

**CONSTELLATION AND  
VERNACULARIZATION OF JAVANESE  
TEXTURE OF THE QUR'AN:  
CHARACTERISTICS AND CULTURAL  
LOCALITY OF JAVANESE PONDOK  
PESANTREN IN TAFSIR AL-IBRĪZ LI  
MA'RIFAH TAFSĪR AL-QUR'ĀN AL-AZĪZ**

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**Abstract:** The existence of the Qur'an as a holy book that is *salib li kulli zaman wa makan* is relevant to the complexity of traditions and societal problems that are experiencing development and change, which more or less influence the diversity of understanding of the Qur'an. Like the spread of Islam to Indonesia, it has implications for the emergence of many products of Qur'an interpretation, and a product of interpretation cannot be separated from space and time. Like the book of Tafsir Al-Ibriz, it is a form of response and reception from Bisri Musthafa for reading the text of the Qur'an, a dialectic between text, context, and interpreter. The book of *Tafsir Al-Ibriz* has a strong locality. Supported by Bisri Musthafa's excellence as the book's author, he also has his own added values, such as the ability to articulate, documentation, organizing which have implications for his product interpretations. This research is a type of library research supported by descriptive analytic interpretation. Based on the study results, it was concluded that the contents of the book *Tafsir Al-Ibriz* were written over four years using a textual-contextual approach (more dominant textual). This interpretation has several features, including *fiqhi*, *sufi*, and *adabi ijtimā'i*. His interpretation is

coloured by the life in which he lives, namely the pesantren environment, as well as his scientific journey for two years in Mecca, as well as a socio-religious organization in which he is active as one of the administrators and initiators of his *qanun asasi*, namely Nahdhatul Ulama.

**Keywords:** Bistri Musthafa, Tafsir Javanese, Vernacularization

## Introduction

The Qur'an is the word of God verbally revealed to the Prophet Muhammad through the Angel Gabriel for approximately 23 years. Its primary function is as *hudan* and *furqan* for all humanity. To be able to maximize the function of the Qur'an, of course, requires interpretation, especially for Indonesians who do not speak Arabic. In Indonesia, the progressivity of the Qur'an interpretation is undoubtedly different from what happened in the Arab world (Middle East). Two things cause significant differences, namely differences in culture and language. First, the Arab world is where the Qur'an was revealed, as well as the embryo of the birth of the Qur'an interpretation in other parts of the world. Second, the process of interpretation for the Indonesian nation must go through translation from Arabic into Indonesian and then be interpreted broadly and in detail by the *mufassir*. This is different from the Arabs, who use and understand Arabic itself (Rouf 2020).

Understanding the text (*nash*) of the Qur'an is one of many activities in interpreting the Qur'an. However, talking about the reality that occurs and the social phenomena the interpreter faces is also critical in interpreting the Qur'an. So that a *mufassir* is required to be able to express and dialogue the meaning in the Qur'an with the sociocultural space and reality in the society in which he lives. These things occur in the dynamics and traditions of writing interpretations of the Qur'an in the archipelago, as evidenced by the use of the Javanese language with variations of

the script, namely the Pegon Latin and Javanese scripts. As stated by Islah Gusmian, the spread of Islam in Indonesia underwent two processes at once, impacting religious understanding (interpretation of religious texts). First, the process of adopting (to adopt) elements of external culture (archipelago culture), which then directly and at the same time the second process occurs, namely the process of selection and adaptation (to adapt) of external culture to internal culture (Islam). In the end, these two processes trigger the emergence of the local language (vernacularization) in the understanding of Islamic religious texts, including here the writing of interpretations of the Qur'an. (Gusmian 2015; Basid and Sholihah 2023).

This research seeks to reveal the characteristics and elements of locality (Javanese pesantren local wisdom) in the commentary of Al-Ibrīz by KH. Bisri Musthafa answers three questions; what are the characteristics, the local content of Javanese pesantren wisdom, and its implementation in the book of al-Ibrīz's commentary? Furthermore, looking at these problems, this paper has two aspects that will be studied, namely the characteristic aspects of *Tafsir Al-Ibrīz's* and aspects of local cultural content through vernacularization in al-Tafsir Ibrīz's and the paradigm of the exegetes who are by the cultural locality in which the *mufassir* is alive (Javanese pesantren).

