Contribution of Acehnese Scholars to The Development of Quranic Exegesis in Indonesia: A Study of Tengku Muhammad Hasbi Ash-Shiddieqy and His Work “Tafsir An-Nuur”

Nazar Fadli*
Necmettin Erbakan, Konya, Türkiye
nazarfadli@ogr.erbakan.edu.tr

Abstract
This article aims to discuss Tengku Muhammad Hasbi ash-Shiddieqy, a modern scholar from the Aceh region of Indonesia, and his significant work in the field of tafsir, titled “Tafsir an-Nuur”. Hasbi is known as a proficient personality in various areas of Islamic sciences. In Indonesia, his competence in Islamic fields such as fiqh, usul al-fiqh, tafsir, and hadith has established Tengku Muhammad Hasbi Ash-Shiddieqy as a respected figure in society. Consequently, due to his areas of expertise, he is recognized as a prolific scholar who has authored academic works such as books and articles. Tafsir an-Nuur is a four-volume tafsir book that covers the interpretation of the Quranic verses from QS. al-Fāṭiḥa to QS. al-Nās, divided into 30-volume. In this tafsir, Quranic verses are explained succinctly, without delving into excessive detail, focusing on elucidating the fundamental meaning of the verses. Therefore, Tafsir an-Nuur falls into the category of concise (ijmālī) tafsir. This tafsir was written in Indonesian to facilitate easier understanding of the Quran’s content for Indonesians. Methodologically, this article is a study that uses source research and qualitative research methods. This article primarily aims to delve into Hasbi’s biography and works. Additionally, it discusses the background of the composition of Tafsir an-Nuur, its systematic approach, sources, methods, and related topics. In this context, readers are expected to gain a better understanding of Hasbi and Tafsir an-Nuur, ultimately contributing to a more comprehensive grasp of the development of tafsir studies in Indonesia.

Keywords: Tafsir, Tengku Muhammad Hasbi ash-Shiddieqy, Tafsir an-Nuur.

* Corresponding Author
Introduction

Tengku Muhammad Hasbi ash-Shiddieqy was a scholar hailing from Aceh, endowed with expertise in jurisprudence, principles of jurisprudence, Quranic exegesis (Tafsir), Hadith, and theological studies.[1] Given his proficiency, it is no surprise that he was recognized as a prolific academic writer in Indonesia, contributing numerous books on Islamic thought.[2] His body of work, encompassing books and articles, spans various fields, including Quranic exegesis and sciences, Hadith, jurisprudence, theology/kalam, and others. One of his significant contributions to the field of exegesis is the work titled Tafsir an-Nuur, whose full name is Tafsir al-Qur’anul Majid an-Nuur.[1]

In addition to his active engagement in academia, Hasbi was known as a figure with modern reformist ideas in Indonesia, often critiquing traditional religious practices carried out by Indonesian Muslims with a “traditionalist” approach.[3] This influence stemmed from the thoughts of Sheikh Muhammad ibn Salim al-Kalali, an Arab reformist residing in Lhokseumawe, whose ideas were further developed by Hasbi after pursuing education at the Madrasah al-Irsyad Surabaya.[1] This educational background led him to believe that Islamic law in Indonesia necessitated novel considerations, extending beyond the mere implementation of Middle Eastern jurisprudential thoughts.[4] Consequently, the concept of “Indonesian fiqh” emerged, a concept he developed based on his deep exploration of classical Arabic texts and the writings of modern reformists from the Middle East.[5] However, his ideas received little attention from Indonesian intellectuals during that period.[6]

This article endeavors to discuss ash-Shiddieqy and his work Tafsir an-Nuur. The choice of Tafsir an-Nuur for this study is due to its status as Hasbi’s magnum opus, offering a comprehensive interpretation of the entire 30 juz of the Qur’an. Through this article, readers are expected to gain further insights, particularly about Hasbi and his exegesis, as well as a general understanding of the development of Islamic scholarship in Indonesia.

Method

Methodologically, this research employs an analytical descriptive approach. Categorized as a qualitative study utilizing library research, it involves the examination of relevant books, manuscripts, articles, as well as related scriptures, hadiths, and other relevant literature addressing the issues under investigation. In accordance with the employed research method, data obtained through library research will be gathered. Subsequently, after the collection of all relevant data, it will be processed and analyzed using the “Descriptive” method.
This involves the researcher visiting the data sources and presenting the information as it is. Following the descriptive phase, the research employs the “Content Analysis” method, where the researcher deeply analyzes the existing data. The analytical findings are presented by carefully scrutinizing opinions surrounding the core discussion. Additionally, to ensure a comprehensive understanding in composing this work, data collection involves examining supporting (secondary) data sources related to the research topic. This is intended to acquire thorough information and determine conclusions, marking a crucial step in the scholarly endeavor.

Discussion
Biography of T.M. Hasbi ash-Shiddieqy

T.M. Hasbi ash-Shiddieqy was a Muslim scholar born in Nanggroe Aceh Darussalam, now known as Aceh, specifically in Lhokseumawe, North Aceh Regency, on March 10, 1904.[1], [7], [8] Hasbi was born into a religious family. His father, Teungku Muhammad Husayn bin Muhammad Su’ud, held the position of chief judge in Lhokseumawe. His mother, Teungku Amra, was a niece of Teungku Cik di Awe Geutah, an ulama who actively participated in the resistance against the Dutch colonial forces.[1], [7], [9]

Genealogically, Hasbi was closely connected to Abu Bakr as-Siddiq. This lineage is traced back to his father, the 36th descendant of Abu Bakr as-Siddiq, consequently making Hasbi the 37th descendant in that same lineage. This genealogical foundation led to the inclusion of “ash-Shiddieqy” as part of his name, resulting in the full name Tengku Muhammad Hasbi ash-Shiddieqy.[1], [10]


