The Application of Hermeneutics in Indonesia as a Koranic interpretation Method

Imarotuz Zulfa¹*

¹ Universitas Islam Negeri Syarif Hidayatullah Jakarta, Indonesia
*Correspondence: ✉ Imarotuzzulfa@gmail.com

Article Info	Abstract
	An examination of the interpretation of the Koran that elicits contentious topics in the contemporary post-modern era is a fascinating subject to explore. Hermeneutics originated in Ancient Greece and has been included in understanding the Koran, as discussed in this article. A discussion ensued concerning the advent of the hermeneutical approach when interpreting the Koran. Is it possible to use a hermeneutical methodology to analyze the Koran? Hermeneutics solves contemporary interpretive disputes by offering a systematic and comprehensive approach to understanding and interpreting texts. In this inquiry through qualitative research and library research, the author analyzes multiple perspectives on hermeneutics held by interpretive figures in Indonesia. This article highlights the importance of science as a catalyst for change in the contemporary era, emphasizing that it should not be disregarded or dismissed. Its pursuit of scientific advancement consistently adapts to current knowledge and practices. However, it remains grounded in ancient traditions, specifically by referring to the Quran and Hadith.

A. Introduction

The Qur'an, regarded as the divine revelation of Allah,[1] serves multiple purposes such as reading, translation, interpretation, and as a fundamental source of guidance[2] for

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[1] Azlisham Abdul Aziz dan Et Al, "Analysis Of Literature Review On Spiritual Concepts According To The Perspectives Of The Al-Quran, Hadith And Islamic Scholars," *Turkish Journal of Computer and Mathematics Education (Turcomat)* 12, no. 9 (20 April 2021): 3155, https://turcomat.org/index.php/turkbilmat/article/view/4790.

[2] Syaiful Arief, "Mohammed Arkoun's Thought On Methodology Of Interpreting The Qur'an," *Al Dhikra | Jurnal Studi Qur'an Dan Hadis* 2, no. 2 (2020): 209, https://doi.org/10.57217/aldhikra.v2i2.782.

humanity.[3] The inclusion of the Qur'an in the lives of Muslims has established a hub for ongoing Islamic dialogue and has emerged as a wellspring of motivation for individuals who want to analyze and enhance the significance of its verses. The Koran will perpetually remain the pivotal text in Islamic civilization.[4]

Ever since the revelation of the Qur'an to Prophet Muhammad, the process of interpreting its meaning has been evolving.[5] Interpreters ranging from classical to modern times have presented a multitude of interpretation methodologies.[6] Exegetical action will never achieve its culmination as long as human beings still possess the capacity for reason.[7] This is demonstrated by discontentment with the concepts, methodologies, and outcomes of an interpretation. Hence, interpretation invariably engenders the potential for generating boundless discourse.

One discourse that has emerged in the interpretation of the Qur'an is the discourse on employing a hermeneutical approach to interpret it. Creating a modern approach to interpreting is an essential requirement in the course of history. This is regarded as an endeavor to formulate interpretations for addressing current complex situations. Progressive Muslim intellectuals engage in the task of presenting their hermeneutical views, which include Fazlur Rahman introduced the theory of double movement,[8]

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[3] Mahmud Arif, "Al-Qur'an As An 'Open Book' In Educationalperspective: The Significant Meaning Of Pedagogical Values And Productive Reading," *Sunan Kalijaga International Journal on Islamic Educational Research* 3, no. 2 (19 Desember 2019): 14, https://doi.org/10.14421/skijier.2019.2019.33.01.

[4] Muhammad Hifdil Islam, "Islam and Civilization (Analysis Study on The History of Civilization in Islam)," *Al-Insyiroh: Jurnal Studi Keislaman* 5, no. 1 (16 Maret 2019): 28–29, https://doi.org/10.35309/alinsyiroh.v5i1.3395.

[5] Safrudin Ediwibowo, "The Debates of the Createdness of the Qur'an and Its Impact to the Methodology of Qur'anic Interpretation," *Ulumuna* 19, no. 2 (29 Desember 2015): 354–55, https://doi.org/10.20414/ujis.v19i2.357.

[6] Ahmad Zaenuri, "Classical And Modern Exegesis Styles: The Evolution Of The Development Exegesis Styles From Classical And Modern Periods," *Jurnal At-Tibyan: Jurnal Ilmu Alqur'an Dan Tafsir* 8, no. 1 (26 Juni 2023): 21–22, https://doi.org/10.32505/at-tibyan.v8i1.6007.

[7] Izza Rohman, "Tafsir Al-Qur'an Bi Al-Qur'an As A Distinctive Methodology" (International Conference on Qur'an and Hadith Studies (ICQHS 2017), Atlantis Press, 2017), 32, https://doi.org/10.2991/icqhs-17.2018.5.

[8] The double movement theory uses both inductive and deductive reasoning to discover two distinct double motions, moving from specific instances to general principles and vice versa. Begin by examining the significance of the text and the historical circumstances that led to its creation. The initial phase necessitates a comprehensive comprehension of the entirety of the Qur'anic text, its particular circumstances, and the fundamental principles governing the scenario, which form the basis of its ethical communication. In the second movement, the language identifies the underlying theme or objective (moral ideals) and relates it to the present situation. Fazlur Rahman, *Islam Modernitas: Tentang Transformasi Intelektual terj. Ahsin Mohammad,* (Bandung: Pustaka, 1985) h.7.

Mohammad Arkoun pioneered the critique of Islamic reasoning[9], Nasr Hamis Abu Zayd raised concerns about religious speech[10], Muhammad Sahrur proposed his theory of limits[11] and other Muslim philosophers have made similar contributions.

