

Mapping the Development of Egyptian Tafsir

Nailun Najah

STAI Muafi Sampang

Email: nailunnajah2340@gmail.com

Corresponding Author: Nailun Najah

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Abstract

This article discusses the mapping of the development of interpretation in Egypt. This article discusses the development of interpretation in Egypt in the classical, middle and renewal phases. Where each phase has its own characteristics and methods. The classical Egyptian interpretation was greatly influenced by the Meccan madrasah, so that many of the interpretations circulating at that time were sourced from the narrations of Ibn Abbas. The second phase is the codification phase. This phase experienced quite significant development compared to the previous one. This period has more diverse methods and patterns of interpretation compared to the previous period. Interpretation in this period has begun to use the bi al-ra'y (dira'yah) approach. Next is the renewal phase. In this phase, the study of interpretation has begun a new chapter with the presence of the mujaddids of interpretation pioneered by 'Abduh and his student Rashīd Ridā with a new approach that is more objective and positions the Qur'an as a source of guidance as well as a problem solver for social problems that plague Muslims. This approach is what Adams calls "descriptive" which throws away religious subjectivity and carries critical scientific values in religious studies. With this approach, the Qur'an will be more "down to earth" because it directly touches on social issues and that is why it can be stated that at this stage, the paradigm of interpretation is al-tafsi'r al-ijtima'i.

Keywords: Mapping, Development, Interpretation, Mesir.

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INTRODUCTION

Egypt was first conquered by Islam through the efforts of 'Amr B. al-'As around the middle of the 7th century AD¹ under the command of Umar B. al-Khat{t}ab. 'Amr B. 'As conquered Egypt through Farama' (Pelusium).² This conquest became a new chapter in history for Islamic tradition and culture, including in the scientific aspect. Since the conquest occurred, Islamic scholarship has continued to grow thrivingly, including in the field of Tafsir. The study of tafsir in Egypt continues to be a popular science to this day.

In the process of its development, Egypt has produced many figures in the field of interpretation who are quite influential in the world, especially after the appearance of reformers such as Muhammad 'Abduh and Rashid Ridha. This condition led to the study of the interpretation of the Qur'a>n in Egypt, as one of the scientific discourses that greatly influenced and colored the map of Islamic thought in the country.

This article will discuss the development of tafsir in Egypt from the classical period to the modern period. To examine this, the discussion will begin with a mapping of the periodization of interpretation in the country.

In general, Muhammad Husayn al-Dhahabi> divides the periodization of tafsir into several phases.³ The first phase is tafsir in the time of the Prophet and the Companions, the second phase is tafsir in the time of *tabi'in* and the third phase is *the tadwin* or codification phase.⁴

The author uses the periodization of al-Dhahabi> to discuss the development of tafsir in Egypt in the classical and medieval periods. The classical phase referred to here includes the periodization of tafsir during the time of the prophet, the companions and *the tabi'i>n*. This means that this phase began from the beginning of the 1st century H to the 2nd century H.⁵ The next phase is the medieval phase, this phase is also referred to as the

¹ The exact date of the conquest of Egypt cannot be ascertained, Al-T{abari>, vol. 1, p. 2592, chooses 16 Rabiul Awal (April 637 A.D.) as the time of Egypt, compare with Ibn 'Abd al-Hakam, pp. 53-58 and Philip K. Hitti, *History of The Arabs*, Terj. R. Cecep Lukman Yasin and Dedi Slamet Riyadi (Jakarta: PT. Serambi Ilmu Universe, 2002), 200.

² Philip. K. Hitti, *History Of The Arabs*..... 200.

³ See Muhammad Husayn al-D}ahabi>, *al-Tafsi>r wa al-Mufassiru>n Vol. I* (Cairo: Da>r al-Hadi>th, 2005), 33-127.

⁴ See *al-Tafsi>r wa al-Mufassiru>n Vol. 1*, p. 127.