During his childhood, he was nurtured in a religious environment by both his father and mother. However, at the age of 6, his mother passed away, and he was subsequently cared for by Tengku Syamsiah, his maternal aunt, who did not have male children of her own.[7], [8], [12] After being under her care for two years, Tengku Syamsiah also passed away, and then Hasbi lived with his elder brother. During his time with his brother, he often slept in the “meunasah”
(prayer hall) and engaged in “meudangan” (spiritual learning) in various of “pondok pesantren” (Islamic educational institutions) in Aceh.[7], [8], [11]

While building his family, at the age of 19, Hasbi entered into matrimony with Siti Khadijah, who was still closely related to him. However, tragedy struck when his wife died after giving birth to their first child. Subsequently, he remarried Teungku Nyak Asiyah, daughter of Teungku Haji Hanum, who was also a relative on his maternal side. This connection was because Teungku Haji Hanum was the maternal uncle of Hasbi. From this marriage, he was blessed with four children: two sons and two daughters.[7], [13], [14] His four children are Zuharah, Anisatul Fuad, Nourouzzaman, and Zakiyatul Fuad.[8]

During his youth, Hasbi was known as an avid reader. He spent considerable time engrossed in reading in his room and the library. His interest in reading extended beyond Arabic and Malay literature; he read books in languages other than Arabic and Malay, including books in Dutch. He was an indiscriminate learner, evident in his pursuit of Arabic language learning from his friend Teungku Muhammad and Dutch language learning from a Dutch individual who sought to learn Arabic from him during his time in Kutara.[7]

In education, his father was a pivotal figure in his upbringing. He received foundational religious education from his father during his childhood, including disciplines such as Quranic recitation and Tajweed. His father sent him to Islamic boarding schools known as “dayah” in Aceh to further his knowledge. This action reflected his father’s aspiration for Hasbi to become a scholar (ulama).[9]

In his pursuit of religious knowledge through various “dayahs,” Hasbi was documented to have studied several of them. Around 1912, he studied at Dayah Teungku Cik in Piyeung, focusing on Arabic language learning, particularly the disciplines of Nahwu (grammar) and Sharaf (morphology). After a year of Arabic language learning there, he transferred to Dayah Teungku Cik in Bluk Bayu. He furthered his studies at Dayah Blang Kabu and continued his education at Blang Manyak and Kurok. In 1919, he pursued his studies at Dayah Teungku Cik Idris in Tanjungan Barat. By 1918, he moved to Dayah Teungku Cik Hasan in Kruengkale, where he continued his education until 1920 and officially received his certification the following year.[1], [7]–[9]

Upon completing his education in Kruengkale, Hasbi then encountered one of the members of the Islamic reformist movement residing in Lhokseumawe, namely Sheikh Muhammad ibn Salim al-Kalali. Under his guidance, Hasbi acquired a wealth of knowledge, leading him to be advised to continue his education at Madrasah al-Irsyad in Surabaya.[7], [13] Thus, around 1926, he departed for Surabaya and commenced his studies at Madrasah al-Irsyad. During his tenure at Madrasah al-Irsyad, he deepened his understanding
of the Arabic language and various other Islamic disciplines, ultimately graduating with honors in 1927.[1], [9]

Following his studies at Madrasah al-Irsyad, Hasbi’s scholarly pursuits continued through extensive reading and self-directed learning, resulting in numerous contributions in articles and books. As a testament to his contributions, he was awarded two Doctor Honoris Causa titles, the first by the Bandung Islamic University (Unisba) on March 22, 1975, and the second by the State Islamic Institute Sunan Kalijaga Yogyakarta on October 29, 1975.[1], [12], [14]

Additionally, he received the title of professor in Hadith studies,[1] although he also taught jurisprudence and principles of jurisprudence. His inaugural professorial address was titled “Islamic Law Responding to Challenges”. [7]

In addition to his teaching activities beyond Aceh, Hasbi is noted for establishing the madrasah in Buloh Beureughang in 1924. This educational institution received support from Teungku Raja Itam Uleebalang. However, due to his pursuit of education at Madrasah al-Irsyad Surabaya, the madrasah was dissolved after two years of operation. Upon completing his studies at Madrasah al-Irsyad, Hasbi and his mentor established Madrasah al-Irsyad in Lhokseumawe, following the same curriculum as Madrasah al-Irsyad Surabaya. He also established madrasah al-Huda in Krueng Mane, approximately 20 kilometers from Lhokseumawe,[7] although both madrasahs faced challenges and eventually closed.[8]

Besides these contributions, Hasbi played a significant role in education during his tenure in Kuta Raja. He was an educator and mentor at Ma’had Imanul Mukhlis (MIM) in Lampaku, an instructor at Muhammadiyah’s HIS and MULO schools, and more.[7], [8] Furthermore, he taught at PTAIN Yokyakarta, which later became IAIN Sunan Kalijaga in 1960, where he served as the dean of the Faculty of Sharia for 12 years until 1972. During this period, he also served as the dean of the Faculty of Sharia at Darussalam Aceh from 1960 to 1962. After these commitments, his career advanced further, leading him to positions such as Deputy Rector III and dean of the Faculty of Sharia from 1963 to 1966, teaching at various private universities, instructing at the Islamic University of Indonesia (UII) from 1964, serving as an instructor and dean of the Faculty of Sharia at Sultan Agung Islamic University (Unnissula) in Semarang from 1967 to 1975, being appointed as rector of Madrasah al-Irsyad University Surakarta, and serving as rector at Cokroaminoto University from 1961 to 1971.[8], [11]

