

**EPISTEMOLOGICAL OUTLOOK OF ZAINI DAHLAN'S
*TAFSIR AL-QUR'AN JUZ 30***

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Abstract

The development of modern Qur'anic interpretation in Indonesia has been characterized by the emergence of thematic exegesis. In this case, chapter 30 of the Qur'an has drawn much attention, among them is *Tafsir Al-Qur'an Juz 30* written by Zaini Dahlan. This work is quite interesting as it is written by an academic Muslim scholar, pedagogical in nature, and having attention much on poetical language of the Qur'an. By using the epistemological framework and theories of Qur'anic interpretation, this article aims to find the source, method, style, validity, and orientation of Zaini Dahlan's interpretation. The article, then, argues that one of Zaini Dahlan's contributions to the discourse of Indonesian Qur'anic studies lies on his attention to the poetic structure of the Qur'an which directed to strengthen theological and pedagogical aspects. In his epistemological structure, Dahlan uses various sources of knowledge most notably from the Qur'an, hadith, history, and scholars' interpretation, which are generally coupled with the dominance of reason (*bi al-ra'y*) over narrations (*bi al-ma'thur*). In addition, Dahlan also applied the thematic method of surahs which is framed by the poetic nuances of the Qur'an. As for the measure of truth, Dahlan seems to apply three theories of validity, namely coherence, correspondence, and pragmatics.

Keywords: *Epistemology, Tafsir Al-Qur'an Juz 30, Zaini Dahlan*

Abstrak

Perkembangan tafsir al-Qur'an di Indonesia modern ditandai dengan munculnya tafsir yang bersifat tematik. Al-Qur'an juz 30, dalam hal ini, banyak mendapatkan perhatian dari kalangan mufasir. Di antara karya tafsir yang ada adalah *Tafsir Al-Qur'an Juz 30* karya Zaini dahlan. Karya ini cukup menarik, karena ditulis oleh seorang akademisi, lebih bersifat pedagogis, dan memiliki kepekaan dalam aspek putik al-Qur'an. Dengan menggunakan kerangka epistemologi dan teori-teori tafsir, artikel ini bertujuan untuk mengetahui sumber, metode, corak, validitas, dan orientasi penafsiran Zaini Dahlan. Artikel ini berargumen bahwa salah satu kontribusi Zaini Dahlan dalam diskursus penafsiran di Indonesia adalah perhatiannya terhadap struktur puitis al-Qur'an yang dinarasikan untuk memperkuat aspek teologis dan pedagogis. Dalam struktur epistemologinya, Dahlan menggunakan berbagai sumber pengetahuan baik dari al-Qur'an, hadis, riwayat, sejarah, dan tafsir para ulama, yang secara umum dikerangkai dengan dominasi nalar (*bi al-ra'y*) daripada riwayat (*bi al-ma'thur*). Selain itu, Dahlan juga mengaplikasikan metode tematik surah yang dibingkai dengan nuansa puitis Al-Qur'an. Adapun dalam aspek tolak ukur kebenarannya, Dahlan tampak mengaplikasikan tiga teori validitas dalam filsafat, yaitu koherensi, korespondensi, dan pragmatik.

Kata kunci: *Epistemologi, Tafsir Al-Qur'an Juz 30, Zaini Dahlan*

Introduction

Studying the Qur'an in the world history has evolved many initiatives, particularly in terms of methodology, epistemology and form of interpretation. Along with it, the growing Qur'anic studies will seemingly continue to develop and create more works on exegetical effort with more diverse characteristics, as it goes with the increasing scientific and social context of the exegetes. In terms of Islamic perspective, for example, the initiative of making the Qur'an easy to understand, relevant to the contemporary needs and challenges has made some important notions on the methods of interpretation, which tasks are mostly done by Muslim scholars. On the other hand, the academic enterprise, which mostly done by Western scholars, has implanted critical initiatives in methodological evaluation of the Qur'an as a sacred text. However, the emergence of Qur'anic approach with various styles, characteristics and methods will eventually create a new face of today's Qur'anic studies.¹

In Indonesian context, both studying the Qur'an and its interpretations and doing Qur'anic exegesis have been a continuous academic venture. Thanks to the

¹ Eko Zulfikar and Ahmad Zainal Abidin, "Ikhtilaf Al-Mufassirin: Memahami Sebab-Sebab Perbedaan Ulama Dalam Penafsiran al-Qur'an," *At-Tibyan: Jurnal Ilmu Alqur'an Dan Tafsir* 4, no. 2 (2019): 285–306, <https://doi.org/10.32502/tibyan.v4i2.859>.

contemporary works of Indonesian Qur'anic studies which provide a new face of Qur'anic interpretation in the sense of academic enterprise. It delivers to the shifting actors of Qur'anic exegetes which extended to the academic territorial space. The clear example of the academic work is the emergence of thematic interpretation of the Qur'an which are generally written by the scholars of universities. This model of interpretation has colored the contemporary Indonesian Qur'anic studies in early 2000s.

