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## THE INTERCONNECTION OF TRADITIONAL AND MODERN APPROACHES IN WAHBAH AL-ZUḤAILĪ'S *AL-TAFSĪR AL-MUNĪR*

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### Abstract

This article aims to examine the methodological construction of Wahbah al-Zuḥaylī's *al-Tafsīr al-Munīr* in both technical and hermeneutical aspects, and to assess its position within contemporary Quranic interpretation discourse. To achieve this goal, the study employs a tafsir approach using Islah Gusmian's Quranic interpretation methodology theory and Abdul Mustaqim's contemporary Quranic interpretation typology theory as analytical tools. The research concludes that the methodological construction of *al-Tafsīr al-Munīr*, from both technical and hermeneutical perspectives, encompasses efforts to balance textual analysis and contextual exploration through consistent and scientific systematization, authoritative sources, the interconnection of *naql* (transmitted knowledge) and *'aql* (reason), interdisciplinary and intertextual thinking methods, diverse nuances, and a textual-reflective approach. Based on these findings, Wahbah al-Zuḥaylī can be seen as successfully interconnecting traditional text-oriented approaches with modern context-oriented approaches, thus positioning *al-Tafsīr al-Munīr* as a moderate interpretation within the typology of contemporary Quranic interpretation discourse.

**Keywords:** *Methodology of Exegesis, Text, Context, al-Tafsīr al-Munīr*

### Abstrak

Artikel ini bertujuan meneliti konstruksi metodologi *al-Tafsīr al-Munīr* karya Wahbah al-Zuḥaylī ke dalam aspek teknis dan aspek hermeneutis, untuk kemudian menilai posisinya di dalam wacana penafsiran al-Qur'an kontemporer. Guna mencapai tujuan, penelitian ini menggunakan pendekatan ilmu tafsir dengan teori metodologi penafsiran al-Qur'an Islah Gusmian dan teori tipologi penafsiran al-Qur'an kontemporer Abdul Mustaqim sebagai alat analisis. Penelitian ini menghasilkan bahwa konstruksi metodologi *al-Tafsīr al-Munīr*, baik jika dilihat dari aspek teknis maupun hermeneutis, memuat upaya untuk menyeimbangkan antara analisis teks dan penggalan konteks dengan dilakukannya sistematisasi yang konsisten dan ilmiah, sumber rujukan otoritatif, interkoneksi *naql* dan *'aql*, metode pemikiran interdisiplin dan interteks, nuansa beragam, serta pendekatan tekstual-reflektif. Melalui temuan ini, maka Wahbah al-Zuḥaylī dapat dinilai telah berhasil untuk melakukan interkoneksi antara pendekatan tradisional yang berorientasi teks dengan pendekatan modern yang berorientasi konteks, sehingga dari sini secara tipologis dalam wacana penafsiran al-Qur'an kontemporer *al-Tafsīr al-Munīr* termasuk tafsir yang moderat.

**Kata Kunci:** *Metodologi Tafsir, Teks, Konteks, al-Tafsīr al-Munīr*

## INTRODUCTION

Typologically, contemporary understanding of Quranic exegesis can be categorized into three forms. The first model is textual and ahistorical interpretation, which in the discourse of exegesis can be referred to as textualist interpretation.<sup>1</sup> Textualist understanding in exegesis primarily focuses on text analysis and disregards excavating the historical context of Quranic verses.<sup>2</sup> The implication of such understanding is that the message contained within the verses of the Quran cannot be fully revealed. However, it should be noted that this understanding does not always result in ideological interpretations, as interpretations with this understanding can be further divided into two orientations. The first orientation can be called textualist-traditionalist,<sup>3</sup> which is an interpretation that solely focuses on linguistic analysis through the tools of Arabic language sciences.<sup>4</sup> Interpretations with the first orientation were mostly done by early generation Mufasirs, aligning with the period when Arabic language sciences began to develop and integrate with Quranic exegesis.

As for the second orientation, it is referred to as textualist-affirmative,<sup>5</sup> which is an interpretation that primarily focuses on linguistic analysis, but in practice, Mufasirs also deviate and then direct their interpretation to reinforce the ideology they follow. Interpretations with this second orientation are mostly done by Mufasirs from the middle to modern-contemporary generations. In the interpretations of Mufasirs from the middle generations, deviations are usually related to theological verses. An example can be seen in the interpretation of al-Zamakhsharī (d. 1143), who reinforced the theology of Mu'tazilah in his *Tafsir al-Kashāf*.<sup>6</sup> This is different from modern-contemporary Mufasirs who mostly deviate to justify the ideology of the movements they follow. Take, for example, Sayyid Quṭb (d. 1966)<sup>7</sup> who is affiliated with al-Ikhwān al-Muslimīn and has a tafsir book titled *Fi Zilāl al-Qur'ān*, and in Indonesia, there is Rokhmat S. Labib who is affiliated with Hizbut Tahrir Indonesia (HTI)<sup>8</sup> and has a tafsir book of *juḡ 'amma* titled *al-Wa'ie*.

<sup>1</sup> Abdul Mustaqim, "Argumentasi Keniscayaan Tafsir Maqashidi Sebagai Basis Moderasi Islam" (UIN Sunan Kalijaga, 2019): 6.

<sup>2</sup> Using a different narrative but substantively similar, Mustaqim explained that textual-scriptural understanding is an understanding that tends to prioritize the text over the context, leading interpretations with this understanding to be trapped in textualism. Mustaqim: 14.

<sup>3</sup> The term "traditionalist" above is derived from Zuhdi's journal article, which further develops and divides the quasi-objectivist conservative typology of interpretation by Syamsuddin into two further categories, namely "traditionalist" objectivists and "revivalist" objectivists. See M. Nurdin Zuhdi, "Hermeneutika al-Qur'an (Tipologi Tafsir Sebagai Solusi dalam Memecahkan Isu-isu Budaya Lokal Keindonesiaan)," *Esensia: Jurnal Ilmu-Ilmu Ushuluddin* 13, no. 2 (22 Juli 2012): 245, <https://doi.org/10.14421/esensia.v13i2.740>.

<sup>4</sup> Muhammad Naufal Hakim dan Abd. Kholid, "Reposisi Dialektis Tafsir Lughawī (Pergeseran Integratif Pendekatan Linguistik dalam Wacana Tafsir Kontemporer)," *QOF: Jurnal Studi Al-Qur'an dan Tafsir* 6, no. 2 (30 Desember 2022): 241–242, <https://doi.org/10.30762/qof.v6i2.275>.

<sup>5</sup> The use of the term "affirmative" above is derived from the historical analysis written by Mustaqim in his book. The term "affirmative" refers to interpretations that seek to legitimize the ideologies followed with verses of the Qur'an. See Abdul Mustaqim, *Epistemologi Tafsir Kontemporer*, 1 ed. (Yogyakarta: LKiS, 2010): 45-46.

<sup>6</sup> Saifullah Rusmin dkk., "Penafsiran-penafsiran al-Zamakhsharī Tentang Teologi dalam Tafsir al-Kasasyāf," *Jurnal Diskursus Islam* 5, no. 2 (30 Agustus 2017): 140, <https://doi.org/10.24252/jdi.v5i2.7121>.

<sup>7</sup> An example of radical interpretation done by Quṭb can be seen through his interpretation of Surah al-Māidah [5]: 44. He declares as infidels every Muslim community that does not establish Islamic law, aligning with the ideology of the Muslim Brotherhood which advocates for the establishment of an Islamic Caliphate. See Mohamed Amine Hocini, Mustaffa Abdullah, dan Fouad Bounama, "The Qur'anic Aspects of Human Development With Special Reference to the Role of 'Aqīdah in Tafsir al-Zilāl of Sayyid Quṭb (A Thematic Study)," *Afkar: Jurnal Akidah & Pemikiran Islam* 22, no. 2 (31 Desember 2020): 347–420, <https://doi.org/10.22452/afkar.vol22no2.10>; Asyhari, "Ekstrimisme dalam Tafsir (Studi Penafsiran Sayyid Quṭb terhadap Q.S al Māidah: 44-47 dalam Tafsir fi Zilāl al-Qur'ān)," *el-Faqih: Jurnal Pemikiran dan Hukum Islam* 5, no. 1 (2019): 130–44, <https://doi.org/10.29062/faqih.v5i1.99>.

<sup>8</sup> As for an example of Labib's interpretation, it can be observed when interpreting Surah al-Baqarah [2]: 30, wherein he interprets the word "khilafah" as the political system of the Islamic Caliphate through the path of allegiance. Thus, this interpretation example aligns with the political aspirations of HTI followers. See Zuhdi, "Hermeneutika al-Qur'an": 248.

In the next stage, extremism in Quranic exegesis not only narrows down to the textualist-affirmative understanding that later forms the ideology of movements, but also narrows down to an understanding that then imposes Quranic verses to fit contemporary contexts. This model of understanding is called liberalist<sup>9</sup> and is widely embraced by Western scholars, as well as Muslim scholars who have explored education in the West. One example is Muḥammad Shaḥrūr (d. 2019). For him, the Quran should be interpreted using modern scientific approaches, which leads to conventional interpretation approaches such as the sciences of the Quran, interpretation principles, and other classical sciences being sidelined. The implications of such understanding can be seen through one of his ideas that has sparked controversy in Indonesia, namely the concept of *milk al-yamīn*, which legalizes non-marital relationships.<sup>10</sup> Based on this, the liberalist understanding in exegesis is also deemed unable to reveal the message of the Quran accurately, as this model of interpretation can, to some extent, desacralize Quranic verses.