⁵ See Muhammad Husayn al-D}ahabi>, *al-Tafsi>r wa al-Mufassiru>n*.....33.

codification phase that began in the 2nd century AH.⁶ In order to make the discussion in this article more comprehensive, the author added the third periodization, namely the modern phase or renewal⁷ or what Ignaz Goldziher called the periodization of the interpretation of the Islamic awakening era.⁸ The following will be further studied about the development of tafsir in Egypt using the mapping described above

PERIODIZATION OF TAFSIR IN EGYPT

Classical Period (1st-2nd centuries AH)

Tafsir entered Egypt at the same time as the conquest of Farama' (Pelusium) by the Islamic army led by 'Amr B. 'A>s}. Therefore, 'Amr B. 'A>s} is considered one of the most meritorious people for spreading tafsir in Egypt. In addition to 'Amr, there are a number of companions who have also visited Egypt and participated in developing the tafsir, such as Abu> Ayyūb al-Ans{ari> (d. 51 H.), 'Utbaḥ B. al-Nud}arr (d. 84 H.), and other companions. From these companions, Egyptian *tabi'i>n* emerged who narrated and disseminated the interpretations of the Prophet, such as 'Abd al-Raḥ}mān ibn H}ajirah al-Khawlani> (d. 83 H.), 'Alī ibn Rabāḥ} al-Lakhmī (d. 114 H.) and other tābi'īn.

In the next phase, especially after 'Amr became governor and was replaced by 'Uqbah ibn 'Āmir (d. 58 H.), the study of tafsir continued to develop. There are several companions besides 'Uqbah who are very *concerned* about the interpretation of the Qur'an, such as 'Abd Allāh ibn 'Amr ibn al-'a>s} (d. 56 H.), 'Abd Allāh ibn 'Abbās (d. 68 H.) who is known as a figure who gave rise to the Mecca school of tafsir, to *ta>bi'i>n* who was also a disciple of Ibn 'Abbās himself, such as Mujahid ibn Jabar (d. 103 H.), 'Ikrimah ibn Abu> Jahl (d. 105 H.) and Hanash ibn 'Abd Allah al-San'ani> (d. 100 H.)⁹

The interpretation of the Mecca school was developed by two famous disciples of Ibn 'Abbas, namely Muja>hid. Mujahid once visited Egypt in the middle of the 1st century AH, around 60-62 AH. and 'Ikrimah who also stopped by the country on his way to the Maghrib area.¹⁰

⁶ This second phase began in the 2nd century AH, namely at the end of the rule of the Umayyads and the beginning of the Abbasids. See Muhammad Husayn al-D}ahabi>, *al-Taḥṣīn wa al-Mufaṣṣirū>n*, p. 127.

⁷ This period began in the 19th century AD, or 13 AH.

⁸ See Ignaz Goldziher, *School of Tafsir: from Classical to Modern*. Terj. M Ailaka Salamullah, et al. (elSAQ: Depok, 2010), 379.

⁹ Dziki Nirwana, Map of Tafsir in Egypt; Tracing the Development of Tafsir al-Qur'an from the Classical Century to the Modern Century in *Falasifa Journal*, Vol. 1, No. 1, March 2010, p. 29.

¹⁰ Abd Allāh Khūrshīd al-Barrī, *al-Qur'a>n wa 'Ulu>muh fi Mis}r*, (Egyptian: Dār al-Ma'ārif, 1969), 278-279. As quoted by Dziki Nirwana in the *Falasifa Journal*, Vol. 1, No. 1, March 2010, p. 30.

Since this phase is the pre-codification phase of tafsir, it is not surprising that there are no complete works of tafsir as a book. There are only "fragments" of the interpretation of scholars based on narration (*naql*) or *bi al-ma'thu>r*.

Middle Period

This period is also called the codification *phase* (*tadwi>n*). The period began in the 2nd century AH, namely at the end of Umayyad rule and the beginning of Abbasid rule.¹¹ There were many tafsir figures born in this period, in the early period some of them were 'At}a ibn Dina>r al-Hadha>li> (d. 126 H), 'Ubayd ibn Suwayyah al-Ans}a>ri> (d. 135 H), 'Abd Allāh ibn Wahb (d. 197 H), al-Imām al-Shāfi'ī (d. 204 H), 'Abd al-Allāh ibn S}a>lih} (d. 223 H), 'Abd al-Ghanī ibn Sa'īd al-Thaqafī (d. 229 H), Abū Ja'far al-Nah}a>s (d. 338 H), and Abū Bakr al-Adfawī (d. 388 H). In the middle to late phase of *tadwi>n*, figures in the field of tafsir were born in much larger numbers and gave birth to several works in the field of tafsir, such as Abu> Ja'far al-Nah}a>s, Jalal al-Di>n al-Suyu>t}i>, and Jalal al-Di>n al-Mahalli>. The following will discuss some of the medieval Egyptian figures who gave birth to several works of interpretation.