There is much previous research conducted by Islamic researchers regarding the study of *Tafsir Al-Ibrīz's*. As far as the research conducted by the researcher, previous research on the study of *Tafsir Al-Ibrīz's* studies has at least two tendencies carried out by orientalist researchers, namely; first, a thematic study related to the *Tafsir Al-Ibrīz* and his author, as was done by Firman Sidik (Sidik 2020), Ahmad Zainal Abidin, Thoriquil Aziz (Abidin and Aziz 2018), dan Rifqatul Husna dan Siti Anisah (Husna and Anisah 2023). Second, the study of figures and their commentary books, as was done by Abu Rokhmad (Rohkmad 2011),

Mubasirun (Mubasirun 2021), dan Aaviy Lailaa Kholily (Kholily 2021). After looking at the results of previous research, the study of the vernacularization of *Tafsīr Al-Ibrīz*'s still escapes the attention of other researchers. For this reason, this research is essential to complement previous studies and find vernacularization in *Tafsīr Al-Ibrīz*'s.

Because the objects of study used in this research are texts or the works of a figure and other supporting literature, the research model results from a literature study or library research with a qualitative-descriptive method with content analysis.

### **Al-Qur'an Vernacularization in Indonesian Interpretation**

Anthony H. John, an Indonesianist, first introduced the term vernacularization. He is a pioneer in the study of Islamic history in Indonesia and a professor of Islam at the Australia National University (ANU), Canberra-Australia. Vernacularization translates Islamic texts such as the Qur'an, Hadith, books of Jurisprudence, and so on, which are transferred into local languages such as Malay, Bugis, Javanese, and Sundanese. Anthony H. Johns states, "The vernacularization of Islamic learning is a core focus in exploring the religious life and culture of Muslims in Southeast Asia". Thus it can be said that vernacularization is the *ijtihād* of the scholars in the form of local language of Islamic values, sourced from the Qur'an, which incidentally is in Arabic, implemented by writing memorization translations, and conveyed in the language and script typical of local Islam (Saenong 2006; Fawaid 2019).

Furthermore, John said that based on historical facts, vernacularization activities had been taking place in Indonesia for a long time. This can be proven by the emergence of the interpretation of *Tarjumān al-Mustafīd*, who at the same time was the originator of the idea of a vernacularization of the Malay language by Abdur Rauf as-Singkili (1615-1693 AD) (Faiqoh 2018). Meanwhile, in the 18th century, Java experienced

remarkable and different progress in writing Qur'anic interpretations. The characteristics or characteristics of writing Tafsir al-Qur'an in Java include: minimizing the use of Arabic script by writing the texts of the Qur'an verses combined with Javanese language and script, writing interpretations manifested by acculturation of culture and the needs that surround the interpreter, which is manifested in various languages and scripts, namely the *Cacarakan* script and the *Pegon* script (Faiqoh 2018).

The *Cacarakan* script is commonly found in inland areas such as Solo and Yogyakarta. In contrast, the *Pegon* script is generally born or found in the interpretation of coastal Islamic communities thick with the pesantren tradition. In conclusion, the various vernacularizations or local languages include 1) the use of Arabic script as Malay, which is called the Malay Arabic script or Arabic Pegon; 2) the emergence of absorption words from Arabic into local languages; and 3) the variety of local Indonesian works inspired by Arabic models (Johns 2009).

The vernacularization that occurs in the interpretation of the Qur'an in the Java region has almost similar characteristics, including Javanese as the primary language, the commentary is written in Arabic Pegon, each word is interpreted with the meaning of *gandul* which is placed under each word in an oblique position. Also, the interpretation product has an element of local wisdom (cultural values) to reflect from which area the interpreter originates. The *Pegon* script became a media for negotiating the local language with Arabic, which eventually gave rise to certain letters following the vowel characters of the language. Pegon comes from the Javanese language *pego*, which means to deviate; it is called *pegon* because this letter deviates from Arabic literature and Javanese literature, it can be said to be an odd script because the order is different from the original language, meaning it is neither Javanese nor Arabic (Baidowi 2020).