Building on the above two typologies of understanding, a third critical understanding emerges. This third model of understanding applies the principle of moderation in the methodology of Quranic exegesis by balancing text analysis and contextual excavation.<sup>11</sup> Moderate understanding in exegesis was initially only associated with interpretation theories. As can be seen in Fazlur Rahman's (d. 1988) double movement method,<sup>12</sup> Abdullah Saeed's contextual interpretation method,<sup>13</sup> and in Indonesia, Abdul Mustaqim with the *tafsīr maqāshidi* method<sup>14</sup> and Sahiron Syamsuddin with the *ma'nā-cum-maghẓā* method.<sup>15</sup> Then, if the emphasis of moderate understanding in exegesis lies in balancing text analysis and contextual excavation, then the effort to moderate Quranic exegesis is not limited to interpretation theories alone. Moderate understanding can also be found in the principles of interpretation applied by Mufasirs in their exegesis books. This effort was at least first initiated by Muḥammad 'Abduh (d. 1905), who was disappointed with previous exegesis products that tended to focus on the scholarly subjectivity of Mufasirs.<sup>16</sup> In its development, the exegesis methodology conducted by 'Abduh and his disciple had a significant influence on modern-contemporary exegesis discourse. The effort to moderate interpretation was then widely practiced by Mufasirs of subsequent generations. One of the Mufasirs who also applied moderate understanding is Wahbah al-Zuhailī (d. 2015) in his book *al-Tafsīr al-Munīr fī al-'Aqīdah wa al-Sharī'ah wa al-Manhaj*.

al-Zuhailī's framework of thought is closely tied to the *maqāshid* paradigm, which makes the concept of benefits the main goal, so in many places, al-Zuhailī will prioritize the principle of moderation in his interpretation. al-Zuhailī's effort to moderate the methodology of Quranic exegesis can be seen through the initial principles found, which are deemed to use a traditional-cum-modern approach. Building on the latter, this research aims to further examine al-Zuhailī's efforts in constructing the methodology of *al-Tafsīr al-Munīr* and assess his position in the

<sup>9</sup> Mustaqim, "Argumentasi Keniscayaan Tafsīr Maqashidi": 51.

<sup>10</sup> Abdul Aziz, "Konsep Milk al-Yamīn Muḥammad Shaḥrūr Sebagai Keabsahan Hubungan Seksual Non Marital" (Disertasi, Yogyakarta, UIN Sunan Kalijaga, 2019): x-xi.

<sup>11</sup> Mustaqim, "Argumentasi Keniscayaan Tafsīr Maqashidi": 51-52.

<sup>12</sup> Muhammad Sakti Garwan, "Relasi Teori Double Movement dengan Kaidah al-Ibrah bi Umūmil-Lafdz la bi Khusus as-Sabab dalam Interpretasi QS. al-Ahzab[33]: 36-38," *Jurnal Ushuluddin* 28, no. 1 (29 Juni 2020): 63–63, <https://doi.org/10.24014/jush.v28i1.8103>.

<sup>13</sup> M. K. Ridwan, "Metodologi Penafsiran Kontekstual (Analisis Gagasan dan Prinsip Kunci Penafsiran Kontekstual Abdullah Saeed)," *Millati: Journal of Islamic Studies and Humanities* 1, no. 1 (15 Juni 2016): 1–22, <https://doi.org/10.18326/mlt.v1i1.1-22>; Barsihannor dkk., "Abdullah Saeed's Construction of the Hierarchy of Values in the Qur'an: A Philosophical Hermeneutic Perspective," *Journal of Islamic Thought and Civilization* 13, no. 1 (20 Juni 2023): 119–32, <https://doi.org/10.32350/jitc.131.09>.

<sup>14</sup> Mustaqim: 39-41.

<sup>15</sup> Sahiron Syamsuddin dkk., *Pendekatan Ma'nā-Cum-Maghẓā atas al-Qur'an dan Hadīs (Menjawab Problematika Sosial Keagamaan di Era Kontemporer)*, 1 ed. (Yogyakarta: Lembaga Ladang Kata & Asosiasi Ilmu Alquran & Tafsir se-Indonesia, 2020): 9-17.

<sup>16</sup> Muḥammad 'Abduh dan Muḥammad Rathīd Riḍā, *Tafsīr al-Qur'an al-Ḥakīm*, 2 ed. (Kairo: Dār al-Manār, 1947): 7; J.J.G. Jansen, *Diskursus Tafsīr al-Quran Modern*, 1 ed. (Yogyakarta: Tiara Wacana Yogya, 1997): 156..

discourse of Quranic interpretation. To achieve this goal, this research uses the theory of interpretation methodology from Islah Gusmian and the typology of contemporary interpretation from Abdul Mustaqim. Gusmian divides the methodology of Quranic interpretation into two aspects. The first aspect is technical, which includes the systematics and form of *tafsir* presentation, the style and form of *tafsir* writing, the nature and knowledge of the exegete, and the origins and sources of *tafsir* references. The second aspect is hermeneutical, which includes interpretive methods, interpretive nuances, and interpretive approaches.<sup>17</sup> Meanwhile, Mustaqim categorizes the typology of contemporary Quranic interpretation into three forms: textual-scriptural, moderate, and liberal-substantialist.<sup>18</sup> As far as literature review goes, there have been several previous studies that have examined *al-Tafsir al-Munir*,<sup>19</sup> but from the research conducted, no studies were found that examined the methodology of *al-Tafsir al-Munir* through technical and hermeneutical aspects and then assessed its position in the discourse of contemporary Quranic interpretation. Most previous studies have primarily examined from the perspective of sources and then associated them with the categories of *tafsir bi al-ra'yi* or *tafsir bi al-ma'thur*, such as the research by Ainol and Aiman, while Islamiyah's research also slightly extends to the pattern of interpretation, without delving further into what approaches are used in *al-Tafsir al-Munir*. The method used in this research is content analysis, which involves deeply exploring the content of the exegesis where the sampled verses are taken from representative themes.

## DISCUSSION

### Wahbah al-Zuhaili in the Struggle of Global Islamic Thought

Wahbah al-Zuhaili was born in Dir 'Atiyyah on March 6, 1932 AD, or 1351 H. His full name was Wahbah b. Muṣṭafā al-Zuhaili. The name "al-Zuhaili" is derived from the name of his ancestral hometown, namely in the city of Zaḥal, Lebanon. His father's name was Muṣṭafā al-Zuhaili (d. 1975), known as a Quranic memorizer who had a high enthusiasm for delving into the content of the Quran.<sup>20</sup> al-Zuhaili's mother was named Fāṭimah b. Muṣṭafā Sa'adah (d. 1984).<sup>21</sup> Like his father, his mother was also known for being religiously devout and knowledgeable. Formally, Wahbah al-Zuhaili's elementary education was completed in the area where he lived, namely Dir 'Atiyyah. Only at the I'dadiyyah to Thanāwiyyah levels, starting from 1946, he was instructed by his father to study in the city of Damascus. After completing his education in Syria, al-Zuhaili then continued his education in Egypt. He studied at the undergraduate level at two colleges simultaneously, majoring in three fields. al-Zuhaili's first

<sup>17</sup> Islah Gusmian, *Khazanah Tafsir Indonesia (Dari Hermeneutika Hingga Ideologi)*, 1 ed. (Yogyakarta: LKiS, 2013): 122.

<sup>18</sup> Mustaqim, "Argumentasi Keniscayaan Tafsir Maqashidi": 6.

<sup>19</sup> Ainol Ainol, "Metode Penafsiran Al-Zuhayli Dalam al-Tafsir al-Munir," *Mutawatir: Jurnal Keilmuan Tafsir Hadith* 1, no. 2 (9 Desember 2011): 142–54, <https://doi.org/10.15642/mutawatir.2011.1.2.142-154>; Ummul Aiman, "Metode Penafsiran Wahbah Al-Zuhayli (Kajian al-Tafsir al-Munir)," *MIQOT: Jurnal Ilmu-Ilmu Keislaman* 36, no. 1 (10 Februari 2016), <https://doi.org/10.30821/miqot.v36i1.106>; Mokhammad Sukron, "Tafsir Wahbah Al-Zuhaili Analisis Pendekatan, Metodologi, Dan Corak Tafsir al-Munir Terhadap Ayat Poligami," *TAJIDID: Jurnal Pemikiran Keislaman Dan Kemanusiaan* 2, no. 1 (5 April 2018): 261–74, <https://doi.org/10.52266/tadjud.v2i1.100>; Islamiyah Islamiyah, "Metode Dan Corak Kitab Tafsir Al-Tafsir al-Munir," *Al-Thiqab: Jurnal Ilmu Keislaman* 5, no. 2 (28 Oktober 2022): 25–41, <https://doi.org/10.56594/althiqah.v5i2.77>.

<sup>20</sup> Muhammad Mufid, *Belajar dari Tiga Ulama Syam Fenomenal dan Inspiratif*, 1 ed. (Jakarta: PT Elex Media Komputindo, 2015): 91; Sami E. Baroudi, "Hannah Arendt, The Human Condition and the Embrace of Human Diversity in the Discourses of Two Contemporary Islamists (Sheikh Muhammad Abu Zahra [1898–1974] And Sheikh Wahbah al-Zuhaili [1932–2015])," *British Journal of Middle Eastern Studies* 48, no. 4 (8 Agustus 2021): 666–86, <https://doi.org/10.1080/13530194.2019.1699775>.

<sup>21</sup> Badr al-Sayyid al-Laḥḥam, *Wahbah al-Zuhaili al-'Alim al-Faqih al-Mufasssir*, 1 ed. (Damaskus: Dār al-Qalam, 2011): 13-14.

college was al-Azhar University, where he majored in Sharia and Arabic language teaching.<sup>22</sup> His second college was ‘Ain Shams University, where he studied law. al-Zuḥailī completed his Sharia studies in 1956 with a very good predicate, while he successfully completed his Arabic language teaching and law studies in 1957.

