was thinking about themselves (as how to save their ownselves, ignoring the others and the Prophet) and thought wrongly of Allah- the thought of ignorance]. (*āli ħimrān* 3:154).

The verse gives a description of the hypocrites who harbour evil suspicions about God. al-Wahidy (p. 238), an-Nasafy (p. 303), ibn Kathīr (228), at-Tabary (p. 165) interpret the two forms of conjecture literally. They state that the hypocrites have doubts and evil suspicions that Allah will not make his Prophet victorious. This meaning is underlined by the verbal process in the verse (48:12) that reads: "...بَلْ ظَنَنْتُمْ أَن لَّن يَنْقَلِبَ الرَّسُولُ وَالْمُؤْمِنُونَ إِلَىٰ أَهْلِيهِمْ أَبَدًا" (48:12). [Nay, but you thought that the Messenger and the believers would never return to their families ...]. (*al-Fath* 48: 12).

Also, al-Wahidy (p. 1009), an-Nasafy (p. 327), ibn Kathīr (101), and at-Tabary (p. 258) admit the salient interpretation that revolves around the meanings of doubt and suspicions. The hypocrites think that the believers will be killed and eradicated at the hands of the unbelievers.

It may be said that the believers entertain doubts in the battle of the allied parties as reported in the verse (33:10) analysed above. The answer is that there is a great difference between the two verses. The attribution of conjecture in the case at hand aims at criticizing the negative mindset. It depicts the negative attitude taken by the hypocrites. The other type reflects the feeling of the human nature in face of dangers as illustrated in the preceding section [5.2.2].

Unbelievers and Default Meaning

The forms of conjecture have been attributed to the unbelievers in thirty-four cases with the meaning of doubt. They are realized by the verbal process in twenty cases and the infinitive form in fourteen cases with the same meaning of doubt or suspicion. These forms have the common interpretation since they are not in need for processing their meanings in mind. They are used to develop the discourses in the following sections.

Groundless Argument of the Unbelievers

The Qur'an is sent down to all humans drawing them near to God. Furthermore, it presents the arguments of the unbelievers with a view to refuting their claims. The forms of conjecture are used to show the groundless argument of the disbelievers who cling to the lowest degree of probability in their journey of denying the existence of God and the hereafter. One of the verses reads: وَإِذَا قِيلَ إِنَّ وَعْدَ اللَّهِ حَقٌّ وَالسَّاعَةُ لَا رَيْبَ فِيهَا قُلْتُمْ مَا نَدْرِي مَا السَّاعَةُ إِنْ نَظُنُّ إِلَّا ظَنًّا وَمَا نَحْنُ بِمُحْسِنِينَ. (45:32). [And when it was said: “Verily, Allah’s Promise is the truth, and there is no doubt about the coming of the Hour,” you said: “We know not what the Hour is: we do not think it but as a conjecture, and we have no firm convincing belief (therein)]. (*al-Jāthiyah* 45: 32).

Understanding the meaning of the verse, al-Wahidy (p. 992), an-Nasafy (p. 306), at-Tabary (p. 107), and ibn Kathīr (p.368) manage in explaining the meanings of the forms of conjecture. They admit the literal interpretation. Moreover, ibn Kathīr went further in depicting the unbelievers’ argument. He interprets their argument in a whimsical framework which is realized by the lexemes of fancy and imagination. Using such lexical items aims at conveying that their thought has no ground or foundation. However, the use of the verbal process “*nazunnū*” (conjecture) and the cognate object “*zanna*” (a conjecture) reflect that their stance of denying the Day of Judgment has insufficient reasons. Similarly, the idea of the groundless argument is realized by the infinitive form sixteen times. This number is used to stress that the unbelievers have no sufficient information for denying the reality of the hereafter. For example, the nominal forms in the verse below: وَمَا لَهُمْ بِهِ مِنْ عِلْمٍ ۖ إِنْ يَتَّبِعُونَ إِلَّا الظَّنَّ ۗ وَإِنَّ الظَّنَّ لَا يُغْنِي مِنَ الْحَقِّ شَيْئًا. (45:28). [But they have no knowledge thereof. They follow but a guess, and verily, guess is no substitute for the truth. (*an-Najm* 53: 28).