In the study of Tafsir al-Qur'an studies in Indonesia, the works of Pesantren play an important role because they are written in the Javanese language with the Pegon script and are taught in various places of worship or Taklim assemblies in all places in Indonesia. So that the Pegon script is very familiar in the community and is a source of teaching Tafsir al-Qur'an to Muslim communities, generally among Indonesian citizens, especially in Javanese Islamic boarding schools; therefore, this vernacularization of the Qur'an carried out by Islamic boarding school scholars has several reasons, including because the Qur'an is a book of instructions or guidance, so that its values must be conveyed to the public. Evidence of the richness of local culture is the existence of regional languages so that vernacularization can describe socio-culture in this interpretation (Baidowi 2020). Thus it can be said that the development of Islam in the archipelago is the result of a dialectic between the text of the Qur'an and the local reality and culture. Several things, namely evidence this 1) efforts to accompany the message of the Qur'an in the book of interpretations which are carried out through the local language and script; 2) the process of processing ideas in the form of traditional language and culture in local communities becomes commonplace; and 3) *mufassir* incorporates local elements into his book of commentaries to become part of the ascent of the Qur'anic message to the public (Baidowi 2020; Fawaid 2019).

The book of Tafsir, which the public widely uses in general, is a book of interpretation written by scholars from Islamic boarding schools, one of which is written by KH Bisri Musthafa. The book *Tafsir Al-Ibriz* is a form of embodiment or implementation of the vernacularization process. This means that the book of interpretation cannot be separated from elements of local culture or local wisdom around it, one of which is by using the Javanese Pegon script in writing its interpretations. This makes the book of *Tafsir Al-Ibriz's* its character, which is essential for further study.

## Get to Know Tafsir Al-Ibrīz and its Author

Tafsir *Al-Ibrīz fi Ma'rifati Tafsir al-Qur'an al-Azīz* is a phenomenal work of KH Bisri Musthafa written in Javanese with the Arabic script *pegon* and the meaning *gandul*. The book of commentaries on *Tafsir Al-Ibrīz* took approximately four years to write, from 1957 to 1960. Several Qur'anic scholars from Kudus have also recited this book, namely KH Arwani Amin, KH Abu Amar, KH Hisham, and KH Sya'roni. *Tafsir Al-Ibrīz* began publication in 1961 and was submitted to the Menara Kudus publisher (Urif 2019). Later, this book was printed using Latin script. In his Muqaddimah, KH Bisri Musthafa explained at length the background of writing this book, where this interpretation was deliberately written in Javanese with the aim that local Javanese people could understand and know the meaning of the Qur'an properly. Also, because KH Bisri Musthafa wanted to make a scientific contribution to Muslims, which he considered, Tafsir Al-Ibrīz's was relatively light in language and easy for anyone (primarily Javanese) to understand (Musthafa 1960).

In addition to conveying the purpose of writing this book, KH Bisri also explained the books that were used as references in writing the book of *Tafsir Al-Ibrīz's*, including Jalālain's commentary, Baidhowi's interpretation, Khozin's interpretation and several other commentary literatures. Several books on Middle Eastern products were used as material for discussion by KH Bisri with some of his students before compiling the book of commentaries on *Tafsir Al-Ibrīz's*, including the book of commentaries on al-Manar, the book of commentaries on *Fī Zīlal al-Qur'an*, the book of commentaries Jawahir, the book of commentaries on *Mahasin al-Takmil*, and the book interpretation of the Mazāya al-Qur'an (Musthafa 1960). If you look at the year the *Tafsir Al-Ibrīz* was completed, this interpretation was written by

KH Bisri when his family's economic situation and condition began to improve. We can see this from the departure of his first son, named Kholil, to Mecca for three years at the age of 17, and his other son, namely Musthafa, went to al-Azhar, Egypt, for six years at a not much different age (Rohkmad 2011). Meanwhile, when viewed from a political career perspective, KH Bisri is also in a period of success. At that time, he was the NU representative in the constituent assembly in the 1955 election. Regarding social status, KH Bisri Musthafa was highly respected by the community because he worked as a political KH and was also a productive writer. From this, it can be concluded that during the process of writing the *Tafsir Al-Ibriz*'s KH Bisri Musthafa was in a relatively stable and conducive situation (Husna and Anisah 2023).

*Tafsir Al-Ibriz* is written in full in 30 chapters, and the form and method of writing are characteristic (Musthafa 1960); 1) The Qur'an is written with a double meaning, 2) the translation of the interpretation is written in the margins with a number sign, the verse number is located at the end while the translation number is located at the beginning, and 3) other statements are marked with the words *tanbih*, *faidah*, *mubimmah*, *qiṣṣah*, and others. KH Bisri Musthafa also mentions *asbāb al-nuzūl* but does not mention *munāsabah*. Several commentators' opinions were also stated, but no *tarjih* was explained in verse. As for the explanation of the hadith, KH Bisri presents it as it is, without mentioning the chain of sanad, nor does it explain the status of the hadith, and so does the opinion of the companions.