The first figure is Abu> Ja'far al-Nah}a>s. His real name was Ahmad B. Muhammad B. Isma>il al-Murādī (d. 338 H.). He was an Egyptian mufasir who had studied with various Egyptian masters in his field such as Bakr B. Sahl al-Dimya>t}i> (d. 289 AH¹²), al-Nasa>'i> who lived in Egypt from 264 AH. to 302 AH,¹³ Abū Bakr ibn Yūsuf (d. 307 AH),¹⁴ Abū Bakr al-T{aha>wi> (d. 321 AH).¹⁵ He also made an intellectual trip to Baghdad and learned languages, *nah}wu>*, and *qira>'a>t* to great scholars such as al-Zuja>j (d. 311 H), al-Ahfash al-As}gha>r (d. 315 H), Ibn al-Anba>ri> (d. 327 H) and other scholars.¹⁶

Some of his works that have reached Muslims today are *Ma'a>ni> al-Qur'a>n*, *I'ra>b al-Qur'a>n*, *al-Waqf wa al-Ibtida>'*, *al-Na>sih wa al-Mansu>h*.¹⁷ According to Brokelmann's information as quoted by Dzikri Nirwana, this book *al-Na>sih wa al-*

¹¹ See Manna' al-Qat}t}a>n, *Maba>hith fi 'Ulu>m al-Qur'a>n*, (Riyad}, Manshura>t al-'As}r al-hadi>th, 1990), 341. Compare with Muhammad Husayn al-D}ahabi>, *al-Tafsi>r wa al-Mufassiru>n*, p. 127.

¹² Experts in the field of interpretation

¹³ Hadith expert

¹⁴ Catch *The Qur'an*

¹⁵ Fiqh experts and leaders of the Hanafi School

¹⁶ Lihat Muḥammad B. 'Alī ibn Ah}mad al-Da>wu>dī, *T{abaqa>t al-Mufassiri>n*, (Beirut: Da>r al-Kutub al-'Ilmiyyah, t.th.), Vol.1, 68-69.

¹⁷ All of them are in the form of manuscripts, except for the last work, which is found in *Da>r al-Kutub al-Mis}riyyah*.

Mansu>h was first printed in Haydarabat. As for the tafsir work *Ma'a>ni> al-Qur'a>n* which is found in *Da>r al-Kutub al-Mis}riyyah*, unfortunately this tafsir manuscript is only 1 volume starting from the tafsir of surah *al-Fa>tih}ah* to the surah *Maryam*, totaling 232 pages of writing in the form of *naskh* ancient that once developed in the 5th century H. and made it possible to read. Meanwhile, the tafsir manuscript in Fustat is very difficult to read.¹⁸

This book of tafsir uses a linguistic approach, by quoting the opinions of several other tafsir scholars and Islamic scholars to interpret the Qur'an.

The next figures are Jala>l al-Di>n al-Mahalli> (797 AH-864 AH) and Jalal al-Di>n al-Suyu>t}i (849 AH-911 AH)¹⁹ are two Egyptian commentators born in the Middle Ages. The relationship between the two is that of a teacher and a student. Jala>l al-Di>n al-Mahalli> was the teacher of Jalal al-Di>n al-Suyu>t}i. The two then collaborated to write a book of tafsir called *Tafsir al-Qur'an al-Kari>m*, or more popularly known as *Tafsi>r Jalalayn*. Originally this book was a project of al-Mah}alli>, he had written tafsi>r from Surah *al-Kahfi>* to Surah *al-Na>s*. Unfortunately, he did not have time to continue the process of interpreting the Qur'an until 30 juz, he had already passed away. So finally this tafsir book project was continued by his student, al-Suyu>t}i>. To make this project complete, al-Suyu>t}i> decided to continue the interpretation of the Qur'an that had not been completed by his teacher, starting from surah *al-Fa>tih}ah* to surah *al-Isra'*. This book of tafsir uses the tafsir *bi al-ra'y approach*.