The verse presents the baseless stance of the unbelievers in denying the hereafter. It is interpreted literally by al-Wahidy (p. 1042), an-Nasafy (p. 393), ibn Kathīr (p. 271), and at-Tabary (p. 58). The default interpretation of doubt, fancy and suspicions reflects the groundless argument of the unbelievers.

The Frame of Futility

After showing the baseless argument of the unbelievers, the Qur'an reveals the futility of their thinking that their unbelief in God results in nothing. Having built their stance upon a

groundless proof, the unbelievers reap nothing from their stance. So, the units of conjecture have been used sporadically for underlining the frame of futility. They stress that they reap nothing except being away from God. This meaning agrees with the background knowledge held by the believers. Such a frame of futility is realized via the verbal process and the infinitive form of conjecture in the verse that reads: *وَدَلَّكُمْ ظَنُّكُمْ الَّذِي ظَنَنْتُمْ بِرَبِّكُمْ أَرْدَاكُمْ فَأَصْبَحْتُمْ مِنَ الْخَاسِرِينَ*. (41:23). [And that thought of yours which you thought about your Lord, has brought you to destruction; and you have become (this Day) of those utterly lost!]. (*Fuṣṣilat* 41: 23).

Here, the salient meaning of doubt reflects the unbelievers' attitude towards faith. al-Wahīdy (p. 954), an-Nasafy (p. 234), at-Tabary (p. 411), and ibn Kathīr (p. 232) admit the literal interpretation by which the unbelievers deem that God does not know their deeds. Their thought is realized by the verbal process 'zanna' and the infinitive form that reflect the unbelievers' degree of guesswork. So, the verse rebukes them for their thought upon which they deny faith in God.

Refutation of Naturalists' View

The unbelievers deny resurrection claiming that it is a life cycle and nothing else. Their argument echoes a theory held by naturalists who claims that the existing forms of life are the descendants by true generation of pre-existing forms according to Darwin (2009, p. 13). The verse below makes an evaluation of such views refuting the belief in naturalism. It reads: *وَقَالُوا مَا هِيَ إِلَّا حَيَاتُنَا الدُّنْيَا نَمُوتُ وَنَحْيَا وَمَا يُهْلِكُنَا إِلَّا الدَّهْرُ وَمَا لَهُم بِذَلِكَ مِنْ عِلْمٍ إِنْ هُمْ إِلَّا يَظُنُّونَ*. (45:24). [And they say: "There is nothing but our life of this world, we die, and we live and nothing destroys us except Ad-Dahr (time). And they have no knowledge of it: they only conjecture]. (*al-Jāthiyah* 45: 24).

In addition to the evaluation of the naturalistic stance, the verse directs the reader to understand what is said and meant in the primary source according to Crismore (1983, p. 2), as cited in Hyland (2005, pp. 18-19). al-Wahīdy (p. 991), an-Nasafy (p. 304), at-Tabary (p. 98), and ibn Kathīr (p. 363) manage in reflecting the exact meaning of the verbal process "yazunūn". They interpret it in terms of doubt, suspicion, imagination, and fancies.

Dogmatic Mindset

The attribution of 'conjecture' to the unbelievers in the verse below reflects their adamant stance against belief in God. The unbelievers accused their Prophet of telling lies, despite knowing that they were truth-teller. The verse reads: *"وَمَا أَنْتَ إِلَّا بَشَرٌ مِثْلُنَا وَإِنْ نَطَّنُكَ لَمِنَ الْكٰذِبِينَ*". (26:186). [You are but a human being like us and verily, we think that you are one of the liars!]. (*ash-Shuṣṣrā* 26:186).

