

# The Transformation of Qur'an Interpretation and The Dynamics of Text Authority in Indonesia: A Critical Analysis

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**Abstract:** The study of Quranic exegesis (*tafsir*) in Indonesia has undergone a significant transformation, reflecting the dynamic interplay between textual authority and socio-cultural contexts. The transformation of *tafsir* in Indonesia is not merely a scholarly pursuit, but also a reflection of the broader socio-political and cultural landscapes that shape the interpretation of the sacred text. This transformation is evident in the various approaches to *tafsir*, ranging from traditional methods to modern contextual analyses, which reveal the underlying epistemological frameworks and ideological stances of the interpreters. This research employs a qualitative approach with critical analysis to explore the evolution of interpretative authority and the shifts in hermeneutical strategies within the Indonesian context. The study concludes that the dynamics of Quranic textual authority in Indonesia are the result of a complex interaction between tradition, innovation, and socio-political forces.

**Keywords:** Quranic Exegesis, Textual Authority, Islamic Thought Renewal

## Introduction

The study of Quranic exegesis (*tafsīr*) in Indonesia has undergone significant transformation, reflecting the dynamic interplay between textual authority and socio-cultural contexts. The evolution of *tafsīr* in Indonesia is not merely a scholarly pursuit but also a reflection of the broader socio-political and cultural landscapes that shape the interpretation of the sacred text<sup>1</sup>. This transformation is evident in the various approaches to *tafsīr*, ranging from traditional methods to modern contextual analyses, which reveal the underlying epistemological frameworks and ideological stances of the interpreters

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<sup>1</sup> Islah Gusmian, "Paradigma Penelitian Tafsir Al-Qur'an Di Indonesia," *Empirisma* 24, No. 1 (January 7, 2016),

<sup>2</sup> Interestingly, while the Indonesian government has played a role in facilitating access to Quranic studies through official *tafsir*, there is also a rich tradition of local ulama (Islamic scholars) contributing to the diversity of interpretations. These local interpretations often incorporate local nuances and symbolic forms, demonstrating the adaptability of Islamic teachings to the Nusantara context <sup>3</sup> Moreover, the influence of Middle Eastern scholars and the incorporation of modern linguistic and contextual approaches have further enriched the tapestry of *tafsir* in Indonesia <sup>4</sup>

However, this transformation is not without its contradictions. For instance, the critical but contextual model of *tafsir* by Abil Fadhol Alsenory reflects a response to the socio-political conditions of the time, highlighting the tension between traditionalist and modernist perspectives within the Indonesian Muslim community <sup>5</sup> Additionally, the criticism of Umar, M. S.'s *Tafsir Nur al-Ihsan* for its perceived lack of reference to traditional sources underscores the ongoing debate over the legitimacy and authority of interpretative works <sup>6</sup> In summary, the transformation of Quranic exegesis in Indonesia is a multifaceted phenomenon that encapsulates the interplay between traditional authority and contemporary challenges.

The critical analysis of this transformation reveals the diverse methodologies, ideological underpinnings, and socio-political

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<sup>2</sup> Muhammad Alwi Hs, Muhammad Arsyad, And Muhammad Akmal, "Gerakan Membumikan *Tafsir Al-Qur'an* Di Indonesia: Studi M. Quraish Shihab Atas *Tafsir Al-Misbah*," *Jurnal At-Tibyan Jurnal Ilmu Alquran Dan Tafsir* 5, No. 1 (June 30, 2020): 89–102, lihat juga, Ahmad Zaiyadi, "Lokalitas *Tafsir Nusantara*: Dinamika Studi *Al-Qur'an* Di Indonesia," *Al-Bayan: Jurnal Ilmu Al-Qur'an Dan Hadist* 1, No. 1 (August 7, 2018): 01–26

<sup>3</sup> Muhammad Iqbal And Syauqi Aulade Ghifari, "Analisis Kontekstual Atas *Tafsir* Departemen Agama Republik Indonesia," *Jurnal Iman Dan Spiritualitas* 2, No. 1 (February 4, 2022): 97–102, Lihat juga Zaiyadi, "Lokalitas *Tafsir Nusantara*: Dinamika Studi *Al-Qur'an* Di Indonesia," August 7, 2018.

<sup>4</sup> Zaiyadi, "Lokalitas *Tafsir Nusantara*: Dinamika Studi *Al-Qur'an* Di Indonesia," August 7, 2018.

<sup>5</sup> Muhammad Asif And Abdul Wadud Kasyful Humam, "Tafsir Ayat Alahkam Abil Fadhol Alsenory: Sebuah Model *Tafsir* Analisis Kritis," *Al-A'raf: Jurnal Pemikiran Islam Dan Filsafat* 16, No. 1 (October 28, 2019): 1

<sup>6</sup> Mohd Sholeh Sheh Yusuff, Yusuf Haji Othman, And Tengku Zawani Tengku Zawawi, "Critical Disclosure of The Text of Al-Futuhat Al-Ilahiyyah by Al-'Ujjaily, S. In The Text of *Tafsir Nur Al-Ihsan*: A Study," *International Journal of Humanities, Philosophy and Language* 4, No. 16 (December 30, 2021): 78–85

influences that shape the authority of the text and its interpretation. As such, the study of *tafsir* in Indonesia offers a critical lens through which to understand the evolving landscape of Islamic thought and its implications for religious authority and identity.

## Research Methods

The research methodology for an article on the transformation of Quranic exegesis and the dynamics of textual authority in Indonesia would likely involve a qualitative approach, utilizing a critical analysis framework. This methodology would be designed to explore the evolution of interpretative authority and the shifts in hermeneutical strategies within the Indonesian context. The study would draw upon a rich bibliographical analysis, examining the works of Indonesian scholars and the socio-cultural and epistemological landscapes that shape their exegesis<sup>7</sup>

Interestingly, the research would need to consider the influence of various movements, such as the Islamic Liberal Network (JIL), and their impact on the authority of interpretation and the popularization of new interpretive issues<sup>8</sup> It would also need to address the development of educational exegesis (*Tafsir Tarbawi*) and its contribution to Islamic educational science<sup>9</sup> The study would benefit from a historical approach, tracing the lineage of contemporary modernist commentators and their distinct interpretative styles<sup>10</sup>

The proposed research methodology would encompass a historical and bibliographical analysis, critical discourse analysis, and an examination of the epistemological underpinnings of Quranic exegesis in Indonesia. It would aim to uncover the transformation of interpretative paradigms and the dynamics of textual authority,

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<sup>7</sup> Gusmian, “Paradigma Penelitian *Tafsir Al-Qur'an* Di Indonesia”; Cucu Surahman, “Pergeseran Pemikiran *Tafsir* Di Indonesia: Sebuah Kajian Bibliografis,” *Afsaruna* 10, No. 2 (2014): 217–32