Several terms are used to provide other explanations with several writing purposes, namely: 1) *tanbih* (warning) and *mubimmah*; these sentences are intended to provide additional information and are considered significant but do not cover all the existing verses; Q.S. al-Kahf: 23-24 and 28, al-Ra'du: 12, 2) meaning words, this description is for explaining a verse that is considered valid, and can also be used as a practice that the reader can carry out; the end of surah al-Baqarah and the end of QS. al-



Kahf, 3) said *qiṣṣah*, providing information about other stories that have something to do with the verse being explained. Meanwhile, the word *saga* tends to be related to a story that is not only related to the verse but has sufficient information. As an example to explain the verse being interpreted, QS. al-Lahab and QS. Al-Fīl, and 4) said *efficacious*, this function is to provide related information about the treatment of certain plants and materials: Al-Nahl 69.

Furthermore, from a methodological point of view, in terms of sources of interpretation, it can be concluded that Tafsir al-Ibrīz uses the source of interpretation *bil iqtirān* or *bil izḍiwāj*, namely a combination of *ma'thūr* and *ma'qūl*. The author agrees with Mustamin Arsyad, who stated that the interpretation of a *mufassir* is not possible using only one source of interpretation but can have more than one, namely, as in the Tafsir Al-Ibrīz there is a combination of *ma'thūr* and *ma'qūl* (Asif 2016). We can prove this by looking at the interpretation of QS. Al-Baqarah [2]: 173 and 115. Although, indeed after a more in-depth study, *Tafsir Al-Ibrīz's* is more dominant using sources of *ma'thūr* interpretation.

If examined from the point of view of the way of explanation, Tafsir Al-Ibrīz's includes interpretations that use explanations with the *bayānī* model or can be called the descriptive model, namely the interpretation model of the Qur'an, by providing descriptive information without comparing one history with another. This can be proven by looking at the interpretation of KH Bisri in QS. Al-Nisā' [4]: 01. If examined from the point of view of coverage, it is included in the *Ijmāli* category, namely the scope of explanation of a verse in a global way, not in-depth or at length and the language is easily understood by ordinary people. This *Ijmāli* interpretation model is seen in the Interpretation of KH Bisri in the *Tafsir Al-Ibrīz's* in QS. Al-Fātihah [1]: 1-7. Meanwhile, from the systematics of writing or explanation, Tafsir Al-Ibrīz's is included in the class of *tartīb mushafī*, namely

interpreting the verses of the Qur'an whose order is adjusted to the order of the verses in the Qur'an Mushaf, starting from sura al-Fātihah to surah an -Nas. In terms of tendency or style, *Tafsir Al-Ibrīz*'s has several aspects, namely *fiqhi* (seen in QS. 05: 06, QS. 04: 43, and QS. 02: 238), *ilmi* (seen in QS. 41: 11), Sufi and *adabi ijtimā'i* (found in the interpretation of Q.S. 39: 3 and QS. 2: 1).

### **Vernakularisasi Tafsir Al-Ibrīz**

There are two types of vernacularization in *Tafsir Al-Ibrīz*, namely, from the aspects of language and appearance and writing. From the aspect of language, as already explained by KH Bisri in the introduction *Tafsir Al-Ibrīz*, the introduction in this Tafsir uses Javanese, as well as explains the considerations of this matter: First, Javanese is KH Bisri's mother language which is used daily; Second, because *Tafsir Al-Ibrīz*'s is intended for rural residents and the pesantren community who are very familiar with the Javanese language; Third, imitating and practising Allah's attitude to bring the Qur'an down to earth, using the heavenly language of the Qur'an choosing to use the language of the earth, namely Arabic. Because the Qur'an was revealed in Mecca and Medina, their language is Arabic (Musthafa 1960). In Javanese, there is a hierarchy (speech level) where the fineness and roughness of diction depend on the parties in the dialogue. So the Javanese language has two language levels; *Kromo inggil* and *ngoko* rough (Rouf 2020). In the Tafsir al-Ibrīz KH Bisri, both are implemented, the use of which is adjusted at different times. *Ngoko* language is used when interpreting verses freely, meaning it is not related to a particular story or a dialogue that contains two or more people. Meanwhile, the *Kromo* language is usually used to describe the dialogue of two or more people who have different social statuses, such as the dialogue between Ashabul Kahfi and the King of Romania, the dialogue between Qitmir and Ashabul Kahfi, the dialogue between the Prophet Muhammad and the wealthy Quraysh Arab figures, the dialogue

between Allah with the devil, and the dialogue between Prophet Khidir and Prophet Musa. 48 An example of *Tafsir Al-Ibrīz*'s of the dialogue between God and Satan QS. Al-A'rāf: 12-14:

