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Epistemology of Tafsir *Anfās al-Maḥāsin fī Tafsīr Sūrat Yāsīn* by K.H. Syaikhul Islam Ali Masyhuri

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ABSTRACT

In January 2025, a new tafsir work entitled Anfās al-Maḥāsin fī Tafsīr Sūrat Yāsīn from Sidoarjo, authored by K.H. Syaikhul Islam Ali Masyhuri, a prominent scholar from the Progressive Islamic Boarding School Bumi Shalawat. This work remains largely unexplored in academic discourse, and its aesthetically chosen title reflects the author's distinctive approach to interpreting Sūrat Yāsīn. This study aims to examine the epistemology of Anfās al-Maḥāsin, with focus on its interpretive methodology and the validity of its exegesis. Using a qualitative method based on library research, data were gathered from the primary text and relevant secondary sources. The analysis applies the perspective of Saifuddin Herlambang to evaluate the methodology and Abdul Mustaqim to assess the validity. The results show that K.H. Syaikhul combines the bi alriwāyah approach by referring to the Al-Qur'ān, Prophetic traditions, views of the companions, Tābi'īn, and mufasir, with bi al-dirāyah rooted in ijtihād, but grounded in authoritative references. He employs the tafsīr ijmālī method in mushafic sequence, with a magāṣidī pattern. Although it has limited scientific correspondence, its coherence remains strong. This tafsir is relevant to the needs of people today. This study offers a foundational step for future academic research on this tafsir.

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ABSTRAK

Pada Januari 2025, seorang ulama dari Pesantren Progresif Bumi Shalawat Sidoarjo, K.H. Syaikhul Islam Ali Masyhuri, menerbitkan sebuah tafsir berjudul *Anfās al-Maḥāsin fī Tafsīr Sūrat Yāsīn*. Kemunculan tafsir ini menjadi menarik, terutama apakah epistemologi yang digunakan memiliki kecenderungan yang sama dengan epistemologi tafsir era modern atau tidak. Penelitian ini bertujuan mengkaji epistemologi tafsir Anfās al-Mahāsin, dengan fokus pada metodologi penafsiran dan validitas tafsirnya. Penelitian menggunakan metode kualitatif berbasis studi kepustakaan, serta sumber data dari teks primer kitab tersebut dan literatur sekunder yang relevan. Analisis dilakukan melalui perspektif Saifuddin Herlambang untuk metodologi dan Abdul Mustaqim untuk validitas. Hasil penelitian menunjukan bahwa K.H. Syaikhul memadukan pendekatan bi al-riwāyah dengan merujuk pada Al-Qur'ān, hadis Nabi saw, pendapat sahabat, Tābi'īn, dan mufasir, serta bi al-dirāyah yang berbasis ijtihād, namun tetap dalam bingkai referensi otoritatif. Selanjutnya, ia menggunakan metode tafsir ijmālī dengan urutan mushafi dan berkecenderungan corak *maqāṣidī*. Validitasnya konsisten secara koherensi, namun minim dalam korespondensi terhadap sains. Secara pragmatis, tafsir ini relevan dengan kebutuhan umat masa kini. Berdasarkan analisis epistemologi tersebut, dapat disimpulkan bahwa Anfās al-Mahāsin memiliki banyak kesamaan dengan epistemologi tafsir era modern. Dengan memahami epistemologi Anfās al-Maḥāsin, penelitian ini dapat menjadi rujukan bagi penelitian selanjutnya mengenai tafsir ini menggunakan pendekatan yang berbeda.

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A. INTRODUCTION

The dynamics of tafsir science development is not only centered in the Middle East or the Arabian, but also extends to various parts in the world, including Indonesia. This shows that tafsir is not a static discipline, but is dynamic and continuously growing along with social changes, culture, and challenges of the times. Each generation faces different problems, so the interpretation of Al-Qur'ān always updates to provide relevant and contextual solutions. This development also reflects how understanding related to the Al-Qur'ān interpretations based on people needs in every era.¹

The spread of tafsir science in Indonesia went hand in hand with the Islamization progress brought by preachers from Gujarat, Persia and Arabia. In their message, they were not only introducing the religion of Islam, but also introducing Holy Al-Qur'ān to local villagers. The existence of Al-Qur'ān becomes a main point in Islamization progress, even though in their first impression with the Holy Al-Qur'ān was truly natural. But this first move became the foundation for tafsir development in Indonesia in the next phase.²

Zia Al-Ayyubi recorded that the history of tafsir in Indonesia began in pre-colonial period (7th to 15th centuries), then continued into early colonialism period (16th to 18th centuries), with the publications of *Tarjumān al-Mustafīd* by 'Abd al-Ra'ūf al-Singkilī. The next developed were began in the end of colonialism period (19th to 20th century), highlighted by the presence of some tafsir works, including *Tafsīr Marāḥ Labīd* by Shaykh Nawawī al-Bantanī, *Tafsīr Fayḍ al-Raḥmān* by K.H. Sholeh Darat, *al-Qur'ān al-Karīm* by Mahmud Yunus, and *al-Furqān* by Ahmad Hasan. In this period there was a decrease in tafsir production, especially at 1942-1952 centuries, because of socio-political condition while and after independence era. Entering the modern era (20th century until today), the progression of tafsir in Indonesia was significant, with one of the monumental works was *Tafsir Al-Misbah* by M. Quraish Shihab.³

In every era, the characteristics of tafsir have been adapting to the social and cultural of society. Atabik divides the history of tafsir in Indonesia into two parts. First, the period before 20th century when tafsir tried to use local languages to connect with the public, which are *Tarjumān al-Mustafīd* that wrote by Pegon-Malay language. Second, the period after 20th century that divided by three phases. First phase (early 20th century to 1950s), marked by the emergence of ratio-critical perspectives in interpretation, like *Tafsīr al-Furqān*. The second phase (1950s to 1990s), tafsir has been developed more systematically academic, as seen in *Tafsīr al-Azhar* by Buya Hamka and *Al-Qur'an dan Tafsirnya* published by the Ministry of Religious Affairs of the Republic of Indonesia. And the last phase (1990s until now) is characterized by multidisciplinary approach, when tafsir products are no longer limited to printed books, but are also available in digital products, for example *Tafsir Al-Misbah*, Al-Qur'ān NU Online and Al-Qur'ān Tadabbur.⁴