In addition to his role as an academician, Hasbi was also prominently engaged in societal affairs. He was notably active as a member or leader of various Islamic organizations, including “Menjadi Satoe,” “Jong Islamiten Bond,” and “Nadil Islahil Islami Muhammadiyah.” Moreover, his involvement
extended to politics, evident through his affiliation with the Masyumi party (Majelis Syura Muslimin Indonesia). He held a position as a representative of Masyumi in the Constituent Assembly. In 1957, he participated in The International Islamic Colloquium organized by the University of the Punjab, held in Lahore, where his intellectual acumen was widely recognized.[8]

After embarking on a lengthy journey, as previously elucidated, on December 9, 1975, at the age of 71, Hasbi passed away. This occurred shortly after he had completed a period of quarantine to undertake the Hajj pilgrimage. He was laid to rest at the family cemetery of IAIN Ciputat in Jakarta. The funeral ceremony included an address delivered by Buya Hamka, a renowned scholar and commentator in Indonesia, while the body was laid to rest by Mr. Moehammad Roem, a close friend of Hasbi.[12]

**Works of T. M. Hasbi ash-Shiddieqy**

Hasbi was a prolific scholar known for his active contributions to writing, encompassing various forms, including articles and books. His initial foray into writing was a booklet titled “Penoetoep Moeloet.” Apart from this booklet, he authored numerous articles for magazines such as “al-Ahkam,” “Pedoman Islam,” and “Panji Islam,” focusing on subjects like jurisprudence (fiqh). In addition, Hasbi’s written works extended into the realm of books, spanning three major domains: tafsir and ulumul Qur’an (Quranic sciences), Hadith, jurisprudence (fiqh),[8] and theology (tauhid/kalam).


Overall, Hasbi’s remarkable oeuvre encompassed 73 titles and 142 volumes, with most of his works concentrated in jurisprudence (fiqih), comprising 36 titles. He also ventured into the fields of Hadith with eight titles, tafsir, and ulumul Qur’an with six titles, and theology (tauhid) with five titles. Additionally, his repertoire included books addressing general Islamic knowledge.[1], [8]

**About Tafsir al-Qur’anul Majid an-Nuur**

The *Tafsir an-Nuur* is a significant work authored by Hasbi, with its first edition published in 1952. This work is the first published commentary on the Qur’ān in Indonesia, thus assuming the role of a pioneering exegesis in the realm of Islamic scholarship within the country. This commentary is categorized as accessible to a broad audience, catering to beginners and researchers, rendering it a subject of considerable interest for those engaged in Quranic exegesis.[1]

Hasbi dedicated himself to the composition of this commentary between 1952 and 1961, a period interspersed with his teaching commitments and various roles within faculties and other institutions. The *Tafsir an-Nuur* saw three separate publications from 1956 to 1976.[1] Its inaugural edition was published by CV. Bulan, followed by a second printing in 1965. The final edition, the second edition, was printed in 2000 after Hasbi’s demise. In this particular edition, the
editorial tasks were undertaken by Nouruzzaman and Fuad Hasbi ash-Shiddieqy, also Hasbi’s son.[8]

**Background of the Interpretation’s Writing**

Regarding the background of composing the *Tafsir an-Nuur*, Hasbi elucidates in the preface of this exegesis the multiple reasons that underlie its writing. The background of writing the *Tafsir an-Nuur* can be delineated as follows: Firstly, his motivation stemmed from the desire to expand and enrich the development of Islamic culture within Islamic institutions of higher learning in Indonesia. To materialize this goal, he believed it was imperative to foster the translation of both the Qur’ān as Kitabullah and the Sunnah of the Prophet and other Islamic texts.[1]

Secondly, the impetus for this work arose from the existence of individuals interested in studying exegesis yet needed to be improved by their lack of proficiency in the Arabic language. Consequently, they could not engage with exegesis texts, predominantly written in Arabic. For those unfamiliar with Arabic, access to the contents of exegesis works remained closed off. Furthermore, Hasbi contends that the exegesis books written by Western scholars lack a guarantee of spiritual purity and alignment with Islamic principles’ lofty and pure essence. He posits that these scholars write based solely on knowledge without grounding it in faith.[1]

Lastly, the third reason emerges from Hasbi’s aspiration to produce an exegesis work in a unified Indonesian language while adhering to esteemed and reliable exegeses, established hadiths, and renowned books of prophetic biography. This approach would facilitate easy comprehension of the meaning of the Qur’ān for Indonesian society, which predominantly needs to improve in Arabic. Simultaneously, it would augment Islamic literature accessible to the Indonesian populace.[1]

**Systematic Structure of the Interpretation**

In the preface of his exegesis, he expounds that the structure employed in composing the *Tafsir an-Nuur* adheres to a five-step systematic approach. The fivefold systematic structure of writing the *Tafsir an-Nuur* is delineated as follows: First, interpreting one verse, two verses, or three verses sequentially according to the order in the Uthmani Mushaf. Second, translating the meaning of the verses into Indonesian using a language choice that is comprehensible and mindful of a meaning that aligns with the intended expression. Third, interpret these verses according to the meaning of the verse. Fourth, elucidating the verses by cross-referencing them with related verses that share thematic relevance enables readers to comprehend verses that resonate with the discussed verse.
Fifth, elucidating the historical context of revelation (asbāb al-nuzūl) if there is authentic information regarding it.[1] These five systematic steps are the methodology he employs while interpreting the verses of the Qur’ān. However, before embarking on the exegesis of Qur’anic verses, Hasbi initially introduces the Sūrat he will elucidate by highlighting several key points about the Sūrat. These include: First, he mentions the name of the Sūrat and its meaning; for instance, the name “al-Baqara” signifies “the cow.” Second, he designates whether the Sūrat is Makki (revealed in Mecca) or Madani (revealed in Medina). Third, he expounds the reason behind the Sūrat’s appellation. Fourth, he outlines the historical context of the revelation of the Sūrat. Fifth, he delineates the substantive content of the Sūrat. Sixth, he establishes connections and correspondences between the current Sūrat and the preceding one.[1] Subsequently, he proceeds to initiate the exegesis of the verses by the aforementioned systematic writing approach.