The unbelievers tell Shuṣayb (Jethro) that they think that he is lying to them. As a result of the dogmatic mindset, they do not give themselves the benefit of doubt. Even their judgment is in contradiction with one of the principles of the human knowledge presented by Descartes (1647/1982, p. 5) that reads "I think, therefore I am."

The Devil's Limited Power Over Man

The nominal form 'zanna' is used for demonstrating the limits of the devil-man relationship. It indicates that the devil has no power over man. What the devil possess is an act of 'conjecture' that a man will follow his path. So, the default meaning is admitted because it goes in line with the established Qur'anic discourse. The discourse reports that man's destiny is in God's hands and that the devil has no power over man. The nominal form 'zann' is used in the verse that reads: (34:20) *وَلَقَدْ صَدَقَ عَلَيْهِمْ إِبْلِيسُ ظَنَّهُ فَاتَّبَعُوهُ إِلَّا فَرِيقًا مِّنَ الْمُؤْمِنِينَ*. [And indeed Iblis (Satan) did prove true his thought about them: and they followed him, all except a group of true believers (in the Oneness of Allah)]. (*Saba' 34: 20*).

al-Wahidy (p. 883), an-Nasafy (p. 60-61), at-Tabary (p. 270), and ibn Kathīr (p. 281) interpret the nominal form 'zann' literally in terms of 'doubt'. Their interpretation is in line with the authentic discourse of the Qur'an since the devil has no power over man. It is temptation only that the devil has and nothing else.

Horror of the Day of Judgment

The salient meaning of conjecture is attributed to the unbelievers concerning the hereafter. When the unbelievers rise from their graves, they think that their life was short. Their thought of 'conjecture' is an outcome of the shock of the horrors of the Day of Judgement. The verse reads: " (17:52) *يَوْمَ يَدْعُوكُمْ فَتَسْتَجِيبُونَ بِحَمْدِهِ وَتَظُنُّونَ إِن لَّبِئْتُمْ إِلَّا قَلِيلًا*". [On the Day when He will call you, and you will answer (His Call) with (words of) His Praise and Obedience, and you will think that you have stayed in this world but a little while!]. (*al-Isrā' 17:52*).

al-Wahidy (637), an-Nasafy (p. 261), ibn Kathīr (p. 29), and at-Tabary (p. 623) admit the literal meaning of conjecture. They state that the form of 'conjecture' conveys an overwhelming feeling of panic and fear as result of the Day of Judgment. So, their thought of the short life is an outcome of the shock.

General Cases

The verbal process 'zanna' is attributed to humans in general in two cases. The first case reminds people of God's favours upon them. It depicts the feelings of humans in weal and woe that they supplicate God for help when they think that there is no way-out of a difficult situation at sea. It implies that the unbeliever at hard times makes room for conjecture that there is God. However, when it comes to easy time, this degree of thinking does not exist. So, a man, the unbeliever in this case, remembers God to help him when he faces troubles. Contrary to the cases above in section [6.3.4.] in which the unbelievers do not make room for conjecture to work, they give themselves the benefit of the doubt supplicating God's blessing. It reads as follows: (10:22) *وَوَظَنُوا أَنَّهُمْ أَحْبَبَ بِهِمْ دَعَا اللَّهَ مُخْلِصِينَ لَهُ الدِّينَ لَئِن أَنجَبْتَنَا مِنْ هَذِهِ لَنَكُونَنَّ مِنَ الشَّاكِرِينَ*. [... and they think that they are encircled therein. Then they invoke Allah, making their faith pure for Him Alone, saying: "If You (Allah) deliver us from this, we shall truly be of the grateful]. (*Yūnus 10: 22*).

