IDEOLOGICAL BIASES IN TRANSLATING THE QUR'AN: AN ANALYSIS STUDY OF *AL-QUR'AN TARJAMAH TAFSIRIYAH* BY MUHAMMAD THALIB

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Abstract: This paper examines the translation of the Qur'an in Indonesia, which is a sign of the interaction of Muslims in Indonesia with the Holy Scriptures, which is not limited to reading and studying it in the original Arabic pronunciation. Like the interpretation of the Qur'an, which is full of dynamics, the translation also touches on the realm of polemics that attract the attention of adherents from different circles. The polemic in question can be found among the long historical translation buildings. In this study, the author chooses *Al-Qur'an Tarjamah Tafsiriyah* by Muhammad Thalib, in which the ideological bias of his organizational group is indicated. Is there an ideological bias produced by Muhammad Thalib in his translation work? This study attempts to answer the above questions using a qualitative method based on library research, with a social identity approach and critical discourse analysis as its formal object. In addition, this study will use the hermeneutical analysis offered by Sahiron Syamsudin. In addition, the method used in this qualitative research is content analysis to analyze the results of Muhammad Thalib's translation, leading to a narrative justification of his ideology. Finally, this research resulted in a conclusion that the results of Muhammad Thalib's translation of the Qur'an in the form of *Al-Qur'an Tarjamah Tafsiriyah* in it are indeed many translations that have an interest in defending his organizational group, MMI (Majelis Mujahidin Indonesia),

which adheres to the ideological ideology of Islamism which departs from the view of integral Islam and is an incarnation of the reproduction of Islamic Revivalism and Neo-revivalism which tends to be traditional and conservative as found in the Wahhabiyah, Ikhanul Muslimin, and Jemaah Islamiyyah movements in the Thaliban.

Keywords: Ideological biases, Tafsiriyah translation, Muhammad Thalib

Introduction

Extreme ideological biases in producing content in translation works. In this section, the community, consciously or unconsciously, has made a work of translation of the Qur'an like that done by Muhammad Thalib that has never been produced by a single person in today's contemporary times. His hard work deserves to be appreciated. Regarding the translation method used, Thalib prefers the *tafsiriyah* method with the belief that only this method is permissible for the Qur'an (Istianah 2016).

Historically, Thalib's work entitled *Al-Qur'an Tarjamah Tafsiriyah* initially began with the emergence of the Majelis Mujahidin Indonesia (MMI) group, which was a turning point from the outbreak of the 1998 reform event, which was marked by the impeachment of the New Order government led by Suharto after 32 years in power. Ultimately, Suharto's removal was a democratic breakthrough that considerably changed steps and determined a new trajectory for Indonesian politics. Various ideological and identity interests previously suppressed by the regime are slowly showing their existence (Kurniawan and Aminuddin 2018). Meanwhile, Ema Khotimah explained a series of alternating chaos during the transition period for Habibie as Suharto's successor and Abdurrahman Wahid as the successor to the reform struggle. During this chaotic and chaotic transitional period, several groups of mass organizations attracted public

attention by filling the streets and demanding the application of Islamic law as a whole in the nation's life. Muslim soldiers with cries of jihad, triggering expressions of frustration at the government, which is seen as failing to carry out its duties (Khotimah 2003).

With freedom of opinion, Thalib came to the surface to voice his opinions by criticizing the government when he was deemed to disagree with him. Apart from that, Thalib is also very ambitious in wanting to uphold Islamic law in Indonesia. To express his opinion, Thalib uses one of the media, namely writing (Fuaddin 2021). Most of Thalib's writings discuss issues of ideological and aqidah differences, such as: *Melacak Kekafiran Berpikir, Syi'ah: Menguak Tabir Kesesatan Dalam Penghinaan Terhadap Islam, Doktrin Zionis dan Ideologi Pancasila, Koreksi Tarjamah Harfiyah Al-Qur'an Kemenag RI, Al-Qur'an Tarjamah Tafsiriyah* and so forth.

In addition, Anwar Kurniawan wrote in his research that these efforts were based on the appointment of Thalib as Amir of MMI since last November 2015, MMI held a National Mudzakarah class of the highest forum in the organizational structure, one of the objectives of which was to shape the orientation of the MMI movement. At the National Conference, Thalib was re-elected as the emir of MMI. MMI reaffirmed its commitment to welcoming a new era of struggle for implementing Islamic law in State Institutions (Kurniawan and Aminuddin 2018). This opinion aligns with Mohammad Sobirin, Thalib's leadership style in managing MMI looks calmer. It is proven that, under Thalib's command, MMI seems no longer as popular as Ba'asyir's control. However, it is still often involved in anarchist activities highlighted by the media. Even though MMI seemed to have lost its teeth after Ba'asyir's resignation, whose leadership has now passed into the hands of Thalib, it can be said that Thalib's progress in strengthening MMI in the field of knowledge can exceed Ba'asyir's achievements. This aligns with his commitment

since receiving the leadership mandate to focus more on strengthening MMI in literacy and knowledge in the struggle for Sharia enforcement, as seen in the facts above (Sobirin 2020).

Meanwhile, Mohammad Sobirin, in his writing, said that in the hands of Abu Bakar Ba'asyir, one of the Islamic mass organizations known as the puritans became a mass organization known in society. In August 2006, the Indonesian Survey Institute (LSI) released the results of its survey in which one of the points included community support for Islamic mass organizations in Indonesia that MMI was in fourth place after Nahdhatul Ulama (NU), Muhammadiyah and Front Pembela Islam (FPI), which received support from the community for the existence and its role (Rubaidi 2011). The election results show public sympathy for the role of MMI in confrontational actions in the name of jihad and *amr ma'rūf nahī munkar*. During the two periods under Ba'asyir's leadership, MMI has always displayed its identity as an organization that upholds *amr ma'rūf nahī munkar*. They are always at the forefront of preventing anti-immorality, liquor, heretical sects, and moral support for the three bombers, Amrozi, Imam Samudra, and Muchlas (Khotimah 2003). Ba'asyir's sympathies for several acts of terrorism in Indonesia have often led to MMI being accused of being a behind-the-scenes player. As a result, Ba'asyir has been diligent in going in and out of bars, both for investigative purposes and only for interrogation.