Following that historical path, the emergence of new tafsir works in the 21st century reflects the continuity of Indonesia's tafsir tradition. One of them is *Anfās al-Maḥāsin fī Tafsīr Sūrat Yāsīn* written by K.H. Syaikhul Islam Ali Masyhuri, an ulama from the Pesantren

¹Irfanudien, Solahudin, and Rumba Triana, 'Metodologi Tafsir Raudah Al-Irfan fi Ma'rifah Al-Qur'an (Studi Analisis Kitab Tafsir Karya K.H. Ahmad Sanusi)', *Cendekia Muda Islam: Jurnal Ilmiah* 3, no. 2 (2023), 244.

²Muhammad Ruli, 'Tafsir Al-Qur'an Berbahasa Sunda Kajian Metode dan Corak Tafsir Raudatul Irfan fi Ma'rifatil Qur'an Karya K.H. Ahmad Sanusi' (Skripsi, Semarang, UIN Walisongo, 2017), 5.

³M. Zia Al-Ayyubi, 'Dinamika Tafsir Al-Qur'an di Indonesia (Era Pra-Kolonialisme hingga Era Kolonialisme)', *Rausyan Fikr* 16, no. 1 (2020), 14-23.

⁴Ahmad Atabik, 'Perkembangan Tafsir Modern di Indonesia', Hermeneutik 8, no. 2 (2014), 318-322.

Progresif Bumi Shalawat, launched in January 2025, in Sidoarjo. This tafsir work can be translated as "breaths of goodness in the interpretation of Sūrat Yāsīn". The title is not only symbolic, but also reflects the author's attempt to present an aesthetic and wise dimension in interpreting Sūrat Yāsīn.

The emergence of this tafsir adds color to the scholarly literature of tafsir in Indonesia, especially in the context of modern tafsir epistemology. The question is whether *Anfās al-Maḥāsin*has the same tedencies as the epistemology commonly used by modern Indonesian local tafsir, or not. This question is important because it will determine the position of *Anfās al-Maḥāsin*in the map of tafsir epistemology in Indonesia.

A number of previous studies examined the epistemology of tafsir by Indonesian scholars, such as Fadli and his team's research on *Tafsir Al-Azhar* by Buya Hamka;⁵ Didik Saepudin on *Tafsir Fayḍ al-Raḥmān* by K.H. Sholeh Darat;⁶ and Johanah Salsabillah and Alif Hibatullah on *Tafsir Hidayah al-Al-Qur'ān* by K.H. Afifuddin Dimyati.⁷ Based on the explanation of these previous studies, the author can conclude that no research has been found that specifically examines the epistemology of *Anfās al-Maḥāsin*. This research, therefore, aims to examine the epistemology *Anfās al-Maḥāsin fī Tafsīr Sūrat Yāsīn*, highlighting its applied methodology and the validity of its interpretations. This study is expected not only to enrich the scholarly literature of Indonesia's tafsir but also to open a space for academic debate on the position of pesantren tafsir within the discourse of modern-era tafsir.

B. METHODS

This research uses a qualitative method with a descriptive-analytical approach to examine the tafsir text in depth and uncover the epistemological framework behind it.⁸ The data sources consist of two types. First, primary data in the form of the tafsir *Anfās al-Maḥāsin fī Tafsīr Sūrat Yāsīn*. Second, secondary data in the form of books, journal articles, and other relevant scientific works.

Data was collected through a literature review, while data analysis used two key perspectives. First, Saifuddin Herlambang's perspective in *Pengantar Ilmu Tafsir* was used to identify the interpretative methodology in *Anfās al-Maḥāsin* which includes its sources, methods, and styles of interpretation. The analytical procedure involved mapping the structure of the tafsir and then matching it with Herlambang's methodological classification.

⁵The research on *Tafsir Al-Azhar* found that its epistemology includes several main aspects. First, its sources of interpretation are the Qur'an, hadith, the opinion of the Companions, classical and modern tafsir literature, and the use of rationality. Second, the interpretation method is $tahl\bar{l}l\bar{l}$ Third, its interpretive validity is based on three theories of correctness: coherence, correspondence, and pragmatism. Check it out: Fadli, Masiyan, and Musli, 'Metodologi Tafsir Kontekstual Al-Azhar Karya Buya Hamka', *At-Tibyan: Journal of Qur'an and Hadis Studies* 1, no. 1 (2018), 193.

⁶The research on *Tafsīr Fayd al-Raḥmān* found that its epistemology includes several main aspects. First, its sources of interpretation are the Qur'an, hadith, classical tafsir literature, and the opinions of Sufi figures. Second, the interpretive method used is tahlīlī. Third, its interpretive validity applies two theories of correctness: coherence and pragmatism. Check it out: Didik Saepudin, 'Epistemologi Tafsir Nusantara: Studi atas Tafsir Fayd al-Rahman Karya K.H. Shaleh Darat', *Diya Al-Afkar: Jurnal Studi Al-Quran dan al-Hadis* 7, no. 01 (2019), 23.

⁷The research on *Tafsir Hidayah al-Qur'an* found that its epistemology includes several main aspects. First, its main sources of interpretation are the Qur'an, followed by hadith, the opinions of Companions, tabiin, mufasir, Arabic language rules, and *ijtihād*. Second, the interpretive method is *bayānī*. Third, its language style is *ijmālī*. Check it out: Johana Salsabilla and Alif Hibatullah, 'Metodologi Tafsir Kitab Hidayatul Qur'an fi Tafsir Al-Qur'an', International Conference on Muslim Society and Thought 4 (2024), 508.

