



BINTU ASY-ĀṬĪ' IN AT-TAFSĪR AL-BAYĀN LĪ AL-QUR'ĀN AL-KARĀM (Analysis of Methodology and Application of Interpretation)

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Abstract

This study discusses the methodology and application of Bintu asy-Syāṭī's interpretation in his work *At-Tafsīr Al-Bayān Li Al-Qur'ān Al-Karīm* when interpreting verses from the Qur'an. The type of research is library research (literature review). The approach used in this study is the science of interpretation approach to analyze the discussion themes. The results of the study show that 'Ā'isyah Bintu asy-Syāṭī' is recorded as the only female figure in tafsir. The basis of Bintu asy-Syāṭī's method of interpreting the Qur'an stems from the statement of classical mufasssīr that: *Al-Qur'ān yufasssiru ba'duhu ba'dan*. The most influential figure in her approach to interpreting the Qur'an was Amīn al-Khūlī, who was both her professor and her husband. In terms of form, the book *At-Tafsīr Al-Bayān Li Al-Qur'ān Al-Karīm* falls under the category of *tafsīr bi ar-ra'yī*. Methodologically, Bintu asy-Syāṭī' uses the *mauḍū'ī* (thematic) method, which is quite different from the thematic concept of previous tafsir scholars who collected and discussed Qur'anic verses that had similarities in theme. Bintu asy-Syāṭī's thematic concept is to discuss one surah thoroughly. And in terms of application, Bintu asy-Syāṭī uses the *taḥlīlī* (detailed analysis) method when presenting the interpretation of surahs in her book, namely explaining a surah by dividing it into two aspects: 1) surah interpretation, which includes: naming, categorization, sequence, and reason for revelation, and 2) verse interpretation, which includes: verse-by-verse interpretation, meaning of vocabulary, relationship (*munāsabah*) between verses, and functional words, sometimes accompanied by explanations of rhetoric, literature, or language. The approach used by Bintu asy-Syāṭī' in her interpretation is a linguistic (*lugawī*) approach, which also defines the style of her interpretation. This study is expected to enrich understanding of contemporary interpretation methodology and

give rise to new methodologies in interpreting the verses of the Qur'an to make them easier to understand, especially in the Indonesian context.

Keywords: Methodology, Application, Bintu asy-Syāṭi, Interpretation, al-Bayan

Introduction

Books discussing the interpretation of the Qur'an have undergone growth and development over time, beginning 14 centuries ago and continuing to the present day, in presenting interpretations of the verses of the Qur'an, both in terms of methodology, style, approach, and systematics. One of the many books of interpretation worth discussing is *At-Tafsīr Al-Bayān Lī Al-Qur'ān Al-Karīm* by Bintu asy-Syāṭi', whose real name is 'Ā'isyah Muhammad 'Alī 'Abd ar-Raḥman, a female exegete who lived in the 20th century CE/13th century AH (1913-1998 CE).

Bintu asy-Syāṭi's work is considered by some contemporary Muslim scholars, including Mardan, to be a solution to the shortcomings of previous tafsir books. Furthermore, he explains that Bintu asy-Syāṭi's tafsir always begins by citing verses from the Qur'an, followed by *syarḥ al-mufradāt* (explanation of vocabulary); explaining the position of a word in a sentence (its function); conducting linguistic analysis; analyzing the emphasis on style and literature (*balagh*) as well as the sense of language (*zauq al-lughah*). Next, explaining the context of its revelation (*sabab an-nuzūl*) and the relationship between verses (*munāṣabah al-ayah*), up to explaining the law or wisdom contained in a verse based on the results of analysis of the verse in relation to nature and social reality, as well as the cultural system of society at that time.¹ This view shows that Bintu asy-Syāṭi' offers something new in interpreting the Qur'an or perhaps a development in the field of interpretation.