<sup>8</sup> Ahmad Syaifuddin Amin and Maisyatusy Syarifah Syarifah, “Liberal Islam and Its Influences on The Development of Quranic Exegesis in Indonesia and Malaysia,” *Jurnal Studi Ilmu-Ilmu Al-Qur'an Dan Hadis* 22, No. 1 (January 30, 2021): 137

<sup>9</sup> Cucu Surahman, “*Tafsir Tarbawi* in Indonesia: Efforts to Formulate Qur'an-Based Islamic Education Concept,” *Jurnal Pendidikan Islam* 5, No. 2 (December 31, 2019): 211–26

<sup>10</sup> Hanna Salsabila Et Al., “Menelisik *Tafsir* Modern-Kontemporer Di Indonesia Abad 20 M,” *Jurnal Dirosah Islamiyah* 5, No. 1 (April 12, 2023): 290–305

reflecting on the contributions of individual scholars, educational frameworks, and liberal movements to the field of tafsir studies.

### **Dynamics of Qur'anic Text Authority in Indonesia**

The dynamics of Qur'anic textual authority in Indonesia is a complex and multifaceted subject, covering various aspects from the textuality of the Qur'an to its influence in society. In Indonesia, the Qur'an text is not only considered a source of religious teachings but also an important element in the formation of social and cultural identity<sup>11</sup> Interestingly, there is a contradiction in the perspective of the Qur'anic text in Indonesia. On the one hand, Mustain Thahir<sup>12</sup> tends to maintain the traditional approach to understanding texts, as seen in education in Islamic boarding schools<sup>13</sup> However, on the other hand, liberal Islamic movements have pushed for a more contextual and inclusive interpretation, despite facing rejection from local religious authorities<sup>14</sup>

The MUI fatwa, for example, shows how religious authorities seek to shape the understanding and practice of Islamic law in society, showing the active role of religious institutions in interpreting Qur'anic texts<sup>15</sup> Meanwhile, Fatima Mernissi's work reveals how a wrong interpretation of Qur'anic texts can affect the view of gender in Islam<sup>16</sup> In the context of education, the political history of Islamic education in Indonesia shows the close relationship between education, Qur'anic

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<sup>11</sup> M. Endy Saputro, "Alternatif Tren Studi Qur'an di Indonesia," *Al-Tabrir: Jurnal Pemikiran Islam* 11, No. 1 (May 1, 2011): 1

<sup>12</sup> Dr. Mustain Thahir Is a Senior Lecturer at The Faculty of Education and Teacher Training Uvri (Veteran University of The Republic of Indonesia), Jalan Baruga Raya, Antang, Makassar, South Sulawesi, Indonesia

<sup>13</sup> Mustain Thahir, "The Role and Function of Islamic Boarding School: An Indonesian Context," *Tawarikh: International Journal for Historical Studies* 5, No. 2 (2014): 197–208.

<sup>14</sup> Ahmad Syaifuddin Amin and Maisyatusy Syarifah Syarifah, "Liberal Islam and Its Influences on The Development of Quranic Exegesis in Indonesia and Malaysia," *Jurnal Studi Ilmu-Ilmu Al-Qur'an Dan Hadis* 22, No. 1 (January 30, 2021): 137

<sup>15</sup> Mohammad Thoyyib Madani and Rifki Rufaida, "The Role of Mui Fatwa as A Product of Islamic Law in Society," *Al-Ridha: Jurnal Pengabdian Kepada Masyarakat* 1, No. 2 (October 2, 2023): 63–70

<sup>16</sup> Dr. Vinu George and Almas Bano, "Understanding the Misinterpretations in Qur'anic Hermeneutics Through Fatima Mernissi; The Veil and The Male Elite," *International Journal of Research in English* 5, No. 1 (January 1, 2023): 178–80

texts, and power, which has continued to develop since the pre-independence period until now<sup>17</sup>

On the other hand, efforts to gain legitimacy in society, such as those carried out by Islamic banks through CSR programs, also show the importance of Qur'anic texts in shaping business practices in accordance with Islamic values<sup>18</sup> The dynamics of the authority of Qur'anic texts in Indonesia cannot be separated from the broader social, political, and cultural context. This includes how the text is perceived in collective memory and commemorative culture, as in the case of the Islamic State of Indonesia<sup>19</sup> and how legitimacy and authority are understood in the broader context of domestic and international politics<sup>20</sup>. The dynamics of the authority of Qur'anic texts in Indonesia are the result of a complex interaction between tradition, innovation, and socio-political forces. From education in Islamic boarding schools to MUI fatwas, from liberal Islamic movements to educational politics, Qur'anic texts continue to play a key role in shaping religious, social, and political life in Indonesia.

Entering the 20th century, there was a significant movement the renewal of Islamic thought, championed by figures such as Mohammad Natsir, Mohamad Roem, and Buya Hamka. Mohammad Natsir's perspective on the relationship between Islam and the state, as well as his views on Islamic education and democracy, played a pivotal role in this movement. He believed in an integrated relationship between Islam and the state, where the state is a tool for implementing Islamic principles derived from the Qur'an and Sunnah<sup>21</sup>.

His transformative approach to Islamic da'wa emphasized verbalic deeds, actualization of Islam in actions, and good personality,

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<sup>17</sup> Choirul Mahfud Mahfud, "The Genealogy of Social History of Islamic Education Politics in Indonesia," *Al-Tadzkiyyah: Jurnal Pendidikan Islam* 10, No. 1 (May 29, 2019): 1–12

<sup>18</sup> Adi Susilo Jahja Et. Al, "Csr and Legitimacy of Indonesian Islamic Banks," *Turkish Journal of Computer and Mathematics Education (Turcomat)* 12, No. 3 (April 10, 2021): 1242–51

<sup>19</sup> M. V. Kirchanov, "Islamic State of Indonesia in Modern Indonesian Memorial Culture," *Minbar. Islamic Studies* 16, No. 2 (June 9, 2023): 337–58

<sup>20</sup> Sanjay Pulipaka, "Power, Authority, And Shifting Sands of The Legitimacy," In *Power, Legitimacy, And World Order* (London: Routledge India, 2023), 20–37

<sup>21</sup> Rizky Aulia And Retanisa Rizqi, "Pemikiran Agama Dan Negara Mohammad Natsir," *Siyasah Jurnal Hukum Tatanegara* 2, No. 1 (June 23, 2022): 1

which influenced societal levels through organizational strategies<sup>22</sup>. Moreover, Natsir's concept of theistic democracy sought to reconcile popular sovereignty with the sovereignty of God, rejecting both theocracy and secularization<sup>23</sup>. Buya Hamka, another key figure, contributed to the discourse on Islamic thought through his involvement in education, social welfare, and political struggle, as well as his interpretation of moral and ethical values<sup>24</sup>.

