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## Bureaucratizing Sharia in Modern Indonesia: The Case of *Zakat*, *Waqf* and Family Law

Asep Saepudin Jahar

Qur'anic Exegesis for Commoners: A Thematic Sketch of Non-Academic Tafsīr Works in Indonesia

Mu'ammar Zayn Qadafy

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Explaining Religio-Political Tolerance Among Muslims: Evidence from Indonesia

Saiful Mujani

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## Mu'ammar Zayn Qadafy

Qur'anic Exegesis for Commoners:
A Thematic Sketch of Non-Academic

Tafsīr Works in Indonesia

Abstract: This article deals with two scholarly tafsīr books circulating throughout modern Indonesia: Husein Qadri's (1906-1966) "Senjata Mukmin" (The Weapons of the Believers) and Agus Purwanto's (b. 1964) "Nalar Ayat-Ayat Semesta" (Reasoning of the Verses of the Universe). Qadri, representing his position as Muslim scholar, and Purwanto, as Muslim intellectual, contribute to the shaping of lay exegesis in their country. I conclude that although the two works are completely different with regard to genre, methodology and style, both are concerned with attracting the attention of lay readers and, accordingly, endeavor to present their information in a comprehensible and accessible manner. In term of content, the two books limit their discussion to the apparent (zāhir) meaning of the Qur'an, an understanding that depends on a reader's knowledge of Arabic; one might call it an immediate understanding of the text. Their works also maintain the primacy of Arabic over the Indonesian language.

Keywords: Non-Academic Tafsīr, Fadā'il al-Qur'ān, Scientific Tafsīr, Senjata Mukmin, Ayat-Ayat Semesta.

Abstrak: Artikel ini mengkaji dua kitab tafsir yang beredar di Indonesia era modern: Senjata Mukmin karya Husein Qadrī (1906-1966) dan Nalar Ayat-Ayat Semesta karya Agus Purwanto (lahir 1964). Mewakili posisi masing-masing sebagai cendekiawan Muslim dan intelektual Muslim, keduanya memiliki andil dalam membentuk corak tafsir awam di negara mereka. Riset ini menyimpulkan bahwa meskipun kedua buku ini berbeda dalam hal genre, metodologi dan gaya penulisan, keduanya sama-sama ditulis untuk menarik perhatian para pembaca awam sehingga penyampaian informasi di dalamnya dilakukan dengan cara semudah dan sekomprehensif mungkin. Dalam hal isi, keduanya membatasi pembahasan pada makna luar (zāhir) al-Qur'an, sebuah pemahaman yang sangat bergantung pada pengetahuan bahasa Arab dari pembaca; atau bisa disebut dengan pemahaman langsung terhadap teks. Kedua karya ini sekaligus menyiratkan keunggulan bahasa Arab di atas Bahasa Indonesia.

**Kata kunci:** Tafsir Non-Akademik, *Faḍā'il al-Qur'ān*, Tafsir Ilmiah, *Senjata Mukmin, Ayat-Ayat Semesta*.

ملخص: تناول هذا المقال كتابي التفسير المتداولين في إندونيسيا الحديثة، وهما Nalar Ayat-Ayat (سلاح المؤمن) لحسين قدري (١٩٦٦-١٩٦٦) و Mukmin (سلاح المؤمن) لحسين قدري الأغوس بوروانتو (من مواليد ١٩٦٤). وقد أسهم كل من قدري الذي يمثل موقعه كمثقف مسلم، وبوروانتو كمفكر مسلم، في تشكيل نوع التفسير في بلده. والنتيجة التي توصلت إليها هذه الدراسة هي أن الكتابين رغم اختلافهما في النوع والمنهجية والأسلوب، إلا أنهما متساويان في المعلومات الواردة فيهما بطريقة سهلة وشاملة. وأما من حيث المضمون فإن كلا منهما المعلومات الواردة فيهما بطريقة سهلة وشاملة. وأما من حيث المضمون فإن كلا منهما يقتصر على البحث في المعاني الظاهرة للقرآن الكريم، وبالتالي فإن فهمها يتوقف على إلمام القارئ باللغة العربية، أو ما يمكن تسميته بالفهم المباشر للنص، الأمر الذي يؤكد تفوق اللغة العربية على اللغة الإندونيسية.

الكلمات المفتاحية: التفسير غير الأكاديمي، فضائل القرآن، التفسير العلمي، سلاح المؤمن، الآيات الكونية.

n his 2014 joint-edited volume, Andreas Görke asserted several appeared to limit their knowledge of *tafsīr* to extensively printed books, mostly in the Arabic language (Calder 1993, 101-7). Redefining this border, Görke added four other items -the oral, partial, lay and regional exegesis- which must be explored in order to make various types of tafsīr works sources of Muslim intellectual history (Görke 2014, 363-67). Unsurprisingly, these four broader types are mostly expanded in the non-Arabic speaking territories, such as Turkey, Pakistan, India, Serbia-Croatia, Nigeria, Kenya, China and Indonesia.

With regard to Indonesia, Görke cited Howard Federspiel's 1994 investigation (Görke 2014, 364) in which he explored 60 separate tafsīr works circulated throughout Indonesia, and classified their authors and audiences into four categories: religious scholars, Muslim intellectuals, lay Muslims, and Muslim students (Federspiel 1994, 130). Well-known as 'ulama', Indonesian religious scholars are those who have enjoyed an established Islamic education and have often then become teachers in *pesantren*, the State Islamic Institute (IAIN) or the State Islamic University (UIN) (Federspiel 1994, 40), while the Muslim intellectuals were more intensively allied to disciplines outside Qur'anic studies (Federspiel 1992, 19-55, 1994, 46, 76, 106). As for the Lay Muslims, Federspiel only inspects two figures, namely Azwar Anas, a politician and a former governor of West Sumatera and a minister of the New Order who wrote a book entitled Al-Qur'an adalah Kebenaran Mutlak (The Qur'an is the Absolute Truth), and H.B. Jassin, a literary critic who graduated from Yale and is the author of 'al-Qur'an, Bacaan Mulia (the Qur'an, the noble reading) (Federspiel 1994, 106-63).

Federspiel also used the four categories to map the readers of the tafsīr works. He concluded that about 45 percent of tafsīr works were prearranged for lay people while the group itself hardly produced commentaries. This means that in Indonesia, lay people simply do not contribute to the formation of Qur'anic exegesis. For Federspiel, this phenomenon establishes the higher status of religious scholars in the Islamic world (Federspiel 1994, 130). Acknowledging this minor contribution to the field, if one aims to understand the types of commentaries that engage lay people, one has to turn to those

works designed by Muslim scholars and intellectuals, such works that are realized by Pink as either a scholar's commentary, institutional commentary or popularizing commentary (Pink 2010, 61–62).<sup>2</sup>

These writings of Federspiel, Pink and Görke underline the existence of the non-experts in the *tafsīr* discourse. As a follow-up study, this article wants to know how Indonesian lay Muslim exegesis is shaped by *tafsīr* works written by Muslim scholars, as well as intellectuals. By spotlighting their aim, methodology and style, this research will explore how *tafsīr* works should appear for Indonesian lay Muslims. To achieve this aim, Husein Qadri's (1906-1966) "*Senjata Mukmin*" (The Weapons of the Believers) and Agus Purwanto's (b. 1964) "*Nalar Ayat-Ayat Semesta*" (Reasoning of the Verses of The Universe) have been chosen. The two books represent two different genres. While the former belongs to the *Faḍaʾil* genre, the later falls under the scientific commentary genre. Additionally, according to Federspiel's theory, Qadri presents as a religious scholar while Purwanto as an intellectual.

