



Evolution of Tafsir Approaches in Islamic Studies

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Abstract

This study explores the evolution of interpretive approaches in the study of the Qur'an, emphasizing their historical progression and contemporary relevance. Using qualitative library research, primary data were sourced from classical and contemporary exegesis texts, while secondary data included scholarly works and related studies. Analytical methods involved content and interpretive analysis. The findings reveal a dynamic development of Qur'anic exegesis, beginning with the Prophet Muhammad's oral interpretations, evolving through the companions' systematic methods, and culminating in modern interdisciplinary approaches. Contemporary methods, such as hermeneutics, thematic analysis, and maqasid al-shari'ah-based exegesis, highlight a shift toward contextual understanding and integration of social sciences and sciences in interpretation. These methodologies address pressing modern issues, including gender equality, environmental sustainability, and digital literacy, aligning Qur'anic principles with current societal needs. The study underscores the critical role of modern exegetical approaches in bridging traditional Islamic scholarship with contemporary challenges, ensuring the Qur'an's continued relevance in guiding ethical, social, and scientific endeavors.

Keywords: Qur'anic Exegesis; Hermeneutics; Contemporary Interpretation; Interdisciplinary

Abstrak

Penelitian ini mengkaji evolusi pendekatan dalam penafsiran Al-Qur'an, dengan menekankan perkembangan historisnya serta relevansi dalam konteks modern. Penelitian ini menggunakan metode kualitatif berbasis studi kepustakaan, dengan sumber primer berupa teks-teks tafsir klasik dan kontemporer, serta sumber sekunder dari karya ilmiah dan literatur terkait. Metode analisis melibatkan analisis isi dan interpretasi. Temuan penelitian menunjukkan adanya perkembangan dinamis dalam ilmu tafsir, mulai dari penafsiran lisan Rasulullah, sistematisasi metode oleh para sahabat, hingga munculnya pendekatan interdisipliner pada era modern. Metode kontemporer seperti hermeneutika, analisis tematik, dan tafsir berbasis maqasid al-syari'ah mencerminkan pergeseran menuju pemahaman kontekstual dan integrasi ilmu sosial serta sains dalam penafsiran. Metodologi ini memberikan jawaban atas berbagai isu modern, termasuk kesetaraan gender, keberlanjutan lingkungan, dan literasi digital, dengan menghubungkan prinsip-prinsip Al-Qur'an dengan kebutuhan masyarakat masa kini. Penelitian ini menegaskan pentingnya pendekatan tafsir modern dalam menjembatani tradisi keilmuan Islam dengan tantangan kontemporer, sehingga Al-Qur'an tetap relevan sebagai pedoman etika, sosial, dan ilmiah.

Kata Kunci: Tafsir Al-Qur'an; Hermeneutika; Interpretasi Kontemporer; Pendekatan Interdisipliner

INTRODUCTION

The Qur'an is the main source of Islamic teachings. Without referring to the Qur'an, a person does not know the teachings of Islam in their true meaning. The Qur'an contains teachings, principles, visions, missions and goals of Islamic teachings. However, not everyone has the ability to use the Qur'an as the main source of Islamic teachings. History records from the beginning of the development of Islam that those who have the ability to understand the Qur'an are very limited.¹ In this connection Quraish Shihab explained that during the time of Rasulullah Saw. He was the mubayyin (explainer) when problems arose. However, when he died, the companions were forced to carry out ijtihad, especially those with abilities such as Ali bin Abi Talib, Ibn Abbas, Ubay bin Ka'ab and Abdullah bin Mas'ud.² Now the Messenger of Allah SAW and the companions mentioned above have preceded us to meet the Lord. Meanwhile, the problems that humans must face today in various areas of life are increasingly developing. Among these problems are, many Muslims do not have Arabic language skills, although some are able to speak Arabic but are not automatically able to understand the Qur'an well, the existence of various signs in the Qur'an and the existence of Hadiths that warn and threaten humans who interpret the Qur'an as they please.

By stating some of the reasons above, several scholars emerged who tried to provide guidelines and standard procedures that must be met by someone who wants to interpret the Qur'an. Finally, these scholars compiled what is called the Sciences of the Qur'an (ulum Al-Qur'an), namely the science that discusses various problems related to the Qur'an and with its very long series of history from the death of the Prophet Muhammad SAW. until now.³ Among the parts of the sciences of the Qur'an (ulum Al-Qur'an) there is the science of interpretation as a science tool to understand the Qur'an well as the main teaching of Islam. In understanding the contents of the Qur'an, an appropriate approach and methodology are needed in order to comprehensively reveal the meaning and message contained therein. One very important approach in understanding the Qur'an is through the science of interpretation.⁴ The development of the interpretation of the Qur'an has experienced a very long dynamic, starting from the time of the Prophet Muhammad SAW to the contemporary era today. In the early days of Islam, the interpretation of the Qur'an relied more on the narrations (tafsir bi al-ma'tsur) received from the Prophet Muhammad SAW, his companions, and tabi'in. However, along with the development of Islamic civilization and the emergence of various new problems, the approach to interpreting the Qur'an has also experienced significant development.

¹ Abuddin Nata, *Studi Islam Komprehensif*, II (Jakarta: Fajar Interpretama Media, 2015). Sukriadi Sukriadi et al., "Memahami An-Nahari Wal-Laili Dalam 'Ulumul Qur'an," *Jurnal Riset Rumpun Agama Dan Filsafat* 2, no. 1 (2023): 68–81, <https://doi.org/10.55606/jurrafi.v2i1.999>; Andre Bahrudin et al., "Hakikat Dan Majaz Dalam Al-Quran," *Symfonia: Jurnal Pendidikan Agama Islam* 2, no. 2 (2022): 137–50, <https://doi.org/10.53649/symfonia.v2i2.23>, p. 138.