Conversely, while contemporary Islamic scholars have extensively employed hermeneutics, there is a significant opposition among Muslims towards its application in understanding the Koran. This is because they believe that hermeneutics neglects procedural interpretation, unlike Qur'anic ulum, which prioritizes authenticity and the methods of storytelling. Furthermore, within the Islamic tradition, hermeneutics distinguishes itself from tafsir and takwil. Furthermore, employing hermeneutics as a means of interpreting the Koran has the potential to undermine the faith of Muslims and the scholarly study of Islam. Furthermore, it is necessary to employ hermeneutics derived from Western or non-Muslim sources in order to investigate the authenticity of the Bible and subject it to critical analysis, as the contents of the Bible are seen as contentious. This diverges from the Koran, which is regarded as sacrosanct. Furthermore, hermeneutics will generate interpretations that are subjective and contingent.

In addition to the aforementioned dispute, it is important to address the application of hermeneutics in the interpretation of the Koran. Initially, the divine scripture was disclosed within a specific temporal and spatial context; however, societal progress will

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[9] Arkoun endeavors to advocate for the adoption of a hermeneutic approach to reasoning as a critical methodology that might yield novel insights and significance in the interpretation of texts. A historical-contextual approach is necessary to consistently update the significance of religious teachings. Arkoun Muhammad, *Islam Kontemporer Menuju Dialog Antar Agama terj. Ruslani,* (Yogyakarta: Pustaka Pelajar, 2001), h.16.

[10] Employing interpretative theory, which is based on the interplay between the text and its cultural framework. Abu Zayd distinguishes between the concept of meaning (maghza) and the concept of significance (ma'na). Meaning, as he explains, refers to the initial and historical understanding of a text within the framework of its creation and structure. The dynamics of two text phases, namely the mimetic tasyakkul and the semiotic tasykil, can be captured to obtain it. The poem is situated within a specific historical setting and chronological period in response to the prevailing culture of that era, particularly during the mimetic phase. The text of the Qur'an would be unfamiliar and outside the realm of understanding for its audience if it were entirely detached from the culture upon which it is founded. During the semiotic phase, texts possess the capacity to transgress both textual and cultural standards. Nasr Hamid Abu Zayd, Isykaliyah al-Qira'ah wa Alliyat al-Ta'wil terj. Muhammad Mansur, (Jakarta: International Center for Islam and Pluralism (ICIP), 2004) h.4.

[11] Muhammad Syahrur introduced the concept of limitations, which he described as divine instructions found in the Qur'an and al-Sunnah that set boundaries for human behavior, specifying both the lowest and maximum thresholds. There are six mathematical forms of Muhammad Syahrur's limit theory: the first is the minimum limit position, the second is the maximum limit position, the third is when both the maximum and minimum limit positions exist simultaneously, the fourth is the straight position, the fifth is the maximum limit position without touching the minimum line, and the sixth is the position of the maximum positive limit and the minimum negative limit. Muhammad Syahrur, Prinsip dan Dasar Hermneutika Alquran Kontemporer, (Yogyakarta: elSAQ Press, 2012) h.37

persistently advance. Hence, it is imperative to provide a contextual framework for the message conveyed in the Koran. Furthermore, due to the cultural nature of language, every language, including the language used in the Koran, is subject to specific regional constraints. Religious messages and realities expressed in local languages have a universal quality. Third, when religious language is regarded as sacrosanct, a lot of chances will arise. The religious message may be efficiently preserved, although the essential significance and communication of the religion could potentially be repressed by formerly revered scriptures. Furthermore, in addition to serving as a codification of divine law, the sacred text also functions as a documentation of the divine discourse between God and His Messenger.

Comprehending God's word completely in accordance with His intentions is a challenging task, as finite people are incapable of fully grasping the infinite nature of God. One possible course of action is to seek an interpretation that aligns as closely as possible with the divine intentions of God. Within the realm of interpretation, the quest for discerning God's intentions is conducted through the employment of the bil ma'tsur technique. Ultimately, interpretation does not isolate itself in an exclusive realm but rather transforms into a form of creation that is attuned to the surrounding issues.

This article aims to examine various aspects of hermeneutics, through qualitative methods and literature research, focusing on the viewpoints of Muslim scholars who either endorse or reject its application in interpreting Islamic texts, particularly the Quran and Hadith. It explores the different methodologies employed in these texts. The conversation will conclude. The present investigation It is expected that hermeneutics can be accurately positioned. Although there have previously been those who have studied this, such as Sahiron. However, Sahiron's focus is not on Indonesian Muslim scholars in general. Sahiron focuses more on the comparison of two figures.[12] Thus, this research will further capture the problem of hermeneutics as a tool for interpreting the Qur'an in Indonesia.

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[12] Sahiron Syamsuddin, "Differing Responses to Western Hermeneutics: A Comparative Critical Study of M. Quraish Shihab's and Muḥammad 'Imāra's Thoughts," *Al-Jami'ah: Journal of Islamic Studies* 59, no. 2 (31 Desember 2021): 479, https://doi.org/10.14421/ajis.2021.592.479-512.

B. Foundational principles of hermeneutics

Hermeneutics, deeply rooted in classical Greek philosophy,[13] traces its origins to Plato's use of "hermeneutike."[14] In "On Interpretation," Aristotle further explores the concept through "hermenias," delving into statements' truth and falsehood. Hermeneia, functioning as an organon, acts as a vital tool connecting literature to semiotics. The term "hermeneutics" itself reflects the influence of the Greek figure Hermes, [15] whose duty involved interpreting divine messages.[16] It embraces various semantic dimensions, from articulation and elucidation to translation, reflecting the discipline's evolution. [17] Today, hermeneutics serves as a crucial method for comprehending both textual and real-world meanings. [18]

In theological realms, hermeneutics becomes intertwined with precise interpretation methodologies essential for the accurate reception[19] of divine messages.[20] Theology, delving into God's divine nature, demands thorough deliberations during the interpretation process. Hermeneutical tools encompass a comprehensive examination of key elements such as the author, text, context, and reader, ensuring a nuanced understanding. This interpretative process, influenced by traditional philosophy, experienced a transformative shift in the early 19th century, notably with the contributions of Schleirmacher and Dilthey. The quest for a theory of "comprehension" emerged, distinct from subject matter and clarification, influencing theology and various disciplines' interpretations. [21]

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[13] Frank J. Barrett, Edward H. Powley, dan Barnett Pearce, "Hermeneutic philosophy and organizational theory," dalam *Philosophy and Organization Theory*, ed. oleh Haridimos Tsoukas dan Robert Chia, vol. 32, Research in the Sociology of Organizations (Emerald Group Publishing Limited, 2011), 182–83, https://doi.org/10.1108/S0733-558X(2011)0000032009.