Of the three fields that al-Zuḥailī studied at the undergraduate level, it turned out that Sharia was the most preferred field. This can be seen when he continued his education at the master’s level by concentrating on Islamic law at Cairo University. At this university, he completed his studies for two years and graduated in 1959 with a thesis titled *al-Dharāi‘ fī al-Siyāsah al-Shar‘īyyah wa al-Fiqh al-Islāmī*. After obtaining his master’s degree, al-Zuḥailī then continued his education to the doctoral level at al-Azhar University, also specializing in Islamic law. He completed his doctoral studies in 1963, with a dissertation titled *Āthār al-Ḥarb fī al-Fiqh al-Islāmī (Dirāsah Muqāranah)*. In the same year, after completing his doctoral education and obtaining his degree, he was immediately appointed as a lecturer at the Faculty of Sharia at Damascus University, bringing him back to his homeland. It took al-Zuḥailī about 12 years to become a full professor, precisely in 1975.<sup>23</sup>

When he became a full professor, his career as an academician reached its climax. He was often invited to conduct academic trips as a visiting lecturer at various universities in Islamic countries. Some Islamic universities that invited him included three universities from Sudan: the University of Khartoum, Omdurman Islamic University, and the International University of Africa. Additionally, there were Benghazi University in Libya and the United Arab Emirates University. Apart from several Islamic universities, as an academic born in the contemporary era, al-Zuḥailī was also actively involved in attending academic forums to discuss papers and exchange scholarly ideas in various countries, whether in Arab countries, Europe, or Asia.<sup>24</sup> Besides being active in academic circles, al-Zuḥailī was also known for his involvement in several social and financial institutions. Among his bureaucratic experiences, he served as the chairman of the Muassasah al-‘Arabīyyah al-Maṣrāfiyyah al-Islāmiyyah,<sup>25</sup> an expert consultant for Islamic Jurisprudence Institutions in Jeddah, Mecca, Sudan, India, and even America. He also founded Sharia and Islamic Studies Magazine in Kuwait and the United Arab Emirates,<sup>26</sup> was a member of the Fatwa Council in Syria, a member of the Sharia Supervisory Board in Bahrain, a supervisor of the Islamic Bank International Currency in Bahrain and London, and a member of the ‘Āl al-Bayt Foundation in Jordan.<sup>27</sup>

al-Zuḥailī was a highly productive individual who generated a substantial body of work. On any given day, he would dedicate at least 16 hours to writing. For al-Zuḥailī, writing was a means to transmit his progressive thoughts and would serve as a legacy for future generations.<sup>28</sup> Referring to Badr al-Sayyid al-Laḥḥam’s records in his book published in 2001, al-Zuḥailī had written approximately 199 books, excluding his works in journal format. al-Laḥḥam likened al-Zuḥailī to “Imām Suyūṭī” of the past who had authored more than 300 book titles. The figure of 199 books mentioned by al-Laḥḥam does not include al-Zuḥailī’s works in journal format. When combined with his journal publications, the number could exceed 500 titles.<sup>29</sup> Three of his famous works are *al-Taḥṣīr al-Munīr*, *Uṣūl al-Fiqh al-Islāmī*, and *al-Fiqh al-Islāmī wa Adīlatuh*.

<sup>22</sup> Mufid, *Belajar dari Tiga Ulama Syam*: 91-92.

<sup>23</sup> al-Laḥḥam, *Wabbah al-Zuḥailī al-‘Ālim*: 15-17.

<sup>24</sup> Mufid, *Belajar dari Tiga Ulama Syam*: 95.

<sup>25</sup> Muhammadun Muhammadun, “Epistemologi Fikih Wahbah az-Zuḥailī dan Relevansinya Bagi Pengembangan Hukum Keluarga di Indonesia” (Disertasi, Yogyakarta, UIN Sunan Kalijaga, 2019): 65-66, <https://digilib.uin-suka.ac.id/id/eprint/49103/>.

<sup>26</sup> Abd. Kholid, *Corak Interpretatif Teologis Wabbah al-Zuḥailī*, 1 ed. (Jombang: Fakultas Pertanian Universitas KH. A. Wahab Hasbullah, 2022): 26-27.

<sup>27</sup> Mufid, *Belajar dari Tiga Ulama Syam*: 95.

<sup>28</sup> Mufid: 95-98.

<sup>29</sup> al-Laḥḥam, *Wabbah al-Zuḥailī al-‘Ālim*: 41-43.

Generally, al-Zuḥailī's works can be grouped into five fields: Quranic studies and exegesis, Hadith, Islamic law, Islamic studies, and Islamic theology.<sup>30</sup>

## Eclecticism in the Presentation Technique of *al-Tafsīr al-Munīr*

### 1. Sequential, Systematic, and Consistent Presentation System

al-Zuḥailī structured the book *al-Tafsīr al-Munīr* sequentially into 30 chapters in accordance with the order of the Muṣḥaf 'Uthmānī. Such presentation is the most common form and has become the mainstream in presenting exegeses both in the classical, medieval, and modern-contemporary eras. The book consists of 16 volumes and has the added value of systematic and consistent presentation consistency. There are two fragments to be highlighted in this first technical sub-section, namely related to consistency in providing general descriptions at the beginning of each chapter in the Quran and related to consistency in dividing interpretations into separate sub-topics. When reviewing the beginning of each chapter in the book *al-Tafsīr al-Munīr*, it will be found that before interpreting, al-Zuḥailī first writes a general description, which usually includes the naming of the chapter (*tasmīyatubā*), the story of its revelation and its virtues (*nuḏulubā wa faḍlubā*), its relevance to the preceding chapter (*munāsabatubā limā qablubā*), and the content of the chapter (*mā ishtamalāt 'alaihi*). For example, when al-Zuḥailī writes a general description of Surah al-An'ām [6], he first explains that the naming of this chapter is taken from several verses within it, namely Surah al-An'ām [6]: 136 and Surah al-An'ām [6]: 138. He then mentions that this chapter belongs to the category of Makkan chapters revealed at once because it contains the fundamental creed. To affirm his statement, al-Zuḥailī then quotes a narration from Ibn 'Umar stating that when Surah al-An'ām [6] was revealed, there were about seventy thousand angels praising and glorifying.<sup>31</sup>

After explaining the reasons for the naming and revelation of the chapter, al-Zuḥailī then discusses the relevance between Surah al-An'ām [6] and the preceding chapter, Surah al-Mā'idah [5], where these two chapters share similarities in content containing refutations of the attitudes and beliefs of the People of the Book. Only after explaining the relevance of the chapter, al-Zuḥailī proceeds to outline the content of the chapter in the form of point-by-point, where in the context of this chapter there are eleven contents: (1.) proof of fundamental beliefs; (2.) proof of prophethood and revelation; (3.) proof of the Day of Resurrection; (4.) explanation of the fundamentals of religion; (5.) explanation of the similarity of teachings brought by the prophets; (6.) explanation of the consequences for mankind in the Hereafter; (7.) explanation of divine destiny; (8.) explanation of Allah justice; (9.) explanation of Allah power as the source of legal determination; (10.) explanation of lessons that can be drawn from previous nations; (11.) explanation of those who cause mischief and goodness during their worldly life.<sup>32</sup> The exposition done by al-Zuḥailī by mentioning the general description of a chapter before interpreting its verses is consistent with other modern-contemporary exegeses, such as *Tafsīr al-Marāghī* by Aḥmad Muṣṭāfā al-Marāghī, *Tafsīr al-Aḏḥar* by Abdul Malik Abdul Karim Amrullah, and *Tafsīr al-Misbbab* by Muhammad Quraish Shihab.<sup>33</sup>

When interpreting the verses of the Quran, al-Zuḥailī, like other modern-contemporary Mufasirs, also gathers several verses together, but he then gives a theme to each group of verses

<sup>30</sup> Muhammadun, "Epistemologi Fikih Wahbah az-Zuḥailī": 69-74; Muhammad Naufal Hakim, *Moderatisme Tafsīr al-Qur'an (Konsiliasi Pendekatan Tradisional dan Modern Wabbah al-Zuḥailī dalam al-Tafsīr al-Munīr)*, 1 ed. (Purwokerto: Pena Persada, 2023): 98-104.

<sup>31</sup> Wahbah al-Zuḥailī, *al-Tafsīr al-Munīr fī al-'Aqīdah wa al-Sharī'ah wa al-Manhaj*, 2 ed., vol. 4 (Dār al-Fikr: Bairūt, 2009): 130.

<sup>32</sup> al-Zuḥailī: 130-133.

<sup>33</sup> Aḥmad Muṣṭāfā al-Marāghī, *Tafsīr al-Marāghī*, 1 ed., vol. 7 (Kairo: Muṣṭāfā al-Bābī al-Ḥalabī, 1946): 69; Abdul Malik Abdul Karim Amrullah, *Tafsīr al-Aḏḥar*, 1 ed., vol. 3 (Singapura: Pustaka Nasional PTE LTD, 2003): 1936-1939; Muhammad Quraish Shihab, *Tafsīr al-Misbbab (Pesan, Kesan, dan Keserasian al-Qur'an)*, 5 ed., vol. 4 (Jakarta: Lentera Hati, 2005): 3-5.

that have been collected, and this is one of the things that distinguishes his exegesis from others.<sup>34</sup> In addition, the systematic pattern in his exegesis book is also something not done by other Mufasirs, where he divides the analysis into three main fragments: analysis using Arabic sciences, analytical interpretation, and conclusion of each interpreted verse. For example, when interpreting Surah al-An‘ām [6]: 1-3, al-Zuḥailī gives a theme to the group of verses titled *Adillatu Wujūd Allah wa Waḥdāniyatih wa al-Ba‘th* (Proofs of the Existence of Allah and His Oneness and Resurrection). After writing the theme of the group of verses, al-Zuḥailī then conducts linguistic analysis, in which three reviews are found in this verse: from the perspective of grammar, rhetoric, and lexical analysis. Only after conducting linguistic analysis will al-Zuḥailī explain the interpretation that covers each verse extensively with sub-topics titled *al-Tafsīr wa al-Bayān*. Furthermore, after explaining the analytical interpretation, al-Zuḥailī will write conclusions, usually in the form of bullet points related to the objectives of the verses, which are encompassed in a section titled *Fiqh al-Ḥayāh aw al-Aḥkām*.<sup>35</sup> Although in the case of the interpretation of Surah al-An‘ām [6]: 1-3 only three linguistic analyses are conducted, it should be noted that in other verses al-Zuḥailī will consistently present linguistic analyses from different perspectives if the case warrants it, such as differences in *qirā‘ah*. This also includes mentioning the reasons for revelation and relevance, where al-Zuḥailī will consistently present them in separate sub-topics. This pattern is not followed by all Mufasirs, as can be seen in the interpretations of Hamka and Shihab of Surah al-An‘ām [6]: 1-3, where after mentioning the second verse, these Indonesian Mufasirs will immediately explain their interpretation in one breath.<sup>36</sup> Another Mufasir who is similar to al-Zuḥailī in terms of systematic consistency is al-Marāghī.<sup>37</sup>