The core message of the verse is that atheist recurses to God in difficult times. al-Wahidy (p. 494), an-Nasafy (p. 14), at-Tabary (p.51) and ibn Kathīr (p.349) manage in grasping the message explaining the meaning of 'zanna' in terms of conjecture. The same analysis applies

to the verse below: "... وَظَنَّ أَهْلُهَا أَنَّهُمْ قَادِرُونَ عَلَيْهَا ... " (10: 24). [... and its people think that they think that they have all powers of disposal over it, ...]. (*Yūnus 10: 24*).

The verse sets an example for the vanity and worthlessness of the worldly life. It likens earthly life to the water that falls from the heaven getting mixed with the earth's surface. Consequently, it brings about different types of plants and foods from which people and animals eat. Both start with a showy attractiveness but are worthlessness at the end. The important part is that once man thinks that he is powerful enough to make use of it, God makes it nothing as if it has not flourished before. When people see its showy attractiveness, they think that they are powerful enough to make use of it. Accordingly, the form of *Az-Zann* is in line with the essence of the message. al-Wahidy (p. 495), an-Nasafy (p. 16, 2), at-Tabary (p. 58), and ibn Kathīr (p. 352) admit the common meaning of 'conjecture'.

The People of the Book

The verbal process 'zanna' is attributed to the People of the Book in four cases. The exegetes' interpretations are the same in three cases; however, there is one controversial case that receives different interpretations as illustrated below. First, here are the three cases which the exegetes agree upon their interpretations. One of the verses reads: مَا ظَنَنْتُمْ أَنْ يَخْرُجُوا وَظَنُّوا أَنَّهُمْ مَانِعَتُهُمْ حُصُونُهُمْ مِنَ اللَّهِ. (59:2). [You did not think that they would get out. And they thought that their fortresses would defend them from Allah!]. (*al-hashr 59: 2*). In this verse, the first underlined process is attributed to the believers and the second underlined process is attributed to the People of the Book. The meaning is that the believers held an agreement with the Jews for defending al-Madinah against enemies. However, the Jews committed treachery against the believers helping the unbelievers of Mecca to invade al-Madinah and kill Muslims. So, the believers decided to drive them from al-Madinah for their treachery of Muslims. The believers did not think that the Jews will be driven out of their strongholds and the Jews thought that their strongholds will protect them. al-Wahidy (p. 1080), at-Tabary (p. 500), and ibn Kathīr (p. 476) admit the salient meaning of conjecture. an-Nasafy does not tackle that form of conjecture in a way that conveys his admission of the literal meaning. The second case reads: وَمِنْهُمْ أُمِّيُونَ (2:78). [And there are among them (Jews) unlettered people, who know not the Book, but they trust upon false desires and they but guess]. (*al-Baqarah 2: 78*).

The verse revolves about the Jews who deny the Prophethood of Muhammad (PBUH) depending on their conjecture. The mental process 'yazunūn' receives different interpretations by the exegetes. al-Wahidy (p. 115), an-Nasafy (p. 104), and at-Tabary (p. 159) interpret it in terms of doubt. Moreover, al-Wahidy angles it from a whimsical frame to show the futility of their claims. ibn Kathīr (p. 465) quotes Mujahid as saying that yazunūn' means 'to lie'. The third case reads: (4:157). "مَا لَهُمْ بِهِ مِنْ عِلْمٍ إِلَّا اتِّبَاعَ الظَّنِّ وَمَا قَتَلُوهُ يَقِينًا". They have no (certain) knowledge, they follow nothing but conjecture. For surely, they killed him not [i.e., Isā (Jesus), son of Maryam (Mary)]. (*an-Nisā 4: 157*).