[14] Jussi Backman, "Hermeneutics and the Ancient Philosophical Legacy," dalam *A Companion to Hermeneutics* (John Wiley & Sons, Ltd, 2015), 23, https://doi.org/10.1002/9781118529812.ch2.

[15] In Islamic tradition, the name Hermes is commonly associated with the Prophet Idris, who is credited as the pioneer of writing, engineering, and medicine. Hermes was referred to as Thot by the Ancient Egyptians, Unukh by the Jews, and Hushang by the Ancient Persians. Sayyed Hossen Nashr, *Islamic Studies: Essay on Law and Society*, (Berut: Librerie Du Liban, 1967), h. 64.

[16] Jean Grodin, *Sejarah Hermeneutik* (Yogyakarta, 2010), 62.

[17] Saint Thomas (Milwankee: Marquette University Press, 1962), 1.

[18] Thomas, 1.

[19] Kusmana, *Hermeneutika al-Qur'an: Sebuah Pendekatan Praktis Aplikasi Hermeneutik Modern dalam Penafsiran al-Qur'an* (Jakarta: UIN Syarif Hidayatullah Jakarta, 2004), 16.

[20] Farid Esack, *Qurain: Liberaition & Plurailism* (Oxford: One World, 1997), 61.

[21] Fahruddin Faiz, *Hermeneutika Alquran (Antara Teks, Konteks, dan Kontekstualisasi)* (Yogyakarta: Qalam, 2002), 55–133.

C. The rationale in favor of harmeneutics

The proponents of hermeneutics argue that traditional interpretations frequently become irrelevant when confronted with diverse contemporary challenges. Conventional interpretive studies tend to overlook the important topics of human rights, gender justice, secularism, and pluralism. The existing interpretive approach is excessively focused on textual elements. Consequently, the ensuing interpretation tends to exhibit patriarchal and sexist tendencies, while also disregarding human rights and displaying insensitivity towards social issues. Consequently, they recognize the necessity for a novel interpretative approach that can bypass the methodological principles of traditional interpretation, which solely concentrates on the text itself. Due to the absence of its existential framework, this type of interpretation necessitates the methodological advancement of modern theories that can uncover the humanistic aspects of the Qur'an, which have frequently been obscured by the inflexibility of texts with theological subtleties.

The prevalence of excessively text-centric methods results in methodological standstill and impasse in interpretation. According to Hasan Hanafi, interpretive labor has thus far been limited to the stages of commentary, detailization, repetition, and explanation, without adequately addressing real-life situations, difficulties, challenges, and human necessities.[22] According to Amin Abdullah, the conventional interpretation tradition has overlooked or intentionally disregarded an important aspect: the performative role of the audience (the intended recipients of the interpretation) in shaping the interpretation's outcomes.[23] The approach to interpreting the Koran frequently prioritizes the connection between the interpreter and the text itself, neglecting the audience's level of engagement with the text. The intended recipients of the interpretation's findings are not the original group that initially received the Koran, but rather subsequent generations that face evolving interests and obstacles in their lives.[24] According to Fazlur Rahman, hermeneutics plays a crucial role in studying the Qur'an, particularly in the aspect of interpretation. Its purpose is to grasp the comprehensive meaning and moral teachings of the Qur'an, resulting in a cohesive and interrelated

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[22] Hassan Hanafi, "*Kata Pengantar" dalam Ilham B. Saenong, Hermeneutika Pembebasan, Metodologi Tafsir Al-Qur'an menurut Hasan Hanafi* (Jakarta: Teraju, 2002), 2.

[23] Amin Abdullah, *Kata Pengantar" dalam Ilham B. Saenong, Hermeneutika Pembebasan, Metodologi Tafsir Al-Qur'an menurut Hasan Hanafi* (Jakarta: Teraju, 2002), xxv–xxvi.

[24] Novriantoni, "Liberalisme Islam Vis a Vis Literalisme Islam", dalam http://islamlib. com/id/artikel/liberalisme-islam-vis-a-vis-konservatisme-islam/ diakses 1 July 2023

entirety.[25] Hence, it may be inferred that the technique now established in the Islamic world is still imperfect.

The tradition of hermeneutics focuses on three interconnected aspects (text, context, and contextualization) in an unbroken circle. This means that when one engages in the excavation and "reproduction" of meaning, all three aspects must be included without interruption. When analyzing the meaning of a text, it is crucial to consider the context in which the text appears and how it is understood within its original context. This understanding allows for the reinterpretation of the intended meaning of the text in a different context.[26]

Komarudin Hidayat is another advocate of applying hermeneutics to interpret the Koran in Indonesia. According to him, the operationalization of hermeneutics in the Islamic tradition existed following the revelation of the Koran. Subsequently, this information was systematized in the field of tafsir, which has a rich historical foundation and is still evolving today, particularly in conducting rigorous analyses of hadith and the text of the Qur'an. Nevertheless, the hermeneutics that has been produced and comprehended within the Western philosophical tradition appears to go beyond the boundaries of the exegetical tradition that has been cultivated in Islamic studies.[27] Komarudin's statement does not imply that he regards hermeneutics as superior to the science of interpretation. Rather, he is examining the contrasting traditions and methodologies employed in these fields, which have evolved within distinct philosophical frameworks and have been shaped by divergent historical and intellectual contexts.