His views on Islamic education were integralistic, combining worldly and ukhrawi elements based on tawhid<sup>25</sup>. The renewal of Islamic thought in the 20th century was marked by the efforts of figures like Mohammad Natsir and Buya Hamka, who sought to integrate Islamic principles with state governance, education, and democracy. Their work emphasized the practical application of Islamic teachings in various aspects of life and governance, advocating for a harmonious blend of religious and worldly knowledge, and proposing a model of democracy that aligns with Islamic values.

### **The Role of Ulama in Establishing Text Authority**

The role of ulama in establishing textual authority is multifaceted and varies across different Islamic communities and scholarly traditions. In the context of gender and women's issues, ulama like Faqihuddin Abdul Kodir advocate for a reciprocal interpretation (Qira'ah Mubadalah) of religious texts, emphasizing mutuality and partnership between men and women based on the principles in the Quran and Hadith<sup>26</sup>. This approach is informed by the socio-cultural context of Muslim communities, such as the Indonesian society, and seeks to reinterpret religious narratives to support gender equality.

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<sup>22</sup> M. Khoirul Hadi Al-Asy'ari, "Dakwah Transformatif Mohammad Natsir," *Walisongo: Jurnal Penelitian Sosial Keagamaan* 22, No. 2 (December 15, 2014): 457–78

<sup>23</sup> Indah Muliati, "Pandangan M. Natsir Tentang Demokrasi: Kajian Pemikiran Politik Islam," *Tingkap* 11, No. 2 (October 18, 2016): 129

<sup>24</sup> Nofia Natasari And Endi Kurniawan, "Analisis Pesan Moral Karakter Buya Hamka Pada Film Buya Hamka Volume 1," *Komsospol* 2, No. 1 (March 13, 2024): 12–24

<sup>25</sup> Agung Wahyu Utomo and Dartim Dartim, "Konsep Pendidikan Islam Integralistik: Studi Pemikiran Buya Hamka Dan Mohammad Natsir," *Iseedu: Journal of Islamic Educational Thoughts and Practices* 4, No. 2 (October 1, 2020): 273–92

<sup>26</sup> Nikmatullah Nikmatullah, "Male Ulama Reinterpretation of The Gender Hadith in Indonesian Socio-Cultural Contexts," *Pharos Journal of Theology*, No. 105(2) (March 2024)

Contrastingly, the authority of female ulama is often shaped by their participation in the Islamic public sphere, as seen in the case of female santri in South Sulawesi. Their authority is built and transformed through engagement in mosque and classroom environments, suggesting that religious authority is not solely derived from classical knowledge but also from active involvement in religious spaces<sup>27</sup> This highlights the dynamic nature of textual authority, which is not static but can be influenced by the level of public engagement and the ability to navigate limited religious spheres.

The debate over the role of Hadith in Islamic interpretation further illustrates the complexity of establishing textual authority. The Qur'an-only movement, for instance, challenges traditional reliance on Hadith, advocating for an interpretation of Islam based solely on the Quran<sup>28</sup> This represents a significant departure from the views of traditional scholars who emphasize the importance of the Prophet's life and Hadith in understanding Islamic belief and practice. In summary, the role of ulama in establishing textual authority is deeply intertwined with socio-cultural contexts, gender dynamics, and the broader discourse on religious interpretation.

While some ulama work towards inclusive and contextual interpretations of religious texts to address contemporary issues<sup>29</sup>, others focus on the practical aspects of building authority within the community<sup>30</sup>. The ongoing debates around the authority and authenticity of Hadith further complicate the landscape of textual authority in Islam<sup>31</sup>.

The role of ulama in establishing textual authority is not monolithic but is characterized by a diversity of approaches and

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<sup>27</sup> Muhammad Irfan Hasanuddin, "Female Ulama: Mediating Religious Authority in A Limited 'Islamic' Public Sphere in Contemporary Indonesia," *Islam Realitas: Journal of Islamic & Social Studies* 4, No. 2 (December 25, 2018): 189

<sup>28</sup> Emad Hamdeh, "Prophetic Hadith and The Qur'an-Only Movement: The Response of Muslim Scholars," *Journal of Islamic and Muslim Studies* 7, No. 2 (2022): 107–19

<sup>29</sup> Nikmatullah, "Male Ulama Reinterpretation of The Gender Hadith in Indonesian Socio-Cultural Contexts."

<sup>30</sup> Hasanuddin, "Female Ulama: Mediating Religious Authority in A Limited 'Islamic' Public Sphere in Contemporary Indonesia."

<sup>31</sup> Hamdeh, "Prophetic Hadith and The Qur'an-Only Movement: The Response of Muslim Scholars."

interpretations. These range from contextual readings of religious texts to address gender equality<sup>32</sup> to the transformation of female religious authority within specific Islamic spheres<sup>33</sup>, and to the contention over the primacy of the Quran versus Hadith in Islamic scholarship<sup>34</sup>. The ulama's role is thus pivotal in shaping the understanding and application of religious texts within the Muslim community.

The role of ulama in establishing the authority of Qur'anic texts in Indonesia is indeed pivotal, particularly in providing official interpretations and resolving interpretative debates. The ulama, as recognized Islamic scholars, possess the religious authority to issue fatwas, which are legal opinions based on Islamic jurisprudence<sup>35</sup>. This authority is exercised through various institutions and mechanisms, reflecting the diversity of Islamic orientations within the country<sup>36</sup>.

However, there are interesting dynamics at play regarding the authority of ulama and the interpretation of the Qur'an. For instance, the Indonesian Council of Ulama (MUI) has been influential in guiding Muslim behavior through fatwas, which also have political implications, as seen in their impact on voter behavior in elections<sup>37</sup>. Additionally, the emergence of female ulama and their efforts to establish community-based authority challenge the traditionally male-dominated religious authority<sup>38</sup>. Furthermore, the development of Quranic exegesis studies in Indonesia shows a shift in interpretative authority, with a growing acceptance of diverse methodologies and the influence of liberal Islamic movements like Jaringan Islam Liberal (JIL)

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<sup>32</sup> Nikmatullah, "Male Ulama Reinterpretation of The Gender Hadith in Indonesian Socio-Cultural Contexts."

<sup>33</sup> Hasanuddin, "Female Ulama: Mediating Religious Authority in A Limited 'Islamic' Public Sphere in Contemporary Indonesia."

<sup>34</sup> Hamdeh, "Prophetic Hadith and The Qur'ān-Only Movement: The Response of Muslim Scholars."