## 2. Detailed Presentation with Interconnection of *Naql* and *‘Aql*

The book *al-Tafsīr al-Munīr* can be evaluated for its detailed presentation with proportional interconnection between *naql* (textual evidence) and *‘aql* (reasoning). Islah Gusmian, in describing the operational definition related to exegesis literature with detailed presentation, mentions that this form of presentation refers to exegesis literature in which a Mufasir (interpreter) will provide a deep and comprehensive explanation of key terms in a verse to find the correct meaning according to the verse’s context (*asbabunnuzul*), which will then be drawn to a conclusion.<sup>38</sup> Based on the aforementioned operational definition, it can be found that al-Zuḥailī also applies a pattern of deep and comprehensive explanation, presenting the context of the revelation of the verse, and drawing conclusions from the terms interpreted in his interpretation. For example, when interpreting the word *wasat* in Surah al-Baqarah [2]: 143, al-Zuḥailī first explains it linguistically, where it is explained that the word *wasat* indicates a praiseworthy quality and serves as a mediator between two qualities, namely excessive extremism (*ifrāt*) and negligence (*tafrīt*). al-Zuḥailī explains excessive extremism as resembling the overly spiritualistic nature of Christians, while negligence is described as resembling the overly materialistic nature of Jews and polytheists. The Muslim community is described as the best community, being justly balanced and moderate, and will bear witness over previous communities.<sup>39</sup> The content of this verse speaks about the change in the direction of the Qiblah (the direction Muslims face during prayer), which aligns with the context of the verse’s revelation

<sup>34</sup> The effort to provide themes for each group of verses above was not undertaken by al-Marāghī, Hamka, or Shihab. See al-Marāghī, vol. 7: 70, *Tafsīr al-Marāghī*, Amrullah, *Tafsīr al-Azhar*, vol. 3: 1940-1941; Shihab, *Tafsīr al-Mishbah*, vol 4: 6.

<sup>35</sup> al-Zuḥailī, *al-Tafsīr al-Munīr*, vol. 4: 133-140.

<sup>36</sup> Amrullah, *Tafsīr al-Azhar*, vol. 3: 1940-1946; Shihab, *Tafsīr al-Mishbah*, vol. 4: 6-16.

<sup>37</sup> Muhammad Naufal Hakim, “Ta’wil Tafsir Periode Modern (Telaah Tafsir al-Marāghī Karya Ahmad Musthâfâ),” *Al-Fath* 15, no. 2 (31 Januari 2022): 96, <https://doi.org/10.32678/alfath.v15i2.5275>.

<sup>38</sup> Gusmian, *Khaṣanah Tafsīr Indonesia*.

<sup>39</sup> al-Zuḥailī, *al-Tafsīr al-Munīr*, vol. 1: 367-370.

as described by al-Zuhaili, where he quotes two narrations.<sup>40</sup> After thorough analysis, al-Zuhaili then concludes that the term “moderate” in the phrase *ummatan wasaṭan* (moderate nation) can encompass various contexts.

"As the Ka'bah is the center of the earth and lies on the axis of the earth's sphere, likewise Allah has made the Muslims the moderate nation (*ummatan wasaṭan*), below the rank of the prophets but above other nations. al-Wasaṭ means just. The origin of this term is that the most praiseworthy of various things is the middle part. So, the Muslim community is the best, the most just, the most moderate, both in terms of geographical position, climate, character, sharia, laws, worship, balance between physical and spiritual needs, and between the worldly and the hereafter benefits.<sup>41</sup>"

In addition to the complexity of the analysis to explore meanings, another noteworthy aspect is al-Zuhaili's effort to interconnect between textual evidence (*naql*) and rational evidence (*'aql*). In almost every group of verses in *al-Tafsir al-Munir*, narratives covering the discussion will be presented. For instance, when interpreting Qs. al-Baqarah [2]: 142-143, al-Zuhaili not only quotes the reasons for revelation (*asbab al-nuzul*) but also cites two narrations to strengthen the opinion that the Muslim community will bear witness to previous communities. The first narration recounts the story of Prophet Noah being asked by Allah on the Day of Judgment about who will testify for him and his people, to which Prophet Noah responds that the witness will be Prophet Muhammad and his community. The second narration consists of the words of Prophet Muhammad, *nahnu al-akhirun al-sabiqun*, meaning we are the last nation but will be at the forefront.<sup>42</sup>

The effort to interconnect textual and rational evidence is also widely used in the interpretation of narrative and legal verses. When examining the introduction of the book *al-Tafsir al-Munir*, it will be found that this pattern of interconnection indeed becomes one of al-Zuhaili's orientations. He states that the textual evidence used is in the form of narrations taken from the Prophet and the righteous predecessors (*salaf al-ṣalih*), while the rational evidence used consists of agreed-upon principles. When assessing al-Zuhaili's orientation in interpretation with the two classifications of *tafsir ra'yu*, then the book *al-Tafsir al-Munir* falls into the category of commendable *tafsir ra'yu*. This is because in his interpretation, al-Zuhaili prioritizes authentic narrations and the opinions of renowned scholars of hadith, exegesis, and jurisprudence. Also, in his interpretation, al-Zuhaili pays great attention to the language of the Quran, starting from its linguistic meanings to the context of the verses.<sup>43</sup> Therefore, this pattern is in line with the criteria for accepting *tafsir ra'yu*, which include four mandatory sources of interpretation: the interpretation of the Prophet while avoiding weak and fabricated narrations, the interpretation of the companions especially related to reasons for revelation and narratives with no room for reasoning, interpretations referring to the original meaning of the Arabic language, and interpretations adhering to the guidance of sentence structure and Sharia principles.<sup>44</sup>

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<sup>40</sup> The first narration regarding the reasons for revelation of Surah al-Baqarah [2]:142 tells that Prophet Muhammad and his followers used to pray facing Masjid al-Aqsa for sixteen or seventeen months, while the Prophet himself wished to pray facing Masjid al-Haram at that time. Then, Allah revealed the verse redirecting the qibla direction. As for the second narration concerning the reasons for revelation of Surah al-Baqarah [2]:143, it narrates Allah's response regarding the acceptance of prayers of deceased Muslims before the change of qibla. al-Zuhaili: 367.

<sup>41</sup> al-Zuhaili: 375.

<sup>42</sup> al-Zuhaili: 376.

<sup>43</sup> al-Zuhaili: 6.

<sup>44</sup> Muḥammad Abd al-'Āḍim al-Zarqāni, *al-Manābil al-Irfān fī Ulūm al-Qur'ān* (Kairo: Īsā al-Bābī al-Ḥalabī, t.th.): 49-50.



### 3. Popular Language Style with Academic Writing Form

The language style used by al-Zuḥailī can be evaluated as employing a popular language style commonly found in modern-contemporary tafsir books. This language style was first promoted by Muḥammad ‘Abduh and Muḥammad Rathīd Riḍā in their *Tafsir al-Manār*, where one of their criticisms addressed the tendency of previous tafsir books to prioritize scholarly subjectivity, often using overly academic language understood only by those well-versed in related fields of knowledge.<sup>45</sup> Therefore, they produced a tafsir book with the orientation of uncovering guidance within the Quran and reducing overly academic terminology. Characteristic of the popular language used by modern-contemporary Mufasir is usually accompanied by analyses aimed at revealing the linguistic miracles of the Quran and then presented with beautiful language styles, highlighting the intended purpose of the Quran revelation, ultimately linking the Quran purpose with prevailing social laws.<sup>46</sup> In this regard, it aligns with al-Zuḥailī’s statement in the introduction of his book *al-Tafsir al-Munir*.

"My main goal in compiling this tafsir book is to create a strong scientific bond between a Muslim and the Book of Allah ‘Azza wa Jalla. For the noble Quran is the constitution of human life in general and in particular, for all humanity and specifically for Muslims. Therefore, I not only explain the fiqh laws on various issues in the narrow sense known among fiqh scholars."<sup>47</sup>

In the statement above, it is explicitly clear that the language style chosen by al-Zuḥailī does not prioritize terms in Sharia knowledge, which can only be understood by jurists (*fuqāba*). Furthermore, in his further explanation, it is also stated that he will prioritize a broader and deeper language style to uncover the laws contained in the verses of the Quran, whether it includes creed, ethics, behavior, or the benefits derived from social and community aspects, as well as personal aspects, such as work, health, aspirations, and worldly and hereafter affairs. Based on these points, it can be concluded that the language style implemented by al-Zuḥailī in *al-Tafsir al-Munir* places language as a medium with a character of simplicity, and this is in line with the indicators of popular language style in tafsir according to Gusmian.<sup>48</sup> Although using a popular language style, this does not diminish the scholarly aspect of the book *al-Tafsir al-Munir*. When referring to the statement above, it will also be found that the explicit main purpose of this tafsir book is to serve as a means to establish a scholarly connection between a Muslim and their sacred book (*rabṭ al-muslim bi al-kitāb Allah ‘azza wa jalla rabṭan ‘ilmiyyan wa thiqan*).<sup>49</sup> The scholarly form of this tafsir book can be seen with the inclusion of footnotes commonly found in scholarly works. The pattern of citation given from the research conducted can be grouped into three forms: citation provided when quoting a book, citation to explain foreign terms, and citation to indicate the quality of a narration.

### 4. Reference Sources from Classical, Modern, and Non-Tafsir Commentaries

In the concluding part of his book *al-Tafsir al-Munir*, al-Zuḥailī lists several reference sources he used in his exegesis. He emphasizes that his references are not solely derived from contemporary exegeses but also from classical ones. In addition to referencing traditional exegesis books, he also cites other works across various fields. The citation patterns are adjusted according to the authority of each book; for instance, when discussing the history of warfare, al-

<sup>45</sup> ‘Abduh dan Riḍā, *Tafsir al-Qur’an al-Ḥakīm*, vol. 1: 7.