⁸Eko Murdiyanto, *Metode Penelitian Kualitatif (Teori dan Aplikasi Disertai Contoh Proposal)* (Yogyakarta: UPN Veteran Yogyakarta Press, 2020), 19.

Second, Abdul Mustaqim's perspective in *Epistemologi Tafsir Kontemporer* was used to assess the epistemological validity of the tafsir through three benchmarks: coherence, correspondence, and pragmatism. This stage was carried out by carefully examining K.H. Syaikhul's interpretative text to identify the consistency of these epistemological elements.

The selection of Saifuddin Herlambang's and Abdul Mustaqim's perspectives was based on their relevance to the research's object and context. Herlambang's methodological framework was chosen because it meticulously outlines the aspects of tafsir studies, including classifications based on the sources, methods, and styles of interpretation. This classification arose from a study of extensive and diverse literature, which resulted in a comprehensive and operational typology. Additionally, Herlambang also accommodates new developments in modern-era tafsir studies, making his proposed framework relevant to the needs of this research. Thus, Herlambang's perspective is considered appropriate for examining *Anfās al-Maḥāsin* because it can systematically map its sources, interpretive methods, and stylistic tendencies.

Meanwhile, Abdul Mustaqim's perspective was chosen because he represents a prominent modern-era Indonesian tafsir scholar who offers a contemporary epistemological framework. Mustaqim's theory not only assesses the validity of a tafsir's methodology but also emphasizes its social relevance, which makes it important to evaluate a tafsir's living value, including K.H. Syaikhul's work. This allows the tafsir to be understood not only in terms of its content but also its contributions to the life of society.¹⁰

C. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

1. Discourse of Tafsīr Epistemology

The term tafsīr epistemology is composed of two key words: epistemology and tafsir. Etymologically, 'epistemology' originates from the Greek words, *episteme*, meaning knowledge and *logos* meaning theory or science. Thus, epistemology can literally be interpreted as the theory of knowledge. ¹¹ In a terminological sense, 'epistemology' refers to the branch of philosophy that examines the origin, structure, methods, and validity of knowledge. ¹²

Meanwhile, the word 'tafsīr' at the etymological level means uncovering hidden meanings, explaining, and clarifying a specific intent. In a terminological sense, 'tafsīr' is understood as a discipline that aims to explain the phrases of the Al-Qur'ān to achieve a correct understanding of the divine message. By referring to these two definitions, 'epistemology of tafsīr' can be understood as a study of the philosophical foundation, methods, and mechanisms for validating knowledge in understanding the Al-Qur'ān.

In line with the development of the times, the epistemology of tafsir has undergone significant changes. According to Abdul Mustaqim, this development can be mapped into three main periods through a 'history of ideas' framework. First, is the formative era, which

⁹Saifuddin Herlambang, Pengantar Ilmu Tafsir (Yogyakarta: Samudra Biru, 2020), vi.

¹⁰Abdul Mustaqim, *Epistemologi Tafsir Kontemporer* (Yogyakarta: LKIS Yogyakarta, 2010), xii-xiii.

¹¹Tira Reseki Pajriani et al., 'Epistemologi Filsafat', *PRIMER: Jurnal Ilmiah Multidisiplin* 1, no. 3 (2023), 283.

¹²Aldomi Putra, 'Tafsir Al-Qur'an Minangkabau: Epistemologi, Lokalitas, dan Dialektika (Studi Kitab Tafsīr al-Burhān, Risālah al-Qawl al-Bayān fī Tafsīr al-Qur'ān, dan Al-Dakwah wa al-Irshād ilā Sabīl al-Rashād)' (Disertasi, Jakarta, Institut PTIQ Jakarta, 2020), 29.

¹³Agus Salim Hasanudin and Eni Zulaiha, 'Hakikat Tafsir Menurut Para Mufasir', *Jurnal Iman dan Spiritualitas* 2, no. 2 (2022), 207.

was marked by the use of quasi-critical reasoning. During this phase (from the time of the Prophet Muhammad until the 2nd century AH), the interpretive method still relied on the authority of figures such as the Prophet, the Companions, and the Tābiʿīn. The validity of the tafsir was largely determined by their legitimacy, so the dominant style was *tafsīr bi alriwāyah* rather than *tafsīr bi al-riwāyah* rather than *tafsīr bi al-riwāyah*

Second is the affirmative era, which is characterized by ideological reasoning. During the Middle Ages, tafsir not only functioned as an effort to understand the holy text but also as an instrument to strengthen a particular political ideology or school of thought. The Al-Qur'ān was often positioned as a source of legitimicy for theological and political views, so interpretation was frequently influenced by ideological interests.¹⁵

Third is the reformative era, which is characterized by critical reasoning. In this phase, the interpretation of the Al-Qur'ān no longer solely relies on traditional authority or ideological interests but instead emphasizes rational and contextual approaches. Mufasir strive to integrate scientific methods with a sensitivity to humanitarian issues and social realities, making tafsir more responsive to the problems of modern society.¹⁶

To fully understand the epistemology of tafsir, there are two main aspects: methodology and the validity of interpretation. Methodology is divided into three parts: sources, methods, and styles of interpretation. Referring to Saifuddin Herlambang's classification, the sources of interpretation ($maṣ\bar{a}dir\ al-tafs\bar{i}r$) include the Al-Qur'ān, ḥadīth, the opinions of the Companions, the tābi'īn, linguistic aspects, as well as the results of reasoning in the form of ra'y and $ijtih\bar{a}d.^{17}$ Meanwhile, the methods of interpretation encompass $ijm\bar{a}l\bar{i}$ (global), $tahl\bar{i}l\bar{i}$ (detailed), $mawd\bar{u}'\bar{i}$ (thematic), and $muq\bar{a}ran$ (comparative), $lahl\bar{i}l\bar{i}$ while the styles can include riwayah, fiqh, tasawuf, philosophy, literature, maqasidi, and science. $lahl\bar{i}l\bar{i}$

As for the validity of interpretation, according to Abdul Mustaqim, it can be viewed through three theories of truth: coherence, which assesses the consistency of the applied

 $^{^{14}}$ Goldziher explained that from the time after the Prophet until the beginning of the second century AH, the Companions were reluctant to interpret the Qur'an with ra'y (personal opinion/ $ijtih\bar{a}d$), because at that time, knowledge was understood as narration. This is evident in the attitudes of figures such as Ibn 'Umar, who refused to interpret; Abu Bakar, who was worried about speaking without a basis from the Prophet SAW; and 'Umar b. Khattab, who even punished people for asking about $mutasy\bar{a}bih\bar{a}t$ verses. See: Mustaqim, Epistemologi Tafsir Kontemporer, 34-35.