**Sources of Interpretation**

The sources of exegesis constitute a crucial aspect in the composition of a tafsir, as they illuminate the quality of the forthcoming exegesis. The sources utilized by Hasbi in this exegesis, in a general sense, are broadly consistent with those employed by other commentators. These sources encompass verses from the Qur’ān, Hadith, the opinions of Şahaba, the views of Tabi’in, and the insights of other exegetes.[1] In addition to these sources, Hasbi, while interpreting certain Quranic verses, integrates insights from systematically organized knowledge, thereby ensuring accessibility to readers, as is evident in his treatment of Quranic verse 164 in QS. al-Baqara.[1]

More specifically, the sources used in composing this interpretation of an-Nuur are sourced from the main interpretations, both the bil-ma’ṣur (text-based) and bil-ra’y (reason-based) interpretations, as well as other interpretations such as Ibn Kathir’s Umdat al-Tafsir, Muhammad Abduh and Muhammad Rashid bin Ali Rida’s Tafsir al-Manar, Muhammad Jamal al-Din al-Qasimi’s Tafsir Mahasin al-Ta’wil (also known as Tafsir Qasimy), Mustafa al-Maraghi’s Tafsir Maraghi, and Muhammad Mahmud Hijazi’s Tafsir al-Wadhih.[1]

Based on the sources of interpretation that he uses in Tafsir an-Nuur and the way he interprets the verses of the Qur’ān, it can be seen that this interpretation leads to ijtima’i. As for the indications that the Tafsir an-Nuur leans more towards ijtima’i (sociocultural interpretation), it can be observed from the background of its writing. The fact that Hasbi authored the tafsir an-Nuur with the aim of addressing social issues underscores its inclination towards sociocultural interpretation. Therefore, through this interpretation, Hasbi endeavors to provide solutions to social problems.
While drawing upon these sources as foundational exegesis data, in the preface of his exegesis, Hasbi asserts that, for guidance in translating Quranic verses into Indonesian, he also consults several other tafsirs, including those by Abu Su’ud, Shiddieqy Hasan Khan, and al-Qasimy.[1]

Based on the referenced sources underpinning his interpretative framework, it can be inferred that *Tafsir an-Nuur* applies a combined interpretation method between the *bil-ma’sur* (text-based) interpretation method and the *bil-ra’yi* (reason-based) interpretation method. However, from these two methods, it is clear that Hasbi is more dominant in using the interpretation method of *bil-ra’yi* (reason-based) in explaining verses from a scientific perspective, cultural or other perspectives.

**Interpretive Methodology**

Methodologically, scholars categorize the division of exegesis methods into four types. The four methods of exegesis classified by scholars are as follows: *Tahlili* (Analytical), *Ijmali* (Concise), *Muqaran* (Comparative), and *Maudhu’i* (Thematic).[16], [17] Based on this categorization of methods concerning the method employed in *Tafsir an-Nuur*, Nasruddin Baidan asserts that this exegesis utilizes the *ijmali* (Concise) method.[18] This method involves the commentator referencing Quranic verses in the sequence they appear, providing a global explanation of their meanings, discerning the intents within the verses, and articulating them in simple phrases, making them more accessible for comprehension and thereby clarifying their meanings for readers or listeners.[16] The utilization of the *ijmali* method is evident in the way he succinctly interprets verses, presenting them concisely and compactly. Consequently, this exegesis falls under the category of *ijmali* exegesis. In interpreting Quranic verses through the *ijmali* method, Hasbi generally employs several, as outlined below.

**Interpretation of the Qur’ān using the Qur’ān**

Interpreting the Qur’ān with Quranic verses is an excellent method to understanding the intentions of the Qur’ān, as emphasized directly by the Qur’ān itself (QS. al-Furqān: 33): “وَلََ يََْتُونَكَ بِمَثَلٍ املَا جمئ ْنَاكَ بِملَْْق م وَاَحْسَنَ ت َفْسم يَا” This is because the one who knows the true intentions of the Qur’ān most comprehensively is Allah Himself.[19], [20] Therefore, commentators consider the method of interpreting the Qur’ān with the Qur’ān as a foundational step in the process of Quranic interpretation. In this regard, Ibn Kathir also asserts in the introduction to his exegesis that interpreting the Qur’ān with the Qur’ān is the finest form of interpretation.[21] This sentiment is also affirmed by Zarkasyi, as the most effective method for comprehending the Qur’ān is through the Qur’ān’s
explanations. Some verses are initially expressed in a general manner (mujmal) and then clarified in subsequent verses, and so forth.[22]

An example of Quranic interpretation with the Qur’ān found in Tafsir an-Nuur pertains to the interpretation of the word كَلممَاتٍ in QS. al-Baqara: 37: فَنَلَقِيَ آدمٌ كَلممَاتٍ فَتَابَ عَلَيْهِ إِلَيْهِ هُوَ الت اواابُ الراحميمُ. Hasbi interprets the meaning of the term “كَلممَاتٍ” using QS. al-A’rāf: 23: فَلا يَلَقَ أَن تَغْفِرْ لَنَا وَتَرْحََْنَا لَنَكُونَنا ممنَ الَْْاسمرمينَ. This interpretation is based on a narration from Ibn Abbas.[1] Ibn Kathir in his exegesis also aligns with the opinion that the term “كَلممَاتٍ” refers to QS. al-A’rāf: 23, as mentioned earlier.[1]