## Originality in *Fadā'il* Materials: Husein Qadrī's (1906-1966) "*Senjata Mukmin*"

Disseminated throughout Banjarmasin, South Kalimantan, Qadri's tafsīr has become popular among Urang Banjar, the inhabitants of the province (Ideham 2003, 72). Historically. Islam spread widely throughout the South Kalimantan region. Relevant statistics reveal that, in 2016, 97 percent of the city's four million citizens converted to Islam, although many of them still hold their local mystical and cultural beliefs (Daud 1997, 581-92; Ipansyah 2010, 85-87). They believe that the world has a relatively dualistic existence in the sense that the existing entities in the real-world stand as something else in the unseen world. Certain tree species, such as kariwaya, are believed to be the houses of supernatural people. Similarly, small rivers are seen as a path to unseen spaces, and sites of the ancient kingdom of Banjar, such as 'Candi', and 'Pamaton' mountain in Martapura is believed to be a palace of supernatural society (Hadi 2015, 216). Objects, including animals and plants, are also believed to have certain magical uses (Daud 2000, 8). They use scrap stones or metal to cure sore eyes, to attract people's attention and to protect themselves from danger. Betel leaf or burnt onion is also said to be able to drive ghosts out. Not to mention the amulets or the wafak paper inscribed with a certain formula,

wrapped in yellow or black cloth, or certain types of perfumes that are used as magical tools for protecting the home and oneself (Daud 1997, 11-12).

Against this background, "Senjata Mukmin" (The Weapons of the Believers) was written by Husein Qadrī who sought to replace such local pagan practices and uses of non-Islamic materials with parts of the Qur'an. Mujiburrahman states that this book is Qadri's mostreferred to work among the Banjar people in their religious practices. As a result of his work, Qadri has maintained contemporary popularity (Mujiburrahman, Abidin, and Rahmadi 2016, 50). The original version thereof, was written in Indonesian using Malay-Arabic script, before it was translated and transposed into standard Indonesian (Roman alphabet) by Zainu Ridlo Buyan. For the sake of clarity, this research will use the original version, which comprises 156 pages including its cover and table of contents. Each page contains between 12 and 15 lines, with an average of 10 words per line. The book comprises 75 chapters, which can be divided into four main types: the use of Qur'anic verses for protecting and attacking weapons, the supplication, the great names of God (al-Asmā' al-Husná) and the good sentences (kalimāt tayyibah).

It should be noted here that Qadrī designed this book as a handbook of structured acts (amalan-amalan) which employ Qur'anic verses as media (Qadrī, n.d., 1).3 Only two authorities ('Alī ibn Abī Tālib and Ka'b al-'Akhbār) were quoted and they were mentioned without chain of isnād (Qadrī, n.d., 17). Therefore, reading the book for the first time, one may get the impression that Qadrī's composition of verses is haphazard and may emerge from a merely spiritual contemplation. Most likely, it is a work of a mystical-allegorical reading. A careful reading, however, shows that he engaged in an exegetical process and obviously created his own signature in constructing the Fadā'il materials. This article argues that despite its simple arrangement, Husain Qadrī's book has maintained a certain methodology that has probably not been realized so far. This kind of 'originality' is quite unusual for the genre of Fadā'il al-Qur'ān since most literatures on Qur'anic merit comprises materials derived from prophetic hadith or reports from the previous pious generation of Muslims (al-Salaf al-Ṣāliḥ).

As an exegetical genre, the genre of Fadā'il al-Qur'ān covers relevant topics such as the excellence of memorizing the Qur'an, its compilation,

its best reciters and the excellence of certain chapters and verses among others. As Asma Afsaruddin shows, by the middle of 2<sup>nd</sup>/8<sup>th</sup> century, the term *Fadā'il* had begun to acquire the connotations of merit and benefit, in addition to the meaning of positive characteristics (Afsaruddin 2002, 27–29). She also maintains that most of the Sunni standard hadith collections have a section on this genre, and that classical scholarly books that deal with the topic of *Fadā'il al-Qur'ān* always record reports, either from the successors (*tābi'un*), companions (*Ṣaḥābah*) or the prophet himself (Afsaruddin 2002, 40).

If we inspect certain classical Fadāil books, we notice that the merit of (reciting) particular Qur'anic verses is eschatological and at the same time non-empirical. Abū 'Ubaid al-Qāsim Ibn Salām (d. 224 H), for instance, narrates reports in his Faḍā'il al-Qur'ān that God really loves someone who recites the sūrah al-Fātihah because in each verse of the sūrah 1 that person admires Him more and more (God says ḥamidanī 'abdī, athnā 'alayya 'abdī and majjadanī 'abdī) (Ibn Salām, n.d., vols. 2: 27-28). There is also a report that says that the verses of the thrones (āyat al-kursī) are the most noble over other verses (a'dam āyah fi al-Qur'ān) (Ibn Salām, n.d., vols. 2: 33-34). A similar type of report is contained in the work of Ibn al-Durays (d. 294) (al-Bajalī 1987, 87). In the later work al-Mustaghfirī (d. 432 H), we find a report that the prophet commanded his companions to study sūrah 2 and 3 (al-Bagarah and Ālu 'Imrān) because, in the hereafter, those two sūrahs will come as two clouds (ghamāmatāni) that cover and protect those who studied them (Mustagfirī and Sallūm 2006, 497). Another similar eschatological report says that whoever continues to recite the verses of the thrones after every obligatory prayer, will be granted a passage to paradise (Mustagfirī and Sallūm 2006, 523). Al-Magdisī (d. 643 H), the author of Fadā'il al-A'māl, also writes a chapter on the merits of the Qur'an in which he records two reports on the merits of sūrah 44 (al-Dukhān). The first says that for whomever recites this sūrah at nighttime, seven thousand angels will ask (God) to forgive him by the morning (asbaha yastaghfiru lahū sab'ūna alf malak). The second report says that whomever recites this *sūrah* on a Friday night, will be forgiven (al-Maqdisī 1987, 538-39).

As for the *Faḍā'il* book in modern non-Muslim countries, Geissinger has noticed that the work of Nana Asma'u (1793-1864), the daughter of Shehu Usmān dan Fodio in the Sokoto caliphate, West Africa,

entitled Tabshīr al-ikhwān bi tawaṣṣul bi suwar al-Qur'ān 'inda al-Khāliq al-Mannān, which included many citations of hadith materials, was useful for instructing readers to recite particular Qur'anic chapters or to be used as an amulet, since it is intended to promote the use of prophetic sunnah rather than local pagan practices. Given the nature of Asma'u's book, Geissinger considers that the book does not demonstrate originality (Geissinger, 2015: 272). Compared to the Fadăil book by Asma'u, and to the classical Arabic works of the Fadā'il genre, which I have previously mentioned, Qadri's book is significantly different, as this article will argue.