¹⁵Various interpretive styles began to emerge, especially at the end of the Umayyad Dynasty and the beginning of the Abbasid Dynasty. The great attention to the development of knowledge during the reign of Caliph Harun al-Rashid (785–809 AD) and his successor, Caliph al-Ma'mun (813–830 AD), became a crucial factor in the birth of tafsir works with diverse orientations. In this period, Syi'ah-style tafsir appeared, such as *Tafsir al-Qur'an* by 'Ali Ibrahim al-Qummi (d. 939 AD) and *At-Tibyān fī Tafsīr al-Qur'ān* by Muhammad ibn al-Hasan al-Tusi (d. 1067 AD). Additionally, Sufi-philosophical tafsir also developed, for example, *Tafsir al-Qur'an* by Al-Tustari (d. 283 AH), and the tafsir of Ibn 'Arabi. See: Mustaqim, 45-47.

 $^{^{16}}$ The reformative era of tafsir was marked by figures such as Sayyid Ahmad Khan, with his $Tafh\bar{n}m$ $al-Qur'\bar{a}n$, and Muhammad Abduh, with his $Al-Man\bar{a}r$, who criticized classical interpretations for being considered irrelevant. This idea was continued by contemporary figures like Fazlur Rahman, Muhammad Syahrur, Muhammad Arkoun, and Hassan Hanafi, who were critical of older tafsir, abandoned madhhab-based patterns, and utilized modern knowledge. Based on a concern for ideological and sectarian tafsir, they built a new epistemology by placing the Qur'an, reality, and the interpreter in a dynamic triadic relationship. The hermeneutic approach became the dominant style in this era. See: Mustaqim, 51-53.

¹⁷M. Afiffuddin Dimyati, *'Ilm al-Tafsīr Usūluhu wa Manāhijuhu* (Mesir: Dar al-Salih, 2020), 32; Annisa Nur Faizah and Deswanti Nabilah Putri, 'Cara Menganalisis Ragam Sumber Tafsir Al-Qur'an', *Jurnal Iman dan Spiritualitas* 2, no. 4 (2022), 537.

¹⁸Herlambang, *Pengantar Ilmu Tafsir*, 62-63; M. Qurais Shihab, *Kaidah Tafsir: Syarat, Ketentuan, dan Aturan yang Patut Anda Ketahui dalam Memahami Ayat Ayat Al-Qur'an* (Jakarta: Lentera Hati, 2015), 377-378.

¹⁹Herlambang, *Pengantar Ilmu Tafsir*, 77.

methodology; correspondence, which tests the conformity of the interpretation with verifiable facts; and pragmatism, which emphasizes the practical usefulness of the tafsir in the lives of the people.²⁰

2. A Biography of K.H. Syaikhul Islam Ali Masyhuri

K.H. Syaikhul Islam Ali Masyhuri, often called Gus Syaikhul, is an ulama and politician who plays a significant role in Indonesia's religious and political spheres. Born in Sidoarjo on November 3, 1985, he comes from a family of scholars with extensive influence in the pesantren community and local socio-political networks. His father, K.H. Agoes Ali Masyhuri, or Gus Ali, is the head of the Progresif Bumi Shalawat Islamic Boarding School in Lebo, Sidoarjo. This social capital was further strengthened by his younger brother's position, Ahmad Muhdlor Ali, who was elected Regent of Sidoarjo in 2020, demonstrating the family's strong connection to local bureaucracy and politics.²¹

Gus Syaikhul's educational journey shows a continuity between his pesantren background and university education. He completed his elementary education at SDN Kenongo, Sidoarjo (graduating in 1997), then continued to Madrasah Tsanawiyah Pondok Pesantren Mambaus Sholihin, Gresik (2000), and Madrasah Aliyah at the same institution (2003). This stage confirms the formation of his intellectual foundation through the pesantren tradition. He then continued his studies at Al-Azhar University, Egypt, earning a bachelor's degree in 2009. Upon his return to Indonesia, he pursued a master's program at Airlangga University, Surabaya, which he completed in 2012.

Beyond his academic path, his organizational activities show how Gus Syaikhul built socio-religious networks. From a young age, he was active in the Gerakan Pemuda Ansor Jawa Timur, a youth organization under Nahdlatul Ulama (NU). His involvement grew through his role in the management of the NU Branch Leadership (Pimpinan Cabang NU or PCNU) of Sidoarjo, as well as his position in the NU Special Branch Leadership (Pimpinan Cabang Istimewa NU or PCINU) in Egypt. These activities were not just about formal membership; they demonstrate his contributions to strengthening the NU youth network at both the local and international levels.

In the political sphere, Gus Syaikhul developed his career as a member of the House of Representatives of the Republic of Indonesia (DPR-RI) for two terms (2014–2019 and 2019–2024). He represents the East Java I electoral district (Sidoarjo Regency and Surabaya City) and is active in Commission VII of the DPR-RI, which handles Energy and Mineral Resources.