In terms of thematic studies, the work of Indonesian exegetes in interpreting the Qur'an has much attention to the contemporary topics that need to be addressed. Besides, there are some attentions paid to the chapter of the Qur'an. In this case, the last chapter of the Qur'an namely *juz 'amma* (chapter 30) become the most interpreted verses among other chapters. There are many works of Indonesian scholars devoted to the explain the last chapter of it, for instance, *Tafsir Juz 'Amma* by Firanda Andirja, *Tafsir Al-Qur'an Juz 'Amma* by Masruhan Ihsan, *Tafsir Juz 'Amma As-Siraj 'l Wahhaj* by Yunan Yusuf, *Tafsir Al Hikmah Tafsir Kontemporer Juz Amma* by Aam Amiruddin, and *Tafsir Al-Qur'an Juz 30* by Zaini Dahlan. Accordingly, our attention will focus on the last exegesis, Zaini Dahlan, given that the book is an academic work, written by a Muslim scholar, pedagogical in nature, and having attention much on poetical language in composing his interpretive words, which features are mostly absent in other works.

Its pedagogical nature can be seen from its early initiative of writing the exegesis. At the beginning, it is originally a material for aural recitation. However, having the limit times, the author then attempts to produce in a written work. The author also expects the readers to find hints from the meaning of the verse in order that they are moved to apply it accordingly to their individual abilities.² In this frame, the exegesis of *Tafsir Al-Qur'an Juz 30* is likely a pedagogical in nature.

Besides, the effort of making the Qur'anic interpretation in poetical words is likely an attempt to make the reader exhilarating each meaning of the Qur'an. This poetical sense has appeared in some forms most notably in the frame of prayers which are written in the end of interpretation, as like he did in interpreting surah *Al-Insyiqaq*.

Ya Allah Tuhanku
 Cerahkan dengan karuniamu
 Sesaknya dada ini agar tegar dan lapang
 Yang terjal berubah landai
 Yang berat terasa ringan
 Lapangkan Ya Allah yang sempit dan buntu
 Cairkan yang liar dan beku ini
 Agar bahtera menerjang garang
 Ya Allah urai lisanku yang kelu

² Zaini Dahlan, *Tafsir Al-Qur'an Juz 30* (Yogyakarta: Kreasi Total Media, 2008), v.

Sikap bahasaku yang beku

Agar mereka tahu

Apa yang ku mau³

Having at least two identities of exegesis, Zaini Dahlan also stated that his interpretation was not written from his own knowledge nor did he take the interpretations of other exegetes, but it was compiled from the author's simple observations with the aim that readers would be able to interpret the text more comprehensively.⁴ The act of not referring to the previous opinions of exegetes may could be one of the interesting points to addressed. Therefore, this article attempts to analyze his exegesis by using epistemological⁵⁶ framework as a main perspective⁷, while combining with some theories of Qur'anic interpretation to identify the style and orientation of his exegesis.⁸

Zaini Dahlan: Biographical Sketch

Zaini Dahlan was born on December 25, 1926 in Temanggung, Central Java and passed away on January 17, 2017. He graduated from the Adab Faculty of IAIN Sunan Kalijaga and al-Azhar University, Egypt. His is majoring the expertise in Arabic literature. After his studies were completed, he married Siti Lathifah and blessed with four children. Zaini Dahlan lived in an simple and ordinary family, with no exceeding wealth. Even when he first lived in Cirebon in 1965, his wife said that he had experienced a situation with finances that were only for one rickshaw and his family⁹

After going through difficulties, he received many gifts. Zaini was assigned to IAIN Sunan Kalijaga as a lecturer, and assisted Prof. Baroroh in opening the Arabic Literature Department at UGM. During his life, he served as a lecturer at IAIN Jakarta, Secretary of the Tarbiyah Faculty in 1965 at IAIN Cirebon, Dean of the Ushuluddin Faculty for 6 years, member of DPRD Cirebon in 1971, Head of Regional Office of the Ministry of Religion in West Java in 1973. Chancellor of IAIN Sunan Kalijaga (1976-1984) and Director General of Bimbingan Islam (Islamic Guidance council) Ministry of Religious Affairs.

³ Zaini Dahlan, *Memahami Kalam Suci*, vol. 1 (Yogyakarta: Pesantren Mahasiswa UII, 2021), 187.

⁴ Zaini Dahlan, *Tafsir Al-Qur'an Juz 30*, v.

⁵ Saifuddin and Habib, "Kritik Epistemologi Tafsir Kontemporer (Studi Atas Kritik Jamal al-Banna Terhadap Beberapa Pemikir al-Qur'an Kontemporer)," *Analisis: Jurnal Studi Keislaman* XVI, no. 1 (June 2016): 110, <http://www.ejournal.radenintan.ac.id/index.php/analisis/article/wie/739/630>.

⁶ Wendi Purwanto, "Struktur Epistemologi Naskah Tafsir Surat Al-Fatihah Karya Muhammad Basiuni Imran Sambar Kalimantan Barat," *At-Tibyan: Jurnal Ilmu Alqur'an Dan Tafsir* 4, no. 1 (2019): 143–63, <https://doi.org/10.32505/tibyan.v4i1.78.3>.