Kusmana also asserted that hermeneutics and interpretation share some parallels, specifically: Firstly, from the perspective of scientific analysis in practice, Both disciplines aim to comprehend the textual content through a linguistic lens, focusing on the semantics of words, grammar, literature, and the contextual usage of words within sentences or in comparison to similar words in other passages. In addition, they also seek to identify the reasons behind the revelation of the verse, known as asbāb al-nuzul in the field of tafsir, and explore its psychological meaning in the field of hermeneutics. Subsequently, in their quest for objective significance, both individuals depend on the written content as well as the surrounding circumstances. Furthermore, both the

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[25] Fazlur Rahman, *Islam dan Tantangan Modernitas tentang Transformasi Intelektual* (Bandung: Pustaka, 1996), 7–8.

[26] Marhaban, "Memahami Teks al-Qur'an drngan Pendekatan Hermeneutika," *Jurnal At-Tibyan* II, no. 1 (Juni 2017): 52.

[27] Komaruddin Hidayat, *Memaihaimi Baihaisai Aigaimai: Sebuaih Kaijiain Hermeneutikai* (Jakarta: Pairaimedina, 1996), 122.

traditions of interpretation and hermeneutics can be employed by different scientific disciplines. The earliest emergence of hermeneutics shared the same focus as interpretation, specifically in the context of deciphering heavenly messages.[28] Similarly, Komarudin asserts that hermeneutics and the science of interpretation, which dates back to the first century Hijriyah, share numerous similarities. Despite hermeneutics originating in a society distinct from the one that fostered the science of interpretation, it can nevertheless be employed as a scientific discipline with certain adjustments. Furthermore, the utilization of hermeneutics in Islam diverges from its application in the Christian realm. Hermeneutics is employed in the Christian realm to seek the authenticity of their sacred texts. They discovered numerous biblical manuscripts, thereby necessitating the task of discerning their authenticity and determining their level of accuracy. Within the domain of Islamic research, hermeneutics is employed not for the purpose of ascertaining the genuineness of the Koranic text but rather for discerning the interpretation that is most proximate to the truth.[29]

The endeavor to integrate Islamic studies with "secular" scientific fields is a longstanding practice in the Islamic world. Indeed, the process of synthesizing two or more scientific fields occurs periodically, including advancements in current scientific knowledge. During the 3rd and 9th centuries AD, the Mu'tazilites merged Islamic theology with Greek philosophy, resulting in its widespread influence on religious, social, and scientific research. For instance, Abu al-Hudzayl al-'Allaf amalgamated Greek atoism with Islamic theology. These two examples provide sufficient evidence that Islamic scholars have long engaged in the integration of Islamic studies with one or more scientific areas. The outcomes of a scientific synthesis inevitably differ in terms of structure, excellence, and volume. The variation observed is most likely attributed to various variables, including the distinct scientific frameworks and the level of comprehension exhibited by the individuals involved in the amalgamation process.

D. Counterarguments to Hermeneutics

The first argument put forward by opponents of hermeneutics is the adequacy of the science of interpretation. This group sees that the science of interpretation—and its supporting sciences—is believed to still be very adequate to produce products that are relevant to current developments. Quoting the opinion of Adnin Armas, Safrudin revealed that the existence of a long history of the science of tafsir and *'ulūmul al-Qur'an* and its richness in works in this field shows that the science of tafsir and its auxiliary

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[28] *Hermeneutika al-Qur'an: Sebuah Pendekatan Praktis Aplikasi Hermeneutik Modern dalam Penafsiran al-Qur'an*, 70.

[29] Hidayat, *Memaihaimi Baihaisai Aigaimai: Sebuaih Kaijiain Hermeneutikai*, 126.

sciences has become an established science. Therefore, it is not open to future generations to make fundamental changes. If there is a need for renewal and development, it can at least be done by using a scientific framework from within the Islamic tradition, not by adopting foreign methodological tools that are not necessarily in accordance with the nature of Islamic teachings.[30]

When interpret ting the Qur'an, a mufasir must adhere to at least two principles. Prior to employing ra'yi or ratio, an interpreter must initially undertake the process of interpretation by scrutinizing the elucidations found in other verses of the Qur'an, in accordance with the principles of the Koran *yufassir ba'duhu ba'dan*. If the Qur'an does not provide an explanation, the interpreter should refer to the explanations given by the Companions or the subsequent generations, specifically the *Tabi'un* and *Tabi'ut Tabi'in*. Furthermore, prior to obtaining the authorization to interpret the Qur'an, a mufassir must fulfill rigorous prerequisites or qualifications. According to Sheikh Muhammad Hussein adz-Dzãhabi, a mufassir must possess expertise in linguistics, Arab customs, the historical context of Jews and Christians during the period of the Qur'an's revelation, asbāb al-nuzūl, and a profound comprehension of scientific knowledge.[31] Similarly, Imam as-Suyûti enumerates the various areas of knowledge that one must acquire in order to interpret the Qur'an, including *Nahwu* (grammar), *Sharaf* (morphology), *Lughat* (lexicography), *Isytiqaq* (etymology), *Balaghah* (rhetoric), *Qira'at* (recitation), *Ushul Fiqh* (principles of jurisprudence), *Asban al-nuzul* (circumstances of revelation), and *Nasikh-Mansukh* (abrogation). Additionally, proficiency in *Ushuluddin* (foundations of religion), *Hadith* (prophetic traditions), *Mubhamah* (ambiguities), Technology, and Science is also necessary.[32]

Nevertheless, Nasarudin Baidan contends that hermeneutics fails to consider procedural interpretation, as previously stated. Moreover, this approach is extremely straightforward and applicable to all situations; however, it does not explain the specific methods an interpreter can use to get a correct and representative interpretation. Furthermore, hermeneutics solely focuses on the utilization of rationality, while the ulum tradition of the Qur'an highlights the presence of countless passages that surpass human comprehension, particularly those related to the realm of the unseen.[33] Similarly, Fahmi

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[30] Safrudin Edi Wibowo, *Hermeneutika dan Kontroversi Kaum Intelektual Indonesia* (Yogyakarta: Istana Publishing, 2019), 169.