Within his family, Gus Syaikhul is the second of eleven children born to Gus Ali and Hj. Nur Qomariyah. He built his own family with Siti Nurainiyah, the daughter of K.H. Hasan Sadily and Siti Kholifah.²² This background as a scholar's family, combined with its political network connections, became a form of social capital that helped shape his intellectual orientation and public role.

²⁰Mustaqim, *Epistemologi Tafsir Kontemporer*, 83; Eni Zulaiha, 'Tafsir Kontemporer: Metodologi, Paradigma, dan Standar Validitasnya', *Wawasan: Jurnal Ilmiah Agama dan Sosial Budaya* 2, no. 1 (2017), 93.

²¹Ali Mahfud, 'Dikepung Politisi Top dan Artis, Ini Profil Syaikhul Islam yang 3 Kali Caleg DPR RI di Dapil Surabaya-Sidoarjo', *Zona Surabaya Raya* (blog), Desember 2023, https://zonasurabayaraya.pikiran-rakyat.com/jawa-timur/pr-1857511259/dikepung-politisi-top-dan-artis-ini-profil-syaikhul-islam-yang-3-kali-caleg-dpr-ri-di-dapil-surabaya-sidoarjo?page=all.

²²Nilna Rahmayanti, 'Santri dan Politik' (Tesis, Surabaya, UIN Sunan Ampel, 2020), 54-58.

3. Systematic Structure of Anfās al-Maḥāsin fī Tafsīr Sūrat Yāsīn

In terms of its writing structure, this tafsir begins with an introduction by Shaykh Yusrī Rushdī Sayyid Jabr al-Ḥasanī al-Azharī, which was written on the first night of Rajab 1446 AH. This introduction opens with praise to Allah Swt, along with blessings and salutations upon the Prophet Muhammad. Subsequently, Shaykh Yusrī states that this tafsir is a gentle and concise work, yet it contains the views of various mufasirs and linguists on Sūrat Yāsīn, a magnificent surah that holds a special place in the hearts and souls of Muslims and has been known since the time of the Companions. At the end of the introduction, Shaykh Yusrī prays that Allah will accept the compilation of this tafsir as an act of charity for its author.²³

Following that introduction, the author's own foreword, or *muqaddimah*, begins. In his foreword, the author starts with praise to Allah SWT, along with blessings and salutations upon the Prophet. He then explains that this tafsir was compiled by fully referencing the explanations of 'ulamā' and mufasir in order to remain within the bounds of sound scholarship. He also states that the main reason for writing this tafsir is the magnificence of the messages contained within Sūrat Yāsīn, which motivated him to provide an explanation that could help Muslims grasp the depth of its meaning. Gus Syaikhul hopes that readers will not only recite Sūrat Yāsīn orally but will also be able to absorb and learn from each of its meanings.²⁴

After the foreword, the discussion proceeds to the core of the work: the interpretation of Sūrat Yāsīn. This interpretation is systematically divided into five main chapters, arranged sequentially to facilitate the reader's understanding. The first chapter discusses the names given to Sūrat Yāsīn. The second chapter describes in detail the number of verses, words, and letters in the surah. The third chapter presents an explanation of the place of revelation for Sūrat Yāsīn. The fourth chapter reviews the virtues and unique characteristics of Sūrat Yāsīn. The fifth chapter contains the interpretation of Sūrat Yāsīn based on thematic groups of verses. The following are the thematic groups of verses contained in the fifth chapter: 26

Table 1. Theme group of verses

No	Verses	Theme
1	1-12	Confirms the truth of the message with the revelation of the Al-Qur'ān
2	13-32	The story of the citizens of a country who denied the Prophets
3	33-44	Signs of Allah's authority
4	45-50	The attitude of the disbelievers to the verses of Allah
5	51-54	Confirmation of the day of resurrection and its greatness
6	55-58	Rewards for people who are believed in heaven
7	59-68	The punishment of the disbelievers in Hellfire
8	69-70	The prohibition of speaking bad words to the Prophet Muhammad
9	71-73	Signs of Allah's power and blessings
10	74-76	The attitude of the polytheists towards Allah's blessings
11	77-83	The proof of the existence of the final day

²³Syaikhul Islam Ali Masyhuri, *Anfās al-Maḥāsin fī Tafsīr Sūrat Yāsīn* (Sidoarjo: Dar Al-Salawat, 2025), 5.

²⁴Masyhuri, 9-11.

²⁵Masyhuri, 11.

²⁶Masyhuri, 20-21.

In this fifth chapter, the author applies several unique stylistic approaches in interpreting Sūrat Yāsīn. First, the author consistently presents the verse before beginning the interpretive process, in an effort to provide an explicit textual foundation. Second, the interpretation starts with an explanation of the general meaning of the verse. Third, narrations and various opinions from mufasirs are presented as a form of respect for the classical tafsir tradition and as an authoritative reference. Fourth, the author begins to elaborate on the meaning of the verse more deeply through an analytical interpretation and explanation. Fifth, the interpretation concludes with the presentation of lessons and benefits ($f\bar{a}'idah$) that can be drawn from the verse, so that the reading of the tafsir is not only textual but also applicable in real life.

As the final part of this tafsir's systematic writing, the work includes the al-maraji' and almasadir used, serving as a form of academic accountability for the sources referenced.²⁷ It also contains a table of contents to help readers navigate the entire discussion.²⁸ The edition of *Anfās al-Maḥāsin* referenced in this study is the one published by Maktabah Dar Salawat, Sidoarjo, and consists of one volume with a total of 131 pages (excluding the cover).