At the end of his tenure, Ba'asyir stepped down as chairman of the MMI because of a conflict of opinion between Ba'asyir and his deputy, Thalib. Ba'asyir thinks that MMI is no longer Sharia; MMI is secular, and the main thing lies in the existing leadership system. For Ba'asyir, the collegial periodic and collective leadership model in MMI follows the Jewish style. Ba'asyir wants MMI to use the concept of Imamat and a single leadership model. Thalib denied the accusation. According to him, the concept of Imamat and the single leadership model put forward by Ba'asyir is the leadership model of Shia and

Ahmadiyah. The existence of friction and contradictions in this view made Ba'asyir leave MMI on July 19 2008. After Ba'asyir stepped down from office, he proclaimed a new Islamic mass organization on September 17 2008, called *Jamaah Ansharut Tauhid* (JAT). With the announcement of JAT, there needed to be more clarity about which MMI branches had to choose; some officially left MMI and joined JAT, and some remained at MMI.

MMI successfully held the Third Congress on 9-10 August 2008. Previously, this congress was threatened with a lack of interest due to accusations and the departure of Ba'asyir from the Laskar Mujahidin ranks. This third congress appointed Thalib as a new leader and a new hope for MMI. It was decided that he would lead AHWA and simultaneously be Amir, while Irfan S. Awwas (Yahya 2018). Will continue to manage the daily management. It was confirmed by the writings of Anwar Kurniawan & Aminuddin that in the field of physical actions, the Thalib leadership had yet to be able to surpass Ba'asyir's achievements. However, Thalib's highest achievement at MMI was the release of corrections to the *Al-Qur'an dan Terjemahnya* published by the Ministry of Religion and *Al-Qur'an Tarjamah Tafsiriyah*, which became the pride of his followers (Kurniawan and Aminuddin 2018).

From the previous studies above, no one has focused on the influence of ideology on the *Al-Qur'an Tarjamah Tafsiriyah* written by Thalib. For this reason, researchers are interested in studying Thalib's views on interpreting the Qur'an in this study. To what extent is the importance of Thalib's interpretation of the verses of the Qur'an used as legitimacy for enforcing Islamic law in Indonesia? The researcher seeks to find out to what extent Thalib's ideological interests and tendencies are used in interpreting the Qur'an verses as legitimacy for the application of Islamic law. Going deeper, this research seeks to see Thalib's efforts to undermine the Indonesian Ministry of Religion's translations through his translation works. It does not

stop there; Thalib's ideals are often in the *Al-Qur'an Tarjamah Tafsiriyah*, intersecting the MMI ideology he adheres to. This paper does not aim to delegitimize the Ministry of Religion's translation of the Al-Qur'an and vice versa but to see the extent to which the dialectical form of the product of interpretation, which represents a particular group, with the reality faced in the nuances of contemporary Indonesian democracy (Basid and Jazila 2023; Husna, Zayyadi, and Oktafiana 2022).

This study uses a qualitative method based on library research, with a social identity approach and critical discourse analysis as its formal object. In addition, this study will use the hermeneutical analysis offered by Sahiron Syamsudin. According to him, the schools of understanding the Qur'an consist of Traditional Objectivity, Subjectivity, and Modernist Objectivism. (Syamsuddin 2017). The method used in this qualitative research is content analysis to analyze the results of Thalib's translation, leading to a narrative of ideological justification. Also translates the verses of *jihad* and *qital* or the affixation of both, which Thalib offered in the *Al-Qur'an Tarjamah Tafsiriyah*. The primary references in the study are the *Al-Qur'an Tarjamah Tafsiriyah* by Thalib. In contrast, the secondary references are all the authors' studies on Thalib and Majelis Mujahidin Indonesia and the like.

Profile of the *Al-Qur'an Tarjamah Tafsiriyah* Muhammad Tahlib

The chronology of writing the *Al-Qur'an Tarjamah Tafsiriyah* by Thalib deliberately intends to correct the Indonesian Ministry of Religion's translation of the Qur'an. As mentioned in the introduction to the book's second part, this translation started in the 1980s. However, this idea worked intensively from 2000 to 2011 (Thalib 2012). Then this correction effort is increasingly gaining momentum and relevance because Indonesia's secular and liberal communities are becoming increasingly stubborn and determined to discredit the Muslim holy book. They believe that

the Qur'an contains elements of violence and hatred towards non-Muslims. Apart from these translations, he also wrote other books which only focused on correcting the verses in the translation.

In the author's view, the existence of Thalib, known to Indonesian Muslim audiences, is more motivated by his structural role in the organization previously led by Abu Bakar Ba'asyir, namely the Majelis Mujahidin Indonesia (MMI). The terrorist incident that ensnared Ba'asyir and the identity of this organization in voicing and trying to establish a caliphate in Indonesia, and often criticizing the democratic system and the Pancasila state principles adopted in Indonesia, has made this organization prominent in the public's attention. Thalib's position as *Amir 'Amm* (2008-2013), an organization with the vision of upholding Islamic Sharia in the lives of Muslims, has attracted Thalib to make him superior to many parties. Public scrutiny of Thalib is getting stronger as it is strengthened by his work in the form of touches on the Qur'an. Moreover, he claims that this work is a criticism and a correction to the Qur'an, touched by the Ministry of Religion of the Republic of Indonesia. The *Al-Qur'an Tarjamah Tafsiriyah* by Thalib has been published in 2 versions: 1) Special Edition of the *Al-Qur'an Tarjamah Tafsiriyah* and *harfiyah* correction to Indonesian Ministry of Religion size 21 x 14 cm, xlvi + 614 pages printed as many as 10,000 copies; and 2) Special Edition of the *Al-Qur'an Tarjamah Tafsiriyah* and *harfiyah* corrections to Indonesian Ministry of Religion size 25 x 17 cm, xlvi + 714 pages as well as 10,000 copies. Recently, there has also been an online version in the form of an application that can be installed on cell phones or computers.