[31] Muhammad Husain adz-Dzahabì, *al-Tafsir wa al-Mufassirin Vol. 1* (Kairo: t.p, 1987), 59.

[32] Jalaluddin As Suyuthi, *Samudera Ulumul Qur'an, Terj. Farikh Marzugi Ammar dan Imam Fauzi Ja'iz*, 1 (Surabaya: PT. Bina Ilmu, 2007), 248.

[33] Nashruddin Baidan, "Tinjauan Kritis terhadap Konsep Hermeneutika," *Essensia (Jurnal Ilmu-Ilmu Ushuluddin)* 2, no. 2 (2001): 165.

Salim contends that hermeneutics should not be regarded as synonymous with, or employed interchangeably with, tafsir and takwil. According to him, the development of the field of Al-Quran interpretation is marked by the adoption of systematic principles and the enforcement of strict proficiency standards for interpreters.[34]

Consequently, individuals who are against hermeneutics contend that hermeneutics should not be considered synonymous with interpretation. Hermeneutics relies on rational conjecture, leading to a multitude of diverse outcomes and making consensus challenging to attain. In the field of hermeneutics, the pursuit of truth is a continuous endeavor. Given the pervasive skepticism inherent in the philosophical underpinnings of hermeneutics, the quest for truth becomes unattainable due to the endless nature of the search. Conversely, in the field of interpretation, the application of rationality should be guided by the texts of the Qur'an and the hadith of the Prophet. This has resulted in a notable occurrence of consensus among numerous interpreters on diverse subjects within the realm of interpretation.

In addition to the justifications for the suitability of traditional exegetical approaches, there are factions that voice their apprehension regarding the growing use of hermeneutics in the interpretation of the Koran. They perceive this approach as distinct from the concepts and methodologies employed by interpretation experts in previous times. Adian Husaini asserts that employing hermeneutics in the analysis of the Qur'an poses three notable challenges: *Firstly*, hermeneutics necessitates a discerning viewpoint and often exhibits a sense of skepticism. A hermeneutic text is inherently intertwined with the interests of its creator and the cultural context in which it was produced. *Additionally*, hermeneutics primarily regards texts as cultural artifacts, disregarding any transcendent elements. *Lastly*, the hermeneutic school is characterized by its pluralistic nature, as it perceives the truth of interpretation to be subjective, thus posing challenges in its application.[35]

Adian Husaini's previous explanation demonstrates that employing hermeneutics in the interpretation of the Qur'an will undermine its sanctity as a divine revelation. This is because hermeneutics commences with a skeptical disposition and proceeds with a critical approach towards the text. Conversely, the Koran is widely regarded as being of divine origin rather than being authored by people. Hermeneutics will diminish the legitimacy of the Koran. Ugi Suharto concurred with Adian's viewpoint, stating that hermeneutics does not align with the theological and philosophical examination of the

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[34] Fahmi Salim, *Kritik Terhadap Studi Al-Quran Kaum Liberal* (Jakarta: Gema Insani, 2010), 80.

[35] Adian Husaini, *Hegemoni Kristen-Barat dalam Studi Islam di Perguruan Tinggi* (Yogyakarta: Gema Insani Press, 2006), 154.

Koran. At the theological level, hermeneutics raises doubts about the problematic character of the apparent verses of the Koran. At a philosophical level, hermeneutics will challenge the notion held by Muslims that the Koran is a divine message from God.[36]

Another reason is that hermeneutics originated in the Christian-Western tradition. Until now, supporters of hermeneutics have tended to adopt this method without undergoing an adaptation or borrowing process, giving the impression that this adoption process does not pose any problems. Although the discipline of hermeneutics was established in the Western Judeo-Christian context, it presents several challenges in interpreting the Bible.[37] As a product of the Western tradition, hermeneutics is replete with many assumptions and theological, philosophical, epistemological, and methodological implications that originate from Jewish and Christian religious and historical experiences. Thus, any adoption effort that does not include conceptual adaptation implies that the Qur'an also has numerous issues akin to those in hermeneutics.

The employment of hermeneutics as an interpretive approach will inevitably lead to subjectivity in the understanding of the Koran, as it is inseparable from specific biases and interests. Ugi Suharto argues that hermeneutics operates at an epistemological level that ultimately leads to a sophist comprehension, which contradicts the Islamic worldview. In addition, this approach possesses numerous streams. Which hermeneutical approach will be adopted? What is the rationale for selecting that particular school of thought? Can we be assured that the chosen hermeneutics school accurately reflects the genuine comprehension of the Koran? Applying this approach to comprehending the Koran will inevitably lead to difficulties, as its objectivity is dubious. While hermeneutics has evolved into a philosophical school, it is important to note that it is not neutral, as it is deeply intertwined with Protestant Christian theology and carries a specific worldview. Hermeneutics is deeply shaped by Greek mythology, challenging Biblical texts, and the contextualization of Biblical teachings during the European Enlightenment period.[38]

Another consequence of employing hermeneutics is the generation of subjective interpretive truth, which ultimately results in nihilism. All interpretations are regarded as outcomes of human rationality that are subjective, situational, temporary, and individual. There is no interpretation that possesses an immutable, unequivocal, and

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[36] Ugi Suharto, "Apakah Al-Qur'an Memerlukan Hermeneutika?," *Jurnal Tarjih* 6 (Juli 2003): 28.

[37] Adian Husaini, *Wajah Peradaban Barat Dari Hegemoni Kristen Ke Dominasi Sekular-Liberal* (Depok: Gema Insani Press, 2005), 90.