⁷ Muhammad Alwi HS, "Epistemologi Tafsir: Mengurai Relasi Filsafat Dengan Al-Qur'an," *Jurnal Substantia* 21, no. 1 (April 2019): 3, <http://dx.doi.org/10.22373/substantia.v21i1.4687>.

⁸ Kusroni, "Mengenal Ragam Pendekatan, Metode, Dan Corak Dalam Penafsiran Al-Qur'an," *Jurnal Kaca Jurusan Ushuluddin* 9, no. 1 (February 2019): 103.

⁹ Siti Lathifah, "Indahnya Mengarungi Samudera Kehidupan Bersama Pak Zaini," in *Zaini Dahlan Sang Guru* (Yogyakarta: UII Press, 2009), 150.

Zaini Dahlan was also an active lecturer in UII working as chairman of the University Presidium (1989), Member of the Board of Trustees of the Waqf Board (1993-1996), Rector of UII (1994-2002) and many other social organizations that he joined. When leading UII, Zaini Dahlan often made positive breakthroughs to make UII a university that is ready to compete in the national or even international.¹⁰

In addition to the book *Tafsir Al-Qur'an Juz 30*, he also wrote *Tafsir Surah Ar-Rūm*, *Tafsir Surah Yāsin*, *Tafsir Surah Al-Mulk*, which is published into a book entitled *Memahami Kalam Suci* and also has a phenomenal work, namely *Qur'an Karim dan Terjemahan Artinya* which he worked on with his team, one of which is Ahmad Bahaiddin Noersalim.¹¹ This work has its own characteristics, namely trying to make understanding of the Qur'an closer to Indonesian context which usually implied to go beyond its literal meaning by looking for equivalent meanings in Indonesian language.¹²

The figure of Zaini Dahlan is a figure who can be used as a role model who swallowed ups and downs from the colonial era to the era of independence. All of his achievements were achieved with a polite and graceful attitude. Zaini appears with his exemplary nature especially with regard to the teachings of the Qur'an. Zaini was able to show himself in carrying out his duties and mandate both as a bureaucrat and as a teaching staff.¹³

On the origins of Zaini Dahlan's Interpretation

In epistemological framework, it is necessary to identify the sources behind knowledge of Qur'anic interpretation. It is interesting to be noted that in the foreword, the author has already stated that the book is not the result of concocting the opinions of the previous exegetes who are experts in their knowledge, but based on a very simple reflection. However, in the commentary *Memahami Kalam Suci* which is a collection of his commentaries, it is stated that there are several main references in his writing, including *Tafsir Jalalain*, *al-munīr*, *Anwār al-Tanzīl wa Asrār al-Ta'wīl*, *al-Manār*, *al-Muntakhab*, *al-Misbāh*, *al-Azhār*, *al-Itqān*, *Ṣaḥīh Bukhari*, *Ṣaḥīh Muslim*, *Sunan an-Nasa'i*, several other hadith books, *Ihya' 'Ulūm al-Dīn* and scientific journals.¹⁴ Below are our explanation on the source where Zaini Dahlan pursue his knowledge to put in his Qur'anic interpretation.

¹⁰ Edy Suandi Hamid, "Sosok Yang Berkarya Tanpa Akhir," in *Zaini Dahlan Sang Guru* (Yogyakarta: UII Press, 2009), 43.

¹¹ M. Rozik Sudawan and Muhammad Hoirus Sholeh, "Menerjemahkan Firman Allah: Analisis Terjemah Ayat-Ayat Penciptaan Manusia Pada Qur'an Karim Dan Terjemah Artinya Cetakan Yogyakarta," *Mashdar: Jurnal Studi Al-Qur'an Dan Hadis* 4, no. 1 (2022): 52, <https://doi.org/10.15548/mashdar.v4i1.4521>.

¹² M. Rozik Sudawan and Muhammad Hoirus Sholeh, 50.

¹³ Husain Haikal, "Dinamika Kesederhanaan Dan Keteladanan Sang Guru," *Millah* IX, no. 02 (February 2010): 346.

¹⁴ Zaini Dahlan, *Memahami Kalam Suci*, 1:339.

a. The Qur'an as ultimate source

In Zaini Dahlan's book, many other verses are used as additional explanations for his interpretation, for instance, the letter al Humazah: 4

كَأَلَّا لِيُبَدَنَّ فِي الْحُطَمَةِ

Translation: "By no means! Surely he will be thrown into (hell) Hutamah."¹⁵

In this verse, Zaini Dahlan interpreted as follows:

"Ayat ini memperingatkan agar seseorang tidak tertipu dan terjerumus ke dalam mencintai dunia yang berlebihan, sikap itu akan menyengsarakan karena menjadi "budak" hartanya. Semangat mencari harta dengan segala cara akan menyuburkan sifat rakus, rakus dan makin tidak peduli terhadap penderitaan sekitarnya, nafsu berkuasa dan pamer makin menonjol angkuh dan mudah tersinggung, kekayaan dan nafsu telah dijadikan panutan yang harus diikuti, disini ia telah masuk ke "khumamah". Kesengsaraan yang melilit rapat sulit sekali melepaskan diri dari cengkramannya. (QS. 45:23)".¹⁶

Then, in interpreting the above verse, Dahlan added his explanation by adding a relational quotation from the other verse of the Qur'an, namely Qs. al-Jathiyah [45]:23.