<sup>46</sup> Andi Rosa, *Tafsir Kontemporer (Metode dan Orientasi Modern dari Para Ahli dalam Menafsirkan ayat al-Qur’an)*, 2 ed. (Serang: Depdikbud BantenPress, 2015): 41.

<sup>47</sup> al-Zuḥailī, *al-Tafsir al-Munir*, vol. 1: 9.

<sup>48</sup> Gusmian, *Khaṣanah Tafsir Indonesia*: 180.

<sup>49</sup> al-Zuḥailī, *al-Tafsir al-Munir*, vol. 1: 9.

Zuhāilī refers to Ibn Ishāq and Ibn Hishām's *al-Sīrah al-Nabawīyyah*, or in *ma'thūr* exegesis, he cites recognized works such as al-Ṭābarī's *Jāmi' al-Bayān*.

No.	Author of the Book	Book Title	Referenced Fields
1.	Muḥammad b. Ishāq (d. 767).	<i>al-Sīrah al-Nabawīyyah</i> .	History and tales of warfare.
2.	‘Abd al-Malik b. Hishām (d. 833).	<i>al-Sīrah al-Nabawīyyah</i> .	History and tales of warfare.
3.	Jarīr b. Yazīd b. Kathīr al-Ṭābarī (d. 923).	<i>Jāmi' al-Bayān ‘an Ta’wīl ay al-Qur’an</i> .	Interpretation, particularly related to the reasons for revelation ( <i>asbab al-nuzūl</i> ).
4.	Aḥmad b. ‘Alī al-Rāzī al-Jaṣṣāṣ (d. 981).	<i>Aḥkām al-Qur’an</i> .	Interpretation of legal verses.
5.	Aḥmad al-Wāḥidī al-Naisaburī (d. 1076).	<i>Asbab al-Nuzūl</i> .	Narratives of the reasons for revelation.
6.	al-Husain b. Mas‘ūd al-Baghawī (d. 1122).	<i>Ma‘ālim al-Tanzīl</i>	Lessons or moral teachings.
7.	Maḥmūd b. ‘Umar al-Zamakhsharī.	<i>Tafsīr al-Kashaf ‘an Haqā’iq al-Tanzīl</i> .	Interpretation of language and correspondence of the contents of the verses.
8.	Abū Bakr b. al-‘Arabī (d. 1148).	<i>Aḥkām al-Qur’an</i> .	Interpretation of legal verses.
9.	Fakhr al-Dīn al-Rāzī (d. 1210).	<i>Tafsīr al-Kabīr wa Majātib al-Ghaib</i> .	Beliefs, morals, laws, and appropriateness.
10.	Abī Bakr al-Qurṭubī.	<i>al-Jāmi’ li Aḥkām al-Qur’an</i> .	Interpretation of legal verses.
11.	Muḥammad al-Shairāzī al-Baiḍāwī (d. 1286).	<i>Anwār al-Tanzīl wa Asrār al-Ta’wīl</i> .	Interpretation of language and correspondence of the contents of the verses.
12.	Nizām al-A‘raj (w. 1328).	<i>Gharāib al-Qur’an wa Raghāib al-Furqān</i> .	Interpretation of language and correspondence of the contents of the verses.
13.	Muḥammad b. Ibrāhīm al-Baghdādī (d. 1341).	<i>Lubāb al-Ta’wīl fī Ma‘āni al-Tanzīl</i> .	Lessons or moral teachings.
14.	Yūsuf Abū Ḥayyān al-Andalusī (d. 1344).	<i>al-Baḥr al-Muḥīṭ fī Tafsīr</i> .	Interpretation of language and correspondence of the contents of the verses.
15.	Abī al-Fidā’ Ismāīl b. ‘Umar b. Kathīr (d. 1373).	<i>Tafsīr al-Qur’an al-Azīm</i> .	Interpretation, especially of authentic hadiths and narrations.
16.	Abī al-Fidā’ Ismāīl b. ‘Umar b. Kathīr (d. 1373).	<i>al-Bidayah wa al-Nihayah</i> .	History and tales of warfare.
18.	Aḥmad b. Maḥmūd al-Nafasī (d. 1407).	<i>Madārik al-Tanzīl wa Haqāiq al-Ta’wīl</i> .	Interpretation of language and correspondence of the contents of the verses.
17.	Jalāl al-Dīn b. Aḥmad al-Mahallī (d. 1460) dan Jalāl al-dīn b. Abī Bakr al-Suyūṭī (d. 1505).	<i>Tafsīr al-Qur’an al-Azīm</i> .	Interpretation of language and correspondence of the contents of the verses.
18.	Jalāl al-dīn b. Abī Bakr al-Suyūṭī (d. 1505).	<i>Asbab al-Nuzūl</i> .	Narratives of the reasons for revelation.
19.	Abū al-Su‘ūd Muḥammad b. Muḥammad (d. 1574).	<i>Irsād al-‘Aql al-Salīm Ilā Mazāya al-Qur’an al-Karīm</i> .	Interpretation of language and correspondence of the contents of the verses.
20.	Muḥammad b. Abd Allah al-Shaukāī (d. 1834).	<i>Faiḥ al-Qadīr</i> .	Interpretation, particularly of authentic hadiths.
21.	Muḥammad ‘Abduh dan Muḥammad Rathīd Riḍā.	<i>Tafsīr al-Qur’an al-Ḥakīm</i> .	Beautiful expressions of interpretation.
22.	Muḥammad Jamāl al-Dīn al-Qāsīmī (d. 1914).	<i>Maḥasin al-Ta’wīl</i> .	Beautiful expressions of interpretation.
23.	Aḥmad Mustāfā al-Marāghī.	<i>Tafsīr al-Marāghī</i> .	Beautiful expressions of interpretation.

24.	Sayd Quṭb.	<i>Fi Zilāl al-Qur'an.</i>	Beautiful expressions of interpretation.
25.	Muḥammad Ali al-Ṣābūnī.	<i>Ṣafwat al-Tafsīr.</i>	Interpretation of language, especially regarding rhetoric.
26.	Abd al-Wahhab al-Najjar.	<i>Qaṣṣas Anbiyā'.</i>	Stories of the prophets.
27.	Abū al-Barakāt b. Anbarī.	<i>al-Bayān fī I'rāb al-Qur'an.</i>	Interpretation of language, especially regarding grammar.
28.	Muḥammad b. Aḥmad b. Juzai al-Kalbī.	<i>al-Tashbīl li 'Ulum al-Tanzīl.</i>	Interpretation, particularly of authentic hadiths. <sup>50</sup>

## Traditional-Cum-Modern Approach in *al-Tafsīr al-Munīr*

### 1. Interdisciplinary Thinking Method

#### a. Language Analysis

The historiography of Quranic exegesis mentions that interpretation using language analysis has been the earliest model, and this approach has been practiced since the time of Prophet Muhammad. The climax of using language analysis in Quranic exegesis occurred when the sciences of Arabic language became more mature, marked by the interconnectedness among branches of Arabic language sciences in interpretation, such as between grammar (*nahw*) and morphology (*ṣarf*) with eloquence (*ilm al-balāghah*) represented by rhetoric (*bayān*), linguistic beautification (*badī'*), and significations (*ma'ānī*).<sup>51</sup> Although it is a classical method, this analytical approach will often be encountered in subsequent interpretations, whether in the medieval or modern-contemporary periods. Referring to the book *al-Tafsīr al-Munīr*, it is found that al-Zuḥailī is a commentator who pays special attention to language analysis in Quranic exegesis. His viewpoint differs from 'Abduh, who reduces language analysis in Quranic exegesis because,<sup>52</sup> according to 'Abduh, one of the weaknesses of earlier exegeses is the excessive use of language analysis. al-Zuḥailī pays special attention to the language of the Quran, which he considers to contain its own miraculous nature. In fact, in the initial discussion in his exegesis book, he writes about seven important knowledges of the Quran, one of which discusses the urgency of understanding anthropomorphism, metaphor, allegory, and euphemism.<sup>53</sup> al-Zuḥailī's view is similar to Amīn al-Khūlī, who also pays special attention to unveiling the linguistic miraculous nature of the Quran.<sup>54</sup> Consistently, al-Zuḥailī's perspective is manifested in the form of interpretations that extensively discuss the linguistic aspects of the Quran.

For example, we can see when al-Zuḥailī interprets Qs. al-Māidah [5]: 89. This verse talks about the expiation for oaths, and al-Zuḥailī, in his linguistic analysis of this verse, applies two patterns. First is the language analysis used to reveal the linguistic miracle of the Quran, and second is the language analysis used to extract the legal messages contained within it. Because there are variations in *qirā'ah* in this verse, al-Zuḥailī first explains the differences in *qirā'ah* involved. In this verse, the phrase *yuākhibdukum* is read by Warsh and Ḥamzah with a *waqaf*, thus becoming *yuwākhibdukum*.<sup>55</sup> Additionally, the word *'aqqadtumu* is read *'aqtum* by Ḥamzah and al-Kisāī, while Ibn Dhakwān reads it as *'āqadtum*. After explaining the differences in *qirā'ah*, al-Zuḥailī then explains from the perspective of *i'rāb*, stating that *mā* in the phrase *bimā 'aqqadtumu al-aymān* can be either *mā maṣdariyyah* or *mā isim mauṣūl*, and the arrangement of *min awṣaṭi* is a form of *ijāz ḥadbf*, where the implication of this phrase is the provision of food in a moderate.<sup>56</sup>

<sup>50</sup> al-Zuḥailī, *al-Tafsīr al-Munīr*, vol. 15: 891-893.

<sup>51</sup> Hakim dan Kholid, "Reposisi Dialektis Tafsīr Lughawī": 240-243.

<sup>52</sup> M. Nur Kholis Setiawan, *al-Qur'an Kitab Sastra Terbesar*, 1 ed. (Yogyakarta: Elsaq Press, 2006): 26-27.

<sup>53</sup> al-Zuḥailī, *al-Tafsīr al-Munīr*, vol. 1: 42-45.

<sup>54</sup> Setiawan, *al-Qur'an Kitab Sastra Terbesar*: 8-12.

<sup>55</sup> al-Zuḥailī, *al-Tafsīr al-Munīr*, vol. 7: 19.