[38] Suharto, "Apakah Al-Qur'an Memerlukan Hermeneutika?," 28.

enduring truth that can be universally applied across all contexts and time periods. This has been verified by Adian Husaini. According to his perspective, the application of hermeneutics to the interpretation of the Koran leads to the absence of a universally accepted truth of interpretation. All interpretation products are the result of human rationality and, as such, are inherently "restricted," "incomplete-contextual," and susceptible to error.[39] Adian's viewpoint is reinforced by Syamsuddin Arif's perspective, as hermeneutics necessitates practitioners strictly adhering to epistemological relativism. There is no definitive interpretation that is universally accurate; everything is subjective and dependent on context. Different individuals may have contrasting perspectives on what is considered right or wrong. The veracity of information is constrained and contingent upon a certain environment, encompassing both temporal and spatial dimensions.[40]

Based on the aforementioned explanation, it can be inferred that the rejection of hermeneutics is grounded in the following rationales: Hermeneutics does not prioritise procedural interpretation. Unlike the 'ulum al-Qur'an, which focuses on the authenticity and methods of storytelling, Furthermore, hermeneutics in the Islamic tradition distinguishes itself from tafsir and takwil. Furthermore, the application of hermeneutics for interpreting the Koran has the potential to undermine the scientific framework inside Islam and the religious conviction of Muslims. Furthermore, hermeneutics has its origins in Western or non-Muslim circles, where it is employed to investigate the authenticity of the Bible, a matter that is regarded as problematic. This diverges from the revered status attributed to the Koran, which is regarded as sacrosanct. Furthermore, hermeneutics will yield interpretations that are subjective and relative, contingent upon the interpreter.

It is possible to deduce the following justifications for the rejection of hermeneutics from the preceding explanation: First, procedural interpretation is not emphasized in hermeneutics. On the contrary, the 'ulum al-Qur'an places greater emphasis on the processes of narration and authenticity. Hermeneutics, secondarily, is distinct from takwil and tafsir in the Islamic tradition. Thirdly, interpreting the Qur'an through the lens of hermeneutics may be detrimental to the scientific establishment in Islam and the Muslims' faith. Furthermore, problematic hermeneutics, which originates in non-Muslim circles or the West, is employed to determine the originality of the Bible. This is in contrast to the sacred status attributed to the Koran. Fifth, depending on the interpreter, hermeneutics may generate interpretations that are subjective or relative in nature.

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[39] Adian Husaini, *Hermenutika dan Tafsir al-Qur'an* (Jakarta: Gema Insani Press, t.t.), 19.

[40] Syamsuddin Arif, *Orientalis dan Diabolisme Pemikiran* (Jakarta: Gema Insani Press, 2008), 182–83.

E. **Dialogue between supporters and rejectors of hermeneutics**

In order to reconcile the conflicting viewpoints of proponents and critics of hermeneutics, it is imperative to establish a middle ground that may satisfy both sides. Dismissing the validity of hermeneutics solely based on its Western origin or non-Muslim nature is an unwise choice. There are potentially applicable ideas and methodologies in the realm of hermeneutics that can aid in comprehending the Koran. Nevertheless, adopting this notion without careful scrutiny and presuming that the techniques of analysis and takwil are antiquated and require substitution is likewise a hasty action.

The faction that opposes hermeneutics posits that hermeneutics diverges from interpretation, while the faction that embraces hermeneutics contends that hermeneutics has been employed in classical interpretations but without definitive resolution. In order to maintain the integrity of both perspectives, it is crucial to ensure that hermeneutics does not supplant the ulūm of the Qur'an but rather serves as a supplementary or accompanying element. Muslims consider the Koran to be sacred while recognising that the methods employed to interpret it, such as tafsir and takwil, do not possess the same level of sanctity. Hence, any approach is permissible as long as it upholds the sanctity of the Qur'an and aims to transform it into a universally comprehensible guidebook applicable across diverse contexts and eras. The content of the Koran is definitive, but its elucidation will endure for generations to come.

In mediating the debate between supporters and opponents of hermeneutics, there needs to be a compromise that can accommodate both perspectives. Rejecting the existence of hermeneutics just because it originates from the West or is non-Muslim is not a wise decision. Because there may be theories and approaches in the field of hermeneutics that can be applied in the process of comprehending the Koran, However, embracing this concept without critical evaluation and presuming that the methods of interpretation and takwil are outdated and need to be replaced is also an impulsive act.

The group that rejects hermeneutics believes that hermeneutics is distinct from interpretation, while the group that accepts hermeneutics believes that hermeneutics has been applied in classical interpretations, although not conclusively. By compromising these two perspectives, we must be able to ensure that the presence of hermeneutics is not replacing the ulūm of the Qur'an, but rather as a complement or companion. Muslims believe that the Koran is sacred, but the methodologies used to interpret it, including tafsir and takwil, are not sacred. Therefore, any method is permitted as long as it does not reduce the sacredness of the Qur'an and strives to make the Qur'an a book of guidance that can be understood by all groups and can be applied at all times and places. The text of the Koran is definitive, but its interpretation will last throughout the ages.

To convey its meaning and message, the Qur'an commands humans to reflect and pay attention. Of course, there are various methods that can be used to disclose this meaning. Muslims must be able to embrace numerous interpretations and understandings of the Koran as long as it remains in the context of deciphering its meaning, not as a means of questioning or criticizing its sacredness. According to Abdullah Darraz, the Koran is like a diamond, every corner emits a distinct light. It is not inconceivable if other people see things differently than what we see.[41] However, this does not mean that everyone is free to express their opinions without fulfilling the scientific requirements set by the owner of scientific authority. In this case, anyone can interpret the Koran, but they must still adhere to the conditions and guidelines that have been set by scholars who are specialists in their respective scientific disciplines.