² M. Quraish Shihab, *Membumikan Al-Quran: Fungsi Dan Peran Wahyu Dalam Kehidupan Masyarakat*, ed. Ihsan Ali Fauzi, IV (Bandung: Mizan Media Utama, 2013).

³ Nata, *Studi Islam Komprehensif*.

⁴ M. Yahya and N. Ibrahim, "Modern Approaches to Understanding Quranic Sciences: A Comparative Study," *Contemporary Islamic Studies Review*. II (2024): 88–107.

In the modern and contemporary era, various new approaches have emerged in interpreting the Qur'an, such as linguistic, socio-historical, hermeneutic, scientific, and other interdisciplinary approaches. This is inseparable from the demands of the times and the needs of Muslims to be able to understand the Qur'an more contextually and relevantly to modern life.⁵ Contemporary Muslim scholars and scholars strive to develop a methodology of interpretation that can accommodate developments in science and contemporary issues, without abandoning the basic principles of interpretation that have been outlined by classical scholars.⁶ This research is expected to be able to answer all the problems that have been explained in the background of the problem and the previous problem formulation. The purpose of this research is to analyze the historical development of interpretive approaches in Islamic studies, identify and examine the characteristics and methodology of various modern interpretive approaches, and evaluate the relevance and contribution of various interpretive approaches in the contemporary context.

RESEARCH METHOD

This research is a qualitative study utilizing a library research methodology, which emphasizes an in-depth exploration of texts and literature relevant to the topic. The data sources are divided into two categories, primary and secondary.⁷ Primary sources consist of classical and contemporary interpretation books, written in Arabic and Indonesian, which serve as the main references for extracting foundational concepts and ideas. Meanwhile, secondary sources include various books, journal articles, scientific works, or other relevant materials that provide contextual or supporting insights related to the topic under discussion. The data collection process employs documentation techniques, which involve systematically reviewing, organizing, and analyzing textual data from the identified sources. This process ensures that the research captures both the depth and breadth of information available in the primary and secondary materials.⁸ The data analysis employs two main approaches: content analysis and interpretation analysis. Content analysis focuses on examining linguistic elements, key terms, and themes within the texts to identify patterns and recurring ideas. Interpretation analysis is used to uncover the deeper meanings and philosophical implications of the content, connecting it to the broader framework of the study. Additionally, the research methodology integrates a thematic analysis to

⁵ A. Sulaiman and N. Ibrahim, "Contextual Interpretation of the Quran: Contemporary Challenges and Solutions," *Journal of Quranic Context Studies* VI, no. 1 (2021): 34–53.

⁶ A. Sulaiman and M. Hamid, "Journal of Quranic Context Studies," 6(1), 34-53. Sulaiman, A., & Hamid, M. (2023). Integration of Classical and Modern Methodologies in Contemporary Tafsir," *Islamic Studies Quarterly* 38, no. 4 (2023): 423–42.

⁷ Achmad Irwan Hamzani et al., "Legal Research Method: Theoretical and Implementative Review," *International Journal of Membrane Science and Technology* 10, no. 2 (2023): 3610–19, https://www.researchgate.net/profile/Tiyas-Widyastuti-3/publication/375917477_Legal_Research_Method_Theoretical_and_Implementative_Review/links/66b044922361f42f23b4a486/Legal-Research-Method-Theoretical-and-Implementative-Review.pdf.

⁸ Bui Thanh Khoa, Bui Phu Hung, and Mohsen Hejsalem Brahmi, "Qualitative Research in Social Sciences: Data Collection, Data Analysis and Report Writing," *International Journal of Public Sector Performance Management* 12, no. 1/2 (2023): 187–209, <https://doi.org/10.1504/IJPSM.2023.132247>.

group related ideas and insights, ensuring that the discussion is structured and coherent.⁹ This approach helps to highlight the core themes relevant to the research question while providing flexibility to explore interconnected concepts. The interpretive framework also allows the researcher to critically analyze and compare classical ideas with contemporary perspectives, bridging traditional Islamic thought with modern educational philosophies. Ultimately, this comprehensive methodology ensures a robust and nuanced understanding of the research topic.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

History of the Development of Interpretation

The word interpretation comes from Arabic, namely *fassara-yufassiru-tafsiran* which means *al-bayan* or *al-iidhah* (explanation, description, information, interpretation and commentary). Another opinion says it comes from the word *fasr* and *tafsirah* which means a doctor's diagnosis of water and urine used as indicators of disease (*tafsirah*).¹⁰ Epistemologically, interpretation is an effort to understand or explain the meaning of the Qur'an according to human capabilities and abilities.¹¹ Tafsir has undergone a fairly long period of growth and development, from its beginnings during the time of the Prophet Muhammad. until now. The history of interpretation can be categorized into several phases, including,¹²First; the time of the Prophet Muhammad SAW.,the interpretation of the Qur'an was carried out directly by him as the recipient of the revelation. The method of interpretation at this time was oral and direct, where friends could ask the Prophet Muhammad directly. when encountering difficulties in understanding the verses of the Koran.¹³This period became the main foundation in the development of the science of interpretation, because the interpretation of the Prophet Muhammad SAW was believed to be the most authoritative and became the main reference for subsequent generations.

Second,during the time of the companions. Entering the era of the companions, the approach to interpretation began to experience more systematic development. Companions such as Ibn Abbas, Abdullah bin Mas'ud and Ubay bin Ka'b became pioneers in the development of interpretation methodology. They did not only rely on the narrations of the Prophet Muhammad, but also began to use *ijtihad* in understanding the verses of the Qur'an, especially for problems that had never been explained directly by the Prophet Muhammad. The approach to interpretation during this period was still dominated by *tafsir bi al-ma'tsur*, namely interpretation based on valid narrations. *Third*,The *Tabi'in* period marked a new phase in the development of the tafsir approach. During this period, schools of tafsir began to form in various Islamic regions, such

⁹ Audrey Alejandro and Longxuan Zhao, "Multi-Method Qualitative Text and Discourse Analysis: A Methodological Framework," *Qualitative Inquiry* 30, no. 6 (July 2024): 461-73, <https://doi.org/10.1177/10778004231184421>.