Allah Ta'ala ndangu marang Iblis: Apa sebabe teka Sira (Iblis) ora gelem sujud, nalika Ingsun printah? Iblis mangsuli atur: Kula langkung utami katimbang Adam. Kawula Panjenengan Titahaken saking latu, Adam Panjenengan titahaken saking lempung (12). Allah Ta'ala nuli dhawuh: Yen kaya mengkono kelakuan ira, meduna sira saking suwarga kene, meduna saking langit, ora prayoga tumrap sira banjur gumedhe kumalungkung ana ing suwarga kene. Ayo metu saking suwarga!!! Temenan sira golongane makhluk kang padha ina-ina (13). Iblis munjuk atur: Kawula nyuwun inah, sageta gesang terus Gusti, ngantos diten Ba'ats (14) (Musthafa 1960).

There are also terms in his interpretation that use Javanese, for example, in mentioning some animals such as *wedus kacang* or what we usually call goats contained in the QS. Al-Zumar [39]: 6, the term *rojo koyo* means livestock, used by KH Bisri to translate the word QS. Al- An'ām as in his interpretation of QS. Āli-ʿImrān [3]: 3 and al-Māidah [5]: 1-2, and also found in QS. Al-Faṭir [35]: 28. An example of mentioning *rojo koyo* in the interpretation of QS. Al-Māidah [5]: 1:

He wong mukmin! Siro kabeh supoyo podo netepi perjanjian (ateges netepi kewajiban).Allah ta'ala ngalalake marang siro kabeh mangan **rojo koyo** sakwuse disembelih, (koyo untho, sapi, lan wedus), kejobo kang diterangake harome marang siro kabeh,... (Musthafa 1960).

Another term he uses is *sathugalak*, which means wild animal, to translate the word as-Sabu'u in QS. Al-Māidah [5]: 3. Sathugalak is a wild animal with horns, nails, teeth or sharp fangs to pounce on its prey (Abidin, Aziz, and Ahmadi 2022). An

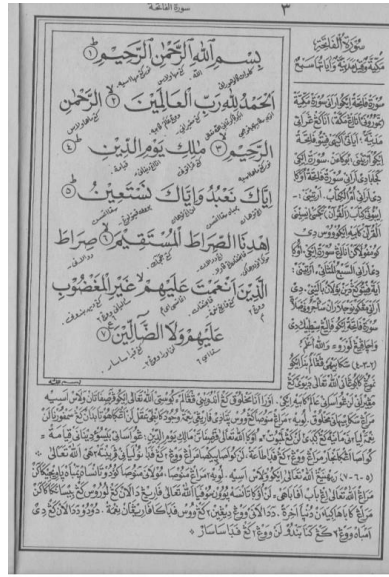
example of mentioning *sathugalak* in the interpretation of QS. Al-Māidah [5]: 3:

Siro kabeh di haromake mangan batang, lan getih, lan daging babi, lan hayawan kang di sembelih ora kerono Allah, lan hayawan kang mati keteken, lan hayawan kang mati sebab tibo saking duwur, lan hayawan kang mati sebab gundangan, lan hayawan kang kepangan **sathu galak**, kejobo hayawan kang kecokot sathu galak durung mati nuli katutupan siro sembelih (Musthafa 1960).

*Celathu* translates the word *qāla*, found in several places, one of which is al-Maidah verse 18. Using the word says (*ngoko* roughly) if the one who says Abu Jahal, but if the speaker is the Prophet, it is translated as *ngendiko* (*kromo inggil*). When mentioning the name of the Prophet and especially the Prophet Muhammad, it begins with the title Kanjeng which means lord (Sayyid) (Asif 2016).

Wong-wong Yahudi lan wong-wong Nasrani podo celathu, ingsun kabeh iki persasat putrane Allah ta'ala lan iyo kekasihe Allah ta'ala. Kanjeng nabi kadawuhan ngunandika: yen kondo iro iku bener, keno opo Allah ta'ala teko nyikso siro kabeh sebab anggon iro podo doso? Terang siro kabeh podo goroh, lan sakbenere siro kabeh iku menuso biasa tunggal-tunggale titahe Allah... (Musthafa 1960).