The book of Husain Qadrī is also concerned with the reception of the Qur'an by non-Arabic speaking Muslims. In his Ph.D thesis on the Islamic Banjar, Ahmad Rafiq explains that, for particular purposes, the Banjar Muslims often recite certain Qur'anic verses that are not related to the meanings inherent in those verses. This is because they believe that the Qur'an is a sacred text with powers that exceed the fact that it is a mere scripture. The Qur'an is indeed received functionally in its performative functions in the Banjar community, rather than received exegetically in its informative functions (Rafiq 2014, 187). Rafiq's words below describe how the Banjar people treat the Qur'an and how such tafsir books such as that of Husain Qadrī assume their place:

"However, it is not necessarily the case that the Banjar functional reception is totally free from the exegetical tradition. The exegetical tradition does not always take the form of a direct and meaningful translation of the Qur'an recited during the act of reception... Such works range from a thorough explanation of the meaning, excellence, and practices of the Qur'an to simple handbooks stating how to use the Qur'an in various particular situations".

Rafiq recognizes that the tafsīr books within the Fadā'il al-Qur'ān genre range from the most complex to the simple handbook. Rafiq does not, however, go further to see the differences with regard to the content and methodology of these diverse works, which are certainly not as simple as they appear. This article tries to engage with this gap by elaborating on two samples from Qadri's book. Each of those sections comprise two parts: a description on the merits of verses gained by reciting them regularly and a list of the intended verses. At the same time, I will argue that while the first part clearly constitutes Qadrī's spoken exegesis, the second describes his unspoken exegesis.

## The Fifteen Verses (Ayat Lima Belas)

Here is Qadrī's description of the merit of the fifteen verses: "Who recites the fifteen verses when he is frightened, God will save him. When someone wishes to accomplish certain needs (ḥājjah), God, by his permission, will make it happen". Qadrī says, "When he recites them during his journey (outside his homeland), God will turn him back to his homeland safely and alive." Qadrī then summarizes: "walhasil, ayat ini dibaca untuk memelihara arwah dan harta daripada Jin dan Manusia dan binatang-binatang buas" (as a result, this verse is recited to keep the soul and the treasure from the jin, human beings and wild animals) (Qadrī, n.d., 15). As already discussed, there is no way to prove whether these verses, when recited regularly, will guarantee the safety of their reciters. Notwithstanding this, Qadrī's choice and arrangement of verses does mean or is intended to mean something. I will break them down to illustrate this point more clearly:

Table 1 (Qadrī, n.d., 15–17)
The Fifteen Verses

	T			
No.	Verses in Order	Texts and Keywords <sup>4</sup>		
1	Q. 3: 1, 2,	Alif Lām Mīm		
	18	God, there is no God but He, the Living, The Self-		
		Subsisting, Eternal.		
		There is no God but He: that is the witness of God,		
		His angels, and those endued with knowledge,		
		standing firm on justice. There is no God but He,		
		the Exalted in Power, the wise.		
2	Q. 40: 62	Such is God, your Lord, the Creator of all things.		
		There is no God but He: then how you are deluded		
		away from the truth!		
3	Q. 13: 31	If there were a Qur'an with which mountains were		
		moved, or the earth were cloven asunder, or the		
		dead were made to speak, (This would be the one!).		
		But truly, the command is With God in all things!		
		Do not believers know, that had God (so) willed,		
		he could have guided all mankind (to the Right)?		
		But the unbelievers -never will disaster cease to		
		seize them for their (ill) deeds, or to settle close		

		to their homes, until the promise of God come to
		pass, for, verily, God will not fail in His promise.
4	Q. 36: 82	Verily, when He intends a thing, <u>His command is</u> ,
		<u>"Be" and it is!</u>
5	Q. 1: 2	Praise be to God, the Cherisher and Sustainer of
		the Worlds
6	Part of Q.	That they should be in confused doubt about a
	50: 15	new creation?
7	Part of Q.	and He is with you wheresoever you may be.
	57: 4	And God sees well all that you do
8	Q. 64: 13	God, there is no god but He: and on God, therefore,
		let the Believers put their trust
9	Part of Q.	and if anyone puts his trust in God, for God will
	65: 3	surely accomplish His purpose: Verily, for all things
		has God <u>appointed</u> a due proportion
10	Part of Q.	and He surrounds (all the mysteries) that are
	72: 28	with them and takes account of every single thing.
11	Q. 73: 9	(He is) Lord of the East and the West: <u>There is</u>
		no God but He: Take Him therefore for (thy)
		Disposers of affairs.
12	Part of Q.	None shall speak except any who is permitted
	78: 38	by (God) Most Gracious, and he will say what is
		right.
13	Q. 80: 18-	From what stuff had He created him? From a
	19	sperm-drop: He had created him, and then <u>molded</u>
		him in due proportions.
14	Q. 81: 20-	Endued with power, with rank before the Lord of
	21	the Throne, with authority there, (and) faithful to
		his trust
15	Q. 85: 20-	But God did encompass them from behind, this is
	22	<u>a glorious Qur'an</u> , (inscribed) in a Tablet preserved.
16	Addition	Wa lā ḥawla wa lā quwwata illā billāh al-'Alī al-
		ʻAḍīm. Wa ṣallallāhu ʻalā sayyidinā muḥammadin wa
		ʻalā ālihī wa ṣaḥbihi wa sallam

The underlined words are the keywords that I think more or less describe the apparent (zāhir) meaning of the Qur'an, which depends on the reader's knowledge of Arabic; one might call it the immediate understanding of the text. Through the keywords, Qadrī has emphasized

a concrete meaning, as follows: In the first part (No. 1-2), he emphasizes that only Allah is the real God for the believers. The second part (No. 3-5) then declares that, as God, Allah is capable of doing whatever He wants, His command is over all things (bal lillāhi al-amr jamī'ā) and everything He desires to happen will happen (an yaqūla kun fayakūn) because he is the Lord of the Universe (rabb al-'alamīn). Conceding that human faith sometimes goes up and down, however, the third part (No. 6-9) inserts that human beings should not have any doubt of God's love for them. Here, the notion of the trust in Allah (al-tawakkul) is brought out. At the same time, Muslims should keep in mind that God's justice has appointed all things a due proportion (ja'alallāhu likulli shai'in gadra), a point that dominates the fourth part (No. 10-13). God has taken account of every single thing (Aḥṣā kulla shai'in 'adada) and he created humankind and moulded him in due proportions (khalaqahū fagaddarah). Finally, the fifth part (No. 14-15) contains an implicit instruction to obey God because He should be the one who is trusted and obeyed (mutain thamma amin) and He somehow makes some win and others lose (wallahu min wara'ihim muhīt). This list of verses is closed by a confirmation about the position of the Qur'an as a praised book (innahū la Qur'an majīd).

One may challenge my reading of Qadri's list of verses, which only considers the keywords that I myself have identified. This is because only by considering these apparent meanings can Qadri's messages be uncovered. In other words, reading them separately in their complex historical context and linguistic meaning will not produce satisfactory results. We need to see Qadri's verses as a unit of narration on their own and ignore the fact that they are taken from different Qur'anic sūrahs. Moreover, due to the fact that this book is designed for laypersons, if Qadrī wanted to deliver a message beyond his Faḍā'il materials, it should have been a simple message resulting from a simple way of reading. Hence, I argue that Qadrī's book could be treated in two different ways: either received functionally in its performative functions or exegetically in its informative functions. For any Muslim who wants to keep his soul and treasure protected by God, he can recite the verses regularly as Qadrī explicitly instructs, or believe in God, trust and obey Him, as Qadrī implicitly explains. Above all, it is undeniable that Qadrī's arrangement of verses alone without any extra comments does create meaning.