The facts revealed by Mardan above are not entirely agreed upon by some other scholars. This is because the interpretation presented by Bintu asy-Syāṭi' is not without criticism. For example, Hariningsih and Moh. Abdul Kholiq Hasan in their writing reveal that despite the merits of Bintu asy-Syāṭi's interpretation, the book still has shortcomings, namely that it does not reflect a complete and integrated unity in the interpretation or fundamental teachings of the Qur'an. This is because it places too much emphasis on linguistic or literary analysis. Generally, its interpretation is reviewed from a linguistic perspective, so it is trapped by linguistic shortcomings, and other values have not been clearly revealed.²

The two assessments above indicate that as an exegete and an ordinary human being, Bintu asy-Syāṭi' and his exegesis are not immune to criticism, while also confirming the fact that, fundamentally, no book or work can achieve perfection. Despite this reality, Bintu as-Syāṭi' has successfully attracted the attention of scholars from both the Middle

¹Mardan, *Tafsir Karya 'A'isyah 'Abd al-Raḥmān Bintu asy-Syāṭi'* (Suatu Rekonstruksi Metodologi Tafsir kontemporer), *jurnal Adabiah*, vol. XI, no. 2, (2011), h. 168-169

²Hariningsih dan Moh. Abdul Kholiq Hasan, *Aisyah Abdurrahman (bintu asy-Syāṭi') Dan Penafsirannya Dlam At-Tafsīr Al-Bayān Al-Qur'ān Al-Karīm*, (Studi Analisis Deskriptif), *Journal el-Hayah* 2, no. 1, (2010), h. 87



East and the West, making her works and ideas a subject of discourse. In addition to her extensive intellectual legacy and the results of her thinking, Bintu asy-Syāṭi' is also regarded as the only female exegete. This adds to the appeal of conducting research on her.

Based on the above facts, Bintu asy-Syāṭi' is a very interesting subject to study, especially in her book *At-Tafsīr Al-Bayān Li Al-Qur'ān Al-Karīm*, which covers methodology and its application when interpreting verses of the Qur'an. This study aims to provide new insights into Bintu asy-Syāṭi's methodology and application when interpreting the verses of the Qur'an.

Referring to the title above, this research is classified as library research (literature review) of a qualitative descriptive nature. The approach used in this research is the science of interpretation. The primary data is the book *At-Tafsīr Al-Bayān Li Al-Qur'ān Al-Karīm* by Bintu asy-Syāṭi', while the secondary data consists of literature relevant to this research. The researcher then conducted an analysis by elaborating it into a coherent written work.

Discussion

1. About Bintu Asy-Syāṭi': Biography and Intellectual Legacy

Bintu asy-Syāṭi' is a name popular among contemporary scholars, referring to a mufassir (exegete) and scholar whose real name is 'Ā'isyah Muhammad 'Alī 'Abd ar-Raḥman. She was born in the western part of the Nile River, specifically in the Dūmyāt area, on November 6, 1913.³ Thus, the name Bintu asy-Syāṭi', which means "coastal girl", is inseparable from the culture of her birthplace. She grew up and developed within the confines of a patriarchal culture promoted by British colonial rule. Fortunately, Bintu asy-Syāṭi' was born into a devout and conservative family.

Bintu asy-Syāṭi's father, 'Abd ar-Raḥman, was a member of a Sufi community and worked as a teacher at a theological madrasah in Dūmyāt. In addition, he was also a lecturer at al-Bahr University. 'Abd ar-Raḥman had a very conservative view, believing that a girl who had reached adolescence should stay at home and study.⁴ Even 'Abd ar-Raḥman initially forbade his daughters from studying at secular schools. This was due to his disappointment at not having a son whom he could raise to become a scholar, which had been his hope from the beginning. Meanwhile, his success was also due to the important role played by his mother, Faridah 'Abd as-Salam Muntasir.⁵

³'Ā'isyah Muhammad 'Alī 'Abd al-Raḥ}man Bintu al-Syāṭi', 'Alā Al-Jisr, (Mesir: Al-Hai'ah al-Mis}riyah li al-Kitāb, 1996 M), h. 2.