As a comparison, the author compares $Anf\bar{a}s$ al- $Mah\bar{a}sin$ with Tafsir Sūrat Yāsīn by Ḥamāmī, which is a very popular subject of study in Indonesian pesantren, both are similar in that they focus exclusively on Sūrat Yāsīn and both consist of a single volume. However, the two also differ in their systematic approach to interpretation. Ḥamāmī uses a method similar to Tafsir al- $Jal\bar{a}layn$, where each verse is presented individually and is then followed by its interpretation. In contrast, $Anf\bar{a}s$ al- $Mah\bar{a}sin$ is closer to the systematic approach of modern Indonesian tafsir like Tafsir Al-Azhar, Tafsir Al-Misbah, and Tafsir Ta

²⁷Gus Syaikhul used a total of 51 books as references in writing this tafsir, covering genres such as tafsir, Qur'anic sciences, hadith, dictionaries, Islamic history, the history of the Prophet Muhammad PBUH, tauhid, and balaghah. See: Masyhuri, 119.

²⁸Masyhuri, 128.

²⁹The following are several pesantren in Indonesia that hold study sessions on *Tafsir Surah Yasin Hamami*: Pondok Pesantren Subulussalam Tulungagung, Pondok Pesantren Mambaul Ma'arif Jombang, and Pondok Pesantren Mambaul Ulum Probolinggo. See: Redaksi, "Ngaji Tafsir Surah Yasin Karya Syekh Hamami Zadah bersama K.H. Dr. Ahmad Zainal Abidin, M.A. di Bulan Ramadan 1446 H," *Pesantren Subulussalam Tulungagung* (blog), Maret 2025, https://subulussalamta.com/ngaji-tafsir-surat-yasin-karya-syekh-hamami-zadah-bersama-kh-dr-ahmad-zainal-abidin-m-a-di-bulan-ramadhan/; Enggran Eko Budianto, "Mengintip Tradisi Ngaji Kitab Tafsir Surah Yasin di Jombang," *DetikJatim* (blog), April 2022, detik.com/jatim/budaya/d-6029238/mengintip-tradisi-ngaji-kitab-tafsir-surah-yasin-di-ponpes-di-jombang; Abdurrohman Sholeh, Benny Prasetiya, and Ari Susandi, "Pembelajaran Kitab Hamami Zadah (Tafsir Yasin) untuk Meningkatkan Kecerdasan Spiritual Santri Pondok Pesantren Mambaul Ulum Pondok Wuluh Leces Probolinggo," *Jurnal Pendidikan dan Konseling* 4, No. 1 (2022), 499.

³⁰Jalāluddīn al-Maḥallī and Jalāluddīn al-Suyūṭī, *Tafsīr al-Jalālayn*, (Beirut: Dār al-Maʿrifah), 4; Ḥamāmī Zādah, Tafsīr Sūrat Yāsīn, (Kediri: Maktabah Bilḥīl, 2023), 1.

³¹Buya Hamka, *Tafsir Al-Azhar*, Vol. 1 (Singapura: Pustaka Nasional PTE LTD, 1982), 126.

³²M. Quraish Shihab, *Tafsir Al-Misbah: Pesan, Kesan dan Keserasian Al-Qur'an*, Vol. 1 (Jakarta: Lentera Hati, 2022), xv.

³³Kemenag RI, *Al-Qur'an dan Tafsirnya*, Vol. 1 (Jakarta: Widya Cahaya, 2011), 33.

4. Epistemology of Anfās al-Maḥāsin fī Tafsīr Sūrat Yāsīn

The epistemological study of tafsir includes two main components: the methodology of tafsir and the validity of interpretation. First, the methodological aspect refers to the tools used in the interpretation process, including its sources, methods, and styles. For this section, the author uses the framework offered by Saifuddin Herlambang. Second, the validity of interpretation includes three components for assessing the truth of an interpretation: the theories of coherence, correspondence, and pragmatism. For this component, the author refers to the perspective put forward by Abdul Mustaqim.

a. Methodology of Interpretation of Anfās al-Maḥāsin fī Tafsīr Sūrat Yāsīn

In the study of tafsir epistemology, the construction of ideas was born from the source of knowledge that became the basis of interpretation, so its existence is very important for a mufasir in formulating his understanding of the Al-Qur'ān. This is also shown in Gus Syaikhul who has created his tafsir by relying on various references as the basic material in interpreting.

1) Source of Interpretation

a) Al-Qur'ān

The categorization of the verses of $S\bar{u}$ rat $Y\bar{a}s\bar{n}$ into eleven main themes, as made by Gus Syaikhul, basically reflects an effort to read the verses relationally. Although it may not explicitly state that one verse interprets another, the thematic structure shows that each verse is understood in relation to the verses that follow. In this context, the thematic method that is used can be defined as an implicit form of interpreting the Al-Qur'ān with the Al-Qur'ān. This happens because the understanding on the meaning of a verse is created through its connection with other verses in a whole narrative. However, the author found a verse of interpretation that explicitly mentions the relation of the group's meaning with other verses as an explanation. This can be seen when Gus Syaikhul interprets "lessons and $f\bar{a}$ " from the theme of verses 51 to 54 here:

It is must to reject any obedience to the shaitan in all the whisperings and deceptions that he decorates in such a way, in the form of shirk, sins, and things that distract from Allah. There is no way to escape from it except through sincerity in worship to Allah. Because, who can survive the temptation, tricks, powers, and whisperings from the shaitan is only a sincere servant, as Allah says: [illā 'ibādaka minhum al-mukhlaṣīn] {al-Hijr: 40}.35

b) Hadīth from the Prophet Muhammad PBUH

In his interpretation of Sūrat Yāsīn, Gus Syaikhul linked the interpretation with ḥadīth sources. This can be seen when he explains one of the other names for Sūrat Yāsīn below:

³⁴Ainur Rafiq and Abd Muhits, *Studi Qur'an* (Yogyakarta: Bildung, 2021), 84-85.

³⁵Masyhuri, *Anfās al-Maḥāsin fī Tafsīr Sūrat Yāsīn*, 94.