<sup>35</sup> Nor Ismah, "Destabilising Male Domination: Building Community-Based Authority Among Indonesian Female *Ulama*," *Asian Studies Review* 40, No. 4 (October 15, 2016): 491–509

<sup>36</sup> Fuad Jabali, "Dissemination of Religious Authority In 20th Century Indonesia," *Studia Islamika* 13, No. 1 (January 1, 1970)

<sup>37</sup> Ach. Fatayillah Mursyidi, "Mui and Its Fatwa: The Articulation of Modern Authority in A Religious Democracy of Indonesia," *Entita: Jurnal Pendidikan Ilmu Pengetahuan Sosial Dan Ilmu-Ilmu Sosial* 2, No. 1 (June 5, 2020): 17

<sup>38</sup> Ismah, "Destabilising Male Domination: Building Community-Based Authority Among Indonesian Female *Ulama*."

on interpretative approaches<sup>39</sup>. We can see the following table as an overview of the role of ulama in determining the authority of texts in Indonesia:

Table 1.1

Aspects	Description
<b>Qur'an Interpretation</b>	Ulama play a central role in providing official interpretation (tafsir) of Qur'anic verses, Ulama's Interpretations become the primary reference for muslims in understanding and applying the teachings of the Qur'an
<b>Resolution of Interpretative Disputes</b>	Ulama have the authority to assess and resolve disputes over the interpretation of the Qur'an among Muslims, Ulama's decisions and fatwas often serve as references in resolving interpretative disputes
<b>Supervision and Legitimacy</b>	Ulama are responsible for overseeing the circulation and interpretation of the Qur'an in society, Islamic institutions led by ulama, such as the Indonesian Ulema Council (MUI), hold the authority to determine the "correctness" of Qur'anic interpretations
<b>Education and Knowledge Transmission</b>	Ulama play a role in educating and transmitting the understanding of the Qur'an to the younger generation through Islamic educational institutions, Ulama's authority in the field of Islamic education becomes a

<sup>39</sup> Ahmad Syaifuddin Amin and Maisyatusy Syarifah Syarifah, "Liberal Islam and Its Influences on The Development of Quranic Exegesis in Indonesia and Malaysia," *Jurnal Studi Ilmu-Ilmu Al-Qur'an Dan Hadis* 22, No. 1 (January 30, 2021): 137, Lihat juga, Cucu Surahman, "Pergeseran Pemikiran Tafsir Di Indonesia: Sebuah Kajian Bibliografis," *Ajkaruna* 10, No. 2 (2014): 217–32

	source of legitimacy for the Qur'anic understanding being taught
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While the author views that scholars continue to play a central role in determining the authority of Qur'anic texts in Indonesia, their influence is subject to the evolving landscape of religious authority, which includes challenges from women scholars, diverse Islamic orientations, and liberal Islamic movements. This development shows a dynamic interaction between traditional religious authorities and emerging voices that seek to reinterpret religious texts in the context of contemporary Indonesian society.

### **The Development of Qur'an Tafsir Methods in Indonesia Critical Analysis of Qur'an Interpretation in Indonesia**

The diversity of Quranic interpretation in Indonesia reflects a spectrum of methodologies ranging from traditional to modern and liberal approaches. Traditional exegesis, such as *tafsir bi al-ma'thur* and *tafsir bi al-ra'y*, has been foundational, with figures from the *Tabi'in* era contributing significantly to the development of Quranic exegesis<sup>40</sup>. Modern interpretations, influenced by reformist movements and contemporary issues, are exemplified by works like *Tafsir al-Quran al-Hakim*, which drew from reformist methodologies<sup>41</sup>, and *Tafsir al-Azhar*, which contextualizes Quranic text with current events<sup>42</sup>. The use of language and personal style also plays a role in the diversity of interpretations, as seen in the comparative study of *Tafsir al-Azhar* and *Abr al-Athir*<sup>43</sup>.

<sup>40</sup> Sumarni Sumarni, Ahmad Nurudin, And Ahmad Mustofa, "Kontribusi Periode *Tabi'in* Dalam Perkembangan *Tafsir Al-Quran*," *Wahana Islamika: Jurnal Studi Keislaman*, October 31, 2023, 227–38

<sup>41</sup> Muhamad Fadly Ismail, Nor Hafizi Yusof, And Wan Ruswani Wan Abdullah, "Metodologi Dan Pemikiran Shaykh Mustafa Abdul Rahman: Kajian Terhadap *Tafsir Al-Quran Al-Hakim Juzu' Satu*," *Ma'alim Al-Qur'an Wa Al-Sunnah* 12, No. 13 (June 1, 2017): 93–105

<sup>42</sup> Umi Wasilatul Firdausiyah, "Modernisasi Penafsiran Al-Quran Dalam *Tafsir Al-Azhar Karya Buya Hamka*," *Jurnal Ulunnuha* 10, No. 1 (June 28, 2021): 65–77

<sup>43</sup> Nur Sa'adah Hamisan, "Gaya Persembahan *Tafsir Al-Azhar* Dan *Tafsir 'Abr Al-Athir*: Satu Perbandingan Bagi Penafsiran Surah Al-Mujadalah," *Ma'alim Al-Qur'an Wa Al-Sunnah* 9, No. 10 (December 1, 2014)

The following is an overview of the table that explains the transformation of Quran interpretation in Indonesia as follows:

Table 1.2

Aspects	Tradisional	Modern Contextual
<b>Interpretive Approach</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Tends to be literal-textual</li> <li>- Prioritizing classical authority</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Emphasis on contextualization</li> <li>- Using an interdisciplinary approach</li> </ul>
<b>Epistemology</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Based on the tafsir of the Qur'an and the interpretation of hadith</li> <li>- Maintaining the authority of traditional clerics</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Developing critical-analytical methodologies</li> <li>- Expanding scientific references</li> </ul>
<b>Ideology</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Conservative</li> <li>- Emphasis on adherence to tradition</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Progressive</li> <li>- Responsive to socio-political realities</li> </ul>
<b>The role of the government</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Limited</li> <li>- Tends to supervise</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Actively facilitating the study of the Quran</li> <li>- Developing an official interpretation</li> </ul>
<b>Contribution of Local Ulama</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Limited to traditional environments</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Significant in enriching the treasure of interpretation</li> </ul>
<b>Controversial Issues</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Debate over the legitimacy of interpretation</li> <li>- The tension between traditional and modernist perspectives</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Debate over authority and interpretation methodology</li> <li>- Criticism of the dominance of official interpretation</li> </ul>

This table shows the transformation in approach, epistemology, ideology, the role of the government, the contribution of local scholars, as well as controversial issues that have arisen in the development of Qur'an interpretation in Indonesia. The shift from the traditional model to the modern contextual reflects the dynamics of the interaction between textual authority and socio-cultural context in Indonesia.