Interpretation of the Qur’ān using Hadith

Hadith plays a crucial role in elucidating the meanings of Quranic verses because the Prophet is a messenger of Allah, and he possesses the most profound understanding of the Qur’ān’s meanings.[19] Thus, it was his responsibility to elucidate the Qur’ān’s meanings to his Ṣaḥāba.[22], [23] The most reliable guidance for understanding the Qur’ān originates from the Prophet himself, as he serves as the embodiment and the expounder of the Qur’ān.[20] Consequently, some Quranic verses can be comprehended with the explanations provided in hadiths narrated by the Prophet’s Ṣaḥāba. The Qur’ān itself overtly states that the Prophet’s duty includes clarifying the Quranic revelations (QS. al-Nahl: 44): "بِملْب َي منَاتم وَالزُّبُرم وَأَن ْزَلْنَا إملَيْكَ الذ مكْرَ لمت ُبَيّ مَ لملنااسم مَا ن ُز ملَ إملَيْهممْ وَلَعَلاهُمْ ي َت َفَكارُونَ". Ibn Kathir also asserts that if Quranic interpretations using the Qur’ān do not yield clarity, then the second approach to interpreting the Qur’ān is through the use of hadiths, as hadiths also function as the exposition of the Qur’ān.[21]

In his exegesis, Tafsir an-Nuur, Hasbi employs hadiths to elucidate certain Quranic verses. An example of Quranic interpretation using hadith found in this work pertains to the interpretation of the term “بمظُلْمٍ” in QS. al-An’ām: 82: أَن ْعَلِمْكَ لَظُلْمٍ أُولَئمكَ لََُمُ الأَمْنُ وَهُمْ مُهْتَدُونَ. Hasbi interprets the term “بمظُلْمٍ” to mean “polytheism” (shirk).[24] This interpretation of “بَيْطَمَ” as meaning polytheism is based on a hadith narrated by Bukhari and Muslim. When the verse was revealed, the Ṣaḥāba found it challenging to comprehend, and they questioned the Prophet about who among them did not wrong themselves. The Prophet’s response clarified that the “wrongdoing” referred to in the verse was not as they initially thought, but rather it indicated polytheism, as explained in QS. Luqmān: إِنَّ الَّذِينَ مِنَ الٍّأَمْرِ عَظُيمٌ: 13.[24]
Interpretation of the Qur’ān using the Statements of the Ṣaḥāba and Tābi‘īn

The utilization of statements from the Ṣaḥāba (Prophet’s companions) and the Tābi‘īn (the followers of Ṣaḥāba) is also a recognized method for interpreting the Qur’ān. This is because the Ṣaḥāba were the finest individuals who lived during the time of the Prophet and received direct explanations of the Qur’ān from him. Similarly, the Tābi‘īn are considered the best individuals after the Ṣaḥāba, who received explanations about the interpretation of the Qur’ān from the Ṣaḥāba.[19], [20] In this regard, even the Prophet acknowledged that the statements of the Ṣaḥāba could be used as a reference for understanding the Qur’ān, as seen in the case of Mu‘ās being dispatched to Yemen, where he stated that he would judge based on the Qur’ān and the Hadith. He would resort to his reasoning if a ruling could not be derived from these sources, and the Prophet approved of this approach.[21]

Likewise, the usage of statements from the Tābi‘īn is common. When explanations from the Qur’ān, Hadith, or the Ṣaḥāba are unavailable, many scholars resort to the explanations of the Tābi‘īn to understand the Qur’ān, such as the views of Mujahid and others. An example of the application of statements from the Ṣaḥāba and Tābi‘īn in the Tafsir an-Nuur is evident in the determination of the Makki (Meccan) or Madani (Madinan) status of QS. al-Fātiḥa. Hasbi employs the opinions of the Ibn Abbas (Ṣaḥāba) and the Qatadah (Tābi‘īn) to establish that QS. al-Fātiḥa was revealed in Mecca. Additionally, he notes that some scholars assert that QS. al-Fātiḥa was revealed after QS. al-Muddaththir. However, he acknowledges that scholars, like Abu Hurairah, Mujahid, Atha‘ bin Yasar, and az-Zuhri, argue that QS. al-Fātiḥa was revealed in Madinah.[1]

Regarding the differences in opinions about the status of QS. al-Fātiḥa, Hasbi explains that some commentators propose that certain parts of the QS. were revealed in Mecca while others were revealed in Madinah. He adds that commentators like Baghawi, Ibn Kathir, Baidhawi, and most scholars support Ibn Abbas’s opinion because the Quranic text itself implies that QS. al-Fātiḥa was revealed in Mecca.[1]
Interpretation of the Qur’ān using the Context of Revelation (Asbāb al-nuzūl)

The reason for revelation (asbāb al-nuzūl) leads to the revelation of one or more verses of the Qur’ān, explaining the legal rulings at the time of the event or circumstance that occurred, including incidents or questions posed to the Prophet.[25] Therefore, the causes for the revelation of Quranic verses, whether due to events or questions, constitute scholars’ general understanding of asbāb al-nuzūl. Knowledge of these reasons is an effective method of comprehending the meanings of Quranic verses, enabling an unveiling of the veil that conceals the meaning of certain verses, thus facilitating understanding. Scholars unanimously agree that the knowledge of the reason for revelation can only be obtained through authentic narrations, either directly from the Prophet or reliably from the Ṣaḥaba.[26]