أَفَرَأَيْتَ مَنْ اتَّخَذَ إِلَهَهُ هَوَاهُ وَأَضَلَّهُ اللَّهُ عَلَىٰ عِلْمٍ وَخَتَمَ عَلَىٰ سَمْعِهِ وَقَلْبِهِ وَجَعَلَ عَلَىٰ بَصَرِهِ غِشَاوَةً فَمَنْ يَهْدِيهِ
مَنْ بَعْدَ اللَّهِ أَفَلَا تَذَكَّرُونَ.

Translation: "So, have you ever seen a person who made his desires his god and Allah let him go astray with His knowledge, and Allah has sealed his hearing and heart and put a lid over his sight? So who is able to guide him after Allah (let him go astray?) Why don't you learn a lesson?"¹⁷

The verse explains that people who follow their desires are misguided people whose reward is 'khumamah' (hell). The main messages of the two verses are equally a warning to the humans to be careful with the misleading worldly things.

b. The Hadith

In Zaini Dahlan's interpretation, when quoting a hadith, he only wrote the translation without the Arabic text and did not mention the narrator or the sanad. For instance, in interpreting the letter *al-Mutaffifin* verses 10-13, he wrote:

وَيْلٌ يَوْمَئِذٍ لِلْمُكَذِّبِينَ الَّذِينَ يُكَذِّبُونَ يَوْمَ الدِّينِ وَمَا يُكذِّبُ بِهِ إِلَّا كُلُّ مُعْتَدٍ أَثِيمٍ إِذَا تُتْلَىٰ عَلَيْهِ آيَاتُنَا قَالَ
أَسَاطِيرُ الْأَوَّلِينَ

"Penipu, pembohong, dan pelanggar hak sesama serta curang dalam bergaul disamakan dengan yang mendustkan hari pembalasan, mereka dengan enteng melanggar dosa dan tidak terbayang bahwa perbuatannya harus dipertanggungjawabkan, dosanya akan

¹⁵ Kementerian Agama RI, *Al-Qur'an Dan Terjemahannya* (Jakarta: Lajnah Pentashihan Mushaf al-Qur'an, 2019), 909.

¹⁶ Zaini Dahlan, *Tafsir Al-Qur'an Juz 30*, 151.

¹⁷ Kementerian Agama RI, *Al-Qur'an Dan Terjemahannya*, 731.

terus bertambah sejalan dengan usia dan kesempatannya. Manusia dicipta dan diberi keunggulan dan kedudukan terhormat bukan kosong tanggung jawab, kemana usia dipakai, untuk apa harta yang dikuasai dan dari mana harta didapat tiada seorang pun yang lolos dari tanggungjawab. Rasul saw dalam hal ini mengingatkan bahwa “kamu semua adalah pemimpin yang bertanggungjawab, masing-masing dituntut tanggungjawabnya.” (al-hadits). Ciri utama pendusta hari pembalasan ialah selalu mencemooh dan mednustakan ayat-ayat Allah yang sampai kepadanya dan menilainya sama dengan cerita-cerita lama.”¹⁸

The quoting hadith is an authentic hadith narrated by al-Bukhari “*Kullukum Rā'in wa kullukum mas'ūlun 'an Ra'iyatihi* (everyone is a shepherd and everyone is responsible for his shepherd).¹⁹ The meaning of the hadith is that everyone must accept the consequences of everything he did during his life, whether he is a cheater, a thief, a drunkard, all of them will be held accountable.

c. Historical narratives

Many of the narrations quoted by Zaini in his interpretation have not been explained. For example, in the introduction to the letter of surah al-Ikhlās, he mentions that there is a ‘history’ which explains the letter of al-Ikhlās as an answer to the questions of the infidels and polytheists of Makkah who questioned the origin and existence of Allah as God.²⁰

The history described by Zaini Dahlan is related to the asbabun nuzul surah. What Zaini explained is also in line with the explanation in the interpretation of al-Miṣbah which is one of the references for his interpretation that the revelation of sura al-ikhlās was intended to introduce Allah and as an order to the Prophet Muhammad to convey and answer people’s questions about God that the Prophet worshipped.²¹

d. The narratives of *Tabi'in*

Zaini Dahlan cites one *tabi'in* opinion, namely Imam Thawus. Imam Thawus is a well-known flutter of *tabi'in*. Imam Thawus stated that the letter of surah al-Insyirah has a close connection with the letter ad-Dhuha which is the previous surah, so that it is said “*the two letters are actually one which is read alternately in prayer*” even though there is a history which does not agree with the history.²² In verses 1-4 of surah al-Insyirah, Imam Thawus said that the verse contains God’s care and guidance for the Prophet Muhammad and the content of surah as-Syarh is similar to surah al-Dhuha.²³

e. The exegetes

Zaini Dahlan stated that his interpretation was not based on the opinions of other interpreters, but in fact it turned out that the opinion of Abu Su'ud, an expert in

¹⁸ Zaini Dahlan, *Tafsir Al-Qur'an Juz 30*, 51–53.