The work launched on 31 October 2011 above, apart from being motivated by Thalib's desire to produce a translation of the Qur'an that is easily understood by Indonesian Muslims who generally do not understand Arabic and convey messages in the verses of the Qur'an, makes motivated by the views he

understands about the necessity of translating the Qur'an using the interpretive method and the prohibition of translating the Qur'an using the literal method. Thalib considers that the *Al-Qur'an dan Terjemahnya* by the Ministry of Religion of the Republic of Indonesia uses the literal method. He even claimed that the use of literalist methods by the Indonesian Ministry of Religion would trigger radicalism in Indonesia. That is why he saw the need for corrections in the translation. In his report, after ten years of particular study of the *Al-Qur'an dan Terjemahnya* published by the Ministry of Religion of the Republic of Indonesia, which since 1965 had undergone gradual revisions starting in 1989, 1998, 2002, until 2010, he noted that it contained many translation errors. His research revealed 3,140 translation errors in the *Al-Qur'an dan Terjemahnya* published by the Ministry of Religion of the Republic of Indonesia. Another reason behind M. Thalib's decision to translate the Qur'an using the tafsir method is Thalib's view that he believes that the radical views of Muslims are caused by their mistakes in understanding the verses of the Qur'an. The Harfiyyah Translation of Al-Qur'an by the Ministry of Religion of the Republic of Indonesia is considered an act of changing the true meaning of the verses of the Al-Qur'an; it can even be misleading (Zulfa 2022).

Thalib's writing confirmed this by explaining various rhetoric aimed at weakening and delegitimizing the Ministry of Religion's translation from public perception; Mohammad Yahya wrote in his research that Thalib wrote several things to weaken the Indonesian Ministry of Religion's translation, including (Yahya 2018). *First*, correction is the review or process of checking and production falsification of the correct form. This process is carried out to test the reading object to verify its correctness and rule out various errors. Correction of the terms used in the QTK correction tells the reader that several errors in the Ministry of Religion's translation need to be corrected, so it assumes that the translation offered by Thalib is correct.. *Second*, literal translation, is

a binary opposition to interpretive translation. This term has a stigmatizing character when it is associated with the Qur'an. The problem is, in *ulūm al-qur'ān* literature, the literal translation is an unlawful method used to interact with the Qur'an. The use of this term in the title of the QTK Correction book is intended to show that the principles and methods used in QTK are harams, which logically follows that their use is also haram. *Third*, "shocking the consciousness of our faith," Thalib has repeated this sentence since his work was launched. According to him, QTK was launched for the first time since August 17, 1965, and manipulated Indonesian Muslims through translation errors. For over 40 years, Indonesian people have believed that QTK is an original product and therefore has an essential authority for understanding the Qur'an. The belief in QTK is a false conscience. The use of the term "jerking" means that the Indonesian Muslim community was shocked by the fatal error in QTK's translation, both in terms of quantity and quality.

Fourth, "the teaching of the holy book of the Qur'an is tarnished". The use of the Harfiyah method, considered illegal by many scholars, indirectly has fatal consequences and radicalizes the Qur'an. In this context, Thalib chose the term tainted teachings of the holy book of the Qur'an to emphasize the implications that arise. Furthermore, the use of the term tarnished means that the understanding is humiliated. *Fifth,* "mistranslation" violates the true Islamic creed, violates the laws established by the Qur'an and al-Sunnah and deviates from the true meaning. The practical implication of using the unlawful method in translating the Qur'an in simple terms is a mistranslation. The consequence of this mistranslation is that it touches on the areas of belief, law, and religious logic. These three areas affect all aspects of Muslim life. Naturally, Thalib emphatically said that the religious problems of today's society are nothing but implications of the problems caused by QTK, including acts of terrorism. *Sixth*, "maintaining

the authenticity of the teachings of the Qur'an". As a solution to hidden problems in QTK, a clear and firm translation using the interpretive method is necessary. According to him, this was done to maintain the authenticity of the teachings of the Qur'an. Problems in QTK can be solved using QTK Corrections and QTT. QTT replaced the authority of QTK (Yahya 2018).

The translation process carried out by Thalib pays close attention to all the rules used in interpreting the Qur'an. Moreover, to produce an appropriate translation pattern between Arabic constructions and the translation language, he refers to the books of salaf interpretation as translation sources, such as *Tafsir Jāmi' al-Bayān fī Takwīl al-Qur'ān* by Muḥammad bin Jarir al-Ṭabārī, *Tafsīr Bahr al-'Ulūm* by Abū al-Laith al-Samarqandī, *Tafsīr al-Dur al-Manthūr* by Jalāl al-Dīn al-Suyuṭī, *Tafsīr al-Kashf wa al-Bayān 'an Tafsīr al-Qur'ān* by Ahmad bin Ibrāhim al-Tha'labī, *Tafsīr al-Qur'ān al-'Aẓīm* by Ibn Kathīr al-Dimasyqī, *Tafsīr Ma'ālim al-Tanzīl fī Tafsīr al-Qur'ān* by al-Husain bin Mas'ūd al-Baghāwī, *Tafsīr al-Jawāhir al-Ḥisān fī Tafsīr al-Qur'ān* by Abū Zaid al-Tha'alabī, and *Tafsīr al-Wajīz* by Wahbah Zuhailiy. While the books used as supporting reading sources, such as *Al-Tafsīr wa al-Mufassirūn, Al-Tibyān fī 'Ulūm al-Qur'ān, Tarjamah al-Qur'an: Dawabiṭ wa Aḥkām, Al-Mu'jam al-Wasīṭ, Qamūs al-Qur'ān: Iṣlaḥ al-Wujūh wa al-Naẓāir, Kamus Besar Bahasa Indonesia* by Pusat Pembinaan dan Pengembangan Departemen Pendidikan dan Kebudayaan Edisi 1990, Kamus Bahasa Indonesia created by the Pusat Bahasa Departemen Pendidikan Nasional, 2008 Edition.

In his research, Kurdi Fadal concluded that Thalib chose the *tafsiyah* translation because the Qur'an could only be translated into Arabic with *tafsiriyah* (Fadal 2018). While the literal translation needs clarification for the readers, it will even invite many problems. In this context, Thalib launched a sharp criticism of the Ministry of Religion's translation of the Qur'an, which uses the literal translation model. According to him, the translation of the

Indonesian Ministry of Religion can not only confuse understanding but also has the potential to emerge radicalism in Indonesia (Thalib 2012).