The second book of Imam Jalaluddin al-Suyut}i> which he himself succeeded in completing is the book *al-Du>r al-Manthu>r fi Tafsi>r bi al-Ma'thu>r*. This book is basically a summary of the book *Tarjuman al-Qur'an* that he wrote. He intended to summarize the hadiths by only mentioning the matat without including a long sanad. This was done by Imam Suyu>t}i> to avoid boredom of readers.²⁰

Al-Suyu>t}i> wrote this book of tafsir by quoting the narrations of al-Bukhari>, Muslim al-Nasa'i>, al-Tirmizi, Abu Daud, Ibn Jari>r Ibn H}a>tim and others. However, in quoting the narration, he did not distinguish between the narration of *S}ah}i>h}* and *D}a>'if*. As the name implies, this hadith uses the *bi al-Ma'thu>r approach*.

¹⁸ Dzikri Nirwana, *Map of Tafsir in Egypt.....* 32.

¹⁹ Lihat Abd al-Hay al-Farma>wi> dalam *Mausu>'a>t al-Isla>miyah: al-Fikr al-Islami*, (Kairo: Al-Majlis al-A'la> li al-Shu'u>n al-Isla>miyah, 2007), 474.

²⁰ See Muhammad Husayn al-D}ahabi>, *al-Tafsi>r wa al-Mufassiru>n.....* 218-219.

This intermediate period or codification phase has characteristics that are much different from the interpretation in the previous period, namely the classical period. If in the classical period the works of tafsir were more inclined to the *bi al-ma'thu>r* approach, then in this period the interpretation with this approach is not very popular. In contrast, medieval Egyptian scholars began to develop the *bi al-ra'y* or *dira>yah* approach in their works. Although there are still some works of tafsir such as *Tarjuman al-Qur'an* that uses the *bi al-ma'thu>r* approach.

Interpretation of Modern Phases²¹

The 19th century is considered an era of renewal for the study of interpretation in general, especially Egypt. The movement to reform tafsir in Egypt was initiated by Muhammad 'Abduh, a disciple of Jamaluddin al-Afghani who was none other than the promoter of the Pan-Islamism²² movement (*al-Wihdah al-Isla>miyah*).²³

Mahmud 'Azb, a professor of Islamic history at al-Azhar University, Egypt, and the University of Paris, France, periodically maps the movement for the renewal of modern interpretation into three generations, namely the *al-Mana>r generation*, spearheaded by Muhammad 'Abduh, then *al-Baya>n*, spearheaded by Amin al-Khuli>>, and *al-Ta'wi>l*, which was pioneered by several contemporary scholars, such as Muhammad Arkoun, Muhammad Abid al-Jabiri, and others.

Interpretation in this modern phase feels more "grounded" than interpretation in the previous phase, because the study is in direct contact with societal issues. Therefore, it can be stated that in this phase, the paradigm of interpretation is *al-tafsi>r al-ijtima>'i>*. The characteristics of interpretation in this phase raise the element of socialist realism (*al-wa>q'i'i al-ijtima>'i*). Other interpretive trends that developed in this phase besides *al-ijtima>'i>* are *al-adabī* and *al-'ilmi>*. The very rapid development can also be seen from

²¹ Baljon in his book entitled *Modern Muslim Koran Interpretation*, said that the so-called Modern tafsir is an effort made by scholars of interpretation in interpreting the verses of the Qur'a>n to suit the demands of the times. Therefore, in this period, all thoughts contained in the Qur'a>n must be re-interpreted. Baljon added that this demand is felt necessary due to more intensive friction with foreign civilizations. See, J.M.S Baljon, *Tafsir Qur'an Modern Muslims*, Terj: Ni'amullah Mu'iz, (Jakarta: Pustaka Firdaus, 1991), 2.

²² The term Pan-Islamism actually comes from non-Muslims. The widespread use of the term was first made by Gabriel Charmes, a French journalist interested in the Ottoman Empire. He used the term as a variant of existing terms such as Pan-slavism, Pan-Germanism, or Pan-Hellenism. However, the idea of Islamic unity itself had been circulating secretly among the Young Ottomans who were founded in 1865 who had adopted the term *Ittihad islami* (Islamic unity) in the late 1860s. See Yudi Latif, *The Plenary State; Historicity, Rationality, and Actuality of Pancasila* (Jakarta: Gramedia, 2011), 149.