The verse narrates the story of Jesus that he is still alive and that the Jews did not kill him. It tells that while they attempted to kill Jesus, he ascended to heaven by God's will. Thus, the verse refutes their claim of killing Jesus. It states that their thought is a matter of guessing. al-Wahidy (p. 301), an-Nasafy (p. 414), and at-Tabary (p. 661) interpret the form of 'Az-Zann' in

terms of doubt that they were sceptical about their act of killing him. ibn Kathīr (p. 336) adds another frame interpreting it in terms of fancy and imagination. Such interpretation reflects the meaning of the baseless and ungrounded belief. Conversely, the exegetes differ over the interpretation of the verse below. It reads: *وَإِذْ نُنزِّلْنَا الْجَبَلَ فَوْقَهُمْ كَأَنَّهُ ظِلَّةٌ وَظَنُّوا أَنَّهُ وَاقِعٌ بِهِمْ خُذُوا مَا آتَيْنَاكُمْ بِقُوَّةٍ وَاذْكُرُوا مَا فِيهِ لَعَلَّكُمْ تَتَّقُونَ*. (7:171). [And (remember) when We raised the mountain over them as if it had been a canopy, and they thought that it was going to fall on them]. (*al-Aʿrāf* 7:171). The verse talks about God's punishment of the Jews for their disobedience. When God raised the mountain of olives over their heads, they thought that it was about to fall upon them. The exegetes differ over the meaning of the mental process 'zannū'. at-Tabary (p. 220) and Ibn Kathīr (p. 431) do not tackle the meaning of 'yazunnūn' in a way that suggests that they recognize the literal meaning of the verb. Such interpretation fits the situation. On the contrary, al-Wahidy (p. 420) and an-Nasafy (p. 616, 2) explain it in terms of certainty. The use of the verbal process of doing 'nataqa' (i.e., move to a higher position to be thrown for) and the conjunction 'ka'anna' (i.e., as if) supports the first interpretation of the literal meaning of conjecture.

CONCLUSION

The present paper lays the basics for the study of the forms of Az-Zann providing the reader with a general background for understanding the issue of the renewal of religious discourse. It gets him familiar with the main forces in religious discourse such as modernists, traditionalists, and reformists. Moreover, it provides a synopsis of the fundamental reasons for conducting the study. The background knowledge helps in answering the main goals of the study. The process of analysis reveals that none of the forms above has been used in the context of faith. They have nothing to do with the idea of relative truth which modernists claim. However, the common meaning of conjecture is admitted in all the cases which are attributed to the believers, unbelievers, the people of the Book, or the devil. Under the believers, the forms of conjecture have been used for developing different discourses. They have been used to provide a psychological management of having doubts. This management aims at avoiding the cognitive dissonance of entertaining two opposing thoughts to create a healthy community. Moreover, the use of the form of conjecture conveys that the least degree of guesswork is enough to initiate good deeds. Also, it proves that it is normal to entertain the feelings of doubts at hard times in face of natural threats. It is normal to harbor such feelings in interaction to natural threats as demonstrated above. In the case of the hypocrites, the forms of conjecture bring into light the main characteristics of the negative personality which the hypocrites adopt towards Muslims. They convey that a true believer should not have such negative mindsets and he should trust God in weal and woe. As for the attribution of conjecture to the unbelievers, it develops different discourses such as the groundless thought of the unbelievers. In addition, it shows the futility of their thinking that their type of thought results in nothing except the Fire. The Qur'an goes on to refute their attitude of naturalism that defies revelation. Also, it has been attributed to the unbelievers to reflect their shock of the horrors of the Day of Judgement. They recognize that the hereafter is the eternal life. Moreover, the attribution of these forms to the devil aims at proving that the devil has no power over man. One of the main findings is the invalid generalization made by the exegetes when they claim that there is a meaning shift from doubt into certainty. Their claim lacks evidence that they did not conduct a thematic study of the

forms of Az-Zann in the Qur'an. According to these outcomes, the study concludes that the exegetic legacy is in a compelling need for renewal.

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ⁱ The translation of the forms of 'Az-Zann represents a problem for the translators of the Qur'an. They are influenced by the exegetes in their interpretation of these forms. So, I will tackle their translation of the forms of Az-Zann in another paper.