M. Quraish Shihab explains the views of scholars who see hermeneutics as a new method of interpreting the Koran. He said, if hermeneutics is understood as an explanation of the meaning of God's word or sacred texts, then it would not be wrong to say that Islamic scholars have been familiar with this hermeneutics for a long time, long before this term was used and developed in the West. Some of the discussions about hermeneutics that have emerged today have also been known to previous scholars.[42]

The problems discussed by hermeneutics essentially have solutions in Islamic studies. Such as how to convey the message of a text that has been spoken or written in a different time, place, and culture to those who understand and apply the text. Interpretation experts, notably hermeneutics figures, warn that a text in the form of a collection of spoken and written words cannot be understood properly unless the speaker, the context of the conversation, and the sociocultural and psychological conditions are known. With the birth of the science of *asbãb al-nuzul*, tafsir scholars attempted to find a solution to this problem. This discipline endeavors to explain a verse by examining the causes and historical context in which the verse was revealed. In Kendari, scholars have diverse opinions regarding the application of understanding a verse. For example, is *al-'ibrah bi 'umûm al-lafzhi or bi khushûs as-sabab*? The academicians also introduced what they called illat, whose existence or absence influenced the interpretation of the text and its application in society.

Sahiron endeavors to reconcile the contentious debate pertaining to the application of hermeneutics in comprehending the Qur'an through the integration of tafsir and

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[41] Muhammad 'Abdullâh Darrâz, *an-Naba' al-'Azhîm Nazarât Jadîdah fi al-Qur'ân* (Kuwait: Dâr al-Qalam, 1997), 111.

[42] M. Quraish Shihab, "Tafsir, Takwil, dan Hermeneutika; Suatu Paradigma Baru dalam Pemahaman Al-Qur'an," *Jurnal Suhuf* 2, no. 1 (2009): 2.

hermeneutics. Initially, with regard to terminology, hermeneutics (defined as "the art of interpreting") and the science of interpretation are fundamentally synonymous. Second, apart from the historical context of their inception, the distinction between the two is the extent of the subject under consideration. As previously delineated, hermeneutics encompasses a broad range of research topics within the domains of sociology and linguistics, including language and texts. In contrast, tafsir is exclusively concerned with the interpretation of religious texts. The connection between hermeneutics and Islamic studies is the text as an object. Thirdly, it is accurate to say that the science of interpretation primarily focuses on the text of the Koran, whereas hermeneutics originally regarded the Bible as its primary subject. Because the two holy texts were revealed to humanity in distinct ways, this is the case.[43] People may then query and doubt the efficacy of hermeneutics as a means of comprehending the Qur'an, and conversely. A prevailing belief among Muslims is that the Koran is an inspired revelation from God, whereas Christians regard the Bible as a manifestation of divine revelation in the form of scripture. Nevertheless, both the Bible and the Koran are composed in a human language, rendering them amenable to exegesis and hermeneutics.

The aforementioned integration endeavor is deemed "legitimate" when construed as an initial assertion that the entire scope of hermeneutics can be applied to religious sacrosanct texts, including the Koran. It is imperative to frame hermeneutics as a theoretical framework for interpreting the Qur'an rather than a substitute for the science of interpretation as a revolutionary theory of Qur'an interpretation. However, it is juxtaposed with interpretive science and hermeneutics in its presentation.

It appears that hermeneutics possesses a unique intellectual allure. This is the case due to three factors. Initially, there are static texts (the Koran in particular) and the ever-changing nature of reality. In the absence of contextual balance, any interpretation of the Qur'an will inevitably become obsolete. The dynamics of social actuality, conversely, necessitate the interpretation of the Koran's teachings. Hermeneutics is therefore regarded as a potential technique for preserving the vitality of texts through the harmonization of reality's and interpretation's dynamics. Secondly, the text is an object of hermeneutics. By interpreting the text as tafsir and ta'wil, hermeneutics enables a comprehensive comprehension of its application to the interpretation of the Qur'an. Arabic is, thirdly, a human language. This indicates that the Arabic used in the Qur'an is a human language capable of being comprehended by other individuals. Three of the aforementioned elements contribute to the credibility of Islamic hermeneutical studies.

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[43] Sahiron Syamsuddin, *Hermeneutika dan Pengembangan Ulumul Qur'an* (Yogyakarta: Pesantren Nawasea Press, 2017), 72–73.

Regarding the subjectivity and relativity of interpretation, hermeneutics-accepting groups hold that text interpretation is subjective due to its contextual connection; thus, the text's meaning is relative. Conversely, opponents argue that the interpretation outcome is inherently objective and does not require contextualization due to the fact that Islam is not a component of historical progression. This matter has been the subject of scholarly discourse for an extended period of time. The inseparability of subjectivity and interpretation is indisputable, particularly when an interpreter's ideology and school have influenced a particular interpretation. In order to safeguard mufassir from inaccuracies and the sway of sects and ideologies, ulama have established stringent conditions and regulations. [44] The most suitable interpretation is exclusively known to the possessor of the Kalam, Allah, and is executed by Muhammad, who has been granted adequate authority to elucidate the Kalam to humanity.

Hermeneutics in the interpretation of the Qur'an is a challenging endeavor that requires an individual with extensive knowledge of Islamic disciplines and hermeneutics to undertake. By establishing a model for the application of hermeneutics, Quraish Shibab has made it possible to interpret the Quran. As per his assertion, the utilization of hermeneutics permits the examination of concealed meanings. Nevertheless, the implementation of hermeneutics must satisfy a multitude of stringent and lax criteria. Strictly speaking, hermeneutics is only permissible when the zahir meaning of the word is obstructed and the selected meaning was suitable for Arabic speakers during the period when the Qur'an was revealed. A loose view, on the other hand, permits the application of hermeneutics so long as the intended meaning can be traced back to the word's root.[45]

Conversely, Quraish Shihab expressed disapproval of the improper application of hermeneutics, which can have negative consequences. As to his statement, scholars do not readily accept alterations in interpretation unless they are firmly grounded in the teachings of the Koran and exclusively serve to satisfy the interpreter's logical thinking. In addition, Quraish Shihab stressed that certain individuals employed hermeneutics as a cover to carry out this interpretation. This demonstrates that there are still instances

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[44] Telah banyak karya-karya ulama yang memuat kaidah-kaidah penafsiran dan syarat-syarat khusus yang harus diperhatikan seorang mufassir ketika akan menafsirkan al-Qur'an. Seperti yang termuat dalam *al-Itqan fi 'ulûm al-Qur'an* karya as-Suyûthî dan lain-lain. Begitu juga dalam upaya menjaga penafsiran agar terhindar dari kesalahan, ulama juga telah menyusun kitab-kitab seputar kesalahan-kesalahan yang muncul dalam penafsiran dan solusinya. Misalnya kitab *al-Ittijah al-Munharifah fi at-Tafsîr,* karya azd-Dzahabî.