Analysis of the Translation of Qur'an Verses Indicates Thalib's Ideological Bias

Thalib carried out ideological bias through Qur'an translators using the *tafsiriyah* method. Thalib places the MMI ideology that he holds, namely jihad, on implementing Islamic law. This effort was made by reducing the meaning of the verse. Thalib translated several words, phrases or sentences in the Qur'an by inserting phrases or sentences such as applying Islamic law, enforcing Islamic law, or the like. He directly translated Some of the Qur'an words with these phrases or sentences, such as the word slander in QS. Al-Baqarah [2] 191:

وَاقْتُلُوهُمْ حَيْثُ ثَقِفْتُمُوهُمْ وَاَخْرِجُوهُمْ مِّنْ حَيْثُ اَخْرَجُوْكُمْ وَالْفِتْنَةُ اَشَدُّ مِنَ الْقَتْلِ ۚ وَلَا تُقْتِلُوْهُمْ عِنْدَ الْمَسْجِدِ الْحَرَامِ حَتّٰى يُقْتِلُوْكُمْ فِيْهِ ۚ فَاِنْ قْتَلُوْكُمْ فَاقْتُلُوْهُمْ ۗ كَذٰلِكَ جَزَآءُ الْكٰفِرِيْنَ

> Merintangi kaum muslim melaksanakan syariat Islam itu lebih berat dosanya dari pada membunuh di Masjidil Haram. Akan tetapi kalian jangan memerangi musuh-musuh kalian di Masjidil Haram kecuali mereka memerangi kalian di tempat itu. Jika musuh-musuh kalian memerangi kalian di tempat itu, maka perangilah mereka. Demikian itu adalah hukuman bagi orang-orang kafir (Fadal 2020).

The word "al-fitnah" (الفتنة) is translated as " merintangi kaum muslim melaksanakan syariat Islam Islam" (obstructing Muslims from carrying out Islamic Islamic law). With this choice of translation, Thalib wants to emphasize that preventing the application of Islamic law is worse than killing. When referring to

several books of interpretation, including what is often referred to as the Tarjamah Tafsiriyah reference, none of them interprets the way Thalib translated it. For example, in *al-Muntakhab fī Tafsīr al-Qur'ān al-Karīm*, slander is interpreted as *"ta'ẓīb"* (torture) against believers (Kairo 1995). In the book of *Al-Muyassar*, the word "slander" is interpreted as الكفر (disbelief), الشرك (polytheism), and الصد عن الإسلام (obstructing Islam). This last meaning is indeed close to Thalib's choice of translation, but it does not include the words kufr and shirk. Book *al-Muyassar* was chosen because it is considered the most appropriate to explain in full the meaning of "obstructing Islam" compared to other commentary books (Al-Qarni 2009).

A similar translation is also enforced in the next verse (QS. *Al-Baqarah* [2]: 193).

$$\text{وَقَٰتِلُوهُمْ حَتَّىٰ لَا تَكُونَ فِتْنَةٌ وَيَكُونَ ٱلدِّينُ لِلَّهِۖ فَإِنِ ٱنتَهَوْا۟ فَلَا عُدْوَٰنَ}$$

$$\text{إِلَّا عَلَى ٱلظَّٰلِمِينَ}$$

> Wahai kaum mukmin, perangilah musuh-musuh kalian sampai rintangan terhadap pelaksanaan syari'at Islam lenyap, dan manusia mengikuti agamanya semata-mata karena taat kepada Allah. Jika musuh-musuh kalian mau berhenti dari merintangi pelaksanaan syari'at Islam, maka antara kalian dengan mereka tidak ada alasan untuk bermusuhan. Bermusuhan dibolehkan hanya terhadap orang-orang yang melakukan gangguan pelaksanaan syari'at (Fadal 2020).

Thalib translated the phrase slanderous words (حَتَّىٰ لَا تَكُونَ) with "obstacles to the application of Islamic shari'ah". This sentence is repeated in the translation of the next sentence. The sentence (فَإِنِ ٱنتَهَوْا۟) translates to, "If your enemies want to stop hindering the implementation of Islamic Shari'ah". Then in the last phrase: (إِلَّا عَلَى ٱلظَّٰلِمِينَ), which usually has a literal meaning, "except against those who are unjust," Thalib translates with:

Hostility is permissible only towards those who interfere with the implementation of the Shari'ah.

In addition to the word "rintangan" (obstacle) in Thalib's translation above, it is still general because the form of the obstacle is not explained, so the meaning is unclear. This ambiguity will make the reader understand that every obstacle must be fought and fought against. This, of course, has the potential to give birth to radical actions when certain groups see any obstacles that their group considers as obstacles to enforcing Islamic law. Therefore, the translation is not by the proper reference but only leads to efforts to justify the ideological thinking of the translator and his group.

The translator said that the meaning of slander could only be translated in that sense, not the other. However, the translation of the word slander in another verse (QS. Al-Anfāl [8]: 39) contradicts this statement even though this verse has the same context and even with a similar editorial text. Thalib translates verse 39: "O Muhammad, fight the polytheists until there is no more polytheism and worship of idols in Mecca, and the Meccans follow Islam solely because of Allah. If the polytheists do not want to stop from their shirk, then Allah is All-Knowing of what they do" (Fadal 2020). The word slander is translated as polytheism and idol worship.

The striking difference in the form of the translation of the two verses above, namely (QS. Al-Anfāl [8]: 39 and QS. Al-Baqarah [2]: 193), is not only about the meaning of slander but also in the sentence وقاتلوهم which is translated as "O Muhammad, fight the polytheists." Even though the sentence is in the form of *amr jama'*, which means an order for many people, Thalib translated it as *amr mufrad* (only to the prophet Muhammad), different from the translation in QS. Al-Baqarah [2] above. Therefore, the translation above does not have a strong basis of

reference. The translation is only the subjective choice of the translator to justify his ideology.

Other verses whose meanings are deliberately changed for ideological justification can be found in the translation of QS. Āli Imrān [3]: 103 follows:

$$وَٱعْتَصِمُوا۟ بِحَبْلِ ٱللَّهِ جَمِيعًا وَلَا تَفَرَّقُوا۟$$

Teguhkanlah diri kalian dalam melaksanakan Islam secara utuh. Janganlah kalian mengambil sebagian syari'at, tetapi meninggalkan sebagian lainnya (Fadal 2020).