Meanwhile, from the aspect of appearance and writing, two forms related to the cultural locality are clearly visible from the appearance or writing side of *Tafsir Al-Ibriz's*, namely the meaning of *gandul* and the Pegon script. These two things were generally used side by side by Islamic boarding school scholars when interpreting the Qur'an in the 16-20 century AD.



**Image:** Appearance or writing of *Tafsir Al-Ibriz's* with the meaning *gandul* and the *pegon* script

The meaning of *gandul* used in interpreting the Qur'an was formulated at the end of the 19th century M. The first *mufasssir* to use it was KH Muhammad Sholeh bin Umar al-Samarani (1820 - 1903) or known as KH Sholeh Darat, and indeed almost all the work of KH Sholeh Darat is written with the meaning *gandul* (Iwanebel 2014). The meaning of *gandul* is usually used to interpret or translate Arabic texts tilted to the left under the verses of the Qur'an and has specific codes which are part of Arabic language analysis. Utawi with the letter mim, which represents *mubtada* and the word iku, which is marked with *keho'*, represents *kehaba*; sopo is marked with the letter *fa'*, which represents *fa'il*, and so on. As for the Pegon script, it appeared much earlier than the *gandul* meaning. It has yet to be known who first introduced it; the Indonesian historian A. H. Johns said that the localization or vernacularization of Islamic scholarship had occurred since the 16th century AD, including the Javanese script. So it is possible that

vernacularization into Javanese in the form of the meaning of *pegon*, was formulated not far from that time (16th century) (Asif 2016). The Pegon script is used to interpret descriptions and explain the content of related verse texts using hijaiyah letters. The language used is Javanese, located on the page's edge.

From the explanation above, it appears that KH Bisri made an effort to nativize the Qur'an or what we are usually familiar with by burying the Qur'an, namely reinterpretation and context, without compromising the text and without eliminating the nation's cultural personality, as well as positive developments public. KH Bisri tries to translate the language of the Qur'an into a down-to-earth human language; he wants to position the Qur'an as a problem-solving in the context of his time. His efforts are evident in the dialogue between the static and limited Qur'an in the context of the dynamic and unlimited development of the times and in emphasising the Qur'an concept, which is *ṣālib likulli zamān wa makān*.

### **Locality in Tafsīr Al-Ibrīz**

*Mufasssīr* and reality, when viewed from the perspective of the progressivity of interpretation, have a powerful and close bonding so that mufasssīr, who is not conservative, will spend extra effort to be able to dialogue the text with the context (the reality of life). It was this effort that KH Bisri carried out in the *Tafsīr Al-Ibrīz*, which underwent an adoption process which, in the end, resulted in the product of his interpretation being able to adapt to the values of the surrounding socio-cultural locality (Javanese Pesantren). In conclusion, there are several aspects of the socio-cultural locality of the Javanese Pesantren in *Tafsīr Al-Ibrīz*'s: **First**, mystical culture. One form of the culture of mysticism that has developed in the Javanese Pesantren is to believe in supernatural powers possessed by an object, commonly known as a blessing on the object and figure of the KH. For example, a KH writes a prayer placed in his wallet or a photo of the KH posted on the

wall of the house, which is believed to bring blessings to the livelihood and safety of the occupants. This can be seen in the interpretation of KH Bisri in Tafsir Al-Ibrīz's of QS. Al-Kahf [18]: 22:

Wong-wong kang padha ngrembuk Kisahe Ashabul Kahfi padha sulaya. Bakale ana golongan kang ngucap yen Ashabul Kahfi iku wong telu nomer papate asune (dalil papat karo asune). Lan ana golongan kang ngucap lima, nenem karo asune. Karo-karone iku namung penyana, nyana-nyana barang samar. Lan ana golongan kang ngucap (yaiku golongan wong-wong Mukmin) pitu, wolu karo asune. Dhawuha Muhammad Pengeran Ingsun dhewe kang luwih pirsane itungane Ashabul Kahfi. Ora ana kang weruh Ashabul Kahfi kejaba sithik. Mula sira aja mbantah perkara Ashabul Kahfi. Kejaba mbantah kang ora jero-jero. Lan sira aja njaluk fatwa bab perkarane Ashabul Kahfi marang sapa wae saking Ahli Kitab (Yahudi) (Musthafa 1960).