The five-verses arrangement follows the order of *sūrah* in the standard *muṣḥaf*: The verse of *sūrah* al-Baqarah takes precedence over that of Ālu 'Imrān, al-Nisa', al-Mā'idah and al-Ra'd. Interestingly, Qadrī adds a short commentary in the end of each verse.

Table 2 (Qadrī, n.d., 19–22) The Five Verses

	Verses in	
No.	Order	Texts and Keywords
1	Q. 2: 246	Have you not turned the vision to the chiefs of the children of Israel after (the time of) Moses? They said to a prophet (that was) among them: "Appoint for us a King, that we may fight in the cause of God". He said: "Is it not possible if you were commanded to fight, that you will not fight?". They said: How could we refuse to fight in the cause of God seeing that we were turned out of our homes and our families? But when they were commanded to fight, they turned back, except a small band among them. But God has full knowledge of those who do wrong.
	Comment	(God) is capable of what he wants (qadīrun 'alā mā yurīd) (3x) <sup>5</sup>
2	Q. 3: 181	God had heard the taunt of those who say: "Truly, God is indigent and we are rich". We shall certainly record their word and (their act) of slaying the prophets in defiance. Of right, and we shall say: "Taste you the penalty of the scorching fire!"
	Comment	(God) is powerful and he does not need any helper (Qawīyun lā yaḥtāju ilā mu'īn) (3x)
3	Q. 4: 77	Had you not turned the vision to these who were told to hold back their hands (from fighting) but establish regular prayers and spend in regular charity? When (at length) the order for fighting was issued of them Feared men as -or even more than- they should have feared God: They said: "Our Lord! What have you ordered us to fight? Would

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		you not grant us respite to our (natural) term Near (enough)?". Say: "Short is the enjoyment of this world: The hereafter is the best for those we do right: Never will you be dealt with unjustly in the very last!"
	Comment	(God) is the most supreme over whom overwhelms and disobeys (Him) ( <i>Qahhārun li man ṭaghā wa ʿaṣā</i> ) (3x)
4	Q. 5: 27	Recite to them the truth of the story of the two sons of Adam. Behold! They each presented a sacrifice (to God): it was accepted from one, but not from the other. Said the latter: "Be sure I will slay you". "Surely, said the former, "God doesn't accept the sacrifice of those who are righteous. <sup>6</sup>
	Comment	(God) is holy who guides whomever he wants (quddūsun yahdī man yashā'u) (3x)
5	Q. 13: 16	Say: "Who is the Lord and Sustainer of the Heavens and the earth? Say:" (it is) God." Say: "Do you then take (for worship) protectors other than Him, such as have no power either for good or for harm to themselves? Say: "are the blind equal with those who see? Or the depths of darkness Equal with Light? Or do they assign to God partners who have created (anything) as He has created, so that the creation seemed to them similar? Say: "God is the creator of all things: He is the One, the supreme and irresistible.
	Comment	(God) is the Self-subsisting one who gives sustenance to whom He wants (qayyūmun yarzuqu man yashā'u al-qūwah) (3x)

The intriguing part here is not only that these verses almost have the same length, but also that each of them reflects stories that are then summarized by Qadrī's short comment. While Q. 2: 246 recounts the insubordination committed by Banū Isrā'īl against God's command to battle, Qadrī captures its message as a signal that God is capable of anything He wants (qadīr 'alā mā yurīd), which means implicitly that whether these people were willing to fight or not does not matter for Him. Similarly, while the second verse (Q. 3: 181) narrates a story

about people who mock God and kill his prophets, Qadrī understands it as a signal that God is undefeatable and He does not need help from anyone to repay the malicious conduct these people directed against Him (qawīyun lā yahtāju ilā mu'īn).

Q. 4: 77 is understood by Qadrī as a declaration that Allah is the most supreme (al-Qahhār) because he could force people to go to the battle even though they had tried to argue with Him, while Q. 5: 27 asserts that God will give guidance to whom He desires (quddūs yahdī man yashā). God is Quddūs (holy) in the sense that He is far removed from the murdering that was done by one of the two sons of Adam as mentioned in that verse. As one may predict, Qadrī's comment on Q. 13: 16 in which he extracts from it a notion that God is *Qayyūm* and He is the one who gives powers also becomes evidence that Qadrī takes the apparent meanings into account.

These five attributes of God, which are derived from five different verses, have constituted Qadrī's original attitudes toward some circumstances that he mentioned explicitly in his book. Qadri writes:

"Telah berkata ba'dhul khowwas pada menerangkan khasiyat ayat ini. yaitu untuk bertemu seteru, pemeliharaan diri daripada kejahatan manusia, jin syaitan dan binatang-binatang buas. Jika orang-orang besar mengamalkan membacanya, tetapi ia di dalam pengikutnya dan bertambah-tambah kebesarannya. Wal hasil, ayat ini patut dibaca ketika di dalam negeri, di dalam musafir dan di dalam peperangan-peperangan" (Qadrī, n.d., 19–20).

"Some special persons (al-Khawwas) have said in explaining the merit of this verse. It is to (be a protection) when facing enemies, self-protection against human evil, demons, satans and wild beasts. If great people practice reading it, they remain with their followers and their greatness increases. The result is that this verse should be read when in the country, while travelling and in times of war ".

The ambiance of 'fighting in a battle' seems to dominate Qadrī's thought on the merits of Ayat Lima. Unsurprisingly, the five verses already discussed represent five attributes of God related to the topic: al-Qadīr (the mighty), al-Qawīy (the most powerful), al-Qahhār (the most supreme and irresistible), al-Quddūs (the holy) and al-Qayyūm (the self-subsisting). It is, of course, not by accident that all of them begin with the letter  $Q\bar{a}f(\ddot{o})$ . In sum, Qadrī insists on two options for one who faces enemies or obstacles: either by reciting Ayat Lima and believing that they can help him solve the problems or by remaining positive thinking about God: that He always helps people as long as

they worship and trust Him. This complexity of interpretation again convinces us on the one hand that Qadrī is not just listing the verses recklessly and, on the other, it shows his capacity as one of the great Muslim scholars of his era. As a matter of 'originality', Qadrī's book clearly maintains the author's own exegetical exercises. This is shown not only by the fact that Qadrī cites no authorities (sanad) in both Ayat Lima Belas and Ayat Lima, but also that, -unlike the Arabic Faḍāʾil scholars- Qadrī proposes a non-eschatological and empirical merit of the Qur'an.