⁴'Abd ar-Raḥ}man bukanlah penduduk asli daerah Dūmyāt. Ia berasal dari sebuah desa kecil yang disebut S}ubrā, di Manufiyyah. Setelah berhasil menyelesaikan pendidikannya di Univesrsitas Al-Azhar di Cairo, ia diangkat menjadi seorang guru pada Sekolah Dasar di Dūmyāt. Di daerah inilah 'Ābd ar-Raḥman bertemu dan menikahi seorang gadis yang bernama Faridah 'Abd al-Salām Muntas'ir, puteri dari dari Syekh Ibrāhim Damhu>j. Lihat Wahyuddin, Corak Dan Metode Interpretasi Aisyah Abdurrahman Bintu Asy-Syāṭhi', Jurnal Al-Ulum, vol. 11, no. 1, (2011), h. 79-98.

⁵Wahyuni Nuryatul Choir, Tafsir Linguistik Bintu Syathi': Studi Atas Pendekatan Linguistik Dalam Kitab Tafsir Al-Tafsīr Al-Bayān Li Al-Qur'an>n Al-Karīm, jurnal Al-Mustafid, vol. 2,

This reality meant that Bintu Asy-Syāṭi' did not have time to play with her peers during her childhood, as she was educated directly by her father from an early age, both at home and when he took little Bintu Asy-Syāṭi' to his office at al-Bahr University to study part-time. At the age of five, Bintu Asy-Syāṭi' was enrolled at the Madrasah Kuttāb Syaikh Mursi in the Ṣubrā Bakhum area. Within a year, she had successfully memorized fifteen juz of the Quran. In 1920, Bintu Asy-Syāṭi' expressed her desire to pursue formal education, but her father firmly rejected the idea, citing a literal interpretation of Quranic verses 32-34 of Surah al-Aḥzāb, which prohibit women from leaving the house and adorning themselves. However, thanks to the support and role of her mother and grandfather (Sheikh Ibrahim Damhūj), who managed to persuade her father, Bintu Asy-Syāṭi' was granted permission to attend school under certain conditions.⁶

Later, when Bintu Asy-Syāṭi' entered high school, his grandfather often asked him to buy copies of the Al-Ahram and Al-Muqattam newspapers. Through these two newspapers, Sheikh Ibrahim Damhūj frequently expressed his criticisms of the government through his writings about the mismanagement of the Nile River, which was polluted by waste, thereby threatening the sustainability of its biodiversity and the safety of fishermen. He dictated his criticisms directly to Bintu Asy-Syāṭi' to be typed. This indirectly fostered Bintu Asy-Syāṭi's love for writing.

After Bintu Asy-Syāṭi' became a university student, she actively wrote for several women's magazines in Egypt. As a result, she was invited to become a regular contributor to Egypt's largest daily newspaper in 1935, Al-Aḥram. To conceal her identity, she used the pen name Bintu Asy-Syāṭi' (coastal girl), which refers to a village in the Dumyat region, where the Nile River and the Mediterranean Sea meet. She went on to write a novel titled Master of the Estate, published in 1942. This novel tells the story of a peasant girl who becomes a victim of patriarchal and feudal culture.

Bintu asy-Syāṭi earned her Lc/BA degree from Fuad I University in Cairo with a mumtāz grade in 1939. Two years later, in 1941, she completed her master's program with a Summa Cum Laude grade. She then obtained her Doctorate degree, which was directly examined by Thoha Hussein in 1950. She later became a Professor in the field of Arabic Language and Literature at Ain Shams University in 1967. Additionally, she was among the distinguished professors at Qarawiyyin University in Morocco. Beyond that, he frequently served as a guest lecturer and speaker at various academic forums in numerous countries: Saudi Arabia, Syria, the United Arab Emirates, Iraq, Rome, Algeria, New Delhi, Kuwait, Jerusalem, Rabat, Fez, and Khartoum.

Following in his intellectual footsteps, Bintu Asy-Syāṭi' has written and produced various works: more than 40 books, hundreds of articles, short stories, and essays. Some even claim that Bintu Asy-Syāṭi' has written up to 60 books. Her works cover a wide range of themes, from fiction and poetry to social issues, literature, and Islamic studies.⁷ It is her

No. 1, (2023), h. 23-36.