An exemplar of the reason for revelation explained in the Tafsir an-Nuur pertains to the reason for revelation of QS. al-Nāḥl: 106: من كفر بالله من بعد إيمانه إلا من أثرة وقيل أنها مطمنة بالإيمان ولكن من شرح بالكفر صدرًا فعَلُّهم غضب من الله وصمم عذاب عظيم. Hasbi states that the reason for the revelation of this verse is based on the narration of Ibn Jarir from Ibn Abbas. It is reported that the polytheists had captured Ammar ibn Yasir and compelled him to blaspheme and revile the Prophet while praising their idols. Subsequently, Ammar went to the Prophet, and the Prophet asked, “What happened?” Ammar replied, “O Messenger of Allah, I spoke ill of you and praised their idols.” Upon hearing this response, the Prophet inquired, “What was your state of heart at that moment?” Ammar replied, “My heart remained steadfast in faith.” The Prophet said, “If they force you again, follow their wishes.” Consequently, the verse was revealed: إملَ مَنْ أُكْرمهَ وَقَلْبُهُ مُطْمَئنُّ بِملَائِيمَ وَلَكَ مَنْ شَرَحَ بِملْكُ فَرَم صَدْر إِلَّا من أثرة وقيل أنها مطمنة بالإيمان. [27]

Interpretation of the Qur’ān using Inter-Sūrat Correlation (Munāsaba of Inter-Sūrat)

Munāsaba, or coherence, is a discipline that elucidates the interconnectedness between various expressions within a single verse or between verses in different parts of the Qur’ān or among different chapters.[26] This interconnectedness is rooted in meaning, thus rendering Munāsaba a scholarly field that reveals interrelated meanings among the chapters and verses.[28] Scholars consider the knowledge of Munāsaba crucial, and it is even classified as one of the branches of knowledge that exegetes must master when interpreting the Qur’ān.[23]

In his commentary, Hasbi generally elucidates the coherence between the chapters (Sūrats) as he commences interpreting a particular Sūrat. An example of inter-Sūrat coherence mentioned by Hasbi in his commentary is the coherence
between QS. al-An’ām and the preceding QS. al-Mā’ida. According to him, the coherence between QS. al-An’ām and QS. al-Mā’ida is as follows:

Firstly, the contents of QS. al-Mā’ida often address the Ahl al-Kitab in opposition, whereas QS. al-An’ām predominantly addresses the polytheists. Secondly, QS. al-An’ām briefly explains the prohibited foods and slaughter regulations, whereas QS. al-Mā’ida provides a detailed explanation. Notably, QS. al-Mā’ida is the last Sūrat revealed. Thirdly, QS. al-An’ām commences with the phrase “Alhamdulillah” (Praise be to Allah), while QS. al-Mā’ida concludes with elucidations of divine decrees. There exists a connection between praise and divine decrees.[24]

**Interpretation of the Qur’ān using Modern Scientific Approaches**

Interpreting the Qur’ān using scientific is a practice often undertaken by contemporary exegetes, hence the term “tafsir bi’l-ilmī,” which refers to an interpretation that employs scientific principles to comprehend certain Quranic verses. In this approach, the exegetes endeavor to apply scientific methodologies to the expressions in the Qur’ān and strive to extract various fields of knowledge and philosophical insights from it.[23] An example of utilizing scientific theories when interpreting Quranic verses, as found in the Tafsir an-Nuur, is evident in the interpretation of QS. al-Baqara: 164:

> إنّ في خلق السّماوات والأرض واحيال اللّيلى والنهار والّلّيّكَ الّتي يُحَرِّي في النّبّهِ بِمَا يُنفّع النّاسَ وَمَا أَنْزَلَ اللّهُ مِنَ السّماوات مِن مَا فَأْحَيَهُوَ الْأَرْضَ بِعَدَّ مُؤَتِّمًا وَطَيَّبُ فِيهَا مِنْ كُلِّ ذَاتِ الْمَفْصَّلِ وَتَصْرِيف الرّياحِ وال سّحابُ الْمُسْحَرِ بين السّماوات والأرض لِلّذين نَجِيْلٍ يُظْنُّونَ

When interpreting the mentioned verse, Hasbi elucidates it from a general scientific perspective, asserting that several phenomena in the universe manifest the unity and mercy of Allah. Firstly, concerning creating the heavens and the earth, Hasbi delves into the law of gravitational attraction. He explains that the stability observed in celestial bodies results from a profound divine principle scientifically termed “gravitational force.” Hasbi emphasizes that without this gravitational force, the stability of planets would be disrupted, leading to the disarray and destruction of the cosmos.[1]

Secondly, regarding the alternation between day and night, Hasbi posits that this phenomenon, as well as the changing of seasons on earth, is due to geographical variations across different hemispheres of the planet.[1] Thirdly, regarding ships sailing on the sea, Hasbi expounds upon the properties of water, Archimedes’ principle elucidating the buoyancy of an object submerged in a fluid, and the properties of gases, vapors, and electricity that serve as
navigational guidelines for seafarers.[1] Fourthly, the process of water descending from the sky is explained through the precipitation process outlined by scholars. Hasbi details the cycle of evaporation, condensation, cloud formation, and rainfall, elucidating how warm air causes water vapor to evaporate, forming clouds that release rain when reaching cooler regions of the earth’s atmosphere.[1]

Fifthly, addressing the revival of the Earth after death, and sixthly, the diversity of roaming animals, Hasbi relates these concepts to the role of rain in fostering plant and animal life. He describes this as the initial phase of life on earth, drawing parallels with theories like James Jeffrey’s tidal theory and Chamberlin Moulton’s planetesimal theory, which proposes the fragmentation of a primordial mass into planets.[1] Seventhly, the concept of winds carrying plant seeds and eighthly, the role of clouds functioning between the heavens and the earth are expounded upon by Hasbi, further illustrating the interconnectedness of various natural processes within the universe.[1] From the points mentioned above, it is clear that Hasbi is trying to explain these points with an explanation of scientific theory as a form of miracle of the Qur’an in scientific terms. However, the explanation is more of a general explanation and does not appear to be too detailed regarding the suitability of the information from the verses of the Qur’an with scientific theory.