<sup>56</sup> al-Zuḥailī: 20.

Following the *i'rāb* aspect, al-Zuḥailī continues to explain from the perspective of *balāghab*. In this verse, the phrase *aw taḥrīru raqabah* is a form of *majāz mursal* in the sense of *itlāqu al-juḥ'ī wa irādatu al-qul* (mentioning a part while intending the whole), which then affects the understanding of the law when explaining the linguistic nuances, where al-Zuḥailī mentions that the majority of scholars except the Ḥanafīyyah understand that the expiation for oath should be a Mukmin (believer) like the expiation for murder and *zihār*, because there is a change in meaning from *muṭlaq* (general slave) to *muqayyad* (specific Mukmin slave). Besides the phrase *aw taḥrīru raqabah*, when explaining the linguistic nuances, al-Zuḥailī also mentions that the word *fakaffāratubu* comes from the word *kufr*, which means covered, and then in Islamic terminology, it is specialized to refer to something that can expiate the sin of breaking an oath.<sup>57</sup> From here, what al-Zuḥailī does through the method of linguistic analysis of Qs. al-Māidah [5]: 89 can be considered to form a pattern of analysis that touches on two aspects of the *ijāz al-Qur'ān*, namely *al-ijāz al-lughawī* and *al-ijāz al-tashrī'ī*.

### **b. Analysis of Life Jurisprudence**

The method of jurisprudential analysis is also often found in the book *al-Tafsīr al-Munīr*. The use of this method in interpretation can be divided into two forms. The first analysis is life jurisprudence (*fiqh al-ḥayāb*), which consists of conclusions, recommendations, or prohibitions (*maqāṣid*) derived from each interpreted verse. The second analysis consists of explanations regarding the laws (*al-aḥkām*) mentioned in the verses. The first form is typically found at the end of the interpretation of each group of verses, while the second form is only found in the interpretation of legal verses and is usually explained comparatively. An example of the first form of jurisprudential analysis method can be seen when al-Zuḥailī interprets Qs. al-Aḥzāb [33]: 69-71. These three verses discuss the prohibition of harming the Prophet Muhammad, exemplifying the ugliness of such actions, such as the followers of Prophet Moses accusing him of having flaws. At the end of the interpretation of these three verses, al-Zuḥailī writes five points of life jurisprudence, the first two of which refer to the content of the verses, namely Prophet Muhammad and Prophet Moses, while the last three refer to a general context that can be taken as lessons in life. Some of the points written are: (1.) the warning of the Quran is not only directed to a specific community but also to the Islamic community; (2.) Prophet Moses holds a high position in the eyes of Allah; (3.) Allah obliges to do good and piety by speaking honestly; (4.) Allah will reward every truthful word; (5.) the message that whoever obeys Allah and His Messenger by following every command and prohibition will be among the saved.<sup>58</sup> Mentioning life jurisprudence like this represents one of the characteristics of modern interpretation methods, thus from this perspective, it can be assessed that al-Zuḥailī intends to combine between classical (traditional) and modern interpretation methods.

As for the example of the second form of jurisprudential analysis method, it can be observed when interpreting Qs. al-Ṭalāq [65]: 1. This verse discusses the laws of divorce (*talak*) and waiting period (*iddah*). When explaining this verse, al-Zuḥailī makes several comparisons between the four schools of Islamic jurisprudence (*mazhab*). This pattern of comparison is evident when al-Zuḥailī explains the permissibility of a wife leaving or staying during the *iddah* period and the actions a husband can take regarding his wife. Regarding the permissibility of the wife leaving during the *iddah* period, al-Zuḥailī mentions two opinions. In the verse mentioned above, the phrase *lā tukhrijuhunna* is interpreted by the Ḥanafī school as forbidding a wife from leaving the house during the *iddah* period, while according to the Shāfi'ī school, the decision of whether a wife can leave the house during the *iddah* period is left to the agreement between the husband and wife. Regarding the conditions for reconciliation (*rujū'*), al-Zuḥailī compares

<sup>57</sup> al-Zuḥailī: 20-21.

<sup>58</sup> al-Zuḥailī, *al-Tafsīr al-Munīr*, vol. 11: 448-449.

between the four schools of jurisprudence. According to the Ḥanafī school, reconciliation can be accepted only through the word *rāja'tuki* or through actions such as kissing, touching, or fondling. According to the Shāfi'ī school, reconciliation can be accepted through words. According to the Māliki school, reconciliation can be accepted through words, actions, and intention. Meanwhile, according to the Ḥanbali school, reconciliation can be accepted explicitly through words and actions, including sexual intercourse with the intention of reconciliation or without it.<sup>59</sup>

### c. *Historical Analysis*

Based on several references mentioned in the previous subsection, it is found that al-Zuḥailī relies on two authoritative Sirah literature to explain the history and stories of warfare in the Quran, namely the book *al-Sirah al-Nabawīyyah* by Ibn Ishāq and Ibn Hishām. From here, it can be understood that al-Zuḥailī conducts historical analysis when encountering narrative verses. However, based on research findings, it is revealed that historical analysis is not only used when interpreting narrative verses but also employed to strengthen views on specific interpretive cases. An example of historical analysis in narrative verses can be found when al-Zuḥailī interprets Qs. al-A'rāf [7]: 85-87. After explaining the linguistic aspects covering these three verses, al-Zuḥailī writes a specific subsection discussing the history surrounding the verses entitled *Aḍwā' min al-Tārīkh* (Insights from History). al-Zuḥailī mentions that this group of verses constitutes the fifth story among the stories of the prophets, specifically the story of the prophet Shu'aib and the people of Midian.<sup>60</sup>

### d. *Socio-Cultural Analysis*

The term "context" in the discourse of interpreting the Quran can be understood through three forms: first, the micro-context encompassing the revelation of the verse, namely the *asbab al-nuzul* (reasons for revelation); second, the macro-context covering the socio-historical conditions of when and where the Quran was revealed, namely in the seventh century in Mecca and Medina; third, the contemporary context, which refers to the social conditions when the Quran is being interpreted.<sup>61</sup> When these three forms of "context" are associated with Gusmian's operational definition, the method of socio-cultural analysis tends to lean towards the significance of the macro-context. In the book *al-Tafsīr al-Munīr*, it is indicated that al-Zuḥailī also utilizes this method, although the expression of the macro-context found is not consistently done as in the micro-context.

An example can be seen when interpreting Qs. al-Shura [42]: 38, which also relates to consultation. When interpreting this verse, al-Zuḥailī engages more in socio-cultural analysis than historical analysis. When interpreting Qs. al-Shura [42]: 38, al-Zuḥailī writes about the socio-cultural context of the 7th century CE, where Prophet Muhammad often engaged in consultation (*shura*) in matters of *muamalah* (interactions) to resolve various issues. This tradition was then continued through the consultation activities during the time of the Companions (Sahabah). al-Zuḥailī explains that the consultation activities of the Prophet and the Companions often discussed public matters, such as deciding on governance, state regulations, state policies, declaring wars, and appointing state officials such as governors and judges. The consultation activities initiated by Prophet Muhammad were then continued by the generation of the Companions. The Companions also engaged in consultations to find solutions to crucial issues, such as when appointing a caliph, determining policies to combat apostates, and exploring Sharia law concerning various ongoing issues.<sup>62</sup> From this example, it can be concluded that besides

<sup>59</sup> al-Zuḥailī, *al-Tafsīr al-Munīr*, vol. 14: 653-661.

<sup>60</sup> al-Zuḥailī, *al-Tafsīr al-Munīr*, vol. 4: 659.

<sup>61</sup> Gusmian, *Khaṣanah Tafsīr Indonesia*, 219-220.

<sup>62</sup> al-Zuḥailī, *al-Tafsīr al-Munīr*, vol. 13: 86-87.

mentioning the micro-context, al-Zuḥailī also endeavors to mention the macro-context in some interpretive cases.

### e. *Scientific Analysis*

Although in the introduction of the book *al-Tafsīr al-Munīr*, al-Zuḥailī criticizes tafsir books that impose scientific theories to fit with the Quran,<sup>63</sup> this does not mean he entirely rejects it, as in his book, there are also verses interpreted using scientific analysis methods. Certainly, what al-Zuḥailī does is similar to other modern-contemporary Mufasirs, such as al-Marāghī<sup>64</sup> and Shihab.<sup>65</sup> Furthermore, the use of scientific analysis in interpretation has indeed become one of the main characteristics of tafsir books in the modern-contemporary period. For example, the application of scientific analysis methods in the book *al-Tafsīr al-Munīr* can be seen when interpreting Qs. al-Anbiyā' [21]: 30. This verse speaks of Allah condemnation of the polytheists who refuse to ponder over the magnificence of His creation of the universe.

In this verse, Allah explicitly states that the heavens and the earth were once one entity then separated by a layer of air between them. When interpreting this verse, al-Zuḥailī then reinforces it with a scientific theory, namely the nebula theory (*al-sadīm*). As presented by astronomers, the nebula theory states that the sun, planets, including the earth, were once a unified whole. The sun was a fiery sphere with rapid movement occurring in its center, causing the separation between the earth and other planets. The formed planets numbered nine, and when arranged according to their proximity to the sun, among the planets are Mercury, Venus, Earth, Mars, Jupiter, Saturn, Uranus, Neptune, and Pluto. Each planet has its orbit, gravity, and moves according to its respective orbit. After explaining the nebula theory, al-Zuḥailī then concludes that this verse is concrete evidence that the Quran is the word of Allah revealed to the unlettered Prophet Muhammad, so if it were not for revelation, it would have been impossible for him to know cosmic matters like this.<sup>66</sup>

## 2. Intertextual Method with the Orientation of Using Another Text as Reinforcement

In addition to using methods of thought in interpreting the Quran, the book *al-Tafsīr al-Munīr* also indicates that al-Zuḥailī employs intertextual methods. The theoretical assumption behind the emergence of the intertextual method is based on the fact that the birth of a tafsir book cannot be separated from the existence of other texts that were born earlier. Gusmian then divides intertextual methods in the interpretation of the Quran into two forms, namely intertextual methods that place another text as a reinforcement object, and intertextual methods that place another text as a critical object.<sup>67</sup> Based on the study results, it was found that al-Zuḥailī often uses the first model of intertextual methods. This can be seen, for example, when interpreting Qs. al-Fātiḥah [1]: 1-7, where at the end of the interpretation, he reinforces his opinion on the concept of guidance with the opinions of ‘Abduh and Riḍā in the *Tafsīr al-Manār*. Initially, al-Zuḥailī explains Qs. al-Fātiḥah [1]: 1-5 with praises for the greatness of Allah. After writing praises for the greatness of Allah, al-Zuḥailī then begins to relate the greatness of Allah to two typologies of humans, where sometimes desires will dominate the soul, leading the human intellect astray, and in this position, only Allah can prevent humans from falling into error. Allah then teaches humans to continuously seek guidance and divine assistance from Him, so that humans always remain on the straight path, thus being on the path of justice and truth. To reinforce the view of Allah guidance concept, al-Zuḥailī then quotes the *Tafsīr al-Manār* and

<sup>63</sup> al-Zuḥailī: 11.