In the translation of the verse above, the phrase بِحَبْلِ ٱللَّهِ is translated as, "in implementing Islam," the word جَمِيعًا is translated as, "in its entirety", and the sentence وَلَا تَفَرَّقُوا۟ with, "Do not take some of the Shari'ah, but leave some of it". The phrase بِحَبْلِ ٱللَّهِ has the basic meaning, "the rope of Allah" but can also mean: "religion", the Qur'an, the book of Allah, Allah's promise, or it can also mean "sincerely monotheism to Allah and Islam" (Ibnu Jarir al-Thabary, n.d.). Among the different meaning choices, the translation "to carry out Islam" always has a close connotation. However, the word جَمِيعًا which is translated as, "in its entirety," does not match the semantics of the word. This meaning does not have a reference that can be interpreted scientifically because there is not a single explanatory book that interprets it that way, including the commentary of al-Samarqandi, as the only reference mentioned by the translator (Fadal 2020). Likewise, the sentence وَلَا تَفَرَّقُوا۟ which is translated as: "Do not take some of the Shari'ah, but leave others", makes the meaning of the verse different from what it should be. In the explanation of al-Samarqandi (As-Samarqandi 1993), the sentence وَلَا تَفَرَّقُوا۟ is interpreted with the word *ikhtilaf*, namely not having disagreements in religious matters as Jews and Christians do. Two other books, al-Muntakhab (p. 87) and al-Muyassar, which Thalib often references, also do not explain the same thing (Fadal and Heriyanto 2020).

Thalib tries to explain the meaning of the above phrases and sentences to clarify the meaning of the verse. In the interpretive translation method, meaning for the purpose and clarifying meaning can be considered reasonable because one word often cannot represent one word in the translation language. However, Thalib tends to exaggerate in interpreting the meaning of the verse, causing problems in interpreting the word. Therefore, the choice of translation offered by Thalib does not find any references so the translation results could be semantically more robust, and cuts occur in the verses of the Qur'an. There are at least two forms of reduction in it. The first reduction is the meaning of the verse because it does not have solid Arabic references. At the same time, the second is the reduction of the source of reference because the book of interpretations cited by Thalib does not describe the contents interpreted in the translation results. Another example of the translation of QS. Al-Māidah [5]: 51 follows:

يَٰٓأَيُّهَا ٱلَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوا۟ لَا تَتَّخِذُوا۟ ٱلْيَهُودَ وَٱلنَّصَٰرَىٰٓ أَوْلِيَآءَ ۘ بَعْضُهُمْ أَوْلِيَآءُ بَعْضٍ ۚ وَمَن يَتَوَلَّهُم مِّنكُمْ فَإِنَّهُۥ مِنْهُمْ ۗ إِنَّ ٱللَّهَ لَا يَهْدِى ٱلْقَوْمَ ٱلظَّٰلِمِينَ

Wahai kaum mukmin, janganlah kalian menjadikan orang-orang Yahudi dan Nasrani sebagai pemimpin-pemimpin kalian. Mereka itu menjadi pemimpin sesama mereka. Siapa saja di antara kalian yang menjadikan mereka sebagai pemimpin, dia termasuk golongan kafir. Allah tidak akan memberi hidayah kepada kaum Yahudi dan Nasrani yang berbuat zhalim (Fadal 2020).

Similar verses also explain more or less the same message and are translated with a similar editorial, namely QS. Āli Imrān [3]: 28 regarding the prohibition, "raising unbelievers as leaders to take care of the believers" (Fadal and Heriyanto 2020). The way of translating the two verses indirectly shows the ideological characteristics of the translator. The problem lies in the meaning

of the word اولياء as "leader". The Ministry of Religion presents a different translation in the Brief Interpretation book. In this book, the word is QS. Āli Imrān [3]: 28 is translated as "guardian, namely the closest person who is a place to store secrets that concern the public good". While in QS. Al-Māidah [5]: 51 The word *awliya'* is translated as loyal friends. Al-Khāzin interprets the word as ansar (helper) and *a'wan* (one who helps). (Al-Khazin 2004). The meaning conveyed by Thalib is difficult to find in the book of interpretation, which is usually used as a reference. However, the choice of meaning can still include the meaning of ansar or *a'wan* in general because being a leader also means being an ansar or *a'wan*. However, Muhammad Thalib's choice of translation is still biased and can be seen as a strong reflection of his ideological understanding in the context of upholding Islamic law in the social life of society. Because this desire cannot be fully realized if the leader is non-Muslim.

Several examples of the translation results above show that Thalib needs to be more consistent in quoting reference sources. More seriously, the Thalib translation, considered the antithesis of the Indonesian Ministry of Religion's translation, is not in line with the views of most commentators. Thalib often makes selective decisions to identify verses' references without processing them first. According to Istianah, they tend to impose specific meanings they choose while closing the possibility of different meanings (Istianah 2016). The model for translating the Qur'anic verses by Thalib above is a model Chesterman calls "translation manipulation". According to him, translation can be a type of manipulation in which the translator manipulates his position as an interpreter to distort or twist the intended meaning of the translated text (Sobirin 2020). Thalib does not use foreignization in translating the verses of the Qur'an. On the contrary, he translated several verses to justify his ideology and that of his group, which advocated "upholding Islamic law" through literacy jihad. Therefore, some verses are forced to be explained with

translations that are out of their original meaning. Thalib ignored the results of the interpretations he claimed to be referenced in several contexts. The deviations that occur in the translation book are in the form of adding and omitting, which are unrelated to the text's meaning or context.

Thalib not only hides behind explanations of the verses of the Qur'an to justify his ideology but also claims that the translations of the Qur'an he offers refer to books of authoritative interpretation. All Muslims naturally believe in the Qur'an's truth and the *salaf* scholars' authoritative interpretations. Muslims easily accept the interpretation. The interpretations of the *salaf* scholars are not widely used as references in the Tarjamah Tafsiriyah version of Thalib. He only chooses references to interpretations that are by his ideological understanding. Claims about references to books of commentary are exaggerated because several inconsistent translations have been found. Choosing one interpretation and ignoring the other interpretations while saying the choice is correct and then saying the other explanations are wrong.