²³ Charles Adams, *Al-Isla>m wa al-Tajdi>d in Mis}r*, Terj: 'Abba>s Mahmu>d, (Kairo: al-hHy'ah al-'Ammah li Qus}u>r al-Thaqa>fah, 2006), 7.

the study approach that was previously still normative-theological, so in this phase it began to move towards a descriptive-critical approach. The following will discuss some of the figures of Modern interpretation in Egypt.

The first figure is Muhammad 'Abduh. The time of 'Abduh is recorded as the beginning of the history of modern tafsir al-Qur'a>n (*as}r hada>thah*).²⁴ 'Abduh is considered by various circles, as the figure who first laid the epistemological footing of Modern interpretation.²⁵ In fact, Goldziher called him the main figure for Islamic reform in general.²⁶

The first work of 'Abduh in the field of tafsir that is quite popular is tafsir al-Mana>r. This tafsir was originally the lecture material of Muhammad 'Abduh delivered at al-Azhar University when he was a lecturer at *the faculty of Us}u>l al-Di>n*. The results of this lecture were then compiled by Ras}id Rid}a> who was none other than his student, then published under the name *Tafsir al-Qur'a>n al-Kari>m*. Before being published as a book, this tafsir had been published periodically in *al-Mana>r magazine*,²⁷ No wonder in the end this tafsir book was more popular under *the name al-Mana>r*.

This book of tafsir consists of 12 Juz, starting from surah al-Fa>tih{ah to verse 53 of Surah Yu>suf. The interpretation of Surah *al-Fatih{ah* to Surah *al-Nisa'* verse 126, is the work of 'Abduh himself. The rest is an interpretation of Ras}id} Rid}a> by standardizing the method used by Muhammad 'Abduh.

Another work of 'Abduh in the field of Tafsir is *Tafsir Juz 'Ammah* which was completed in 1902 AD.²⁸ As the name implies, this tafsir only contains the 30th juz of the Qur'a>n. This book of tafsir was compiled by 'Abduh after deliberation with members of *Jam'iyah Khairiyah al-Isla>miyah*. 'Abduh hopes that his tafsir work can be a funnel for community improvement.

²⁴ There are several books that can be consulted that outline the epistemological map of contemporary interpretation, such as Mahmud 'Azb, *Malâmiḥ al-Tanwîr fî Manâḥij al-Tafsîr* (Cairo: Maktabah al-Usrah, 2006), 'Abd al-Qadir Muhammad al-S}a>lih, *al-Tafsîr wa al-Mufasssiru>n fî> al-'As}r al-Hadi>th* (Beirut: Dar al-Ma'rifah, 2003), as well as 'Abd al-Maji>d al-Muhtasab, *Ittija>ha>t al-Tafsî>r fî> al-'As}r al-Ra>hin* (Beirut: Dar al-Bayariq, 1986).

²⁵ Gamal al-Banna, *Tafsî>r al Qur'an>n Bayn al-Qudama>' wa al-Muhaddithi>n*, (Kairo: Da>r al-Shuru>q, 2007.), 147.

²⁶ Ignaz Goldziher, *Mazhab Tafsir*..... 395

²⁷ Ignaz Goldziher, *Mazhab Tafsir*..... 397.

²⁸ Actually, in addition to this, there are certain parts (pieces) of Muhammad's interpretation that have been published, including the Tafsir of Surat *al-Fa>tih{ah* published in Cairo and the Tafsir of Surat *al-'As}r* which was also published in Cairo in 1321 AH.

'Abduh's thinking in the field of tafsir departed from his belief that many things must be preserved and appreciated from the legacy of classical tafsir, just as many things are reviewed and improved. 'Abduh assesses that since entering the *sharh period*, interpretation activities have been interpreted more as sacred rituals, and unfortunately less so than with the social problems that have developed. The study of tafsir is only limited to theocentrism, and has lost its anthropocentric spirit.²⁹

In detail, the project of 'Abduh's renewal in tafsir includes three things. Namely, *first*, to free interpretation from the shackles of taklid to classical interpreters. *Second*, it breaks away the interpretation of primordialism and sects that have been inherited by classical interpreters. *Third*, interpreting the Qur'a>n by raising the element of socialist-realism (*al-wa>q'i al-ijtima>i*).³⁰ In the last point, 'Abduh wants to dialogue the Qur'a>n with social problems.