## Arabic as Benchmark: Scientific Commentary on Q. 27: 18 and Q. 76: 17

In Indonesia, Agus Purwanto, a theoretical physician who completed his PhD from Hiroshima University, Japan, is a prominent advocate of the scientific commentary. His tafsīr book, "Nalar Ayat-Ayat Semesta (Menjadikan al-Qur'an Sebagai Basis Konstruksi Ilmu Pengetahuan" (The logic of the verses of the universe: making the Qur'an the basis for the construction of knowledge) was published in 2015 by Mizan, a major Indonesian book publisher. It was intended to be a revised version of Purwanto's first book, entitled "Ayat-Ayat Semesta: Sisi-Sisi al-Qur'an yang Terlupakan" (The verses of the Universe: The forgotten sides of the Qur'an), which was published three years prior to. In the preface of the 2015 version, Purwanto states that he was amazed by the fact that his two books have reached a wide range of audiences. Since its initial soft-launch between 2008 and 2011, the books had been presented 86 times in front of professors, ministers, governors, rectors, Kiyais, students, and ordinary people from particular remote villages (Purwanto, 2015: 8). This level of acceptance shows that this scientific Qur'anic commentary by Purwanto is of interest to academic readers, especially to a non-academic audience. The following discussion will elaborate on the peculiarities of Purwanto's reading of Q. 27: 18 and Q. 76: 17.

## Q. 27: 18

Q. 27: 18 reports a contact between a colony of ants and the prophet Solomon. It is narrated that when this colony reached a lowly valley of ants (wād al-Naml), one ant said (qālat namlatun): "Oh ants... get into your habitations, lest Solomon and his hosts crush you (under foot) without knowing" (Yā ayyuhā al-naml udkhulū masākinakum

lā yaḥṭimannakum sulaymān wa junūduhu wa hum lā yash'urūn). Presumably, in a non-scientific commentary, the word namlah is likely to be understood as merely 'an ant', regardless of its sex. As a singular noun, Namlah (نَصْلَةُ) lexically means 'an ant'. The feminine verb (qālat) is used because the noun carries a feminine ending (the ta' marbūṭah). For Purwanto, this kind of translation is correct (benar) and acceptable (dapat diterima) (Purwanto, 2015: 430–431).

As a scientist, however, Purwanto wants to know the more precise sexual identity of the speaking ant. He is critical of the translation by Mahmud Yunus (1899-1982), which renders the word *namlah* -as 'a king of ants' (*raja semut*) (Yunus 1986, 343). Purwanto argues that Yunus's translation is biased for assuming that the leader of a community should be male possibly based on Q. 4: 34. Alternatively, Purwanto tends to understand it as a 'queen of ants' because the story of the female-speaking ant and the story of the Queen of Saba' (Q. 27: 23) appear in the same *sūrah*. Additionally, this particular ant gives instructions to the other ants by saying *udkhulū*. Since an instruction is usually given by a leader, the speaking ant is most probably the leader of the colony: the queen (Purwanto, 2015: 432).

To support this, Purwanto compares four different dictionaries. While Mahmud Yunus's dictionary says that namlun (نَمْكُ) is for single ant and *nimālun* (نِمَالٌ) is for the plural, three other dictionaries which Purwanto refers -the Elias Modern Dictionary, the Munawwir Dictionary and the Dictionary of al-Azhar- agree that the correct word for a single ant is *namlatun* (نَمْلَةٌ) and its plural form could be *namlun* (نَمْلٌ), namalun (نَمْلٌ), or nimālun (نَمْلٌ). Based on this comparison, Purwanto concludes that the lexical meaning of the namlatun is still unclear (tidak jelas) (Purwanto, 2015: 433). He then proposes a simple way to differentiate between a male and female ant. It is by considering the ta' marbūtah as the marker of a feminine referee. Hence, namlun نَمْكُ is a male ant and *namlatun* (نَمْكُةُ) is a female ant (Purwanto, 2015: 432). A critical note here is that Purwanto seems to inaccurately treats his sources. None of the last three references offer *namlun* as a singular male form of namlatun (compare with: Mandhūr, n.d., 11:673), as Purwanto suggests. In other words, Mahmud Yunus's version, which says that *namlun* is a single ant, is the unreliable deviation.

To be fair to Purwanto, I include here al-Zamakhsharī's (1075-1144) comment in *al-Kashshāf*, a linguistic-based commentary that

had been expanded on by the largest number of glosses in Islamic intellectual history (Saleh 2010, 20-21), which also recognizes that the speaking ant is female based on a completely different linguistic reason than that offered by Purwanto. Al-Zamakhsharī records a conversation between Qatādah and Abū Hanīfah in which the latter told the former that the speaking ant was female, explaining that the word namlatun can refer to both male and female ant, just like *hammāmah* (a pigeon) and shātun (a goat). The sexual identity, however, is determined by the verb marker not by the noun marker. Therefore, one could say قَالَ نَمْلُةُ (a male ant speaks) or قَالَتْ نَمْلَةٌ (a female ant speaks) (al-Zamakhsharī 1966). Compared to al-Zamakhshari's argumentation, Purwanto's linguistic analysis is far from deep. The most likely explanation behind Purwanto's forced analysis is that, in natural science, the role of the queen of ants is probably the most amazing feature, among others. As Purwanto says, a queen of an ant colony can not only spawn, it can also recognize allies and enemies that might cause damage to it (Purwanto, 2015; 436). Ants, Purwanto continues, have a complex communal life with a system of collective wars, even of slavery and cattle management (Purwanto, 2015: 435).

Another feature to be considered here is the local Indonesian dimension in Purwanto's book that may not exist in non-Indonesian scientific commentaries. In order to prove this, the tafsīr by Tanṭawi Jawharī (1862-1940) and Zaghlul Najjār will be examined. It should be noted earlier that, as a matter of style, Al-Najjār does not follow Jawharī. al-Najjār usually begins his discussion by summarizing the general teachings one could absorb from a particular chapter of the Qur'an. Instead of analyzing the words one by one (taḥlīlī), al-Najjār directly comes with his scientific data (al-dalālah al-'ilmīyah). Even so, readers of al-Najjār's book could still expect to know al-Najjār's linguistic analysis of certain words because in some places he explains them when he sees that the linguistic discussion is significant for preparing readers to go into the broader scientific argument (al-Najjār 2007a, 4:427-30).7 Jawharī, on the other hand, applies a more structured methodology. His commentary usually begins with an explanation of the word meaning (al-tafsīr al-lafzī) then of the lessons learned from the passage (al-laṭā'if), most of which are scientific.

In his Jawāhir al-Qur'ān, Jawharī provides us with 17 pages of explanation on Q. 27: 18, ranging from the anatomical aspects of ants

to their communal behavior (Jawharī, 1928a: 126-143). In terms of the speaking ant, Jawharī asserts that there is a kind of ant that has the ability to command and assemble other ants. This is, for Jawharī, God's sign on the ability of ants to organize a community "wa ammā nidā'uhā liman taḥta amrihā wa jam'uhā lahum fa innamā yushīru ilā kaifiyah siyāsatihā wa ijtimā'ihā wa hikmatihā fī taṣrīf umūrihā" (Jawharī, 1928a: 127). Jawharī also utters the role of female ants (al-Ināth), which spawns eggs and takes care of them all the time (tulāhidhuhunna lailan wan nahāran). He also points out that ants are able to think, build houses, plant, raise cattle, and even make war (Jawharī, 1928a: 129-130).