<sup>64</sup> Hakim, “Ta’wīl Tafsir Periode Modern”: 99-101.

<sup>65</sup> Abdul Hafidz, “Model Penafsiran M. Quraish Shihab Terhadap Ayat-ayat Kawḥiyah dalam Tafsīr al-Miṣbāḥ” (Disertasi, Surabaya, UIN Sunan Ampel, 2021): xii, <http://digilib.uinsa.ac.id/49913/>.

<sup>66</sup> al-Zuḥailī, *al-Tafsīr al-Munīr*, vol. 9, 57-58.

<sup>67</sup> Gusmian, *Khaṣanah Tafsīr Indonesia*.

writes that guidance can be divided into five forms, namely *hidāyah al-ilhām al-fīṭriyyi*, *hidāyah al-ḥawās*, *hidāyah al-‘aql*, *hidāyah al-dīn*, and *hidāyah al-ma‘ūmah wa al-tauḥīq*.<sup>68</sup>

### 3. Diverse Interpretive Nuances with a Combination Style

#### a. *The Literary-Societal (al-Adabī al-Ijtīmā‘ī) Nuance*

The term *al-adabī al-ijtimā‘ī* was popularized by al-Dhahabī (d. 1977) referring to tafsir books with literary and societal nuances.<sup>69</sup> This nuance emerged from the discourse corpus developed by ‘Abduh regarding “ideal” interpretation. This discourse corpus was then elaborated by Riḍā in the preface of the tafsir book *al-Manār*, where there are at least five points that must be mastered before interpreting the Quran, including understanding and placing the language of the Quran as the Arabic language of the 7th century CE, mastering the sciences of Arabic literary style (*uṣlūb*), understanding the historical, sociological, and anthropological backgrounds in which the Quran was revealed, knowing the guidance contained in the Quran by observing the conditions of Arab society at the time of revelation, and having a good understanding of the life of Prophet Muhammad and the Companions.<sup>70</sup> Then, Roem Rowi studied and formulated that there are six characteristics and two objectives encompassing tafsir books with the *al-adabī al-ijtimā‘ī* nuance. Some of the characteristics formulated include the awareness that the Quran is a unified whole, integrating sources of *naql* (textual evidence) and *‘aql* (reason), understanding the correlation between verses, being selective about previous narratives and thoughts, allowing breadth in reasoning, and appreciating ongoing developments and phenomena. The two stated objectives are to emphasize the function of the Quran as guidance and to remind humans of the presence of the Quran.<sup>71</sup>

Based on ‘Abduh view of “ideal” interpretation and the formulation of characteristics and objectives of tafsir with *al-adabī al-ijtimā‘ī* nuance by Rowi, the indication that the book *al-Tafsīr al-Munīr* contains the *al-adabī al-ijtimā‘ī* nuance becomes stronger. As mentioned, one of the added values of the book *al-Tafsīr al-Munīr* is the consistency in addressing themes for each group of verses,<sup>72</sup> which certainly proves that al-Zuḥailī is a commentator who realizes the unity within the Quran. In addition, the consistency in mentioning textual and rational evidence in interpretation,<sup>73</sup> as well as the mention of correlations between chapters<sup>74</sup> and verses,<sup>75</sup> also become main characteristics of the book *al-Tafsīr al-Munīr*. Although al-Zuḥailī uses both textual and rational evidence, it is worth noting that the proportion of using rational evidence is still greater than textual evidence, so it can be assessed that al-Zuḥailī is a commentator who prioritizes reasoning without denying tradition.

Next, the point of being selective about past narratives and thoughts, which is a characteristic of tafsir books with the *al-adabī al-ijtimā‘ī* nuance, will also be found in the book *al-Tafsīr al-Munīr*. al-Zuḥailī is a commentator who is very cautious and selective, especially when discussing the use of *Israilīyyat* narratives. He criticizes previous tafsir books that he believes have been infiltrated by *Israilīyyat* narratives that are unreliable. For him, the use of *Israilīyyat* narratives in *tafsīr* would only cause confusion and would not be in line with agreed-upon scientific theories. Also, in this context, his assessment of previous tafsir books that overly prioritize scholarly subjectivity, especially scientific theories to fit with the Quran, and the dogmatism of the schools of thought adopted by many earlier generation commentators, is significant.

<sup>68</sup> al-Zuḥailī, *al-Tafsīr al-Munīr*.

<sup>69</sup> Muḥammad Ḥusain al-Dhahabī, *al-Tafsīr wa al-Mufasssīrūn* (Kairo: Maktabah Wahbah, 1976).

<sup>70</sup> ‘Abduh dan Riḍā, *Tafsīr al-Qur’an al-Ḥakīm*.

<sup>71</sup> M. Roem Rowi, *Ragam Penafsiran al-Qur’an*, 1 ed. (Surabaya: Lembaga Pendidikan al-Qur’an, 2001).

<sup>72</sup> Just as when interpreting Surah al-An'am [6]: 1-3, al-Zuḥailī addresses the theme of “The Evidence of the Existence of Allah, His Oneness, and Resurrection”. See al-Zuḥailī, *al-Tafsīr al-Munīr*, vol. 4: 133.

<sup>73</sup> Refer to the interpretation of Surah al-Baqarah [2]: 142-143. al-Zuḥailī, *al-Tafsīr al-Munīr*, vol. 1: 376.

<sup>74</sup> See the opening of Surah al-An'am [6]. al-Zuḥailī, *al-Tafsīr al-Munīr*, vol. 4: 130.

<sup>75</sup> Refer to the commentary on Surah al-An'am [6]: 4-6. al-Zuḥailī: 142-143.

Regarding the point about the goals of tafsir books with the *al-adabi al-ijtimā'ī* nuance, as specified by Rowi, concrete examples can also be found in the introduction of the book *al-Tafsīr al-Munīr*. As mentioned earlier, the purpose of al-Zuhailī in compiling his tafsir book is to serve as a means to establish a scientific bond between a Muslim and the holy book of the Quran.<sup>76</sup>

#### **b. Fiqh (al-Fiqhī) Nuance**

The fiqh nuance is the second dominant nuance that colors almost every part of the book *al-Tafsīr al-Munīr*. This is as stated by Abd Kholid in his book, where one characteristic of the *al-Tafsīr al-Munīr* is its accommodation of debates among the schools of Islamic jurisprudence. In the context of interpreting legal verses, al-Zuhailī adopts at least four steps: (1.) determining the meaning of the text contained in the verse; (2.) determining the type of verse, including whether it is clear or ambiguous; (3.) considering the principles in deducing legal rulings; (4.) considering general principles related to interpreting the Quran.<sup>77</sup> Such an interpretive pattern is one of al-Zuhailī's specialties and represents a form of scholarly subjectivity that is inevitable in his tafsir book. Despite containing strong scholarly subjectivity, consistent comparative analysis helps al-Zuhailī avoid fanaticism towards a particular school of thought.

#### **4. Textual-Reflective Approach, Moderate Typology of Understanding, and Efforts to Balance Text-Context**

Before assessing the approach in the book *al-Tafsīr al-Munīr*, it is important to establish what is meant by the terms "textual" and "contextual". According to Saeed, a textual approach in Quranic exegesis refers to a perspective that believes the language of the Quran has concrete references. The implication of this belief affects the view that the verses of the Quran are still relevant today, demanding that Muslims adapt to the text's meanings. Commentators who use a textual approach as a foundation tend to employ semantic theory as the primary analysis when interpreting the Quran.<sup>78</sup> Meaning excavation using linguistic tools is more frequently utilized than excavating meaning using historical and social analysis. The thought pattern of textualist groups is inherited from the tradition of early generations of Muslims who established a hierarchy in understanding legal texts.<sup>79</sup> They consider that interpreting the Quran by maintaining tradition is an appropriate attitude.<sup>80</sup> There are three principles established by followers of textualist groups. The first principle states that the Quranic text contains a fixed and objective stance. The second principle states that the legal texts (the Quran and hadith) today are complete and sufficient to address all contemporary issues. The third principle states that textualist groups reject an interpretation model that addresses contemporary issues by dialoguing legal texts with their contexts.<sup>81</sup> What Saeed writes is consistent with the opinion of Syarfruddin, who argues that in today's context, textualist groups tend to apply Shariah principles directly.<sup>82</sup>

The textualist group tends to use the *al-zāhiriyyah* methodology in understanding legal texts, which has at least three main characteristics. The first characteristic is adhering strictly to the literal text and not departing from it unless there is another literal text to replace it. The second characteristic is understanding that the primary meaning of a text lies in its literal interpretation, not in the meaning behind the text (context). The third characteristic is believing that efforts to understand the context or reasons for the legislation of Shariah are a form of error. From here, a

<sup>76</sup> al-Zuhailī, *al-Tafsīr al-Munīr*, vol. 1: 8-11.

<sup>77</sup> Kholid, *Corak Interpretatif Teologis*: 40.

<sup>78</sup> Abdullah Saeed, *The Qur'an (An Introduction)*, 1 ed. (New York: Routledge, 2008): 220-221.