With this translation of the Qur'an, Thalib also tries to remove the stigma of radicalism against the mass organizations he leads. Negative social stigma is often attached to the MMI they lead because they are seen as having close ties to radical jihadi figures or being associated with other high-level organizations (Kurniawan and Aminuddin 2018). Muhammad Yahya explained in his research that several radical jihadist figures close to MMI, such as Abu Bakar Ba'asyir, had convinced some circles that MMI was classified as a radical Islamic mass organization. Implementing Islamic sharia, once voiced out loud by the mass organization, strengthened the stigma scandal (Yahya 2018). So when Thalib led MMI, the strategy to voice their ideology was pursued through a literacy jihad in print and online media. The translation of the Qur'an written by Thalib is one of them. Not only in the physical

form of printed books but also digital, namely the playstore (with the title *Al-Qur'an Tarjamah Tafsiriyah*).

The translation of the Qur'an published by the Ministry of Religion is the most effective target. Not only because the Ministry of Religion's translation is the official state reference which tends to be trusted by the wider community but also because, so far, the government has been loud in voicing deradicalization or anti-radicalization. Thalib attacked the Ministry of Religion's version of the translation and tried to prove that there were thousands of errors. He mentioned that there were 3,229 translation errors in the old version of the Ministry of Religion, and in the revised edition (2010), Thalib considered that it contained more errors than before 3,400 (Thalib 2012). According to Thalib, mistakes can lead to extremist views or incite violence against the reading public (Fadal and Heriyanto 2020). He wrote a remarkable work entitled Correction of translation of the Qur'an Ministry of Religion of the Republic of Indonesia to prove these mistakes. Thalib describes these mistakes in this book into four verse themes: faith, shari'ah, social and economics. According to Thalib, some of the ministry's translations were considered wrong, as seen in the translation of verses of war (*qital*): QS. Al-Anfāl [8]: 39, QS. Al-Baqarah [2]: 191, and QS. Al-Taubah [9]: 5, 14, 29. Moreover, Thalib has made many strong comments about the version of the translation of the Qur'an by the Ministry of Religion. For example, he considers the Ministry of Religion's version of the literal translation as an act of changing the verses of the Qur'an from their true meaning, which can be misleading and lead to aggressive attitudes in non-Muslim communities. Thalib also called the Ministry of Religion's translation a distorted translation of the Qur'an. He said there were around 1,000 fatal mistakes in the translation of the Indonesian Ministry of Religion's version (Fadal and Heriyanto 2020).

From this statement, it is clear that Thalib's purpose in writing *Tarjamah Tafsiriyah* was to correct the translation of the

Qur'an by the Ministry of Religion. The Indonesian Ministry of Religion's Tarjamah Correction Book confirms this attitude. This book discusses the mistakes of the Ministry of Religion in several themes: faith, logic, Arabic grammar and sharia. In the book, he is very confident and often emphasizes the word "false" in the translation of the Ministry of Religion. Thalib did not hesitate to question the commentators and *ulūm al-Qur'ān* attached to the Ministry of Religion's translation team, such as Quraish Shihab. They are known as a moderate group that disagrees with Thalib and his friends in the context of jihad for the implementation of Islamic Sharia in Indonesia (Fadal and Heriyanto 2020).

More than just a simple correction, Thalib's book *Al-Qur'an Tarjamah Tafsiriyah* has become a counterattack against the government and to fight against the extreme stigma attached to his organization. Therefore, trying to provide translations of verses that do not cause acts of violence in society. Among the verses illustrated by Thalib is QS. Al-Tahrīm [66]:9:

يَٰٓأَيُّهَا ٱلنَّبِيُّ جَٰهِدِ ٱلْكُفَّارَ وَٱلْمُنَٰفِقِينَ وَٱغْلُظْ عَلَيْهِمْ ۚ وَمَأْوَىٰهُمْ جَهَنَّمُ ۖ وَبِئْسَ ٱلْمَصِيرُ

> Wahai Nabi, berjuanglah kamu melawan orang-orang kafir yang melanggar perjanjian damai dengan senjata, dan melawan orang-orang munafik dengan hujah dan ancaman. Lakukanlah tindakan keras kepada kaum kafir dan munafik. Tempat tinggal kaum kafir dan munafik adalah neraka jahannam, seburuk-buruk tempat tinggal) (Thalib 2012).

The translation of the verse above is the revision that the Thalib wants from the Ministry of Religion translation version. He emphasized his criticism that fighting against disbelievers cannot be synonymous with dealing with hypocrites. In dealing with hypocrites, you cannot justify them with weapons but with the force of argument because fighting them with weapons can

negatively impact social relations with them. However, he still justifies jihad in the form of "threats" of hypocrites if his arguments are unsuccessful. He said threats were made to stop disturbing Muslims (Fadal and Heriyanto 2020). On the one hand, Thalib did not justify armed war against the hypocrites, but on the other hand, he allowed it with threats. Resistance to *hujjah* does not cause fear, but intimidation (*threats*) is part of instilling fear in society.

On the other hand, his efforts to avoid translations that can lead to violence are instead trapped in another potential for violence. Therefore, struggling with constant threats is not the right choice to eliminate the negative impact on social harmony, including with the hypocrites. Furthermore, the hypocrites exemplified by Thalib are Ahmadiyah, Syi'ah and other deviant sects that outwardly claim to be Muslims (Fadal and Heriyanto 2020). Thalib's criticism that the translation of the verse by the Ministry of Religion can lead to anarchic actions against groups considered heretical, the *tafsiriyah* translation he offers strengthens the community's tough stance in dealing with people who do not share their ideology. The translation given by Thalib above is to justify the translator's ideology and his group's attitude towards other parties which are considered heretical and not in line with him (Fawaid and Karimah 2022).