The second is called the Heart of the Al-Qur'ān. Sūrat Yāsīn was given this name based on the Prophet's statement as narrated from Anās, that the Prophet said: (Indeed, everything has a heart, and the heart of the Al-Qur'ān is Yasin). ³⁶

c) Opinions from the Companions

Gus Syaikhul's interpretation refers to the opinion of the Companions, as seen in the interpretation of the 8th verse, especially on lafaz *aghlālan*, which he explains by referring to the opinion of Ibn 'Abbas, as follows:

Ibn 'Abbas said regarding Allah's saying [$aghl\bar{a}lan$] is a shackle from the chest to the chin, so they $muqmah\bar{u}n$ (raised their heads), like an animal restrained with a bridle.³⁷

d) Opinions from the Tābi'īn

Gus Syaikhul also refers to the opinion of the Tābiʿīn in his interpretation, as seen in the interpretation of the 12th verse, especially in the verse *wa naktubu mā qaddamū wa āthārahum*. In this case, he cited the opinion of Mujahid, as follows:

Mujahid said regarding Allah's words [wa naktubu $m\bar{a}$ $qaddam\bar{u}$] which means their charities, and [wa $\bar{a}th\bar{a}rahum$] referring to the statements of their footsteps. ³⁸

e) Opinions from the Mufasirs

When interpreting the 41st verse, Gus Syaikhul was not separated from the opinions from the mufasirs, and he quoted Ibn Jarīr al-Ṭabarī's interpretation as follows:

Ibn Jarīr said regarding the words of Allah: [wa āyatun lahum annā ḥamalnā dhurriyyatahum fī al-fulki al-mashḥūn] as a sign of Our control of anything We desire. We have transported their generations, those who were saved from the generations of Adam

³⁶Masyhuri, 12.

³⁷Masyhuri, 26.

³⁸Masyhuri, 27.

in Noah's ship. And that is what Allah means with *al-fulki al-mashḥūn*. As for *al-fulki* is a ship and *al-mashḥūn* means a fully loaded ship. 39

2) Methods and Styles

In exploring the interpretative sources, Gus Syaikhul combines two approaches altogether: first, *bi al-riwāyah* approach which is based on the Al-Qur'ān, the Prophet's ḥadīth, the opinions of the Companions, the Tābi'īn, and the mufasir, in explaining the meaning of a verse; second, *al-dirāyah* approach which comes from the author's personal *ijtihād*, but still based on pre-existing interpretative references.⁴⁰

The method of interpretations used by Gus Syaikhul in presenting his tafsir is an *ijmālī* method, which is a method that focuses on delivering the meaning of the Al-Qur'ānic verses in general and concise.⁴¹ The author assumes that the interpretation of the verses is because Gus Syaikhul tends to deliver the main point of the verse in a concise way, without too much indepth description. However, before entering the interpretation of each verse, Gus Syaikhul provides a general understanding of the verses, and follows it with the narrations and opinions from various mufasirs. In fact, before starting the interpretation, he compiled four introduction chapters that discuss the names of Sūrat Yāsīn, the amount of verses, words, and letters in the surah, the place where it was revealed, and its benefits and virtues. Each interpretation of the verse is also always closed with lessons and faidah that can be learned. However, in the author's analysis, all of these elements are more functional as supporters to facilitate the understanding of the main message from the verse. Meanwhile, the sequence of interpretation used by Gus Syaikhul refers to *ṭarṭīb al-mushafī*, which is the order of verses as in mushaf, so that the interpretation of Sūrat Yāsīn was presented coherently from the first verse to the last.⁴²

Furthermore, the style of Gus Syaikhul's interpretation in $Anf\bar{a}s$ al-Mahasin does not show a dominant preference for a particular style explicitly. Based on the author's observations, the descriptions are rather simple and concise, and it doesn't show the characteristic style of the author's ideas that stand out. This makes it difficult to classify the style of interpretation used. However, if referring to the classification offered by Saifuddin Herlambang, this interpretation can be included in the category of $maq\bar{a}sid\bar{a}$ style, because the direction of the interpretation is to explore the vision of the Al-Qur'ān, both in universal and partial dimensions, which is oriented towards achieving benefits for all people.⁴³ This can also be seen from Gus Syaikhul's effort to present a "lessons and $f\bar{a}'idah$ " segment for each group of verses he interprets.

³⁹Masyhuri, 56-57.

⁴⁰Muhammad Subhan, Masiyan, and M. Ied Al Munir, 'Al-Riwayah wa Al-Dirayah dalam Tafsir Al-Kasyaf Karya Al-Zamakhsyari', *At-Tibyan: Journal of Qur'an and Hadis Studies* 6, no. 1 (2023), 5-8; Khaerul Augusty, 'Tafsir Riwayah dan Dirayah sebagai Mazhab dalam Tafsir', *Al-Tadabbur: Jurnal Ilmu Al-Qur'an dan Tafsir* 7, no. 2 (2022), 256-257.

⁴¹Ahmad Izzan, *Metodologi Ilmu Tafsir* (Bandung: Tafakur, 2014), 105.

⁴²Abdul Majid and Arif Sugitanata, 'Sebuah Kajian Historis: Periodesasi dan Tartib Mushafi Ayat-Ayat Al-Quran', *Al-Bayan: Jurnal Ilmu al-Qur'an dan Hadist* 4, no. 2 (2021), 222; Marlinda, 'Tartib Suwar al-Qur'an', *Tafasir* 1, no. 1 (2023), 61.

⁴³Herlambang, *Pengantar Ilmu Tafsir*, 96; Wasfi Ashur Abu Zayd, *Naḥwa Tafsīr Maqāṣidī li al-Qur'ān al-Karīm: Ru'yah Ta'sīsiyyah li Manhaj Jadīd fī Tafsīr al-Qur'ān* (Kairo: Mufakkirun, 2019), 13.

3) Validity of the Interpretation

The methodology of interpretation was discussed previously. Next, the validity of the tafsir will be measured through the following three theories of truth:

a) Coherence Theory

Coherence theory claims that an interpretation can be categorized as correct if it is in line with the previous proposition and shows consistency in the application of a methodology followed by the mufasir.⁴⁴ This concept is related to the science of munasabah in the study of *'Ulūm al-Qur'ān*, which analyzes the connection between verses or surahs, both those that precede and those that follow them.⁴⁵ So, from the perspective of coherence theory, an interpretation is recognized as valid if it is able to present a meaning and methodological consistency in a series of interpretations of the Al-Qur'ānic verses.