<sup>79</sup> Abdullah Saeed, *Interpreting the Qur'an (Towards a Contemporary Approach)*, 1 ed. (New York: Routledge, 2006): 50-52.

<sup>80</sup> Abdullah Saeed, *Islamic Thought (An Introduction)*, 1 ed. (New York: Routledge, 2006): 31-32.

<sup>81</sup> Saeed, *Interpreting the Qur'an*: 55-56.

<sup>82</sup> U. Syafudin, *Paradigma Tafsir Tekstual & Kontekstual (Usaha Memaknai Kembali Pesan al-Qur'an)*, 2 ed. (Yogyakarta: Pustaka Pelajar, 2017): 36-37.



rule emerges that meaning is derived from the generality of the text, not from the specificity of the reason for revelation, or *al-‘ibrah bi ‘umūm al-laḥẓi lā bi kbuṣūṣ al-sabab*. Next, there are two conceptual frameworks that form the background in the thinking of textualist groups when interpreting the Quran. First, this group understands the Quran only in its historical context, namely the Quran that existed and developed during the time of the Prophet, the Companions, and the Followers, without any attempt to explore and extract the substantive meaning of the text to be brought into today’s context. Second, this group in understanding the meaning of the Quranic text will not dialogue it with the social phenomena currently occurring. Therefore, the truth parameter of the textualist group is based on the literal meaning of the text as stated by the text itself.<sup>83</sup>

The second approach is the contextual approach, where contextualist here reflects an understanding that emphasizes the importance of context.<sup>84</sup> The contextual approach is an inclusive and pluralistic approach; it does not force the text to fit the contemporary context, nor does it force the contemporary context to conform to the text. The goal of this approach is to remain anchored in the literal text while also considering the socio-historical context of the Quranic verses. Although the contextual approach also understands that the Quran is a scripture suitable for every time and place, it interprets this adage as an effort to uncover the guidance within the Quran substantively and progressively. From here, a rule emerges that meaning is derived from the specificity of the reason for revelation, not from the generality of the text, or *al-‘ibrah bi kbuṣūṣ al-sabab lā bi ‘umūm al-laḥẓi*.<sup>85</sup>

There are at least eight principles in contextual interpretation approach: (1.) placing the Quran as a book of guidance; (2.) understanding that the Quran contains universal values; (3.) understanding that the Quran has a historical dimension; (4.) understanding the literary dimension of the Quran related to specific terms; (5.) understanding the historical and literary context of the Quran; (6.) understanding the purpose of the Quran through the study of historical and literary contexts; (7.) bringing the historical and literary context of the Quran into the contemporary era; (8.) making the moral-ethical purposes of the Quran a guide to addressing various issues. Furthermore, according to Syafrudin, this contextual approach encompasses two conceptual frameworks. The first framework invites understanding the Quran according to its historical context and original meanings, which will then be projected into today’s context. The second framework brings social phenomena occurring within the framework of the Quran’s objectives. Therefore, the truth parameter of this contextual approach is based on the functionalism of the text.<sup>86</sup>

After understanding the textual and contextual approaches in interpreting the Quran, it can be assessed that the book *al-Tafsir al-Munir* does not fully employ the textual approach and does not fully utilize the contextual approach. This assessment is derived from several cases of interpretation that have been presented. It is found that sometimes al-Zuḥailī tends to adhere strictly to the text, for example, when interpreting Surah al-Nisā’ [4]:1 regarding the creation of humans from a single soul (*naḥḥidab*). al-Zuḥailī is a commentator who agrees with the statement that the creation of Eve came from Adam’s rib, he adheres firmly to the authentic hadith stating that women were created from a man’s rib, although it is also explained that there is another opinion stating that the meaning of *naḥḥidab* is Eve and Adam created from the same type and nature.<sup>87</sup> Then, in another case of interpretation, al-Zuḥailī is indicated to employ several principles of the contextual approach, namely by attempting to balance textual analysis,

<sup>83</sup> Syafrudin: 38-41.

<sup>84</sup> Abdullah Saeed, “Some Reflections on the Contextualist Approach to Ethico-Legal Texts of The Quran,” *Bulletin of the School of Oriental and African Studies* 71, no. 2 (Juni 2008): 221–222, <https://doi.org/10.1017/S0041977X08000517>.

<sup>85</sup> Syafrudin, *Paradigma Tafsir Tekstual & Kontekstual*: 48-49.

<sup>86</sup> Syafrudin: 43-53.

<sup>87</sup> al-Zuḥailī, *al-Tafsir al-Munir*, vol. 2: 556-557.

excavation of micro-contexts, and macro-contexts. This can be seen when interpreting Surah al-Shūrā [42]:38, where after analyzing *mufradāt*, three reasons for revelation that encompass the descent of the verse are mentioned, followed by an explanation of the socio-cultural conditions of the Islamic society during the time of the Prophet and the Companions, where the Islamic society at this time had the tradition of consulting.<sup>88</sup>

Referring to Gusmian's mapping, it is found that textualist groups in their development also comprehend context, which then gives birth to their own interpretation regarding how contextual interpretation is done. For textualist groups, contextual interpretation is an interpretation that not only interprets the text literally but also must delve into the historical context of when and where the Quran was revealed (macro). Therefore, the conceptual framework of the contextual approach for textualist groups is conditioned by closeness, so their interpretation moves from reflection to practice. This third view is then termed as textual-reflective approach.<sup>89</sup> Based on the latter, it can be evaluated that al-Zuhaili in his book *al-Tafsir al-Munir* tends to use a textual-reflective approach, as found in several indicators in this commentary, which on one hand include characteristics, principles, and conceptual frameworks of the textual approach, such as the application of *taṭbiq al-sharī'ah* (but not to the extent of enforcing implementation), the use of the principle of *al-ibrāh bi 'umūm al-laḥẓi lā bi khabṣ al-sabab*,<sup>90</sup> and understanding the Quran only in its historical context, namely the holy book of the Quran that existed and developed during the time of the Prophet, Companions, and Successors, without attempting to explore and dig into the substantive meaning of the text to be brought into today's context.<sup>91</sup> On the other hand, this commentary also contains principles of the contextual approach, such as placing the Quran as a book of guidance, understanding that the Quran contains universal values, understanding the literary dimension of the Quran, understanding the historical and literary context of the Quran, understanding the purpose of the Quran, and making the moral-ethical purposes of the Quran a guide to addressing various issues.<sup>92</sup> Therefore, it can be concluded that what al-Zuhaili did in his commentary does not reach the contextual level, but he only attempts to balance textual analysis and contextual excavation.

The next issue arises when al-Zuhaili's interpretation in *al-Tafsir al-Munir* does not reach the contextual level, does this mean that he does not apply a moderate understanding in interpreting the Quran? To answer this question, it is necessary to reiterate two things. First, moderate understanding in interpreting the Quran according to Mustaqim refers to interpretations that do not reach extreme levels, namely rigid, textual, and ideological understandings (textualist-affirmative) and liberal understandings that can desacralize the text. Second, there are several indicators that a commentary book is said to apply moderate understanding, including understanding the values of harm contained in the Quran, paying attention to the context of Quranic verses, considering the linguistic aspects of the Quran, adhering firmly to the sciences of the Quran and principles of interpretation, and integrating-interconnecting scholarship.<sup>93</sup> Referring to the first indicator, it can be assessed that *al-Tafsir al-Munir* does not reach a textualist-affirmative understanding and does not reach a liberal understanding; al-Zuhaili remains a commentator who firmly adheres to the Shari'ah text with an objective understanding (textualist-traditionalist). Then, when referring to the second indicator, from the mentioned points, all can be found in *al-Tafsir al-Munir* except one point, namely paying attention to the context of today (contextualization). Therefore, it can be concluded that what al-Zuhaili did in his commentary has applied moderate understanding, but not to the extent of attempting to

<sup>88</sup> al-Zuhaili, *al-Tafsir al-Munir*, vol. 13: 84-85.

<sup>89</sup> Gusmian, *Khazanah Tafsir Indonesia*: 274-275.

<sup>90</sup> Rowi, *Ragam Penafsiran al-Qur'an*: 62.

<sup>91</sup> Syafrudin, *Paradigma Tafsir Tekstual & Kontekstual*: 41.

<sup>92</sup> Syafrudin: 50-51.

<sup>93</sup> Mustaqim, "Argumentasi Keniscayaan Tafsir Maqashidi": 33.

dialogue the universal moral values found in the verses with today's context or contemporary issues.

## CONCLUSION

The methodology constructed by Wahbah al-Zuhaili in *al-Tafsir al-Munir* has successfully opened up a new discourse on the importance of interconnectedness between traditional and modern interpretation approaches. While it does not result in a fully contextual interpretation, at least the approach offered by al-Zuhaili can moderate the dynamics and dichotomy of the contemporary discourse on Quranic interpretation methodologies, which is divided into two models: an understanding that only emphasizes the text, which is considered at an extreme level could lead to textual worship, and an understanding that only emphasizes the context, which is considered at an extreme level could lead to the liberalization of the text. Technically and hermeneutically, the form of this traditional-cum-modern interpretation methodology construction can be seen through the establishment of consistent and scientific systematization, authoritative reference sources, interconnectedness of *naql* and *'aql* sources, interdisciplinary and intertextual thinking methods, diverse nuances, and textual-reflective approaches. The implications of these findings suggest that in contemporary Qur'anic exegesis discourse, efforts to balance between text and context can be found not only in the interpretation methods advocated by exegetical thinkers but also in the methodological constructions proposed by exegetes. Although the effort to balance text and context is not as concrete as that offered by modern-contemporary exegetical thinkers through their interpretation methods, these findings at least indicate that the effort to balance text and context is not solely about directly addressing contemporary issues. It can also be understood as revealing universal moral values and not resulting in radical or liberal interpretations. The limitation of this study is that the examination of moderation in Qur'anic exegesis is limited to referring to one exegete and one exegesis book, although comparisons were also made in the analysis, but the comparisons are still considered partial. Therefore, it is wide open for Qur'anic exegesis researchers to study other exegesis books, not only limited to the modern-contemporary period but also the classical or medieval periods.

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