¹⁰ A S Sakni, "Model Pendekatan Tafsir Dalam Kajian Islam," *Jurnal Ilmu Agama: Mengkaji Doktrin, Pemikiran ...*, 2013., p. 63.

¹¹ Muhammad Husein Adz-Dzahabi, *At-Tafsir Wa Al-Mufasssirun* (Kairo: Dar Al-Hadits, 2012).

¹² Nasiruddin Baidan, *Metodologi Penafsiran Alquran* (Yogyakarta: Pustaka Pelajar, 1998). Nata, *Studi Islam Komprehensif*.

¹³ M. A. Siraj, "Digital Transformation in Quranic Studies: Modern Approaches to Tafsir in the Digital Age," *Journal of Islamic Digital Studies* 5, no. 2 (2022): 156-75.

as the Mecca School pioneered by the students of Ibn Abbas, the Medina School developed by the students of Ubay bin Ka'b, and the Iraqi School led by the students of Abdullah bin Mas'ud. Each school has different characteristics and interpretive tendencies, which are influenced by the socio-cultural and intellectual conditions in their respective regions.¹⁴

Entering the codification period (2nd and 3rd centuries Hijriah), the tafsir approach experienced very significant development. Scholars began to write tafsir books systematically and comprehensively.¹⁵ In this period, two main approaches emerged in the interpretation of the Qur'an: tafsir bi al-ma'tsur and tafsir bi al-ra'yi. Tafsir bi al-ma'tsur, which was pioneered by scholars such as Ibnu Jarir at-Thabari, still maintains the use of history as the main source of interpretation. Meanwhile, tafsir bi al-ra'yi developed by scholars such as az-Zamakhsyari began to provide wider space for the use of reason and linguistic analysis in understanding the Qur'an. In the golden age of Islam (4th to 8th century Hijriah), the approach to interpretation increasingly developed with the emergence of various styles of interpretation.

Tafsir with a fiqh style as developed by al-Qurthubi, tafsir with a theological style such as the work of ar-Razi, tafsir with a sufistic style as written by al-Qusyairi and interpretation with a philosophical style as developed by Ibn Sina. This diversity of styles reflects the development of various scientific disciplines in Islamic civilization and their influence on the methodology of interpreting the Qur'an. In the contemporary era, the tafsir approach is increasingly expanding its scope with the emergence of various new methodologies such as maqashidi tafsir which emphasizes the objectives of sharia, thematic tafsir which examines certain themes comprehensively and interdisciplinary approaches that integrate various modern disciplines in understanding the Qur'an. This development shows that the science of tafsir continues to evolve to answer the challenges of the times, while maintaining the authenticity and fundamental values in understanding the holy book of the Qur'an.¹⁶

Interpretation Method

Tafsir methods are the methods used to interpret the verses of the Qur'an which lead to conclusions about the meaning and content of the holy book. In general, the method of interpreting the Qur'an is divided into four methods that are commonly used by commentators, namely the ijmalī interpretation method (generally/globally), tahlīlī interpretation (analytical), maudhu'ī interpretation (thematic) and muqaran interpretation (comparative).) as well as hermeneutics. First, Ijmalī interpretation method (generally/globally), explaining the meanings contained in the verses of the Qur'an in a concise, general manner and using language that is easy

¹⁴ Muhammad Wildan Faqih, "Sejarah Perkembangan Tafsir History Of Tafsir Development," *Jurnal Dirosah Islamiyah* 6, no. 1 (2024): 120–29, <https://doi.org/10.47467/jdi.v6i1.1159>; Aini Qurotul Ain, "Tafsir: Pengertian, Sejarah, Maraji', Hukum, Dan Pembagiannya," *Jurnal Iman Dan Spiritualitas* 3, no. 1 (2023): 71–76, <https://doi.org/10.15575/jis.v3i1.18772>, p. 73. Sakni, "Model Pendekatan Tafsir Dalam Kajian Islam," p. 65. Ma'mun Mu'min, *Metodologi Ilmu Tafsir*, I (Yogyakarta: Idea Press Yogyakarta, 2016).

¹⁵ A. Saifuddin and W. Wardani, "Perkembangan Metodologi Tafsir Modern," *Jurnal Studi Ilmu-Ilmu Al-Qur'an Dan Hadis* 21, no. 1 (2020): 1–22.

¹⁶ F. Rahmawati, Ahmad K, and M. Ismail, "Ecological Tafsir and Environmental Conservation: A Qur'anic Perspective on Environmental Crisis," *Environmental and Islamic Studies Journal* 7, no. 1 (2023): 78–95.

to understand. The systematics follow the sequence of the letters of the Qur'an so that the meanings are interconnected. Among the tafsir books which include ijmalī tafsir are Tafsir al-Jalalain and Tafsir al-Qur'an al-Karim. Among its advantages, it is practical, concise, easy to understand, free from israiliyat or still relatively pure. Among the shortcomings is that there is no space to present or explain adequate analysis.¹⁷ Second, The tahlili method is a method of interpreting the verses of the Qur'an in detail, in detail, clearly and is done by explaining and describing the meanings contained in the verses of the Qur'an. The explanation starts from vocabulary, munasabah verses and letters, sentence structure, reasons for the revelation of verses and various opinions of the companions, tabi'in and contemporary interpreters.¹⁸ In this method, there are several tendencies of interpreters, namely tafsir bi al-ma'tsur, tafsir bi ar-ra'y, tafsir ash-shufi, tafsir al-falsafi, tafsir al-adabi, tafsir al-ijtimai', tafsir al-fiqhi and tafsir al-fiqhi.