¹⁹ Muhammad Ibn Isma'il Abu Abdullah al-Bukhariy, *Shahih Al-Bukhari*, vol. 3 (Dār Ṭauq al-Najah, 1442), 120.

²⁰ Zaini Dahlan, *Tafsir Al-Qur'an Juz 30*, 174.

²¹ M. Quraish Shihab, *Tafsir Al-Misbah*, II, vol. 15 (Jakarta: Lentera hati, 2004), 607.

²² Zaini Dahlan, *Tafsir Al-Qur'an Juz 30*, 111.

²³ Zaini Dahlan, 111.

Qur'anic interpretation and Sufism, is quoted in his interpretation. This pattern of referring to previous Qur'anic interpreters can be seen in explaining QS. al-Ikhlās: 1. By quoting Abu Su'ud's commentary *Irshād al-aql al-Safīm ilā Mizāya al-Kitāb al-Karīm*, hZaini Dahlan interprets the word 'Huwa' refers to Allah, but structurally the word of Allah has not been mentioned before in this verse. According to him, this structural linguistics gives the impression that Allah is easy to know and close to people whose hearts are clean.²⁴

There are also some non-specific mentions in his interpretation regarding whose exegetes he uses as a reference, however, the author finds that he also makes several commentary books such as *Tafsir Jalalain*, *al-munīr*, *Anwār al-Tanzīl wa Asrār al-Ta'wīl*, *al-Manār*, *al-Muntakhab*, *al-Misbāh*, *al-Azhār* as the main references.

f. Reason

Taking the example of Surah An-Naba: 9, “*And We have made your sleep a means of rest*”²⁵, Zaini Dahlan interprets sleep as making some limbs not work actively especially when energy is lacking for activity. While the organs that remain active are the kidneys, lungs, heart, liver, skin and others.²⁶ When a person sleeps, the breathing process will get deeper and longer and the heart rate will slow down, all of which affect physical and spiritual health. The Qur'an mentions not as a need for creatures so that when someone is still given the pleasure of sleeping then it should be grateful. According to him sleep is the same as death which ends with rising or waking up. After not, then someone will continue his deeds as well as with death, humans will rise to continue the next stage of life.²⁷

On the Methods of Interpretation

In surah *al-Insyiqāq*, Zaini Dahlan begins his commentary by giving the *muqaddimah* (introduction) first, as follows:

“Surah ini masuk kelompok Makiyah ayatnya 25 dan turun setelah surah al infithar, di antara isinya berita tentang kejadian menjelang kiamat sebagai peringatan kepada manusia agar sadar bahwa proses yang terjadi di alam tidak akan terhambat dan terhenti, dan baru berakhir bila manusia telah dihadapkan kepada Tuhannya dan menerima hasil amalnya. Dalam pertemuan itu ada yang senang ada yang susah, karena itu manusia harus menyiapkan diri dan tidak tertipu rayuan setan sehingga kegiatan hidupnya hanya untuk berlomba menumpuk harta. Harta dapat memberi manfaat bagi kehidupan akherat jika dikelola sesuai petunjuk Allah. Saat itu manusia terbagi menjadi dua golongan yang beriman, sedang yang kafir dan ingkar akan mendapat bagiannya jua, sebagai hasil dari perbuatannya di dunia.”²⁸

²⁴ Zaini Dahlan, 175.

²⁵ Kementerian Agama RI, *Al-Qur'an Dan Terjemahannya*, 869.

²⁶ Zaini Dahlan, *Tafsir Al-Qur'an Juz 30*, 4.

²⁷ Zaini Dahlan, 4.

²⁸ Zaini Dahlan, 58.

From excerpts from his interpretation, Zaini categorizes the *Al-Insyiqaq* surah as a *makkiyah* surah, mentions that there are 25 verses, descended after *Al-Infithar*'s letter and conveys the main message of the surah regarding the apocalypse which is an appeal to humans to prepare supplies when the apocalypse arrives. When interpreting the surah, he divides the parts that are still in one discussion to be interpreted together so that it is not too long and the reader can more easily understand the meaning of the verse. If munasabah is needed, it is correlated with other verses, so that he explains verses 1-2 at once.