Contradictions and interesting facts emerge when considering the absence of tafsir manuscripts in certain regions, such as South Kalimantan, where sufism and jurisprudence dominate, indicating a potential gap in the diversity of available interpretations<sup>44</sup>. Additionally, the modernization of Quranic interpretation, as discussed in *Tafsir al-Azhar*, shows an engagement with modern problems and an effort to maintain the Quran's relevance across times and places<sup>45</sup>. Progressive Islamic jurisprudence further illustrates the dynamic nature of interpretation in Indonesia, aiming to align Islamic law with contemporary values such as democracy, pluralism, and human rights<sup>46</sup>. The landscape of Quranic interpretation in Indonesia is characterized by a rich tapestry of traditional, modern, and progressive approaches. The traditional methods continue to be influential, while modern interpretations strive to contextualize the Quranic message in light of contemporary challenges. The diversity of interpretative methods underscores the dynamic nature of Islamic scholarship in Indonesia, reflecting a commitment to both preserving tradition and engaging with the evolving context of modern society.

The issue at hand concerns societal perceptions of the credibility and background of interpreters or analysts, particularly in the context of various professional fields. The credibility of professionals, whether they are auditors, educators, or financial officers, is often judged based on their educational background, experience, and

<sup>44</sup> Ahmad Mujahid, "Tafsir Al-Quran Dalam Naskah (Majaz): Studi Filologis Dan Analisis Isi," *Jurnal Ilmiah Ilmu Ushuluddin* 11, No. 2 (March 10, 2016): 129

<sup>45</sup> Firdausiyah, "Modernisasi Penafsiran Al-Quran Dalam Tafsir Al-Azhar Karya Buya Hamka," June 28, 2021.

<sup>46</sup> Yusdani Yusdani, "Agama Dan Isu-Isu Kontemporer Dalam Perspektif Fiqh Progresif," *Al-Mawarid* 12, No. 1 (February 28, 2007): 45–58

adherence to ethical standards. These factors contribute to the trust and reliability placed in their interpretations and opinions.

While some studies have found a significant impact of educational background and experience on perceived credibility<sup>47</sup>, others have highlighted that societal perceptions can also be influenced by individual practices and the effectiveness of institutional management<sup>48</sup>. For instance, the perception of Islamic banking by some Muslim intellectuals as not aligning with its intended principles suggests that credibility is not solely based on background but also on the perceived alignment with ethical and professional standards<sup>49</sup>.

Societal perceptions of credibility and background are multifaceted and influenced by a combination of educational qualifications, professional experience, and the ethical conduct of individuals and institutions. While educational background is a significant factor in enhancing credibility<sup>50</sup> the effective management of institutions and adherence to ethical standards also play crucial roles in shaping public trust<sup>51</sup>. Therefore, it is essential for professionals and institutions to maintain a balance between formal qualifications and the ethical execution of their roles to foster positive societal perceptions of their credibility.

A critical analysis of the interpretation of the Quran shows that these exegesis works have an important role in shaping the socio-political discourse and dynamics in Indonesia. Existing studies reveal that tafsir not only functions as an explanation of sacred texts, but also

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<sup>47</sup> Melania Berta Uli Kaban and Ferby Mutia Edwy, “Kualitas Laporan Keuangan: Latar Belakang Pendidikan Dan Pengalaman Internasional Cfo,” *Jurnal Akuntansi Trisakti* 11, No. 1 (February 27, 2024): 25–44

<sup>48</sup> Faisal Attamimi, “Persepsi Masyarakat Muslilm Tentang Zakat Di Kota Palu,” *Hunafa: Jurnal Studia Islamika* 5, No. 3 (December 15, 2008): 357, Lihat juga, Amir Mu’allim, “Persepsi Masyarakat Terhadap Lembaga Keuangan Syariah,” *Al-Mawarid* 10 (October 14, 2003), <Https://Doi.Org/10.20885/Almawarid.Vol10.Art2>.

<sup>49</sup> Mu’allim, “Persepsi Masyarakat Terhadap Lembaga Keuangan Syariah.”

<sup>50</sup> Kaban And Ferby Mutia Edwy, “Kualitas Laporan Keuangan: Latar Belakang Pendidikan Dan Pengalaman Internasional Cfo”; Cindy Anggita N, Istianigsih Istianigsih, And Aloysius Harry Mukti, “Pengaruh Latar Belakang Pendidikan, Pengalaman Audit Dan Gender Terhadap Kualitas Audit,” *Sentri: Jurnal Riset Ilmiah* 3, No. 3 (March 3, 2024): 1439–57

<sup>51</sup> Attamimi, “Persepsi Masyarakat Muslilm Tentang Zakat di Kota Palu”; Mu’allim, “Persepsi Masyarakat Terhadap Lembaga Keuangan Syariah.”

as a medium to criticize and respond to socio-political realities<sup>52</sup>. For example, Syu'bah Asa through his book "In the Light of the Qur'an" uses tafsir as a space to criticize socio-political conditions<sup>53</sup>, while in Islamic boarding schools, Indonesia's tafsir is recognized based on sanad and translation quality (Yusufa, 2016).

In addition, there is a uniqueness in the interpretation of the archipelago influenced by Middle Eastern and local scholars, which reflects new approaches in understanding Qur'an texts in a changing social context<sup>54</sup>. On the other hand, in South Kalimantan, no tafsir manuscripts were found, indicating that the focus of the study tends to be on Sufism and fiqh, but there is still a relationship between non-tafsir manuscripts and tafsir studies<sup>55</sup>.

The modernization of tafsir, as seen in *Tafsir al-Azhar* by Buya Hamka, shows an effort to contextualize the text with contemporary events, signaling the adaptation of tafsir to modern issues<sup>56</sup>. Diverse interpretation methodologies, such as those used by Ahmad Mustafa al-Maraghi in *tafsir al-Maraghi*, show a variety of approaches in exegesis<sup>57</sup>. The Tabi'in period also made a significant contribution to the development of the tafsir method<sup>58</sup>. The approach of maqasidic tafsir, which is oriented towards the goals of sharia, offers a new perspective in overcoming the gap between text and context<sup>59</sup>.

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<sup>52</sup> Islah Gusmian, "Tafsir Al-Quran Dan Kritik Sosial: Syubah Asa Dalam Dinamika Tafsir Al-Quran Di Indonesia," *Magbza: Jurnal Ilmu Al-Qur'an Dan Tafsir* 1, No. 2 (November 14, 2016): 67–80

<sup>53</sup> Ibid.