According to Jawharī, the story of ants in the Qur'an should be regarded as God's command to human beings in order to research nature as well as to take away lessons from the ways ants live since their behavior is the most similar to human beings (inna al-namlah agrab al-ḥayawānāt ilā al-Insān fī af'ālihi) (Jawharī, 1928a: 133). Above all, Jawharī emphasizes that the miraculous life of ants confirms the divine miracles (mu'jizah rabbānīyah) that God gave to Solomon (Jawharī, 1928a: 124). Jawharī goes further by mentioning a valley located somewhere in the ancient Shām as a reference for the Qur'anic wād al-Naml. The issue of which ants speak, however, does not draw out Jawhari's attention. On the phrase wa qālat namlah yā ayyuhā alnaml udkhulū masākinakum (and an ant says, o ants, get into your habitations), Jawharī briefly notes how the Qur'an attributes ants as they have intelligence (ajrāhum majrā al-'uqalā') and he apparently says nothing on the linguistic aspect of wa qalat namlah (Jawhari, 1928a: 126), whether it shows that the speaking ant is male or female.

Q. 27: 18 also appears in Zaghlul al-Najjār's Tafsīr al-Ayāt al-Kawnīyah fi al-Qur'ān al-Karīm. Of nine pages,8 two of them solely contain pictures. al-Najjār begins his commentary by announcing that ants constitute a well-ordered community (mujtama' munaddam). Ants are strong and smart and they enjoy working hard (hubb al-'amal wa almuthābarah wa al-Jihād) (al-Najjār 2007b, 2:329). A colony of ants has a fertile queen (al-malikah al-mukhassabah) who continuously spawns new ants and protects them until they reach maturity. Other sterile female ants (ināth al-naml al-'āqirah) must maintain the stability of the colony, while the male ants (dhukūr al-Naml) have to fertilize the queen (yatahaddadu dawruhā fī ikhsab al-malikah) (al-Najjār 2007b, 2:370-71). Just like Jawhari, all scientific data provided by al-Najjār

are dedicated to amaze readers how complex and well-organized the life of an ant colony is.

It is true that the main goal of a scientific commentary is to establish the miraculous nature of the Qur'an by emphasizing that the text which emerged in the 7th century has inspired the 20th century scientific discoveries and that the text accurately matches with modern sciences in every single word (Jansen 1980, 364). Jawharī, al-Najjār and Purwanto plausibly executed this task very well. Just like his two Arabian predecessors, Purwanto also asserts that Q. 27: 18 should encourage Muslims to conduct research on ants and their complexities. Only by simultaneously questioning and researching can science develop (Purwanto, 2015: 436). Purwanto's limits on linguistic knowledge, however, drive him to pursue a linguistic analysis that does not appear in the exegetes of those who come from Arabic-speaking countries. Regardless of its accuracy, Purwanto's linguistic analysis raises the degree of Arabic over Indonesian in which it is being translated: that the Arabic words used in the Qur'an precisely manifest scientific natures. This point will be further elaborated upon in the next example.

## Q. 76: 17

Q. 76: 17 says that, in heaven, its inhabitants will be given a cup containing zanjabīl to drink. In his Qur'anic translation, Yusuf Ali asserts a noticeable footnote: "The word literally means ginger. In Eastern medicine, ginger is administered to give warmth to the body and zest to the taste. Metaphorically, this is appropriate for the Royal Feast which is now figured forth" (Ali 1934, 1658). In Jawhari's tafsīr, a little explanation is added to the Zanjabīl (in only one-third of a page). By citing two poems, he proclaims that Arabian people are used to drinking ginger because it creates something that tempts the taste (yaḥṣulu fihi ḍarbun min alladha). For Jawharī, this enjoyment also becomes a reason for God to make this plant as an example of a drink in heaven. Jawharī does not go further to discuss what uniqueness this plant has since he recognizes that ginger could only be found in this world (illā asmā'an limā fi aldunyā) and not in the hereafter. For al-Jawharī, only God knows with what He will actually provide people in heaven. According to Jawhari, heaven is full of things that no eyes have seen and about which no ears have heard (mā lā 'aina ra'at, wa lā udhuna sami'at) (Jawharī, 1928b: 312). Jawharī unsurprisingly prefers to come closer to the explanation

of Q. 76: 2, 8, 11 and 21, rather than to discuss Q. 76: 17 any further. Hence, while reading Jawhari's interpretation of Q. 76, one may easily learn that Jawhari merely foccusses on the distinction between the world and the hereafter for his use of such technical terms, like the physical/sensory favors (ni'am jismīyah/hissīyah) vis-a-vis the souloriented (rūhīyah) and resource-oriented favors ('aglīyah). At the end of his explanation, Jawharī reminds readers that the Qur'an stimulates human beings to observe natures, since without such knowledge, one will fail to reach happiness in the world and in the hereafter (Jawharī 1928b, 24:316-18).

In Zaghlūl al-Najjār's commentary, another different nuance could be grasped by readers. In 14 pages pages, he comments Q. 76: 1-2 with explanation on the earthly-living creatures from four million years ago and on the developed science in embryology as it is implicitly mentioned in the phrase faja'alnāhu samī'an basīrā) (al-Najjār 2007a, 4:243-56). Here, we should remember that Q. 75: 17 (the speaking ant) and Q. 26: 18 (the ginger) belong to a different type. While the latter informs about a history that happened in the past, the former, on the contrary, provides an eschatological story that happens in the future. In this case, unlike Jawhari, who sees the verse metaphorically, Purwanto's prior understanding that the words of the Qur'an match his scientific discoveries, which makes him believes that the ginger drink will be served to those in heaven. He explicitly declares that the ginger itself is indeed a heavenly drink (minuman surgawi) (Purwanto 2015, 439).

In addition, there are several local-Indonesian things that Purwanto explores in his 12 pages of explanation. First, the ginger drink, which is widely referred to in Indonesia as "wedang Jahe". The term 'wedang' refers originally to a local Javanees term, which means "a drink of coffee". As a technical term, wedang Jahe appears later to denote the crushed ginger that is consumed by mixing it with water and sugar in a cup, just like coffee. Second, information on the popularity of the ginger drink among Indonesian people. Third, an extensive explanation of some varieties of ginger plants with which Indonesian people have already grown familiar, such as *jahe*, *kencur*, *temulawak* and *kunyit* (turmeric), and their medicinal and cooking utility (Purwanto 2015, 441-50).

By providing these three local aspects, Purwanto has contextualized his tafsīr for his readers, thereby making it more accessible. These local Indonesian aspects also convince us that Purwanto's literal understanding of the apparent meaning of the *zanjabīl* also becomes his main approach to the issue the issue that lay Indonesian people grasp easily. By asserting that the Arabic Qur'anic word matches with the Indonesian context, Purwanto wants to drive his audience's attention to the Qur'an and the Arabic at once. The fact that Purwanto's book also includes 30 pages (pages 30-59) in which he explains the peculiar features of the Arabic language is further evidence to support this conclusion.