**Second**, the culture of religious rituals. Religious ritual activities entrenched within the Javanese Pesantren are *tablil* and pilgrimage of graves. KH Bisri alludes to these two things in the Tafsir Al-Ibrīz when interpreting the QS. al-Jumu'ah [62]: 11 and in the QS. Al-Zumar [39]: 3, which is shown below:

“Awasi! Namung kagungane lan kagem Allah Ta'ala dewe agama kang murni iku, wong-wong kang podho agawe sesembahan lan nganggep sak liane Allah Ta'ala (kaya berhala-berhala) dianggep pujaan (yo iku wong-wong kafir Makkah) iku deweke padha nyelathu mengkene: ing sun kabeh ora padha nyembah berhalaberhala iku kejaba supaya berhalaberhala iku mau marekake ing sun marang Allah Ta'ala sarana parek kang temenan. Temenan Allah Ta'ala iku bakal ngukumi antarane wong-wong kafir lan wong-wong Islam ana ing bab agama kang wong-wong kafir lan muslimin podha suloyo iku (kang pungkasane wong-wong Islam dilebokake suargo lan wong-wong kafir dijegurake

neraka Jahanam). Temenan Allah Ta'ala ora nuduhake marang wong-wong kang deweke iku akeh goroe lan banget kufure”.

KH Bisri also explained about *tawassul* and the custom of visiting family graves for the Javanese people, or what is commonly called *nyekar*. He explained that this culture was not the same as the customs of the Meccan infidels because what Muslims did was very different in terms of meaning and purpose.

Third, the rejection of anthropomorphism (*tajsim*). The majority of Javanese Pesantren follow the ideology of Ahlussunnahwal Jama'ah, which, when discussing monotheism, firmly believes in holding on to the verse “ليس كمثلہ شيء” (no one resembles Him, Q.S. Al-Syura: 11), as well as KH Bisri who acts as Great KH in Java. The Sunnis reject the notion of *tajsim* or *mujassimah*, namely the theological view that God has a body and limbs and carries out bodily activities like humans. Therefore KH Bisri rejected this view because it was considered contrary to God's nature or equating God with His creatures. When interpreting the letter al-Fajr verse 22, KH Bisri tends to use *ta'wil* rather than using the literal meaning, as shown below:

Mbok ya aja kaya mengkono..! (eling ta!) Mengko yen bumi wis digunjang ganjingke. Dhawuhe Pengeran wis tumeka, Malaikat wus padha baris (Musthafa 1960).

Fourth, alternative medicine. In the culture of Javanese Pesantren, there is a custom in the form of belief in alternative medicine; for example, the drink that the KH prays for is believed to be able to cure the disease. Moreover, the belief that comes from the teachings of Islam that the Qur'an has miracles to cure disease; KH Bisri explained this in his book entitled *Imam Al-Din*, explained that certain verses function as a cure for a disease, even when interpreting QS. Al-Isrā' [17]: 82, and QS. Al-Nahl [16]: 69 shown below:

”Banjur tawon didawuhi supaya mangan sangking sekabehane warnane buahbuahan lan supaya ngambah dalane Allah Ta'ala sarana lapang. (papan kang angel-



angel kang ora bisa ditekani menungso bisa diambah dening tawon tanpa ngerusak kiwa tengen lan senajan adoh kaya apa tawon bisa bali marang sarange). Sangking wetenge tawon-tawon iku bisa metu omben (yoiku madu) kang bedhobedho wernane, ana kang puteh, kuning lan abang. Madu mau ngandung obat tambane menungso. Sak temene mangkunu iku cukup kanggo ayat tondo kekuasaane Allah Ta'ala tumrap kaum kang gelem mikir" (Musthafa 1960).

### Study of KH Bisri's Thought and Ideology

The book of al-Ibriz's interpretation certainly did not emerge from a vacuum; KH Bisri was raised and educated in a traditional Islamic boarding school, studied with several Ulama in Mecca, who later became involved with the strong tradition and organization of the Nahdhatul Ulama (NU), and interacted quite intensely with the colour of NU (*nabdhyyin*), even he who defines the meaning of Aswaja. The genealogy of thought and the socio-religious conditions that followed him gave colour to *Tafsir Al-Ibriz's*. KH Bisri positions himself as a traditional Islamic nurse who maintains traditions as long as they do not conflict with the basic principles of Islam and Islamic Aqedah; the basic assumption of traditional Muslims is that the Qur'an as a guide to life and a source of life can also be a means to overcome various life problems, for example, verses of the Qur'an as a ware in praying for various needs in life (Gusmian 2016).