<sup>54</sup> Ahmad Zaiyadi, "Lokalitas Tafsir Nusantara: Dinamika Studi Al-Qur'an Di Indonesia," *Al-Bayan: Jurnal Ilmu Al-Qur'an Dan Hadist* 1, No. 1 (August 7, 2018): 01–26

<sup>55</sup> Ahmad Mujahid, "Tafsir Al-Quran Dalam Naskah [Majaz]: Studi Filologis Dan Analisis Isi," *Jurnal Ilmiah Ilmu Ushuluddin* 11, No. 2 (March 10, 2016): 129

<sup>56</sup> Umi Wasilatul Firdausiyah, "Modernisasi Penafsiran Al-Quran Dalam Tafsir Al-Azhar Karya Buya Hamka," *Jurnal Ulunnuha* 10, No. 1 (June 28, 2021): 65–77

<sup>57</sup> Farhan Ahsan Anshari and Hilmi Rahman, "Metodologi Khusus Penafsiran Al-Quran Dalam Kitab Tafsir Al-Maraghi," *Jurnal Iman Dan Spiritualis* 1, No. 1 (2021): 55–62.

<sup>58</sup> Sumarni Sumarni, Ahmad Nurudin, And Ahmad Mustofa, "Kontribusi Periode Tabi'in Dalam Perkembangan Tafsir Al-Quran," *Wahana Islamika: Jurnal Studi Keislaman*, October 31, 2023, 227–38

<sup>59</sup> Mufti Hasan, "Tafsir Maqasidi: Penafsiran Al-Quran Berbasis Maqasid Al-Syariah," *Magbza: Jurnal Ilmu Al-Qur'an Dan Tafsir* 2, No. 2 (December 10, 2017): 15–26

Finally, the transformation of the method of interpretation from literal to hermeneutic shows a response to the challenges of globalization and contemporary changes<sup>60</sup>. Overall, a critical analysis of Qur'anic interpretation in Indonesia reveals that *tafsir* not only plays a role in religious discourse, but also in responding to and shaping socio-political discourse. *Tafsir* became a tool for scholars and scholars to articulate views and criticisms of socio-political conditions, as well as to adapt the understanding of sacred texts to changing realities.

### **Reflections on the Position of Ulama in the Transformation of Qur'an *Tafsir***

The role of ulama, or Islamic scholars, in adapting to the changing times and understanding the socio-cultural context of society is underscored by the literature. Ulama are recognized for their religious and social leadership, which includes the ability to influence individuals and groups<sup>61</sup>. They are seen as central figures in both religious and social affairs, with a privileged status in Indonesian society<sup>62</sup>. The emergence of varied terms for ulama reflects a broader reinterpretation and dynamism within the Muslim community, indicating their evolving roles in academics, social movements, and politics<sup>63</sup>.

While ulama are traditionally seen as guardians of religious teachings, their role is not static. They engage in discussions and debates, reflecting a dynamic approach to modern changes, including education, legal, and gender issues<sup>64</sup>. This adaptability is also evident in the way ulama in Malaysia interact with the state, redefining the contours of both the state and Islam based on socio-political conditions<sup>65</sup>. Moreover, the ulama's influence extends to the digital era,

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<sup>60</sup> Fathul Mufid, "Pendekatan Filsafat Hermeneutika Dalam Penafsiran Al-Quran: Transformasi Global *Tafsir Al-Quran*," *Ulul Albab Jurnal Studi Islam*, September 20, 2013

<sup>61</sup> Noor Azmi, "Dedikasi Ulama Kalimantan Dalam Mengatasi Polemik Pandemi Covid-19," *Nizham Journal of Islamic Studies* 9, No. 01 (June 24, 2021): 125

<sup>62</sup> Satnawi Satnawi, "Rekonstruksi Makna Ulama Dalam Realitas Sosial Masyarakat Indonesia," *Tafsir Al-Tlimi* 14, No. 2 (March 31, 2023): 267–78

<sup>63</sup> Ibid.

<sup>64</sup> Muhammad Abdur Raqib, "'Safeguarding Islam' In Modern Times: Politics, Piety and Hefazat-E-Islami 'Ulama in Bangladesh," *Critical Research on Religion* 8, No. 3 (December 25, 2020): 235–56

<sup>65</sup> Walid Jumblatt Abdullah, "The Ulama, The State, And Politics in Malaysia," *Critical Asian Studies* 53, No. 4 (October 2, 2021): 499–516

where they serve as opinion leaders and information legitimizers, particularly in rural communities<sup>66</sup>.

The literature suggests that ulama are expected to adapt to contemporary developments while understanding the socio-cultural context of their communities. Their roles have expanded beyond traditional religious teaching to encompass various aspects of social life, including engagement with digital media and participation in socio-political discourse. The ulama's adaptability and their ability to address the problems experienced by the ummah are crucial for their continued relevance in a rapidly changing world.

The position of ulama in the socio-political dynamics of Indonesia is multifaceted, reflecting their integral role in both religious and societal affairs. Ulama, or Islamic scholars, are not only spiritual guides but also influential figures in social movements and politics<sup>67</sup>. The emergence of diverse terms for ulama, such as spiritual scholars, campus scholars, and political scholars, indicates their expanding roles in a dynamic Indonesian Muslim society<sup>68</sup>.

The Indonesian Congress of Women Islamic Scholars (KUPI) exemplifies the challenge against male-dominated religious authority and the push for Islamic feminism as a social movement<sup>69</sup>. Moreover, ulama have historically been charismatic political leaders, as seen in the role of Syekh Musthafa Hussein Nasution in Islamic socio-political movements<sup>70</sup>. Contradictions arise when considering the political representation of Muslim power in Indonesia. While the National Movement of Fatwa Guards-Ulama (GNPF-Ulama) is a significant force, Nahdlatul Ulama (NU) seeks to reclaim discourse and unite

<sup>66</sup> Ira Mirawati And Dadang Sugiana, "Ulama Sebagai Legitimato Informasi Keuangan Masyarakat Perdesaan di Era Digital," *Indonesian Journal of Cultural and Community Development* 1, No. 1 (June 5, 2018)

<sup>67</sup> Satnawi, "Rekonstruksi Makna Ulama Dalam Realitas Sosial Masyarakat Indonesia."

<sup>68</sup> Ibid.

<sup>69</sup> David Kloos And nor Ismah, "Siting Islamic Feminism: The Indonesian Congress of Women Islamic Scholars and The Challenge of Challenging Patriarchal Authority," *History and Anthropology* 34, No. 5 (October 20, 2023): 818–43

<sup>70</sup> Dinul Husnan And Muhammad Sholihin, "Ulama, Islam, Dan Gerakan Sosial-Politik: Reposisi Ulama Dalam Gerakan Sosio-Politik Islam Indonesia," *Fokus Jurnal Kajian Keislaman Dan Kemasyarakatan* 2, No. 1 (June 12, 2017): 1

nationalism with Islam, challenging GNPF-Ulama's populist narrative<sup>71</sup>.