Positioning Arabic as a benchmark, these two examples show us the notion of lay-persons in and outside of Arabic-speaking countries. Knowing Arabic, laypersons from Arabic speaking countries can read and understand the Qur'an to a greater degree than those from non-Arabic-speaking countries. As Aisha Geissinger asserts in her work on gender and Muslim construction of exegetical authority, the difference between experts and laypersons in Arabic-speaking countries turns on their attitude toward an advanced aspect of Islamic studies. While the former camp, for instance, discusses a single hadith with a complete sanad (a chain of names of authorities in an ascending order that goes back to the prophet or to one of his companions), the latter is satisfied with the shorted version of the sanad before understanding the content of the hadith by evaluating its matn (Geissinger, 2015: 281-282). Regarding accessing tafsīr literature, Arab laypersons can read and understand the works as experts do. In this case, the expert's task is to read the unprinted edition, give indices, headings and footnotes, and even provide an online edition of that literature (Geissinger 2015, 283). Compared to these conditions, Indonesian lay-Muslims still have to learn Arabic before they can deal with more advanced knowledge in Islamic studies. At this stage, Purwanto's scientific interpretation amazes people with its extraordinary Arabic characteristics and persuades them to learn it while reading the Qur'an and enjoying its scientific features.

## **Concluding Remarks**

The requirements of who is permitted to conduct *tafsīr* has become an important topic in the traditional *'ulūm al-Qur'ān*. Due to the Qur'an's status as a holy book, it is not surprising that Muslim scholars are assertive in determining the criteria of those who are allowed to officially interpret it. These criteria, which cover both intellectual and

ethical requirements of the exegete, are often discussed in the chapter "shurūṭ al-mufassirīn wa ādābuhum" (terms and behavior of the exegetes). In this kind of discussion, an exegete (mufassir) is portrayed as an almost-perfectly ethical person, imbued with qualities of perfect intelligence. An exegete should have good intentions, morality, a willingness to practice what is known, credibility, tawaddu', nobleness, the courage to speak the truth, polite gestures, clear speech, a willingness to prioritize those who are more entitled to interpret the Qur'an, and good preparation and delivery (Muḥammad 1984, 194-96).

As for the *surūt*, in his *Itqān*, al-Suyūṭī lists 15 branches of the sciences that an exegete should master: linguistics, al-Nahw (grammar), al-Sarf (morphology), al-Ishtiqāq (semantics), al-Ma'ānī (clear expression), al-Bayān (embellishment), al-Badī' (beautiful style), Qirā'āt (variation of readings), Usul al-Din (theology), Usul al-Figh, 'ilm Asbāb al-Nuzul (occasion of revelation), al-Naskh (abrogation), al-Figh (Islamic jurisprudence), prophetic tradition (al-Hadīth), and the 'ilm al-Mauhibah (the science beyond the power of human beings bestowed by God upon those who practice what they know) (al-Suyūtī 2008, 771-73). An exegesis that is carried out by someone who has not yet mastered these sciences, will be considered invalid. On the contrary, if the exegete could maintain them, his exegesis will be highly appreciated and, at the same time, it will be considered reliable. In al-Zarqānī's (d. 1367 H) words, this reliable exegete is able to produce exegeses of the highest rank (a'lā marātib al-tafsīr) (al-Zarqānī 1995, 2:44). He says:

أما المعابي العامة التي يستشعر منها المرء عظمة مولاه والتي يفهمها الإنسان عند إطلاق اللفظ الكريم فهي قد يكاد يكون مشتركا بين عامة الناس وهو المأمور به للتدبر والتذكر لأنه سبحانه سهله ويسره وذلك أدبى مراتب التفسير.

"As for the general meanings that can make everyone feel the majesty of their Lord, and that can be understood by every human being when they hear the noble words (Qur'an), it can be done by almost all human beings. And that is exactly what God has commanded (that every human being) should think and study (the Qur'an) because He has made it easy. That is the lowest level of exegesis ".

al-Zarqānī's distinction between the ideal exegesis as the highest degree (a'lā marātib al-tafsīr),9 and the ordinary exegesis as the lowest one (adnā marātib al-tafsīr), on one hand, undermines the dominance of the elite over lay lay Muslims. On the other hand, it asserts that the

non-academic are also capable of conducting exegeses to a degree that corresponds with the basic capabilities of human logic. The difference between them then leads scholars to agree with that *tafsīr*, as a religious duty, is not charged to everyone (*lā yutakallafu lahā wāḥid*). Within this framework, we can safely argue that, regardless of the difference in quality, the interpretation made or designed by the non-expert group is methodologically plausible.

My reading on the works of these two Indonesian figures, one of whom is a Muslim scholar and the other a Muslim intellectual, has made some dimly viewed aspects of lay exegesis more positive. Regarding their respective styles, both scholars are concerned with attracting the attention of lay readers. By positioning Qur'anic verses into local contexts and impressing the amazing aspects of the Arabic-language Qur'an, Purwanto makes his book closer to more broadly accessible. Differently, Husein Qadrī packs his ideas in the form of the Fadā'il Qur'ān book, which resonates with laypersons. Without drawing too much attention, Qadrī inserts messages of being a pious Muslim within the structured acts that he asks people to practice. Thus, tailoring tafsīr for laypersons can, in fact, be more complicated than for academics, because an exegete must arrive at his/ her own easy-to-understand and efficient explanation.

The two layers of meaning in Qadrī's Ayat Lima Belas and Ayat Lima remind us of the varied level of meanings (awjuh) of the Qur'an, as theorized by Ibn 'Abbās and quoted by Nūr al-Dīn 'Itr's (d. 1937), as follows ('Itr 1993, 73-74): (1) Wajh ta'rifuhu al-'Arab bi lughatihā, a meaning that can be easily understood by Arabians or by those who do understand Arabic; (2) Tafsīr lā yu'dharu aḥadun bijahālatihī, an interpretation that does not require specific intelligence to understand because its meaning is already clear (duhūran lā khafā'a fīh); (3) Tafsīr ya'lamuhu al-'Ulamā', an interpretation that can only be reached by the 'ulama' with their sufficient exegetical tools; (4) Tafsīr lā ya'lamuhū illāllāh, an interpretation such as the unseen materials (al-ghayb) that only God knows. Both tafsir works that have been examined in this article deal with the simplest of the four, the one that can or cannot be grasped by someone according to his knowledge on Arabic. Qadrī's apparent meanings require his audience to know Arabic, a skill that Purwanto strongly recommends people learn throughout his book. While using only Arabic to read the Qur'an is not enough

to produce an interpretation that satisfies advanced audiences, the method is applicable in works designed for laypersons. Both Qadrī and Purwanto's tafsīr books manifest this perspective very well. They arrive at the apparent meanings of the Qur'anic verses, without any inquiries into their relational meanings or into their historical contexts. Consequently, both scholars treat a single verse as a unit in the sense that the verses alone contain messages of their own, and when these units are unified and arranged together, they construct another new bigger unit, as Qadrī's book obviously demonstrates.