The tafsir books that use the tahlili method are the book Jami' al-Bayan, fi Tafsir al-Qur'an by Ibnu Jarir ath-Thabari and the book Tafsir al-Qur'an al-'Azhim by Ibnu Katsir. Among its advantages is that it has a wide scope when understanding the Al-Qur'an and contains various ideas and concepts in interpretation. Meanwhile, its shortcomings make the Qur'an partial or fragmented so that it seems as if the Qur'an provides incomplete, in-depth and inconsistent guidance because the interpretation given in one verse is different from the interpretation given in other verses. which is the same as it and the inclusion of israiliyat thinking.¹⁹ Third, maudhu'i method (thematic), namely the explanation of the verses of the Qur'an regarding a certain title or topic of discussion. The interpretation is not based on the order of the verses and letters contained in the mushaf. The characteristic of this method is to highlight a certain theme, title or topic of discussion. Then the selected themes will be studied thoroughly from various aspects and comprehensively according to the instructions in the interpreted verses in order to obtain a solution to the problem.²⁰ Among the tafsir books that use this method are the book Tafsir al-Wadhih by Muhammad Mahmud al-Hija'i and the book al-Mar'ah fi al-Qur'an by 'Abbas Mahmud al-'Aqqad.

This maudhu'i method has a very broad scope, just like other methods. This method is also not free from advantages and disadvantages. Among the advantages of maudhu'i interpretation is that it is relevant or can always be linked to current problems. Practical, easy to understand and apply in everyday life. Comprehensive, providing a complete understanding of a topic. Actual, always relevant and not out of date.²¹ In addition to having several advantages of maudhu'i interpretation, it also has several disadvantages, among the disadvantages is that although the

¹⁷ Umami Kalsum Hasibuan, Risqo Faridatul Ulya, and Jendri Jendri, "Tipologi Kajian Tafsir: Metode, Pendekatan Dan Corak Dalam Mitra Penafsiran al-Qur'an," *Ishlah: Jurnal Ilmu Ushuluddin, Adab Dan Dakwah* 2, no. 2 (2020): 96–120, <https://doi.org/10.32939/ishlah.v2i2.9>, pp. 228-229.

¹⁸ Sakni, "Model Pendekatan Tafsir Dalam Kajian Islam," p. 70.

¹⁹ Umami Kalsum Hasibuan, Risqo Faridatul Ulya, and Jendri, "Tipologi Kajian Tafsir: Metode, Pendekatan Dan Corak Dalam Mitra Penafsiran al-Qur'an," p. 228.

²⁰ Muhammad Naufal Nuruddin Salim and Dadan Rusmana, "Konsep Pola Makan Menurut Al-Qur'an Dalam Kajian Tafsir Tematik," *Islamic Review: Jurnal Riset Dan Kajian Keislaman* 11, no. 1 (2022), <https://doi.org/10.35878/islamicreview.v11i1.334>, p. 73.

²¹ Umami Kalsum Hasibuan, Risqo Faridatul Ulya, and Jendri, "Tipologi Kajian Tafsir: Metode, Pendekatan Dan Corak Dalam Mitra Penafsiran al-Qur'an," pp. 229-231.

thematic interpretation method (maudhu'i) has many advantages, this method also has several disadvantages. One of the disadvantages is by taking a small part of the verses of the Qur'an which actually contain a broader meaning. For example, when we only focus on one problem such as prayer or zakat in one verse, we may ignore other aspects that are also important in the verse. This method is considered inappropriate by some scholars, because it seems to "cut up" the verses of the Qur'an which actually have a relationship with each other. However, if this method does not cause errors in interpretation, then it is not a problem.

In addition, by giving a specific title to each discussion, we tend to limit our understanding of the verse. In fact, the verses of the Qur'an often have very broad meanings and are not limited to just one topic. In essence, the thematic interpretation method has the risk of simplifying the meaning of the Qur'an and ignoring the relationship between verses. Therefore, in using this method, we need to be careful not to make mistakes in interpreting.²² Fourth, muqaran (comparative) interpretation method, namely interpretation in the form of interpretation by comparing verses of the Qur'an with other verses that have similarities or comparing verses of the Qur'an with Hadiths that appear to contradict each other or comparing various opinions of interpreters in interpreting verses of the Qur'an. The method of interpretation of muqaran or comparison is one way of interpreting the Qur'an by comparing various opinions of scholars and different points of view. This method has advantages and disadvantages.²³ Advantages: Viewing the Qur'an from various angles, this method allows us to understand the Qur'an from various perspectives, including from modern science. This makes us realize that the Qur'an is very broad and can be related to various areas of life. Increases tolerance, by comparing different opinions, we learn to appreciate differences of opinion and become more open to the views of others. Encouraging deeper study, this method encourages interpreters to study more deeply about the Qur'an, hadith, and the opinions of previous scholars.

As for the disadvantages, namely it is not suitable for beginners, this method is quite complex and requires a deep understanding of religious sciences. Therefore, this method is less suitable for beginners or those who are still learning the basics of religion. Less focused on problem solving, this method emphasizes more on comparing opinions than finding solutions to social problems faced by society.²⁴ The Muqaran interpretation method is a useful tool for understanding the Qur'an in more depth. However, this method has limitations and is not suitable for all situations. To gain a comprehensive understanding, we should combine the Muqaran interpretation method with other interpretation methods. This Muqaran interpretation method is very good at enriching our understanding of the Qur'an, but it is less effective in providing direct solutions to social problems. Fifth, hermeneutics method. The word hermeneutics comes from the Greek word *Hermeneuein*, which means to interpret. This term refers to a school of philosophy that focuses on the theory of interpretation and interpretation of texts through in-depth exploration. Hermeneutics focuses on three main elements, namely text, context and

²² Ummi Kalsum Hasibuan, Risqo Faridatul Ulya, and Jendri., pp. 229-231.