Furthermore, the update of 'Abduh's tafsir penetrates five important lines. *First*, it cleans the content of tafsir from the elements of *isra>iliyya>t* and *khurafa>t mythology*.³¹ *Second*, to reason more rationally with interpretations related to rituals, miracles, the last days, stories after death, stories about angels, demons, jinn, and other things related to metaphysical denominations. *Third*, interpret the Qur'a>n in a more actual way and relate it to societal problems, especially socio-economic, including medical problems. *Fifth*, it provides a new touch to interpretations related to the world of women, such as the issue of polygamy, talaq, hijab and education.

The influence of 'Abduh is extraordinarily great for the world of tafsir. After 'Abduh, many figures of world interpretation were born who were none other than 'Abduh's disciples, and many were influenced by 'Abduh's thoughts.

The next figure is Al-Mara>ghi>. Al-Mara>ghi> was a disciple of Rashid Rid}a>. His *Magnum Opus* in the field of tafsir is *Tafsi>r al-Mara>ghi>*.³² This tafsir was first published in Cairo in 1950 A.D. Just like its predecessor, it also has the pattern of *Ada>bi> Ijtima>i>*. Some opinions even say that *Tafsi>r al-Mara>ghi>>* is a

²⁹ Abd al-Qa>dir Muhammad S}a>lih}, *al-Tafsi>r wa al-Mufassiru>n in 'As}r al-Hadi>th*, (Beirut: Da>r al-Ma'rifah, 2003), 305.

³⁰ Ibid, 305-307.

³¹ Gamal al-Banna>, *Tafsi>r al-Qur'a>n Bayn al-Qudama>* 147.

³² In addition to the book *Tafsi>r al-Mara>ghi>*, Among his other works are *'Ulūm al-Bala>ghah*, *al-Hisbah fi al-Isla>m*, *al-Wa>jiz fi Us}u>l al-Fiqh*, *Tahdhi>b al-Tawd}ih*, *Risa>lah fi Must}alah al-Hadi>th*, *Sharh Thalathi>n Hadi>than*, *Risa>lah fi Zawja>t al-Nabi>*, and so on.

refinement of Tafsir al-Mana>r. The method used is also seen as a development of *Tafsir al-Mana>r*. However, for observers of tafsir, al-Mara>ghi> is the first mufasir to separate the global and detailed descriptions, with a combination of *al-riwa>yah* and *al-dira>yah approaches*.³³ So in an interpretation sourced from history, al-Mara>ghi> takes a valid history and is supported by scientific evidence. When interpreting the verse, it is also mentioned because it is *nuzul* (if any) and is considered *s{a>h{ih* according to its standards. In addition, he also tries to avoid long-winded explanations, scientific terms or theories that are difficult to understand. The explanation of these verses is packaged in short, concise, and easy-to-understand language.

The third figure is Amin al-Khuli>, who is the initiator of the second generation. The renewal of the interpretation of the rhetorical school or *bayani* was pioneered by Amin al-Khuli> (d. 1978 AD). The interpretation of *this madhhab* focuses more on the aspects of rhetoric and language. The Qur'a>n, according to Khuli>, rhetorically language has its own interest, or at least aura, for every reader, whether Muslims or non-Muslims. Therefore, studying the content of the Qur'an by leaving aside the rhetorical-linguistic aspect would be absurd.³⁴ In addition, Khuli> also views that text and interpreter are the two key axes in the effort to dissect interpretation. Furthermore> Khuli views that so far the text of the Qur'a>n has become an arena of mutual attraction for the interests of interpreters who are biased by the ideology of their sect. The Qur'a>n is a dead text (*jisman ha>dim mayyit*), which can be drawn according to the interests of the interpreter. To dissect the content of the Qur'a>n, in saving Khuli>, two approaches are needed. *First*, the approach to the aspects behind the Qur'a>n (*dira>sah ma hawla al-Qur'an*) and *second*, the approach to the content of the Qur'a>n itself (*dira>sah fi al-Qur'ân*).³⁵

The first approach emphasizes the importance of the socio-historical aspects behind the text of the Qur'a>n. Khuli> proposed an example of a study of the stories of the previous people such as Thamu>d, 'A>d, Madyan, and so on. In this case, for example, Khuli> demanded a historical and geographical device. After explaining the first approach, we can enter the second approach, which is the approach to the content of the

³³ Al-Dhahabī, *al-Tafsīr*, Vol.3..... 252.