The discussion of modern scientific theories employed by Hasbi in elucidating Quranic verses related to the universe indicates that Hasbi is one of the scholars who endorse the scientific interpretation (tafsir ilmi). It is evident that when explaining Quranic verses related to the universe, Hasbi frequently associates them with modern scientific theories, as mentioned in several points above, as a manifestation of the Quran’s miraculous nature substantiated by modern scientific knowledge. The presence of modern scientific knowledge is believed to complement the explanation of verses concerning the universe. Hence, some scholars often utilize scientific theories as a support in comprehending certain Quranic verses, leading to the characterization of their interpretation as “tafsir ilmi” or scientific interpretation. Looking at his comment, it will be understood that Hasbi is trying to combine the information in the Quran with scientific theory as evidence for the miracles of the Quran. Therefore, it becomes evident that Hasbi is identified as a figure in exegesis who believes that the miraculous nature of the Qur’an aligns with explanations from modern science. Consequently, certain verses of the Qur’an can also be elucidated from a scientific perspective. Nevertheless, the existence of this scientific interpretation also elicits both support and opposition among scholars. Some scholars who endorse this approach include Fahruddin al-Razi and Thantawi al-Jauhari, while...
others, such as Abu Ishaq al-Syathibi and Sheikh Mahmud Syaltut stand in opposition to the concept of scientific interpretation.

**Interpretation of the Qur’ān using Juridical (Fiqh) Approaches**

Within the Qur’ān, some verses discuss legal principles (fiqh), prompting certain scholars to compile these verses and subsequently interpret them within specialized collections known as “Ahkam al-Qur’ān,”[29] which are then categorized as fiqh-oriented interpretations. This interpretation emphasizes elucidating the legal provisions in the verses and outlining the methodology for deriving legal rulings from them.[30]

In his exegesis, Hasbi extensively explains legal principles while elucidating legal verses. This is due to his expertise in jurisprudence (fiqh) and its foundational principles (ushul al-fiqh). An illustrative example of Hasbi’s interpretation of legal principles is found in his discussion of QS. al-Mā’ida: 38: يُوَالِسَانِي وَيُوَالِسَانِيَةَ فَاقْطَعُوا أَيْدَيْهِمَا جَزَاءً بِمَا كَسَبَا نَكَالَ. Hasbi contends that this verse pertains to the legal ruling for male and female thieves. He asserts that the judge should issue the punishment of amputation for the right hand of both male and female thieves, with the amputation boundary extending from the wrist to the base of the fingers. This ruling is established as a consequence of their actions that harm the property of others.[24]

Furthermore, Hasbi asserts that this verse explicitly stipulates the punishment of hand amputation for thieves. However, the verse does not provide clear guidance on the consequences if the offense is repeated or specify the minimum value of stolen property that would lead to the punishment of hand amputation. The absence of clarification regarding the minimum value of stolen property has led to differences of opinion among scholars, particularly concerning the threshold of stolen wealth. Hasbi presents several perspectives from scholars as follows:

Firstly, according to reports attributed to al-Hasan and Dauz azh-Zahiri, they argue that even if a small amount is stolen, the punishment of hand amputation should still apply. Secondly, scholars from the early (salaf) and later (khalaf) generations agree that the minimum theft threshold is a quarter of a dinar or 3 dirhams of silver. A hadith from the Prophet supports this, reported by Bukhari and Muslim through Ibn Umar, where in the Prophet ordered the hand of a thief who stole a valuable shield worth 3 dirhams to be amputated. Thirdly, the Hanafi school asserts that the minimum threshold for theft is 10 dirhams, and the stolen item should be kept in a location designated for storing goods.[24] In almost the same language, Abu Su’ud also said that cutting off the
hand would occur if a thief steals goods from a deposit box (حمرْزٌ) and the value of the goods stolen is 10 dirhams or more.[31]

Ibnu Kathir, in his exegesis, also states that scholars differ in determining the threshold of theft that results in the offender receiving the punishment of hand amputation. Among the criteria for theft, Ibn Kathir mentions what Hasbi explained above, such as the threshold of 3 dirhams, in accordance with the opinion of Imam Malik bin Anas based on the hadith in Bukhari and Muslim: أن رسول الله صلى الله عليه وسلم قطع في بحث نه للاثر. In addition to the 3 dirhams threshold, Ibn Kathir also explains that there is a view within the Hanafi school indicating a threshold of 10 dirhams for theft. This perspective is also conveyed by Hasbi in his exegesis, indicating a general alignment between the explanations of Hasbi and Ibn Kathir on this matter.[32]

Additionally, Hasbi highlights that regarding repeated theft, the punishment progressively intensifies: for the first theft, the left hand is amputated; for the second theft, the left foot is amputated; for the third theft, the right hand is amputated; and for the fourth theft, the right foot is amputated. If the individual continues to steal after this point, they will be imprisoned. Moreover, Hasbi explains that according to scholars who specialize in the matter (muhaqqiq), the terms “saariq” (male thief) and “saariqah” (female thief) imply habitual theft. Hence, hand amputation is only executed for thieves who have habitually committed theft. Those who have stolen once or twice are not considered habitual offenders and, therefore, do not incur the punishment of hand amputation. This penalty is applied when no alternative means of correction remain.[24] After elucidating these legal perspectives, Hasbi underscores that the punishment for theft can be waived if the offender is forgiven or repents, provided the case has not yet reached the judicial authorities. Nevertheless, the stolen property must still be returned.[24]