“Surah ini mengajak manusia melihat secara cermat makhluk yang besar-besar yang selalu menyuyertai hidupnya dan dapat dilihat dengan mudah, yaitu langit dan bumi. Keduanya memberi manfaat yang sangat besar bahkan kehidupan manusia sangat tergantung kepadanya, di sana mereka menetap dan di sana menemukan rezekinya disana pula mestinya ia menyiapkan diri menghada Tuhan Allah.¹ Dalam surat ini manusia diingatkan bahwa fasilitas hidup yang selama ini dinikmati pada saatnya akan dicabut yang tentu akan mengancam keselamatan hidupnya. Dimulai dengan terbelahnya langit yang Nampak menganga lebar, suatu peristiwa yang belum pernah dilihat manusia. langit berbuat demikian karena Allah penciptanya menghendaki dan tidak ada jalan lain baginya kecuali tunduk mematuhi perintah-Nya.”²⁹

This interpretation explains that the basic purpose of surah *Al-Insyiqaq* is an invitation to contemplate all God's creatures that exist in the surrounding environment to benefit humans and reminds that all existing facilities can easily be taken by God so that humans need charity provisions to face their God.

When correlating his explanation with other verses, he uses an end note (a sign with the number one), namely Qs. *Thaha* (20): 55. Then he gives a conclusion from his interpretation with a sign “Yang Perlu Diperhatikan” including:

- a) The many warnings about the apocalypse indicate that it is worth watching out for.
- b) Approach Allah with faith and charity before he suddenly calls.
- c) Only faith and charity save people in Allah's court “the position of the servant closest to his Lord when he prostrates, pray a lot”

In general, based on al-Farmawy's classification of interpretation methods,³⁰ into 4, including the *tahlili*, *ijmali*, *muqāran*, and *maudū'i* methods. In terms of interpretation methods, after analyzing the book *Tafsir Zaini Dahlan* applies the *maudū'i* surah method. The steps of thematic interpretation (*Maudū'i*) of letters according to Mustafa Muslim are:

- a) Categorizing *makkiy* or *madaniy*, describing *asbabun nuzul*, *tartūb nuzuliy* and the virtues of surahs.
- b) Explaining the moral idea of the surah and the historicity of taking the name of the sura.

²⁹ Zaini Dahlan, 59.

³⁰ 'Abd al-Hayy al-Farmawi, *Al-Bidāyah Fi al-Tafsīr al-Maudhu'i* (Kairo: al-hadharah al-Arabiyah, 1977), 30.

c) Dividing it into several sections (especially for long surahs) to make it more focused on the discussion, explaining the 'am and *Khas nasikh Mansūkh*, Arabic pronunciation and gives the conclusion of each section.

d) Correlating the conclusions of each section and explain the main purpose.³¹

Zaini Dahlan's interpretation could be categorized as thematic based on chapter (*mawdu'i surah*) in nature. As it can be seen also from the other Dahlan's commentary works, that is not only chapter 30, but also the interpretations of *Tafsir Surah Ar-Room, Surah Yasin, Surah Al-Mulk*, which is now written into one book entitled *Memahami Kalam Suci*. This is also one of the indicators that Zaini Dahlan is indeed using the thematic based chapter in his interpretation method.

Rendering Zaini Dahlan's Validity of Qur'anic Interpretation

There are three philosophical theories that can be applied to test the validity of interpretation, namely the theory of coherence, correspondence, and pragmatism. First, coherence theory is the validity of interpretation seen from the harmony and consistency of previous statements and the application of methodology.³²

From the background, it is mentioned that this interpretation is not written with the concoction of exegete's opinion, but from the description it is not appropriate when the author reads the interpretation. Because it was found that there was opinion of interpreters that he quoted, especially found that the harmony and similarity of his interpretation with other interpreter that he used as his main reference.

In the book *Memahami Kalam Suci*, which is a collection of his interpretations, there are also some main references such as the interpretations of *al-Misbah, al-Munir, Al-Manar* and others so that automatically the interpretation is more or less influenced by the interpretations of the other books. other.

However, in the use of interpretation methodology from the beginning of the interpretation to the end, he consistently uses the thematic based chapter method as has been described in the sub-chapter of the method of *Tafsir Al-Qur'an Juz 30*.

Second, Correspondence Theory If drawn in the study of epistemology of interpretation, then an interpretation is justified if it is in accordance with empirical facts. This theory is usually used to measure the validity of scientific interpretations related to *Kauniyah* verses with the findings of established scientific theories.³³

There are several interpretations of Zaini Dahlan which reflect the correspondence theory, namely when he interpreted verses 14-16 in surah an-Naba' about the rain. Zaini Dahlan explained that the sun sends its rays and heat to the earth, both land or sea, it causes heat so that the water evaporates upwards and then becomes cloudy and contains water droplets which eventually become rain that wets the surface

³¹ Mustafa Muslim, *Mabahith Fi Al-Tafsir al-Mawdu'iy* (Mesir: Dar al-Qalam, 2005), 40.

³² Abdul Mustaqim, *Epistemologi Tafsir Kontemporer* (Yogyakarta: LKiS, 2012), 83.