[45] M. Quraish Shihab, *Membumikain al-Qur'an: Memfungsikain Waihyu dailaim Kehidupain* (Bandung: Mizan, 1993), 565.

where interpreters employ unsuitable hermeneutics in their interpretations.[46] Undoubtedly, this needs greater scrutiny.

Quraish Shihab's proposition and critique illustrate that the endeavor to apply hermeneutics necessitates strict adherence to the governing principles. This practice is implemented to exercise prudence in interpreting the Qur'an, with the aim of reducing subjectivity and potential errors that may undermine the integrity of the Qur'an's principles. Undoubtedly, exercising prudence in the interpretation of the Qur'an has gained widespread acceptance.

In addition to the previous discussion on hermeneutics, the author acknowledges that the purpose of hermeneutics is to create a broad and favorable environment for the intellectual exploration and comprehension of all verses of the Koran that possess a humanitarian-socio-cultural aspect. In addition, hermeneutics requires that humans have the ability to read the verses of the Koran in numerous ways. The disparity in comprehension is the catalyst that motivates individuals to enhance their abilities, strive to be at the vanguard, and surpass expectations for the betterment of mankind. The advancement of interpretive techniques necessitates the implementation of systematic, deliberate, and sustainable experimentation. The assessment of comprehension at both the al-fahm and ifham levels needs to be conducted within the context of human civilization to ascertain their respective advantages and disadvantages.

Despite the numerous benefits that hermeneutics provides, the utilization of hermeneutics in Islamic studies is perceived negatively and poses a potential threat to certain individuals in Indonesia, according to Yusuf Rahman. The primary determinant is the high level of activity exhibited by those who oppose hermeneutics, as they disseminate their perspectives through various channels and media outlets. In addition to traditional print media such as books, journals, and the national newspaper Republika, they also utilize several online platforms, including insist.or.id, inpasonline.com, blogs, and others. Mosques and Islamic boarding schools provide platforms for these individuals to express their perspectives, as they are actively engaged as religious leaders and academics and maintain affiliations with organizations such as MIUMI. However, the avenues for disseminating perspectives that endorse hermeneutics are primarily restricted to academic platforms, including scholarly publications and conferences. Hence, it is imperative to conduct an extensive promotional campaign to effectively and

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[46] Shihab, 565.

openly communicate different perspectives through various alternative platforms, thereby enlightening Indonesian Muslims about these divergent viewpoints.[47]

Disagreements in methodology and the resulting conclusions should not lead to harmful conflict and division among proponents of textual analysis and contextual analysis, conservatives and progressives, and adherents of traditional beliefs and contemporary ideas. Rather than eradicating disparities, it is crucial to confront them with a level of sophistication in both cognition and conduct. Claims that assert exclusive truth are rejected in favor of a more dialogic understanding of truth that is relative. Yusuf Rahman asserts that every interpreter will diligently strive to comprehend and accurately communicate the true essence of Islam as intended by God. Hence, it is not permissible for any person to claim that their understanding of the Qur'an is the most precise. [48] Abou El Fadl suggests that one can strive, aspire, and aspire to become a servant of God, but it is unfeasible for anyone to claim that they have truly achieved this status.

It is important to encourage and duplicate agreements that arise from disparities in pre-existing knowledge, throughout the process of understanding, and after comprehension has been achieved. Building awareness of civilization necessitates a foundation of deliberate decision-making to foster the acquisition of knowledge and the practice of benevolence, which are advantageous to humanity in both the present and the hereafter. The consensus among all stakeholders aims to achieve agreement by proactively addressing potential arguments and discrepancies.

Ultimately, it is essential to engage with holy scriptures using rationality and moral awareness that not only considers the words and historical context but also acknowledges the influence of evolving socio-cultural factors. It is imperative to utilize the Qur'an and its wealth of interpretation to the fullest extent. The purpose of the text is not only to express the author's previous encounters but also to document novel ijtihad in fields where science might provide assistance. When individuals exhibit a reluctance to employ rational thinking, it serves as an indication that the state of civilization is deteriorating. When multiple perspectives exist, it can be challenging to compel someone to choose a single viewpoint. The Qur'an serves as a potent source of inspiration for contemporary readers. When one has knowledge of both written and experimental texts, it is logical to employ supplementary methodologies and auxiliary sciences.

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[47] Yusuf Rahman, "The Indonesian Muslim Responses to the Use of Hermeneutics in the Study of the Qur'an and Tafsir: A Critical Assessment", personal interview results on September 25, 2023. UIN Syarif Hidayatullah Jakarta.

[48] Yusuf Rahman, "The Indonesian Muslim Responses to the Use of Hermeneutics in the Study of the Qur'an and Tafsir: A Critical Assessment", personal interview results on September 25, 2023. UIN Syarif Hidayatullah Jakarta.

F. Conclusion

Hermeneutics is a method of comprehending texts based on the outcomes of human cognition. An approach to deciphering the intended significance of a text involves the application of multiple sequential procedures and methodologies. While it may be categorized as a Western product, it should not be dismissed, as Islam mandates the cultivation of human intellectual ingenuity. The application of creative thinking has demonstrated the ability of hermeneutic theory to generate novel insights that can significantly influence highly developed societies. When it comes to comprehending the text of the Koran, there is no need to be concerned about the application of hermeneutics, despite the fact that various interpretations may arise.

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