Hence, we can conclude that in matters of jurisprudence (fikih) pertaining to Quranic verses, particularly in the context of issues related to the punishment of theft (qisas), Hasbi engages in an analysis incorporating perspectives from various legal schools (mazhab) relevant to the subject. He also references legal opinions, occasionally without explicitly mentioning the scholar’s name, using terms such as “muhaqqiq,” to expound on jurisprudential matters discussed in the verses.
Interpretation of the Qur’ān using Cultural Approaches.

Interpretation using the cultural approach represents a pattern of exegesis that elucidates verses of the Qur’ān through a focus on meticulous examination of their expressions. The central meanings of the verses are conveyed using captivating language, followed by the application of these verses under societal norms and the framework of urbanization. This interpretation approach is also called “adabi ijtima’i” exegesis.[23]

In his exegesis, Hasbi also employs the adabi ijtima’i approach when expounding upon certain verses of the Qur’ān. The interpretation undertaken by Hasbi utilizing the adabi ijtima’i approach is characterized by the incorporation of Indonesian culture, rendering this model of interpretation evident in the elucidation of specific verses. For instance, this is discernible in his commentary on QS. al-Nūr: 27 as follows:

يَََي ُّهَا الاذمينَ آمَنُوا لَ تَدْخُلُوا ب ُيُوتً  غَيَْ ب ُيُوتمكُمْ حَتَّا تَسْتَأْنمسُوا وَتُسَل ممُوا عَلَى أَهْلمهَا ذَ
لمكُمْ خَيٌْ لَكُمْ لَعَلاكُمْ تَذَكارُونَ.

When interpreting the verse, Hasbi distinctly elucidates the etiquette of visiting, viewed through the lens of Indonesian culture. This becomes particularly evident in his explanations regarding seeking permission to enter. He expounds upon the methods of seeking permission, including knocking on doors, calling out to those within the house, clearing one’s throat, reciting tasbih and tahmid, or explicitly requesting permission. Furthermore, Hasbi explains that the prohibition of entering someone else’s house without permission applies universally, regardless of gender, whether it is the house of a close relative (mahram) or especially if it is not a mahram’s house. Everyone possesses privacy, even if it involves a father or child. He reinforces this statement with a Hadith of the Prophet, which underscores the necessity of seeking permission even when entering one’s mother’s room.[33]

Regarding seeking permission, Hasbi emphasizes that even husbands are encouraged to seek permission from their wives before entering their rooms, as there could be instances when the wife prefers not to be seen by others. He cites the example of the wife of Ibn Mas’ud, who, upon Abdullah’s return from a journey, would always clear her throat upon arriving home, as she did not want to be seen in undesirable conditions.[33]

Subsequently, Hasbi explains that while the wording of the verse first emphasizes seeking permission and then greeting the occupants, he believes that the initial action should be to greet, followed by seeking permission. He shares this perspective with other scholars who prioritize giving greetings before seeking permission from the homeowner. In his view, the conjunction “and” in the verse does not add any substantive significance in this context. Additionally,
Hasbi notes other scholars’ opinion that greetings and seeking permission should only occur if someone is visible inside the house.[33]

Conclusion

From the explanations provided above, it can be inferred that Hasbi is among the scholars who ardently pursue religious knowledge, thereby acquiring expertise in various fields such as jurisprudence (fiqh), principles of jurisprudence (ushul al-fiqh), exegesis (tafsir), Quranic sciences (ulum al-Qur’an), theology (kalam), and more. These proficiencies were undoubtedly cultivated through unwavering determination and his profound love for Islamic scholarship. With his acquired expertise, he has also succeeded in composing numerous books and articles, with one of his significant achievements being the comprehensive 30-volume exegesis titled Tafsir an-Nuur. In writing Tafsir an-Nuur, Hasbi used a mixed method between bil ma’sur and bil ra’yi and of the two methods he was more inclined towards the bil ra’yi method, interpreting the verses of the Qur’an in an ijmalii (general) manner, using mu’tabar and modern interpretations as sources of interpretation. Therefore, in his interpretation, Hasbi employs a modern interpretation method while simultaneously adhering to classical interpretation methods. Based on research, it can be concluded that the nature of his interpretation is sociocultural and literary. Technically, he also uses several methods in interpreting verses of the Qur’an such as; Firstly, he interprets the Qur’ān using the al-Qur’ān itself, secondly, he interprets the Qur’ān using hadith, thirdly, he interprets the Qur’ān using the statements of the sahābas and tābi’īn, fourthly, he interprets al-Qur’ān using the context of revelation (asbāb al-nuzūl), fifthly, he interprets the Qur’ān using inter-sūrat correlation (munāsaba of inter-sūrat), sixthly, he interprets the Qur’ān using modern scientific approaches, seventhly, he interprets the Qur’ān using juridical (fiqh) approaches, lastly, he interprets the Qur’ān using cultural approaches. Owing to its well-structured and lucid presentation, the intended meanings of the verses are effectively conveyed and easily comprehended by readers, whether they are researchers or members of the general public.

Credit author statement

Nazar Fadli: Conceptualization, Methodology, Writing – review & editing, Supervision, Project administration.

Acknowledgement

We would like to thank several anonymous reviewer for providing valuable input on this paper.
Bibliography.