²³ Aida Fitriatunnisa and Danendra Ahmad Rafdi, "Metode Tafsir Muqaran Dilihat Kembali," *Jurnal Iman Dan Spiritualitas* 3, no. 4 (2024): 639-46, <https://doi.org/10.15575/jis.v3i4.31043>, p. 645.

²⁴ Fitriatunnisa and Rafdi., p. 645.

contextualization, which must be interconnected in the interpretation process. When exploring the meaning of a text, an interpreter also needs to consider the original context of the text and how its meaning was understood in the initial context, in order to be able to interpret the text relevantly in the new context.

The debate on the application of hermeneutics theory in understanding the Qur'an is still ongoing. When compared to interpretation, hermeneutics has fundamental differences. Interpretation is deeply rooted in Islamic tradition, with the main sources coming from the Qur'an, the Prophet Muhammad, and his companions. The Prophet's explanation of the verses of the Qur'an has direct authority from Allah, which was then passed on to the companions and passed on through the interpretation school to the tabi'in. After the era of the tabi'in, interpretation began to be codified and equipped with special criteria for interpreters. On the contrary, hermeneutics brings a new approach to interpreting the Qur'an, with a perspective that considers the text to no longer be something completely sacred. In hermeneutics, when the text comes down and is in the midst of human life, the text becomes completely human property, so that it can be interpreted and understood freely as desired. Hermeneutics views every element in the text as being clearly interpretable, which is the main difference from traditional interpretation in the study of Ulum Al-Qur'an.²⁵

Styles and Approaches in the Interpretation of the Qur'an

Style is the variety, type and uniqueness of an interpretation. Style here is a way of seeing that exists in a field of science and is then applied in understanding the verses of the Qur'an or the variety and special nuances that color an interpretation. In this case the author tries to explain several styles in the interpretation of the Qur'an, including the following. First, fiqh or legal approach is an interpretation that tends to focus on verses related to Islamic laws (fiqh). This means that interpreters who use this style will delve deeper into verses that regulate worship, muamalah, criminal and other laws. The origins of this fiqh interpretation style can be traced back to the time of the Prophet Muhammad SAW. When the companions had difficulty understanding the laws contained in the Qur'an, they immediately asked the Prophet Muhammad SAW. This shows that from the beginning, Muslims have had great attention to the legal aspects of the Qur'an. Previous interpreters with this style were far from fanatical. However, after the emergence of theological schools, interpretations tended to support their respective schools. So that they interpret verses according to the sect they follow or at least it does not conflict with their sect.²⁶ Examples of tafsir books with a fiqhi style are: *Ahkam Al-Qur'an* by al-Jashshash, *al-Jami' li al-Ahkam Al-Qur'an* by al-Qurthubi. In essence, the style of fiqhi interpretation is a very important approach in understanding Islamic laws which originate from the Koran. The scholars who use this style try to explore in depth the meaning of the law contained in each verse, so that it can become a guide for Muslims in carrying out their daily lives.²⁷

²⁵ Sakni, "Model Pendekatan Tafsir Dalam Kajian Islam.", p. 71.

²⁶ Sakni., p. 67.

²⁷ Muhammad Ismail and Makmur, "Al-Qurṭubī Dan Metode Penafsirannya Dalam Kitab al-Jāmi' Li Aḥkām al-Qur'Ān," *Pappasang* 2, no. 2 (2020): 17-32, <https://doi.org/10.46870/jiat.v2i2.68>, p. 18.

Second, the philosophical interpretation approach is a method of interpreting the Qur'an using logic and philosophical theory. This method emerged when Islamic civilization experienced rapid development and interacted a lot with Greek philosophical thought. Scholars have different opinions about philosophical interpretation. Supporters argue that by combining philosophy and religion, understanding of the Qur'an can be deeper. They often use the *takwil* method (figurative interpretation) to adjust verses to philosophical theory. Opponents argue that this method can deviate from the correct understanding of religion and ignore the rules of Arabic in the Qur'an. Examples of interpretations that use a philosophical approach are the works of Imam Fakhruddin ar-Razi and Ibn Rushd. In conclusion, philosophical interpretation is an attempt to combine religion and philosophy in understanding the Qur'an, but this method is still a matter of debate among scholars.²⁸ Third, Linguistic approach in interpretation. The linguistic approach in the interpretation of the Qur'an requires someone who wants to understand the content of its verses to have a deep knowledge of Arabic, the language used by the Qur'an. To understand the meaning of a word in the context of the verses of the Qur'an, an interpreter needs to examine the various meanings contained in the word and consider all aspects related to the verse in order to determine the meaning of the word correctly. This approach means that an interpreter must have a thorough understanding of Arabic, including grammar (*nahwu*), the beauty of language (*balaghah*), and literature. With a deep understanding of the language of the Qur'an, an interpreter can more easily find and understand the meaning and structure of sentences in its verses, so that he is able to interpret and reveal the message behind the arrangement of the sentences.²⁹

Fourth, historical approach. Someone who wants to understand the Koran correctly must study the history of the revelation of the Koran which is known as the science of *Asbab al-Nuzul*. With this approach, a person will be able to understand the wisdom contained in a verse relating to a particular law and is intended to protect the Shari'ah from misunderstandings. By knowing the background to the revelation of the verse, people can recognize and describe the situations and circumstances that occurred when the verse was revealed, so that it makes it easier to think about what is contained behind the texts of the verse.³⁰ So knowing the *asbab al-nuzul* is the most important and best way to understand the meaning of a verse. Then the companions who know more about the reasons for the revelation of a verse, then their opinions are given priority to the meaning of a verse, compared to companions who do not know the reasons for the revelation of a verse.³¹ Fifth, Sufi approach. Sufi interpretation is an approach to interpreting the Qur'an that uses a Sufi perspective. Sufi interpretation is divided into two types: interpretation based on Sufi theories and interpretation that relies on symbolic interpretation or signs that are only

²⁸ Syam, IK, Alfathah, S., Zulaiha, E., & Ahmad, K. (2023). Historical Study of Philosophical Interpretation. *Hanifiya: Journal of Religious Studies*, 6(1), 85-92. <https://doi.org/10.15575/hanifiya.v6i1.18321>, pp. 86-92.