Given the context of the pesantren world, KH Bisri does interpret the Qur'an not only scientifically and rationally but also spiritually, for example when interpreting the last three verses of sura al-Baqarah, he uses verses of the Qur'an as a medium for prayer to protect the house and repelling demons by referring to a Hadith. The word *shifa'* in QS. Al-Isra' [17]: 82, he interpreted it not as a medicine or physical healer but as a cure for misguidance.

Ingsun Allah Ta'ala nurunake perkara rupa Al-Qur'an kang dadi tamba saking penyakit sasar lan uga dad rahmat tumrap wong-wong Mukmin, nanging Al Qur'an iku ora nambahi wong-wong Kafir kejaba tambah tuna (jalaran saking anggone padha Kufur) (Musthafa 1960).

However, in his other works, he uses verses from the Qur'an to heal a disease. As a KH who plays an active role in the NU organization, his ideology can also be seen from the ideology adopted by the largest socio-religious organization in Indonesia. In the field of Jurisprudence, even though the reference is to the four primary schools of thought (Hanafi, Maliki, Syafi'i and Maliki), in reality, Fiqh of the Syafi'iyah Madzab is the primary reference for Nahdhiyyin residents (Fadal 2018). In the field of Sufism, it refers to the thoughts of Imam Ghazali and Imam Junaidi Al-Baghdadi. In contrast, the field of Theology follows the schools of Abū Hasan Al-Ash'ārī and Abū Mansūr Al-Māturīdī (Mulyaden 2021). In religion and social interaction, KH Bisri is flexible, not rigid, and creative, but at the same time, there is firmness and commitment. For example, his views on family planning. According to KH Bisri, it is permissible for a family to plan their future with the family planning program as long as it is accompanied by the main reasons, namely maintaining the health of mothers and children and improving the family's quality of life (Baidowi 2020).

The building of KH Bisri's scientific thought in Kalam is also heavily coloured by Asy'ariyah theology, which places reason and revelation in their respective positions. That is, the ability of reason is limited, so revelation is needed to know human obligations in the world. For KH Bisri, reason is used as a means to do good things, but it cannot be used as a determinant of doing good and avoiding evil, as a religious obligation. Likewise, regarding *qadla'* and *qadar*, human effort or endeavour influences the realization of deeds, but what determines is Allah. Humans are given the freedom to act, but God determines it. Likewise, in

morals, KH Bisri is a KH who is very concerned about the younger generation's moral degradation. Through his work in morality in the Javanese language: *washaya aba liabana*, he delivered his advice to the younger generation, guiding obedience and obedience to parents, health and noble ideals. His other works include Javanese poetry, *ngudisusila* books and trustworthy partners. He also emphasized the attitude of humanism, independence, diligent study and other commendable attitudes or morals (Rouf 2020).

When understanding verses of the Qur'an, KH Bisri is not only trapped in a textual way of thinking, but sometimes he uses rational explanations; for example, when interpreting *mutasyabihat* verses, besides referring to the opinions of commentators, he also provides rational explanations (Baidowi 2020). Based on the research of L.W.C. Van Den Berg, quoted by Karel A. Steenbrink, who states that the most dominant subject matter studied in Islamic boarding schools is Jurisprudence, Arabic, Monotheism and Sufism. It also refers to the results of Karel A. Steenbrink's research which sees the figure and position of a KH as a central figure and is believed to be able to become a spiritual advisor and a problem solver in all life problems for the surrounding community. These two things become external and internal factors which influence the Tafsir Al-Ibrīz so that the style of interpretation is more dominant in the style of *fiqhi*, *sufi* and *adabi ijtimai'*.

## Conclusion

Tafsir *Al-Ibrīz li Ma'rifati Tafsiri al-Quran al-Azīz* is the work of a KH from Rembang, Central Java, namely KH Bisri Musthafa. Apart from being a prominent Kyai, he is also known as a superior orator, politician, and active organizer in Nahdhatul Ulama (NU).

Tafsir al-Ibrīz was written for four years with a textual-contextual approach (more dominant textual). This Tafsir has

several features, including *fiqhi*, *sufi*, and *adabi ijtima'i*. His interpretation is coloured by the life in which he lives, namely the pesantren environment, as well as his scientific journey for two years in Mecca, as well as a socio-religious organization in which he is active as one of the administrators and initiators of his Qanun Asasi, namely Nahdhatul Ulama (NU).

Even though this interpretation was born in the pre-modern era, his thoughts on this interpretation were relatively moderate; this can be seen in how he responded to government programs such as family planning (KB). Also quite critical-reactive, especially on socio-religious issues related to the surrounding culture.

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