The Indonesian Council of Ulama (MUI) further illustrates the ulama's influence through the issuance of fatwas that shape legal and social dynamics<sup>72</sup>. Additionally, ulama are involved in addressing religious radicalism and utilizing social media for deradicalization efforts<sup>73</sup>. Ulama in Indonesia are deeply embedded in the socio-political fabric of the nation.

They serve as spiritual leaders, social activists, and political influencers, with their authority extending into various realms, including education, legal interpretation, and counter-radicalization. Their roles are not static but evolve in response to societal needs and challenges, as evidenced by the diverse forms of ulama engagement in contemporary Indonesia. The critical analysis of ulama's position in Indonesia's socio-political dynamics reveals their significant and complex influence, which continues to shape the country's religious and political landscape.

### **Renewal of Tafsir and Its Influence on Indonesia Society**

The demand for a more contextual and responsive interpretation of the Quran in light of contemporary developments is a subject of considerable interest within Islamic scholarship. The discourse of Muhkām-Mutasyābih, as discussed in classical literature, has been identified as deteriorating due to shifts in meaning and a specialization that confines discussion to theological verses of the

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<sup>71</sup> Dian Dwi Jayanto, "Mempertimbangkan Fenomena Populisme Islam di Indonesia Dalam Perspektif Pertarungan Diskursif: Kontestasi Wacana Politik Antara Gerakan Nasional Pengawal Fatwa Ulama (Gnpf-Ulama) Dan Nahdlatul Ulama (Nu)" 29, No. 1 (2019): 1–25.

<sup>72</sup> Mohammad Thoyyib Madani and Rifki Rufaida, "The Role of Mui Fatwa as A Product of Islamic Law in Society," *Al-Ridha: Jurnal Pengabdian Kepada Masyarakat* 1, No. 2 (October 2, 2023): 63–70

<sup>73</sup> M Nurul Ikhsan Saleh and Yuli Astiana, "The Perspectives of Islamic Scholars on Religious Deradicalization and Social Media Roles," *Akademika: Jurnal Pemikiran Islam* 26, No. 2 (December 13, 2021): 241

Quran<sup>74</sup>. This situation is exacerbated by a lack of discussion and elaboration on these concepts in Quranic interpretation.

Efforts to reframe this specialization among classical scholars and reinvent the concept of Muhkām-Mutasyābih are seen as potential avenues for elaborating this discourse and other approaches in Quranic exegesis<sup>75</sup>. Al-Jabiri's hermeneutic approach to interpreting Quranic verses and Islamic cultural heritage (turāts) is another response to the need for contextual interpretation. His method emphasizes objectivity and continuity, using the conceptual framework of sharia universality and the chronology of revelation to align interpretations contextually<sup>76</sup>.

This approach, while not specifically discussing education, is recognized as a foundation for developing religious education that addresses humanization and hominization<sup>77</sup>. The era of the Tabi'in is highlighted for its significant contributions to the development of tafsir (interpretation) methods, which took into account social, historical, and linguistic contexts<sup>78</sup>. These methods, including tafsir bi al-ma'sūr, tafsir bi ar-ra'y, tafsir bi al-ma'ānī, and tafsir bi al-hadīṣ, are still relevant and employed today<sup>79</sup>.

Quraish Shihab's thematic interpretation in Indonesia is another example of contextual interpretation, where the focus is on providing workable solutions in contemporary contexts<sup>80</sup>. His approach to sociological interpretation of the Quran seeks to merge scientific and religious literature, although there is debate about the relationship between science and the Quran<sup>81</sup>. The analytical

<sup>74</sup> Ahmad Syaifuddin Amin, "Reinventing Konsep Muhkam-Mutasyābih Dan Pengembangannya Dalam Tafsir Al-Qur'an Kontekstual," *Journal of Qur'an and Hadith Studies* 10, No. 2 (December 31, 2021): 179–202

<sup>75</sup> Ibid.

<sup>76</sup> Zulkipli Lessy, "Al-Jabiri's Quranic Hermeneutics and Its Significance for Religious Education," *Kemanusiaan the Asian Journal of Humanities* 30, No. 1 (2023): 34–56

<sup>77</sup> Ibid.

<sup>78</sup> Sumarni Sumarni, Ahmad Nurudin, And Ahmad Mustofa, "Kontribusi Periode Tabi'in Dalam Perkembangan Tafsir Al-Quran," *Wahana Islamika: Jurnal Studi Keislaman*, October 31, 2023, 227–38

<sup>79</sup> Ibid.

<sup>80</sup> Andi Rosa And Muhamad Shoheh, "Literacy Culture About Sociology of Contemporary Religious Texts: A Study of Interpretation of The Quran in Indonesia," *Kne Social Sciences*, April 4, 2024

<sup>81</sup> Ibid.

interpretation of the Holy Quran is an esteemed approach that has evolved over time, adapting to the principles of Sharia and the contextual needs of the time<sup>82</sup>.

This method involves a comprehensive exploration of each verse in the order they appear in the Mus'haf, with interpreters bringing their expertise and interests to bear on various aspects of the text<sup>83</sup>. The analysis reveals a scholarly consensus on the necessity of contextual and responsive interpretation of the Quran. This is reflected in the various methodologies and approaches developed over time, which seek to balance textual fidelity with contemporary relevance. The studies collectively underscore the importance of adapting Quranic interpretation to the evolving needs and challenges of the modern era.

The application of critical interpretative methodologies such as hermeneutics, socio-historical analysis, and interdisciplinary approaches is a significant development in the field of Islamic studies. These methodologies offer a more nuanced understanding of religious texts by considering the broader socio-historical context and integrating insights from various disciplines<sup>84</sup>. While hermeneutics is embraced by some Muslim scholars for its rational and creative potential in interpreting Quranic texts<sup>85</sup>, it is also criticized for its perceived negative assumptions about sacred texts and the potential for desacralization and relativism<sup>86</sup>.

The application of hermeneutics in Islamic thought is seen as a response to contemporary challenges, such as the need for a multicultural interpretation of Islam (Baidhawy, 2010). The hermeneutical-authoritative concept proposed by Abou El Fadl is an

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<sup>82</sup> Abdulmanan Aboamro And Habiburrahman Rizapoor, "Unveiling the Divine Text: Exploring the Analytical Interpretation of The Holy Quran," *Integrated Journal for Research in Arts and Humanities* 3, No. 3 (June 9, 2023): 39–48

<sup>83</sup> Ibid.