²⁹ Ummi Kalsum Hasibuan, Risqo Faridatul Ulya, and Jendri, "Tipologi Kajian Tafsir: Metode, Pendekatan Dan Corak Dalam Mitra Penafsiran al-Qur'an.", p. 240.

³⁰ Sakni, "Model Pendekatan Tafsir Dalam Kajian Islam.", p. 67.

³¹ Lukman Hakim, "Historiografi Dalam Tafsir Al-Qur'an," *Al-Dhikra* 2, no. 2 (2016): 1-23. Ummi Kalsum Hasibuan, Risqo Faridatul Ulya, and Jendri, "Tipologi Kajian Tafsir: Metode, Pendekatan Dan Corak Dalam Mitra Penafsiran al-Qur'an.", p. 240.

understood by Sufis. Despite many controversies, Sufi interpretation can be accepted if it does not contradict the original meaning of the verse, is supported by other evidence, and does not contradict common sense.

Then among the tafsir books with a Shufi style are the tafsir Al-Qur'an al-Azhim by Abdullah al-Tustariy, the book Haqaiq al-tafsir by al-'Alamah al-Sulamiy and the book Ara'is al-Bayan fi Haqaiqal- Qur'an by Imam al-Syiraziyy. Tafsir scholars are of the opinion that in this Shufi style tafsir there are many errors and deviations, so this tafsir can be accepted if it meets the requirements, namely; does not conflict with the external meaning of the verse, the interpretation can be strengthened by other syara' arguments, the interpretation does not conflict with syara' arguments and reason, the interpreter does not assume that the interpretation is the only correct interpretation, but must first acknowledge the meaning birth verse.³² Sixth, socio-community approach. Interpretation that emphasizes more on cultural and social literature is known as the socio-community approach. In terminology, understanding the verses of the Qur'an means mentioning the words in the Qur'an carefully and explaining their meaning using a beautiful style of language so that it is interesting to read. Then the interpreters relate the texts of the Qur'an to the social conditions and cultural systems that exist in society.

According to Adz-Dzahabi, the socio-social style of interpretation is a way of interpreting the Al-Qur'an by explaining or revealing its verses with precision in expression, using straightforward language, and emphasizing the main purpose of its revelation and then applying it to social life. This style of interpretation arose because of the dissatisfaction of the commentators who thought that the interpretation of the Qur'an had so far only been dominated by interpretations that focused on nahwu, language and differences in schools of thought, both in the fields of kalam science, ushul fiqh, sufism, fiqh, and so on. Then the tafsir books that use socio-social interpretation styles are the tafsir al-Manar book by Muhammad Abduh and Rasyid Ridha, the book Tafsir al-Wadhiih by Muhammad Mahmud al-Hijazy, the book Tafsir Al-Qur'an by Syaikh Ahmad al-Maraghi and the book Tafsir Al-Qur'an al-Karim written by Shaykh Mahmud Syaltut.³³

Seventh, semantic approach. Because in the Qur'an there are verses that use the words mubhâm, musytarâk, and mutasyâbihât. So words like this require a deeper understanding, including being understood with linguistic concepts (semantics) in order to find the right meaning. In this semantic approach there is an application of semantic analysis, where Toshihiko Izutsu defines semantics as an analytical study of key terms of a language with a view that ultimately arrives at a conceptual understanding of weltanschauung or the worldview of the community that uses the language, not only as a means of speaking and thinking, but more importantly is the conceptualization and interpretation of the world that surrounds it. In this semantic approach there is also 'Ilm al-Dalâlah which is a term in Arabic. While in Western scientists, the science of dalâlah is better known as semantique. 'Ilm al-Dalâlah has stages of development, including, initially 'Ilm al-Dalâlah was divided into three parts, namely dalâlah

³² Umami Kalsum Hasibuan, Risqo Faridatul Ulya, and Jendri, "Tipologi Kajian Tafsir: Metode, Pendekatan Dan Corak Dalam Mitra Penafsiran al-Qur'an.", p. 240.

³³ Umami Kalsum Hasibuan, Risqo Faridatul Ulya, and Jendri, p. 245.

thabî'iyah, dalâlah 'aqliyah, and dalâlah wadh'iyah/'irfiyah. Then over time, the study of dalâlah also developed, scholars have divided the study of the science of dalâlah into three parts, including: (1) Only studying vocabulary, such as that found in the making of dictionaries. (2) Studying meaning based on structure, this study is divided into two, namely lexical semantics and syntactic semantics. (3) Studying meaning in terms of both words and phrases.³⁴

Eighth, semiotic approach. Semiotics is often referred to as the science that studies signs. If this semiotics is applied in the study of the Qur'an, then a new branch is born called the semiotics of the Qur'an. Semiotics of the Qur'an is an interpretation that looks more at the analysis of how the marking system functions in the text of the Qur'an. The most influential figures in the study of semiotics are Charles Sanders Peirce and Ferdinand de Saussure. They are even dubbed the fathers of modern semiotics. Semiotics of the Qur'an has three frameworks, namely signs, symbols, and signals. Then there are two main directions of semiotic approaches that have been developed and used in cultural studies, namely: structural semiotics and social semiotics. Social semiotics focuses more on the act of using everyday signs (parole) socially in the existing socio-cultural context, with all the plurality of readings and actions, as a reaction to an existing text. While structural semiotics focuses more on the study of codes, conventions or rules of the game (including ushul al-fiqh and fiqh) that have been agreed upon socio-historically as a social convention that has been fixed and never changes.³⁵