Thalib's translation of QS. Al-Tahrīm [66]: 9 is deliberately intended to correct and criticize the Ministry of Religion's translation of the Qur'an in this verse. However, the corrections and criticisms seem "hackish" in the verses selection because another verse with the same editorials is QS. At-Taubah [9]: 73, he translated with Indonesian words which were more or less similar to the Ministry of Religion's translation, *"Hai Nabi, perangilah orangorang kafir dan orang-orang munafik dan bersikap keraslah terhadap mereka. Tempat mereka adalah jahannaman itu adalah seburuk-buruknya tempat kembali"*. While Thalib's translation of QS. Al-Taubah [9]: 73 is: *"Wahai Nabi, berjuanglah kamu melawan kaum kafir dan dakum*

munafik, dan bersikap keraslah terhadap mereka. Tempat tinggal mereka kelak adalah neraka Jahannam, dan itulah seburuk-buruk tempat tinggal". Thalib missed this verse from the list of thousands of verses that were considered wrong and criticized by Thalib (Fadal and Heriyanto 2020).

Apart from that, jihad verses that show radical destigmatization efforts can also be considered in Thalib's translation of QS. Al-'Ankabūt [29]: 6. He criticized the Ministry of Religion's literal translation of the verse. According to Thalib, the word *jāhada* (جَٰهَدَ), which is translated as jihad, is considered wrong because it connotes the meaning of 'attack on other parties' and can lead to an aggressive attitude towards non-Muslims in society. The Tafsiriyah translation he offered ultimately only emphasized the ideological justification he held for only adjusting the references to the book of interpretations according to his ideology. Al-Baghawi (Al-Baghawi 2014), Al-Samarqandi (As-Samarqandi 1993), and Ibn 'Atiyyah did not explain the meaning conveyed by Thalib. The commentary books written by him only refer to the book of al-Muyassar, which mentions the sentence, "*man jahada fi sabil i'la kalimah Allah*", which is then translated as: "Anyone who struggles to uphold the religion of Allah".

A similar narrative is also found in the translation of QS. Al-Māidah [5]: 35:

يَٰٓأَيُّهَا ٱلَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوا۟ ٱتَّقُوا۟ ٱللَّهَ وَٱبْتَغُوٓا۟ إِلَيْهِ ٱلْوَسِيلَةَ وَجَٰهِدُوا۟ فِى سَبِيلِهِۦ لَعَلَّكُمْ تُفْلِحُونَ

Thalib translates this verse in his book: "O believers, fear Allah. Take the path to get closer to Allah by doing good deeds. Fight for you to defend Islam; you will be lucky in the afterlife". In the translation above, جَٰهِدُوا۟ is translated as fight, while the composition: فِى سَبِيلِهِ is to defend Islam. There is no addition to complete the meaning of the word جَٰهِدُوا۟. The translator translates words without mentioning objects. The same thing also happened

to the translation of QS. Al-Hajj [22]: 78; Al-Taubah [9]: 41 and 86, all of which do not mention who the object of the ordered jihad is. The addition is only made to the phrases فِى سَبِيلِهِ (Al-Taubah [9]: 41), فِى اللَّهِ (Al-Hajj [22]: 78), and فِى سَبِيلِهِ (Al-Māidah [5]: 35) with translations in defense of Islam. The word *sabil* (سبيل) means "way", and *sabilillah* means "way of Allah", but Thalib translates it as "defending Islam". In the book of interpretations, which many translators use as references, al-Muntakhab, the word *sabīlillah* is interpreted with *sabīl i'la' kalimah Allah* (the way of upholding Allah's sentence), as can be seen in the interpretation of QS. Al-Taubah [9]: 41 (Kairo 1995). However, none of the commentators interpreted it as "Islam" or "defending Islam". Translating the word *jāhidū* using the literal method without explaining the object can lead to misunderstandings because the objectives of the jihad's commandments are unclear, against whom jihad must be carried out, so it is ambiguous for the reader. This confusion can produce a wild understanding, especially when combined with the last sentence, "in defence of Islam". On the other hand, confusion also arises because the translation needs to mention the methods and means of carrying out the ordered jihad. As a result, readers of the translation can understand that jihad is carried out to defend Islam against anyone, every non-believer, and Muslims who disagree with them. In addition, his failure to explain how to carry out jihad can lead to an understanding that jihad in defence of Islam can be carried out in any way, including by force or coercion.

Another example is in the QS. Al-Baqarah [2]: 191, "O believers, fight your enemies wherever you meet them on the battlefield and in times of war". Thalib translates the clause وَاقْتُلُوهُمْ with "fight" and includes the context that the polytheists in Mecca are the audience of the verse "on the battlefield and in times of war". Thalib criticizes that the translation of the Ministry of Religion gives the impression that every Muslim can kill infidels who are enemies of Islam anywhere and anytime so that the literal

translation of the Ministry of Religion can endanger social relations in society (Fadal and Heriyanto 2020). The editorial translation that Thalib submitted to QS. Al-Baqarah [2]: 191 is only an attempt to remove the radical stigma against his group. The sequence of these verses must indeed be interpreted in context, "on the battlefield", so that it is not understood in a wild way, giving the impression that Islam commands hostility towards adherents of other religions anywhere and under any circumstances. However, translating the sentence: وَٱقْتُلُوهُمْ with "fight them" is a form of "semantic coercion" because the word *qatl*, which means "to kill", is different from *qitāl*, which means "to fight" or "war" (Fadal and Heriyanto 2020).

Thalib also criticized the Ministry of Religion's translation of QS. Al-Taubah [9]: 29 follows: "Fight those who do not believe in Allah and do not (also) in the Last Day, and they do not forbid what Allah and His Messenger have forbidden and do not practice the true religion (religion of Allah), (is people) who were given the Bible to them until they paid the jizya obediently while they were in a state of submission". According to Thalib, this kind of translation can trigger an extortion movement against infidels who live in Muslim society, causing endless social conflict. He also interprets the literal translation as meaning that it is permissible to force other people to convert to Islam even though, strictly speaking, there is another verse (QS. Al-Baqarah [2]: 256) which prohibits forcing someone to convert to Islam. For that reason, he considers the translation to be wrong (Kurdish fadal). Then he proposed the following translation: "O believers, fight the Jews and Christians who do not want to believe in Allah and the Hereafter, do not leave the prohibitions of Allah and His Messenger, and also do not want to convert to Islam, even though they had previously promise to follow the last Prophet unless they want to pay the jizya voluntarily and humbly.".