³³ Abdul Mustaqim, 83.

of the earth and seeps into the ground. By absorbing water into the soil becomes fertile so that plants can grow well.³⁴

This is in accordance with science which explains that the process of rain begins with evaporation, which is the evaporation of water due to the heat of the sun and then undergoes condensation, namely water that evaporates to the lowest level of the earth's atmospheric layer turning into clouds. After that, the clouds merge and form clouds. When it gets bigger, it will move to a place where the temperature is low so that the color of the cloud becomes dark so that it experiences precipitation, namely rain.³⁵

Third, the theory of pragmatism, namely the truth of interpretation is measured if it can practically be a problem solving of social problems. In this theory the interpretation of its contribution to society and not measured by other interpretations.³⁶ Based on the our analysis of the pragmatism theory, it can be seen at the end of his consistent interpretation that he concludes that the general purpose of the surah is to always be applied to the practice of life and can be solutions to get closer to God.

Style of Zaini Dahlan's Interpretation

The style of interpretation according to Nashrudin Baidan's definition is a tendency that influences the thinking of the commentator so that it is this tendency that dominates the tafseer.³⁷ The specialization of commentary products in certain styles still has the possibility that there are other styles in a work of interpretation, but the pattern that becomes the reference is the style that dominates.³⁸

Tafsir Al-Qur'an Juz 30 written by Zaini Dahlan is more dominant in *Adabi-Ijtima'i* (socio-literary) style by emphasizing the aspects of theology (*i'tiqadi*) and education (*tarbawi*). Ishlah Gusmian defines the *adabi-ijtima'i* pattern, namely interpreting the meaning of the Qur'anic text in a beautiful language style. Then the interpreter relates it to the social context and cultural system within the society.³⁹ If we use the theory put forward by Ishlah Gusmian and connected with Zaini Dahlan's scientific background who is proficient in literature, then there is a sense of comfort for the reader because the meanings of the verses he expresses are packaged in a poetic but easy-to-understand language style. This is very clear when interpreting verses about heaven, hell, or the universe. Examples of al-Ghasiyah letters: 18-20

³⁴ Zaini Dahlan, *Tafsir Al-Qur'an Juz 30*, 5.

³⁵ Khamidinal, "Studi Komparasi Waktu Dan Proses Terjadinya Hujan Dalam Perspektif Al-Qur'an Dan Sains," *Jurnal Suhuf* 33, no. 1 (Mei 2021): 97–98.

³⁶ Abdul Mustaqim, *Epistemologi Tafsir Kontemporer*, 83.

³⁷ Nashruddin Baidan, *Metodologi Penafsiran Al-Qur'an* (Yogyakarta: Pustaka pelajar, 2012), 366.

³⁸ Abdul Syukur, "Mengenal Corak Tafsir Al-Qur'an," *El-Furqania* 01, no. 01 (Agustus 2015): 85, <https://core.ac.uk/download/pdf/231325839.pdf>.

³⁹ Ishlah Gusmian, *Khazanah Tafsir Indonesia: Dari Hermeneutika Hingga Ideologi* (Yogyakarta: LKiS, 2013), 235.

وَالِى السَّمَاۓِ كَيْفَ رُفِعَتْ وَاِلَى الْجِبَالِ كَيْفَ نُصِبَتْ وَاِلَى الْاَرْضِ كَيْفَ سُطِحَتْ

Translation: “And look at the heavens, how was it lifted up?, and the mountains, how were they erected?, and upon the earth, how were they stretched out.”⁴⁰

Toward this verse, Zaini Dahlan uses a beautiful choice of words in poetic form but not rhythmic:

“Demikian pula langit yang selalu cerah memberikan kesempatan untuk menatap ufuk dan merunung. Kesunyian malam yang menjadi lahan subur bagi yang cerdas berolah pikir, di kesenyapan itu para pujangga Arab melanturkan rindunya dan memanggil malam yang tidak kunjung menjawab. Gunung-gunung yang gagah membuat diri merasakecil, bumi yang tergelar dan yang memberikan segalanya. Bukankah semua itu tanda-tanda yang sangat jelas tentang kebesaran dan kekuasaan Allah sekaligus bukti kemurahan dan kasih sayang-Nya?”⁴¹

Then he explained again that humans essentially have enough time to reflect on the universe and there are broad opportunities to get closer to Allah through the intermediary of studying and pray to Allah.⁴²

Another exemple is in Surah an-Naba verses 14-16

وَاَنْزَلْنَا مِنْ الْمُعْصِرَاتِ مَاءً ثَجَّاجًا لِنُخْرِجَ بِهِ حَبًّا وَنَبَاتًا وَّجَنَّاتٍ اَلْفَاافًا

Translation: “We send down from the clouds abundant rain, that We may cause to grow with it grains and vegetation, and luxuriant gardens”

In these verses Zaini Dahlan interpreted

“Matahari yang mengirim sinar dan panasnya ke bumi, daratannya dan lautnya menimbulkan panas yang menguapkan air yang naik menjadi mendung memuat butiran air yang akhirnya turun sebagai hujan membasahi permukaan bumi dan meresap ke dalamnya, menyuburkan tanah dan mengisi telaga yangkekeringan. Tetumbuhan mulai menguncup segar, bunga dan buah-buahan bermunculan menjadi rezeki yang menychatkan manusia dan makhluk Allah yang lain.”⁴³

Examples of interpretations that emphasize more on the aspects of theology which focuses on aspects of faith can be seen, for instance, through the interpretation of surah al-Ikhlās. Towards this verse, Dahlan introduce the word *ahad* which means one includes one in substance, nature of action and worship. In God's substance is not made of any element, God's nature is different from his creatures. All actions occur by the power of Allah, both in material and in the process, while all worship is performed

⁴⁰ Kementrian Agama RI, *Al-Qur'an Dan Terjemahannya*, 892.