Ninth, scientific approach. The scientific approach in the interpretation of the Qur'an, or the interpretation of science, is a method of interpretation that uses a scientific approach, in which the verses of the Qur'an are studied based on theories of knowledge. This interpretation is especially applied to the kauniyah verses, namely verses that discuss natural phenomena. This approach provides an opportunity for interpreters to broaden their scientific horizons and develop various scientific potentials that are relevant to the contents of the Qur'an. In using this approach, the interpreter must be based on scientific principles that can be used as a guide, without forcing an arbitrary understanding of the text or interpreting it according to personal desires. The meaning of the verse is taken naturally, based on language analysis and according to the context of the sentence. Some books of interpretation that carry this scientific approach are *Al-Jawahir fi Tafsir Al-Qur'an* by Thanthawi Jawhari, *Al-Tafsir al-Ilmi li al-Ayat al-Kawuniyah fi Al-Qur'an* by Hanafi Ahmad and *Al-Isyarat Al-Ilmiyah fi Al-Qur'an Al-Karim* by Dr. Muhammad Syawqi al-Fanjari. This type of interpretation has developed in line with the progress of modern science, with the aim of helping commentators understand the verses of the Qur'an from a perspective that is in line with the development of science.³⁶

³⁴ Achmad Zaki Yamani et al., *Aneka Pendekatan Dalam Tafsir Al-Qur'an Dari Khazanah Pemikiran Islam Hingga Barat*, ed. Wardani, 1 (Yogyakarta: Zahir Publishing, 2021).

³⁵ Yamani, AZ, Hasbiannor, A., Masdar, Kurniaty, RS, Riady, A., Maulana, AR, Abie, AS, Anwar, S., Norlatipah, Anisah, N., Liansari, N., Rahmawati, S., Jarimah, Rahmadi, E., Fikri, I., Lukman, R., Rahmatina, N., 'Abqary, MA, Isnaniah, ... Ansari, MZ (2021). *Various Approaches in the Interpretation of the Qur'an from the Treasures of Islamic Thought to the West* (Wardani (ed.); 1). Zahir Publishing, p. 38.

³⁶ Ummi Kalsum Hasibuan, Risqo Faridatul Ulya, and Jendri, "Tipologi Kajian Tafsir: Metode, Pendekatan Dan Corak Dalam Mitra Penafsiran al-Qur'an.", p. 242,

Characteristics and Methodology of Modern Interpretation Approach

The development of the modern interpretation approach shows a very significant dynamic in the effort to understand the Qur'an comprehensively and contextually. The modern interpretation approach has distinctive characteristics, namely emphasizing the aspects of contextuality and relevance to contemporary issues. Modern interpreters are no longer fixated on the textual approach alone, but rather seek to integrate various methodologies and scientific perspectives in understanding the Qur'an. One of the prominent methodologies in the modern interpretation approach is the hermeneutic approach. The hermeneutic approach in modern interpretation not only pays attention to the textual aspect (text), but also considers the historical context (context) and its relevance to contemporary readers (contextualization). This methodology allows for a more dynamic and responsive study of the Qur'an to the development of the times, while still paying attention to the basic principles of interpretation that have been outlined by classical scholars.³⁷

Another characteristic that emerges in the modern tafsir approach is the use of thematic analysis (*maudhu'i*). The thematic approach allows for a comprehensive study of the Qur'an by collecting verses that have similar themes and analyzing them holistically. This methodology not only provides a deeper understanding of a theme in the Qur'an, but also helps in formulating Qur'anic solutions to various contemporary problems. Another important aspect of the modern tafsir approach is the integration of social sciences and science. Research such as this shows that modern exegetes are increasingly using an interdisciplinary approach in interpreting the Qur'an. They integrate various disciplines such as sociology, anthropology, psychology, and science in an effort to understand the messages of the Qur'an in a more comprehensive and applicable manner.³⁸ The modern interpretation approach is also marked by the emergence of the *maqashidi* interpretation methodology. This approach emphasizes understanding the objectives of sharia (*maqashid al-syari'ah*) in interpreting the Qur'an.³⁹ This methodology not only pays attention to the literal meaning of the text, but also seeks to uncover the purpose and wisdom behind each provision in the Qur'an. In terms of methodology, the modern tafsir approach also pays special attention to contemporary linguistic analysis. Modern commentators not only use classical language analysis, but also integrate modern linguistic theories in understanding the structure and meaning of the verses of the Qur'an. This allows for a deeper understanding of the nuances of meaning contained in the text of the Qur'an. In addition, the modern tafsir approach is also characterized by the use of a more systematic comparative methodology. Modern commentators not only compare various tafsir opinions, but also critically analyze the advantages

³⁷Rahman, M., S, A., & Hassan, A. (2021). Thematic Approach in Modern Qur'anic Interpretation: Methodology and Application. *International Journal of Islamic Studies*, 14(2), 112-131.

³⁸Wardani, WW (2020). Integration of Tafsir and Social Sciences: An Initial Note on the Sociology of the Qur'an. *Scientific Journal of Ushuluddin Sciences*, 19(2), 42-63. <https://doi.org/10.18592/jiiu.v19i2.4000>, pp. 42-63.