We can observe three points from Thalib's translation and comments on QS. Al-Taubah [9]: 29 above. *First*, which sentence and translation he is directing his criticism needs to be clarified. *Second*, he believes that the Ministry of Religion's version of the literal translation is wrong and can lead to an understanding that Islam allows forcing other people to convert to Islam. It can be noted that the phrase, "nor did they convert to Islam", is only found in the Thalib translation. At the same time, the Ministry of Religion's version uses the phrase: "no religion with the true religion (religion of Allah)". Therefore, this criticism is more appropriate to Thalib's translation. *Third*, Thalib translated the sentence مِنَ ٱلَّذِينَ أُوتُواْ ٱلْكِتَٰبَ with: "Even though they had previously promised to follow the last Prophet". This expression can save the reader from extortion against infidels and prevent social conflict. However, the translation of these sentences has never been explained in the commentary books, often used as references in Thalib's translations, including the interpretation of al-Muyassar, which he quoted (Fadal and Heriyanto 2020).

Some examples of the translations of the Qur'an produced by Thalib above do not have consistency with one of the schools of interpretation offered by Sahiron, namely the traditionalist, subjectivist and modernist objectivist schools. According to him, the traditionalist objectivist school considers that the understanding of the text of the Qur'an must be by the meaning of the original language and by the methods and results of the interpretation of the *salaf* scholars. Meanwhile, the subjectivist school seeks to produce new meanings without referring to the meanings of texts that were known in the past so that texts are open and can be interpreted by anyone. The modernist objectivist school provides a balance between the search for the text's original meaning and the reader's role in interpretation while still applying the interpretation methodology of the previous scholars but also respecting different contemporary methods and approaches (Syamsuddin 2017). Therefore, the translation of the Qur'an

proposed by Thalib is more accurately described as a radical subjectivist school, namely translating verses subjectively and tending to use his own religious beliefs and those of his group. As a result, some translations do not explicitly reference classical commentary literature and Arabic language semantics written by previous scholars.

On the other hand, the descriptions of several examples of translations above show that Thalib wanted to correct the Ministry of Religion's translation and tried to discredit the government's translation. This step is also a form of counterattack against the Indonesian government. Like tactics in a soccer game, the counterattack is the most effective defence. Thalib, as the *Amir* of MMI, has led a counterattack against the radical stigma that the accurate propagator of radical views is the government, not their group, as in the case of the translation of the Ministry of Religion in QS. Al-Baqarah [2]: 256 above is considered a trigger for radicalism because of a wrong translation. Through the media of translating the Qur'an, which is related to the message of the holy book of Muslims, Thalib tries to convince the public that the mushrooming radicalism in Indonesia was not born from the movement of Islamic groups but has instead been produced by the government itself through the translation of the Qur'an. Another strategy to gain public trust is the official *tashih* notes from the Ministry of Religion in the translation book.

On the other hand, to counter the opinion that some Muslim groups classified as jihadists or radicals are seen as not understanding Islamic religious values or as distorting Islamic teachings with their ideology. So he presented the work of *Tarjamah Tafsiriyah* to prove his prowess in Islam was better than those who had suspected him, including the team of experts on translating the Ministry of Religion's version. Thus, another implied message is that some Muslim groups should not monopolize the understanding of Islamic teachings by the

government's wishes. The idea that there are 3,400 errors is only to make the public believe that the Ministry of Religion's translation is wrong and that his version of the translation is the solution to the truth of the translation. However, of the thousands of mistakes, Thlib was only able to try to prove 171 verses with corrections: 78 verses in the field of faith; 42 verses about sharia; 35 verses about social; and 16 verses related to economic issues (Fadal and Heriyanto 2020). However, regardless of whether the 171 verses translated by the Ministry of Religion are true or false, several verses regarding jihad, *qitāl*, and others are described in this paper; it is evident that the corrections and revisions offered by Thalib are nothing more than proof of their exclusive attitude in religious understanding (tafsir al-Qur'an) because the translation also leads to an understanding that causes violence in society (translation of QS. Al-Tahrīm [66]: 9), forces to convert to Islam (translation of QS. Al-Taubah [9]: 29), and confirms or justify his jihadist movement for the implementation of Islamic Sharia (translation of QS. Al-Baqarah [2]: 191, 193, Al-Anfal [8]: 39, Āli Imrān [3]: 103).

Apart from ideological justification efforts through Al-Qur'an translators with the various weaknesses above, what Thalib did in his translation book was not because of the shallowness of his knowledge. However, it is more about the orientation or style of thinking built from his background, including educational, social and socio-political backgrounds present in his mind with his group. Furthermore, Thalib's *Al-Qur'an Tarjamah Tafsiriyah* presents challenges for the Indonesian government in increasing religious moderation in Indonesia.

Conclusion

Based on the previous discussion, the author concludes that Muhammad Thalib's opposition to the translation of the Qur'an by the Ministry of Religion of the Republic of Indonesia (Kemenag RI) cannot be separated from his position as emir of

the Majelis Mujahidin Indonesia (MMI), which adheres to the ideological ideology of Islamism, which departs from the view of Islamic integralism and is an incarnation of the reproduction of Islamic Revivalism and Neo-revivalism which tends to be traditional and conservative as found in the Wahhabiyah, Muslim Brotherhood, and Jemaah Islamiyyah movements in the Thaliban so that the translation results in an ideological biases.

The ideological bias carried out by Thalib in his *Al-Qur'an Tarjamah Tafsiriyah* can be seen from the justification he made by distorting the meaning of the verse, such as the word "slander" (QS. Al-Baqarah [2]: 191; 193) which is translated as "obstacles to the implementation of Islamic law", is also translated into the phrase بحبل الله, the word جميعا, and the sentence ولا تفرقوا in QS. Āli 'Imrān [3]: 103. Meanwhile, the translation of the verses of jihād and *qitāl* in the book proves not only to justify the translator's ideology but also as an effort to destigmatize the radical understanding associated with his group. This destigmatization is carried out in the following ways: (1) the interpretation books used as references in the book tend only to choose references that are by their ideology; (2) there are distortions in some of the interpretation books used as references; and (3) some of the translations it offers tend to lead to radicalism or extremism.

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