⁴¹ Zaini Dahlan, *Tafsir Al-Qur'an Juz 30*, 85.

⁴² Zaini Dahlan, 85.

⁴³ Zaini Dahlan, 5.

only for Allah.⁴⁴ While emphasizing on the aspect of education, it can be seen for instance in his interpretation of Qs al-'Alaq:

“Perintah membaca diulangi karena pentingnya bagi perkembangan manusia yang pada dirinya telah tersedia sarana yang cukup. Giat membaca, mengamati, dan meneliti dapat mempertajam akal dan pikiran manusia, dan Allah berkenaan memuliakan dan membuka tabir-tabur ilmu. Pengetahuan yang belum dikenal di samping mempertajam potensi dirinya, kegiatan seperti itu akan membangkitkan semangat menggali rahasia alam yang dapat memperkuat iman.”⁴⁵

Another example can be seen in Surah at-Takwir ayat 6-9, where his poetical interpretation is written as follows:

“Bila laut menghempaskan airnya yang memanas keras-keras ke daratan dengan menghempaskan kandungannya jauh-jauh; bila sisa-sisa jasad manusia yang telah lumat bertemu dengan rohnya dengan menggeliat bangkit dari tidurnya yang berlangsung berabad, dan bayi-bayi yang teraniaya dikubur hidup-hidup dipertanyakan mengapa mereka harus bernasib demikian? Apakah dosa mereka sehingga anugerah kehidupan yang diberikan Tuhannya dirampas dengan bengis, apakah kekejian itu dibiarkan saja berlalu atau harus dipertanyakan demi keadilan?”⁴⁶

The Contributions of Zaini Dahlan's Qur'anic Interpretation

Through which the *Tafsir Al-Qur'an Juz 30* explained above, it can be noted that the exegesis written by Zaini Dahlan has added more value in Indonesian thematic based chapter which style are more in poetical languages. It also can be drawn some advantages of his interpretation that are: 1) The interpretation is packed with poetical language. This is due to Zaini Dahlan's educational background who struggles in the field of literature so that he expresses it in his tafsir; 2) Explaining the meaning of the Qur'an briefly and clearly; 3) At the end of the interpretation, he always tries to draw a conclusion as the moral significance of the surah which signifies the important position of his interpretation as pedagogical exegesis; 4) Many endnotes of Qur'anic verses as an additional explanation of his interpretation so that his interpretation becomes clearer.

While on the other side, the drawback of his interpretation is on the ignorance of references he uses in his interpretation. Besides, in quoting hadiths and historical narratives, there are also many sources whose sources are not also clearly stated. As a process, interpretation will never stagnate even though in the Islamic treasury there have been thousands of interpretation titles that have been published to the public. The contribution given by this interpretation certainly adds to the treasures and works in the Indonesian scholarship of the Qur'an.⁴⁷ This interpretation also makes it easy

⁴⁴ Kementerian Agama RI, *Al-Qur'an Dan Terjemahannya*, 913.

⁴⁵ Zaini Dahlan, *Tafsir Al-Qur'an Juz 30*, 120.

⁴⁶ Zaini Dahlan, 86.

⁴⁷ Ishlah Gusmian, “Epistemologi Tafsir Al-Qur'an Kontemporer,” *Al-A'raf: Jurnal Pemikiran Islam Dan Filsafat* XII, no. 2 (July 2015): 23, <https://jurnal.ar-raniry.ac.id/index.php/substantia/article/download/4687/pdf>.

for the academic community and the general public to more easily studying the contents of the Qur'an, as this interpretation is written in a language that is easy to understand and comfy for internalization of the meaning of the verse.

Conclusion

Based on our explanation above, in terms of epistemological framework, the sources that Zaini Dahlan refers to in interpreting the Qur'an are mostly taken from the Qur'an, Hadith, historical narratives, the opinions of *tabi'in* and Muslim exegetes, and all of them are basically refer to the basic foundation of reason (*ra'y*). Besides, the method used by Zaini Dahlan is mora framed with thematic based chapter method and dominantly featured with the style of socio-poetical language with emphasis on theological and educational notions. In terms of validity, Zaini Dahlan applied three philosophical theories namely coherence, correspondence, and pragmatism. It is in this case that Zaini Dahlan could add more value in terms of Indonesian context of interpreters, mainly on the academic effort of Qur'anic interpretation which paid much attention on pedagogical and poetical structure of interpretation.

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