³⁴ Amin al-Khuli, *Manâhij Tajdîd fi al-Nahw o al-Ballâghah o al-Tafsîr o al-Adab*, (Cairo: Maktabah al-Usrah, 2003), hal'229

³⁵ Ibid, 223.

Qur'a>n. If the first approach emphasizes the importance of the historical aspect, then the second aspect emphasizes the importance of the rhetoric-linguistic aspect.

This project of reforming *the rhetorical madhhab* was then continued by 'Aisyah Abd al-Rahman Bint al-Sha>t}i' (d. 2000 AD), who was a student and wife of Amin al-Khuli>. His commentary is called *al-Tafsīr al-Bayānī li al-Qur'ān al-Karīm*. Bint al-Sha>t}i' published his tafsir work in the first volume in 1962 and reprinted in 1966 and 1968. Meanwhile, the second volume was published in 1969 and received an extraordinary response and he is expected by the public to be able to continue his interpretation to cover the entire Qur'a>n, not only the 14 short letters that he has completed so far. The tafsir print that the author found was published by Da>r al-Ma'a>rif, Egypt, in 1977 in 2 volumes. This tafsir is categorized as *adabi tafsir*>. Methodologically, the tafsir of Bint al-Sha>t}i' applies the *muna>sabah method*.³⁶ In his interpretation, Bint al-Sha>t}i' believes that the words in the Arabic Qur'a>n have no synonyms. One word only has meaning, so if people try to replace it with another word, the Qur'an will lose its accuracy and beauty.

Furthermore, if the above Khuli> approach is only a methodological offer, then Sha>t}i' draws it further into the realm of praxis. By leaning on the two main principles of the Khuli> approach, Sha>t}i' expands the episteme of his interpretation to be broader by; *First*, the unification of themes (*al-wih}dah al-mawd}u>'iyyah*) which are scattered separately in various verses and letters. Sha>t}i' collects fragments of the theme, to then analyze it historically and rhetorically. *Second*, by analyzing the things behind the text being formed gradually, which requires a socio-historical study. *Third*, further examine the structure of texts, words, phrases and diction, especially texts that have metaphorical meanings and reveal the beauty behind the rhetoric of the sentence structure. *Fourth*, it includes a lot of medical studies, exact sciences and astronomy. For example, pharmacobia, electrons, atoms, and others.

The next figure who entered the second generation was Muhammad Ahmad Khalafullah. He was one of the students of Amin al-Khulli> who studied the dimensions of narrative in the Qur'an>n with a striking approach to historical literature. Khalafullah wrote a dissertation titled *al-Fann al-Qas{asi> fi al-Qur'a>n al-Kari>m*, which

³⁶ This method uses each word or verse to then associate it with a nearby verse and even a verse that is far away. Each word and its use in several verses of the Qur'an>n are collected to know what explanations are related to a word being interpreted.

disseminated the art of storytelling in the Qur'a>n. It is important to note that Khalafullah did not want to interpret the stories in the Qur'an, but tried to see these stories from the window of history and literature. Khalafullah has the assumption that the stories mentioned in the Qur'a>n are not as a model of narration to reveal history, but to describe morals, illustrate things, sharpen the focus of attention and facilitate the acceptance of the essence contained by these stories. Khalafullah classified the Qur'a>n narrative into three: narratives that correspond to history, metaphorical-tamtsili narratives, and mythical narratives (*ust}uri*).

To strengthen his hypothesis regarding the *ust}uri* narrative, Khalafullah leaned on three arguments. *First*, psychologically, these stories can be understood more as a means of teaching (*bu'd tarbawi*>), not with the intention of revealing history. *Second*, these stories are familiar to Arabs, especially Jew-Christians, who have long read the old (*torah*) and new (*gospel*) testaments. The Qur'a>n repeats (partially) these stories with a new style of storytelling. *Third*, the attitude of classical interpreters who are too exaggerated in appreciating these stories, so they place the stories as part of God's sacred kalam, and forget the essence (*ibrah*) that it contains.