³⁹Nurhayati, & Syamsyuddin, M. (2024). Gender-sensitive Tafsir in Contemporary Muslim Societies: Reconstructing Equal Relations. *Journal of Gender and Islamic Studies*, 9(1), 45-64.

and disadvantages of each opinion. This methodology helps in producing a more objective and comprehensive understanding of the verses of the Qur'an.⁴⁰

Relevance and Contribution of the Interpretation Approach in Answering Contemporary Muslim Community Problems

In facing the complexity of contemporary Muslim problems, various tafsir approaches have made significant contributions. Contemporary tafsir approaches have succeeded in offering innovative solutions to various modern problems, ranging from bioethical issues to digital economic issues. The study shows that the flexibility of modern tafsir methodology allows for the development of more adaptive answers to the challenges of the times, while still adhering to the fundamental principles of the Qur'an. In the context of socio-economic problems, the maqashidi tafsir approach has contributed to the development of a more responsive Islamic economic system. Through a deep understanding of maqashid al-shari'ah in economic verses, contemporary exegetes have succeeded in formulating Islamic economic principles that can be applied in the context of the modern economy, including in the development of sharia fintech and contemporary Islamic financial instruments.⁴¹

Another important aspect is the contribution of the tafsir approach in dealing with family and gender issues. The contextual tafsir approach has helped in reconstructing the understanding of gender relations in Islam. Contemporary exegetes have succeeded in showing that the values of gender equality and justice have actually been embedded in the Qur'an, but need to be understood by considering the socio-historical context and maqashid sharia.⁴² In the realm of science and technology, the contribution of the scientific interpretation approach is also very significant. The contemporary scientific interpretation approach has helped bridge the gap between modern science and revelation. The exegetes have succeeded in showing that the scientific hints in the Qur'an do not contradict the discoveries of modern science, and in some cases even provide an important ethical perspective in the development of technology.⁴³ Another important contribution is seen in the handling of environmental and ecological issues. The ecological interpretation approach has helped build environmental awareness based on the Qur'an. Contemporary exegetes have succeeded in exploring the concepts of environmental preservation in the Qur'an and applying them in the context of the modern ecological crisis.⁴⁴ The contribution of the tafsir approach is also seen in the development of modern Islamic educational

⁴⁰ A. Muzayyin, "Pendekatan Hermeneutika Dalam Tafsir Modern: Studi Kritis Atas Metodologi Kontemporer," *Jurnal QOF* 3, no. 2 (2019): 167–86.

⁴¹ Arie Syantoso, Parman Komarudin, and Iman Setya Budi, "Tafsir Ekonomi Islam Atas Konsep Adil Dalam Transaksi Bisnis," *Al Iqtishadiyah Jurnal Ekonomi Syariah Dan Hukum Ekonomi Syariah* 4, no. 1 (2018): 20–39, <https://doi.org/10.31602/iqt.v4i1.1595>, pp. 20-39.

⁴² Nurhayati and M. Syamsyuddin, "Gender-Sensitive Tafsir in Contemporary Muslim Societies: Reconstructing Equal Relations," *Journal of Gender and Islamic Studies* 9, no. 1 (2024): 45–64.

⁴³ Muhammad Faisal, "Sains Dalam Al-Quran (Memahami Kontruksi Pendekatan Tafsir Bil-Ilmi Dalam Menafsirkan Alquran)," *Jurnal Studi Alquran Dan Tafsir* 1, no. June (2021): 26.

⁴⁴ Mamluatun Nafisah, "Tafsir Ekologi," *Jurnal Al-Fanar* 2, no. 1 (2019), <https://doi.org/10.33511/alfanar.v2n1.93-112>.

methodology. Contemporary exegetes have succeeded in extracting educational principles from the Qur'an and applying them in the context of the modern education system. This helps in the development of an Islamic educational model that not only emphasizes the religious aspect but also pays attention to the development of science and technology. In the digital era, the tafsir approach has also adapted by contributing to the development of digital da'wah and online Qur'an literacy. Contemporary exegetes have developed an interpretation methodology that can be accessed and understood through digital platforms, making it easier for Muslims to access an authoritative understanding of the Qur'an in the digital era

CONCLUSION

Based on the discussion that has been presented previously, the development of the interpretation approach in Islamic studies has undergone a very dynamic evolution from the classical to the contemporary era. Starting from the period of the Prophet Muhammad SAW. with the oral and direct interpretation method, continuing to the period of the companions and tabi'in with the dominance of bi al-ma'tsur interpretation, to the modern era with various contemporary patterns and approaches. Several conclusions can be drawn that what is meant by the interpretation method is a way and steps that must be taken when interpreting the Qur'an. Among the methods that have been explained above, the ijmalī, tahlīlī, maudhu'i, muqaran and hermeneutic interpretation methods. In addition, what is meant by the approach and pattern is the perspective of the interpretation process or nuances, colors and tendencies of thought or ideas that dominate the interpretation, including philosophical, fiqh, Sufi, scientific, social-community, language, historical, semantic and semiotic interpretations.

The modern interpretation approach has distinctive characteristics and methodologies, including: (1) Use of a hermeneutic approach that considers aspects of text, context, and contextualization. (2) Application of thematic analysis (maudhu'i) for a more comprehensive understanding. (3) Integration of social sciences and science in interpretation. (4) Development of a maqashidi interpretation methodology based on the objectives of sharia. (5) Sensitivity to issues of gender and social justice. (6) Use of contemporary linguistic analysis and comparative methodology. Various interpretive approaches have made significant contributions in answering the problems of contemporary Muslims, including: (1) Solutions to bioethics and digital economic issues. (2) Development of a responsive Islamic economic system. (3) Reconstruction of understanding gender relations in Islam. (4) Integration of science and revelation in a modern context. (5) Development of environmental awareness based on the Qur'an. (6) Promotion of pluralism and harmonious interfaith relations. (7) Development of modern Islamic education methodology. (8) Countering radicalism and extremism. (9) Adaptation of preaching in the digital era.

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