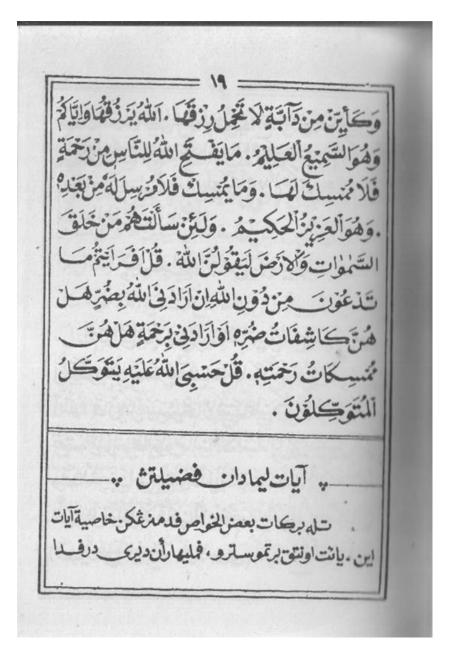
In everyday life, we are often exposed to Muslims immediate understandings of the Qur'an. For instance, in Egypt, we can sometimes find a public bus with the following inscription on its body: "yaā bunayya irkab ma'anā, wa lā takun ma'a al-kāfirīn" (oh my son, ride with us, and do not be with the infidels), which derives from Q. 11: 42. Similarly in Indonesia, a part of the Qur'anic verse "wa lā tagrabū hādihi alshajarah" (don't get closer to this tree), a part of Q. 2: 35, has been used to prohibit people from becoming members of a certain political party, the logo of which includes a tree. These two uses seem to result from a rushed and unorderly reading of that Qur'anic verse. The appearance of similar phenomenon in Qadrī and Purwanto's books, however, proves that it is based on a certain prior understanding that the verse alone means something. Most likely, this is how the lay exegesis takes shape. Referring to al-Zargāni's terminology, this apparent meaning of the Qur'an is the general meaning (al-Ma'ānī al-'Āmmah) that can make everyone feel the majesty of their Lord, and can be grasped by almost all human beings". This meaning for al-Zarqānī is the result of the lowest level of exegesis (adnā marātib al-Tafsīr) (al-Zarqānī 1995, 2:44-46).

We also find in this article that the intellectual capacity of the authors matters. As a Muslim scholar, Qadrī's lists of verses exhibit his more extensive familiarity with the whole Qur'an rather than Purwanto, the Muslim intellectual, who seems to only be familiar with the scientific verses with which he is dealing. Although Qadrī's profound scholarship is not explicitly maintained in his book, the way he composes the verses and comments at the end of each verse quite clearly indicates his capacity as a Muslim scholar. Qadri's book evidently creates his signature and 'originality' in the genre of Faḍā'il al-Qur'ān. While such Fada'il al-Qur'an in Arabic books depends on citing authorities and is often made up of materials derived from prophetic hadith or reports

from the previous pious generation of Muslims, Qadrī maintains his own exegetical exercises. Moreover, while his Arabian predecessors only relate *Faḍāʾil al-Qurʾān* materials to eschatological and non-empirical merits, Qadrī brings up the opposite. On the other hand, Purwanto's careless reading of his sources, which he refers to and, on his linguistic argumentation, which is not supported by authoritative evidences, shows his lack of proficiency in the Arabic language.

Forms follow functions. In her article on the arrangement of texts in the printed Qur'anic translation, Pink notes that the layout of the published works supervenes the condition of the audiences targeted by the authors or publishers (Pink 2017, 143). She also maintains the issue of language sensibility within the writing design by which some bilingual Indonesian translations are written: translators who prefer to display the left-to-right text wish to emphasize the primacy of Indonesian, the targeted language over Arabic, while those who employ the right-to-left arrangement emphasize the contrary (Pink 2017, 146). In this research, I argue that in the lay exegesis, the primacy of Arabic over Indonesian is also maintained. Purwanto dedicates a special chapter to the primacy of the Arabic language and he often expresses his admiration for the accuracy of Arabic in informing some scientific discoveries thoroughout his book. This conclusion strengthens my argumentations in my previous article, in which I recount Purwanto's book and compare it with some scientific *tafsīr* books from the Muslim world (Qadafy 2017). Husin Qadrī more elegantly implies this primacy by writing his book in Arabic and by emphasizing that the Qur'anic verses he cited could performatively and informatively function.

## Appendix 1 The Five Verses



### Endnotes

- 1. Aboebakar Atjeh (1900-1970) for instance was considered so due to his writings on Islamic studies in general and H. Oemar Bakry (b.1916) for his revivalist activities as well as his writings that criticize the modern religious life. Coincidentally, both figures did not hold any position at any Islamic educational institutions. Federspiel also considered as Muslim intelectuals journalist (Bey Arifin), teaching staff at the national teacher training college (Ahmad Syafi'i Ma'arif), nutritionist and teaching staff at the Bogor Institute of Agriculture (M. Ali Husein), government official (Imam Munawwir), and research agency (M. Dawam Rahardjo).
- 2. The first commentary is usually performed by a scholar and aimed to the academic community while the second is initiated by religious institutions that are usually close to or part of the government. Complementing them, the third type arising as result of the mass-mediatisation of the Qur'anic commentary "is intended for a broad public direct impression on their readers or audience". Pink insists that this categorization will further help researchers to see the modern commentaries better rather than a category based on the location of deforestation or language used. However, she realizes that variations of tafsir in the modern era in terms of content, purpose and display are very diverse.
- 3. Qadrī said: "Maka inilah Risalah yang bernama Senjata Mukmin, termuat di dalamnya ayat-ayat yang besar fadhilahnya, amalan-amalan yang penting diamalkan, doa-doa dan kalimat-kalimat yang mujarrabat, dan asma'-asma' yang mengandung khasiat yang besar dan penting diamalkan di zaman sekarang oleh kaum Muslimin dan Muslimat"
- 4. The text provided here is based on Yusuf Ali's Qur'anic Translation while the original texts are in the appendixes.
- 5. This number indicates how many times the verses should be regularly recited in order to gain their merits. A mention of number like this is actually not a common feature in the classical Arabic Fadā'il Qur'ān books although the number sometimes appears in the Fadā'il al-A'māl materials. Further research needs to be seriously taken to trace the genesis of this feature in both genres.
- 6. In Yusuf Ali's translation, the verse is numbered 30 not 27. See: (Ali 1934, 250–51)
- 7. For instance, he discussed a linguistic aspect of madda (ظلُّ ) and zalla (ظلُّ) in Q. 25: 45 as preface before he explains more about the earth's orbit over the sun. (al-Najjār 2007b, 2:325–29) He also analysed lexically the Arabic word danā-yadnū to show that the Dead Sea is the most likely place where Rome had been defeated (ghulibat al-Rūm, Q. 30: 1-2).
- 8. It should be noted here that in terms of length, nine pages of al-Najjār's work are not equal to a half of the 17 pages of Jawharī's because one page in al-Najjār's work comprises about 20 lines with 14 to 16 words, while Jawhari's book is much longer with 35 lines and about 20 words per page)
- 9. Clarifying what he meant by highest level of exegesis (a'lā marātib al-tafsīr), al-Zargānī presents the conditions proposed by Muhammad 'Abduh which requires an exegete to rule at least five basic knowledge: the essence of linguistic meaning, language style, human conditions (*'ilm aḥwāl al-bashar*), the position of the Qur'an as the guidance book (*Kitāb* al-hidāyah), the history of the Prophet and the Companions. (al-Zargānī 1995, 2:44–46)

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- 6. Ms. Undhang-Undhang Banten, L.Or.5598, Leiden University.
- 7. Interview with K.H. Sahal Mahfudz, Kajen, Pati, June 11th, 2007.

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محمد عارف