Another modern tafsir figure is Sayyid Qut}b. Sayyid Qut}b (1906-1966 AD), the writer of *Tafsi>r fi Z}ila>l al-Qur'a>n*. His full name is Sayyid ibn Qut}b B. Ibra>him al-Ashmawī Ah}mad Sulayman, born in 1906 in Koha, Ashut region, Egypt.³⁷ It is emphasized here that "Sayyid" is the original name, not the title that Arabs commonly introduce to the descendants of the Prophet (saw). The book *Tafsi>r fi Z}ilāl al-Qurān* was originally a permanent rubric that was nurtured by him at the request of Sa'i>d Ramad}an in the monthly magazine *al-Muslimūn*, a journal that was first published in December 1951 and was expected to become a medium that contained the views of Muslim thinkers.³⁸

In describing each letter, Sayyid Qut}b first gave an introduction that explained the themes in question. After that, the verses are grouped to be interpreted. Only in this sense can the tafsir of Qut}b be called *mawd}u>'i*> (thematic). In addition, in his interpretation, he tends to reject takwil, even though it is only applied to certain verses that are considered unnecessary to be discussed further, especially those related to stories.

³⁷ Abd al-Qa>dir Muhammad S}a>lih{, *al-Tafsi>r al-Mufassiru>n in al-'As{r al-Hadi>th*, (Libanon: Da>r al-Ma'rifah, 2003), 347.

³⁸ Ibid.

According to him, the most important thing is to learn from these stories. Likewise, in interpreting the verses of the law, Sayyid Qutb prefers *tawaqquf*. Unlike the usual jurists and proposals who try to find *the 'illah* (law of reason) contained in a provision of *shara* law', Qutb states that the only one who knows *the 'illah* is Allah, and as far as man can do is think of the wisdom of the law.³⁹

Qutb achieved two significant leaps in modern interpretive discourse; *First*, Qutb can surpass some of his previous interpreters in terms of literature, especially his intelligence in choosing diction and his beauty in strung together sentence structure. *Second*, Qutb, like 'Abduh, interprets the Qur'an by first departing from the realities of life, thus giving birth to a socialist-realist interpretation pattern.

Related to this trend of the development of modern Egyptian interpretation, after the renewal phase of 'Abduh, Jansen sees that there are at least 3 paradigms; namely *al-tafsīr al-'ilmi* which is filled with the adoption of the latest scientific findings, *al-tafsīr al-adabi* which contains linguistic and philological analysis, and *al-tafsīr al-ijtima'i* which intersects with the daily problems of the people. Most of the content of these modern Egyptian interpretations is inseparable from these three aspects, although they are more or less heterogeneous⁴⁰

CONCLUSION

Based on the above elaboration, it can be concluded that each period of the tafsir phase in Egypt has different characteristics from each other. Classical Egyptian interpretations, for example, were heavily influenced by the Mecca madrasas, so that many of the interpretations circulating at that time were derived from the narration of Ibn Abbas. Tafsir in this classical period is based on the method *of Tafsir bi al-Ma'thur*.

The second phase is the codification phase. This phase has experienced significant development compared to the previous one. In addition to the birth of a large number of scholars of interpretation who published their works, this period also has more diverse methods and styles of interpretation compared to the previous period. Tafsir in this period has begun to use *the bi al-ra'y (dirayah) approach*.

Furthermore, in the renewal phase, the study of tafsir has started a new chapter with the presence of *mujaddid* tafsir pioneered by 'Abduh and his disciple Rashīd Ridā

³⁹ Abd al-Ghafur Muhammad Mustafa Ja'far, *Al-Tafsīr wa al-Mufasssiru>n in Tha'ubih al-Jadi>d*, (Kairo: Dar al-Salam, 2007), 773-776.

⁴⁰Jansen, *the Interpretation*..... 18

with a new approach that is more objective and more positioning the Qur'an as a source of guidance as well as a *problem solving* to social problems that plague Muslims. This approach is what Adams calls "descriptive" which discards religious subjectivity and carries scientific critical values in the study of religion. With this approach, the Qur'an will be able to be more "grounded" because it is in direct contact with social problems and therefore it can be stated that in this phase, the paradigm of interpretation is *al-tafsi>r al-ijtima>'i>*. However, in the next development, new paradigms emerged as Jansen read that other interpretive trends that developed besides *al-ijtima>'i>* were *al-adabi>* and *al-'ilmi>*. Finally, hopefully this article can provide an overview of the mapping of interpretation in Egypt from the classical period to the modern period.

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