The application of this coherence theory is clearly reflected in the method of interpretation used by Gus Syaikhul. In formulating tafsir, he does not purely rely on personal ijtihad, but also relies on the historical approach by referring to authoritative sources, such as the Holy Al-Qur'ān, the Prophet's ḥadīth, the opinions of the Companions, Tābiʿīn, and mufasir. In addition, Gus Syaikhul also shows methodological consistency in his interpretations. This can be seen from the systematic arrangement in interpreting groups of verses. Each component of the arrangement is present in its fullness, starting from the presentation of the verse before the interpretation, the exposure of general meaning for the group of verses, the publication of history and various opinions from the mufasir, until the process of interpreting the meaning and learning lessons or faidah from the verse. The consistency in presenting these elements shows the coherence in the interpretation that has been prepared.

b) Correspondence Theory

Correspondence theory is a theory which claims that a statement is only accurate if it conforms to empirical facts.⁴⁶ In the world of tafsir, this theory is generally used to test the validity of 'ilmī interpretations, which is based on a scientific approach.⁴⁷ So, a tafsir can be declared true if its content is in line with objective reality that can be proven scientifically.

Based on this theory, the author assumes that Gus Syaikhul doesn't dominantly display the application of correspondence theory in his interpretation of Sūrat Yāsīn. This is because he isn't a scholar but rather a religious figure and a politician. So, his interpretation is rather unoriented to a scientific approach based on empirical data or science, so it isn't fully in line with the principles in correspondence theory.

c) Pragmatism Theory

In philosophical studies, the theory of pragmatism is known as the natural theory of truth, which is based on its usefulness in practice.⁴⁸ In the context of tafsir, this theory sees an interpretation as true if it can provide solutions regarding social problems faced by human

⁴⁴Mustaqim, *Epistemologi Tafsir Kontemporer*, 112.

⁴⁵Achmad Zuhdi et al., Studi Al-Qur'an (Surabaya: UIN Sunan Ampel Press, 2021), 102.

⁴⁶Mustaqim, Epistemologi Tafsir Kontemporer, 293.

⁴⁷Ummi Kalsum Hasibuan, Risqo Faridatul Ulya, and Jendri, 'Tipologi Kajian Tafsir: Metode, Pendekatan dan Corak dalam Mitra Penafsiran Al-Qur'an', *Ishlah: Jurnal Ilmu Ushuluddin, Adab Dan Dakwah* 2, no. 2 (2020), 243; Abd al-Qādir Manṣūr, *Mu'assasah 'Ulūm al-Qur'ān* (Sūriyah: Dār al-Qalam al-'Arabī, 2002), 188.

⁴⁸Surajiyo, *Ilmu Filsafat: Suatu Pengantar* (Jakarta: Bumi Aksara, 2005), 58.

beings and has a real function in life.⁴⁹ From this point of view, the validity of a tafsir is not only determined by its compatibility with other interpretative theories, but also how far it has been able to answer the problems and demands of the people in a conclusive manner.

In terms of this theory, Gus Syaikhul's *Anfās al-Maḥāsin* shows a tendency that is in line with the principles of pragmatism. This is shown in how the interpreter emphasizes the social dimension of these verses, especially through the component of "presenting the lessons and faidah that can be taken from a group of verses." Gus Syaikhul has consciously directed the meanings of verses in a way that resonates with the reality of the people's lives. In addition, the language used in this interpretation is simple and accessible, which shows that it's designed to be easily understood by the general public.

Nevertheless, the pragmatism in this tafsir is more apparent in the social domain, specifically concerning human morality. This is evident, for example, in the lessons and benefits section of the interpretation of verses 1–12, where one of the key points states that the greatest obstacles to human faith originate from two sides: internal and external. From the internal side, these obstacles are arrogance, excessive self-pride, and ignorance. As for the external side, the obstacle arises from an excessive love for the world.⁵⁰ According to the author, the form of pragmatism in this tafsir more closely resembles moral advice and an invitation to goodness, rather than offering practical solutions for modern issues such as technology, economics, and other contemporary problems.

D. CONCLUSION

Anfās al-Maḥāsin fī Tafsīr Sūrat Yāsīn by K.H. Syaikhul Islam Ali Masyhuri (2025) represents a new contribution to the corpus of local Indonesian tafsīr. This work offers an alternative for students in pesantren and scholars alike, in addition to Tafsīr Sūrat Yāsīn by Ḥamāmī from Turkey, with a stronger connection to the local context in terms of both presentation style and content. The tafsīr is systematically structured, beginning with an introduction by Shaykh Yusrī Rushdī al-Azhari, followed by the author's foreword, and a commentary on Sūrat Yāsīn divided into five chapters, covering the surah's name, the number of verses, place of revelation, virtues, thematic interpretation, narrations from mufassirūn, meaning analysis, and derived wisdom. From a methodological perspective, K.H. Syaikhul integrates the bi al-riwāyah and al-dirāyah approaches, employing an ijmālī method with a tartīb al-mushafī arrangement, and leaning toward a magāsidī style that emphasizes the Qur'an's universal vision for human welfare. The tafsīr's validity is maintained through methodological consistency, although the application of scientific facts is limited, as the author is a religious scholar rather than a scientist. Pragmatically, the tafsīr addresses contemporary Muslim needs by emphasizing social dimensions and accessible language, though its focus remains on moral guidance rather than practical solutions to modern issues such as technology, economics, or other contemporary challenges.

⁴⁹Mustaqim, Epistemologi Tafsir Kontemporer, 299.

⁵⁰Masyhuri, *Anfās al-Maḥāsin fī Tafsīr Sūrat Yāsīn*, 35.

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