<sup>84</sup> Zakiyuddin Baidhawy, "Hibrida Paradigma Fondasionalisme Dan Hermeneutika Menuju Interpretasi Islam Multikultural," *Diskursus - Jurnal Filsafat Dan Teologi Sif Driyarkara* 9, No. 2 (October 11, 2010): 229–47, Lihat juga, Alam Tarlam, "Analisis Dan Kritik Metode Hermeneutika Al-Qur'an Muhammad Shahrūr," *Empirisma* 24, No. 1 (January 1, 2015), <Https://Doi.Org/10.30762/Empirisma.V24i1.10>.

<sup>85</sup> Ernita Dewi, "Pemikiran Amina Wadud Tentang Rekonstruksi Penafsiran Berbasis Metode Hermeneutika," *Jurnal Substantia* 15, No. 2 (2013): 145–67.

<sup>86</sup> Ahmad Shobiri Muslim, "Problematika Hermeneutika Sebagai Metode Tafsir Al-Qur'an," *Empirisma* 24, No. 1 (January 1, 2015)

example of an anti-thesis to traditional authoritative-interpretative concepts, emphasizing the importance of aligning interpretations with contemporary values of justice and humanity<sup>87</sup>.

The adoption of critical methodologies like hermeneutics and socio-historical analysis in Islamic exegesis represents a shift towards a more dynamic and contextually aware interpretation of religious texts. This approach is not without controversy, as it challenges traditional methods and the authority of classical interpretations. However, it also offers the potential for a more inclusive and relevant understanding of the Quran in the modern world.

The role of traditional ulama and academic scholars in facilitating dialogue and the acceptance of new interpretations (tafsir) of Islamic texts is multifaceted. Traditional ulama, with their deep roots in religious education and community respect, possess a unique authority in interpreting religious texts. This is exemplified by Thaifur Ali Wafa's *Tafsir Firdaus al-Na'im*, which, despite being unpublished, contributes to the dynamic development of Quranic interpretation in Indonesia<sup>88</sup>.

Similarly, the influence of Hamka, as an ulama and national figure, is evident in his *Tafsir al-Azhar*, which incorporates Indonesian nuances and reflects his broad knowledge and experience<sup>89</sup>. On the other hand, academic scholars bring contemporary methodologies and critical approaches to the study of Islamic texts. For instance, the research methodology of Aksin Wijaya in his exegesis reflects a shift from critical to descriptive approaches, incorporating comparative, character, and thematic-nuzuli research methods<sup>90</sup>.

<sup>87</sup> Nasrullah, "Hermeneutika Otoritatif Khaled M. Abou El Fadl: Metode Kritik Atas Penafsiran Otoritarianisme Dalam Pemikiran Islam," *Hunafa: Jurnal Studia Islamika* 5, No. 2 (2008): 137–50.

<sup>88</sup> Moh Azwar Hairul, "Telaah Kitab Tafsir Firdaus Al-Na'im Karya Thaifur Ali Wafa Al-Maduri," *Nun: Jurnal Studi Alquran Dan Tafsir di Nusantara* 3, No. 2 (June 13, 2019): 39–58

<sup>89</sup> Muhammad Fatih, "Konsep Ulama Dalam Pandangan Mufassir Indonesia: Studi Aspek-Aspek Keindonesiaan Dan Metodologi Tafsir Al-Azhar Karya Hamka Dan Penafsirannya Terhadap Term 'Ulama' Dalam Al-Qur'an," *Progressa: Journal of Islamic Religious Instruction* 3, No. 2 (June 10, 2020): 67–78

<sup>90</sup> Cholid Ma'arif, "Arah Baru Kajian Tafsir," *Qof2*, No. 2 (December 15, 2018): 161–74

The academic perspective is also seen in the study of the role of ulama in Jambi, which uses questionnaires, observations, and interviews to understand the social dynamics and challenges faced by ulama<sup>91</sup>. Both traditional ulama and academic scholars contribute to the evolution of tafsir by engaging with the community and addressing contemporary issues. The traditional ulama's interpretations are often grounded in classical methods, such as *Tafsir bi al-Ra'yi*, which emphasizes the use of reason<sup>92</sup>, while academic scholars may employ more diverse and innovative approaches, such as the qualitative method of *tafsir maudhu'i biddirayah* used to explore the concept of Islamic scholar education<sup>93</sup>.

Traditional ulama and academic scholars play complementary roles in facilitating dialogue and the acceptance of new tafsir. The traditional ulama's authority and community engagement, combined with the academic scholars' methodological rigor and critical analysis, create a rich and dynamic environment for the evolution of Islamic scholarship.

## Conclusion

The transformation of Quranic exegesis (tafsir) in Indonesia reflects the dynamic interaction between textual authority and socio-cultural context. The shift in interpretive approaches, from traditional to modern contextual, reveals the epistemological and ideological diversity of interpreters. The role of the Indonesia government in facilitating access to Quranic studies through official interpretation, as well as the contribution of local scholars, has enriched the treasures of interpretation that represent the adaptability of Islamic teachings in the context of the archipelago.

However, this transformation is inseparable from contradictions, such as the tension between traditional and modernist perspectives, as well as the debate about the legitimacy and authority

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<sup>91</sup> Hermanto Harun And Arfan Arfan, "Ulama Jambi: Peran, Sirkulasi, Dan Kebutuhan Replanting Ulama Muda," *Kontekstualita* 37, No. 1 (March 14, 2023): 33–50

<sup>92</sup> Arsyad Moh Ba'asyien, "Tafsir Bi Al-Ra'yi Sebagai Salah Satu Bentuk Penafsiran Alquran," *Hunafa: Jurnal Studia Islamika* 2, No. 2 (2005): 175–84.

<sup>93</sup> Badruddin H. Subky, Adian Husaini, And Didin Hafidhuddin, "Konsep Ulama Dan Proses Pendidikannya: Pendekatan Metode Tafsir Maudhu'i Bi Al-Diryah," *Ta'dibuna: Jurnal Pendidikan Islam* 4, No. 1 (September 6, 2015): 69

of interpretive works. For example, Abil Fadhol Alsenory's model of critical-contextual interpretation reflects a response to certain socio-political conditions, while criticism of Umar, M.S.'s *Tafsir Nur al-Ihsan* for its perceived lack of traditional source references indicates an ongoing debate about the legitimacy and authority of interpretive works.

Overall, the transformation of Quran interpretation in Indonesia is a multifaceted phenomenon that includes the interaction between traditional authorities and contemporary challenges. A critical analysis of this transformation reveals the diversity of methodologies, ideological foundations, and socio-political influences that shape the authority of texts and their interpretation. Thus, the study of *tafsir* in Indonesia offers a critical lens for understanding the ever-evolving landscape of Islamic thought and its implications for religious authority and identity.

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