⁶Wahyuddin, Corak Dan Metode Interpretasi Aisyah Abdurrahman Bintu Asy-Syāṭi', Jurnal Al-Ulum, h. 79-98.

⁷<https://suaraaisyiyah.id/aisyah-bintu-syathi-perempuan-pelopor-tafsir-modern/>. Diakses



intellectual legacy and various works that have made Bintu Asy-Syāṭi' a scholar and the only popular female mufasssir.

2. Regarding Bintu Asy-Syāṭi's Methodology in His Interpretation

One of Bintu Asy-Syāṭi's monumental works is the book *At-Tafsīr Al-Bayānī Li Al-Qur'an Al-Karīm*, which researchers consider to be the best explanation of the methodology of Qur'anic interpretation proposed by Amīn al-Khūlī. Essentially, the book was initially just a discussion presented by Bintu asy-Syāṭi' to her students at the Faculty of Sharia. She then compiled it into a thematic tafsir book that only covers a small portion of the themes in the Qur'an, specifically in juz 30 (juz 'Ammah), which consists of only 14 surahs. The book is divided into two volumes. Volume I covers the surahs *aḍ-Ḍuhā*, *asy-Syarḥ*, *az-Zalzalah*, *al-'Ādiyāt*, *an-Nāzi'āt*, *al-Balād*, and *at-Takāshūr*. Volume II covers the surahs *al-'Alaq*, *al-Qalam*, *al-'Asr*, *al-Lail*, *al-Fajr*, *al-Humazah*, and *al-Ma'ūn*. However, there is no clear rationale for the selection of these surahs, and the book only interprets 14 surahs.⁸ The first volume was printed in 1966 and 1968, while the second volume was printed in 1969.⁹

According to Mardan, the book was written as a solution to the lack of exegesis works at that time. He believed that exegesis books at that time only explained verses through other verses, hadiths, statements of the companions and *tabi'in*, or personal opinions and linguistic interpretations without considering and relating them to the conditions that existed when the verses were interpreted. Meanwhile, Bintu asy-Syāṭi' in her interpretation sought to explore the content of a verse by seeking the meaning behind the words of the verse through: vocabulary, phrases, clauses, and verses, then relating them to what was actual at the time the verses were interpreted.¹⁰ In addition, Bintu asy-Syāṭi' also emphasized that the thematic interpretation method he adopted was intended to explain the differences between classical and contemporary methods (of scholars) covering aspects of the miraculous nature of the Qur'an, while also examining the views of classical exegetes that the Qur'an interprets itself (*al-Qur'an yufassiru ba'duhu ba'dan*).¹¹

Bintu asy-Syāṭi' was a student and wife of the renowned scholar Amīn al-Khūlī, who was also a lecturer in the subject of 'Ulūm Al-Qur'ān at Cairo University. Amīn al-Khūlī was a scholar who specialized in the field of Tafsir (Qur'anic exegesis) and was also well versed in the field of literature. Additionally, he is regarded as having the ability to integrate literature and the Qur'an, thereby making literary studies a primary component of Qur'anic research. Conversely, Qur'anic studies must also be an integral part of literary research. Based on his thoughts and consistency, Amīn al-Khūlī was appointed as a

pada tanggal 4 Mei 2025.

⁸Ā'isyah Muḥammad 'Alī 'Abd ar-Raḥman Bintu asy-Syāṭi', *At-Tafsīr Al-Bayānī Li Al-Qur'ān al-Karīm*, Juz I dan II, (Cet. VII; Kairo: Dār al-Ma'ārif, t.th.).

⁹Dini Tri Hidayatus Sya'dyya, *Studi Terhadap Metodologi Kitab Tafsir Al-Bayānī Lil Qur'an Al-Karim Karya Bintu Syathi'*, *Junal Al-Wajid*, vol. 1, no. 2, (2020), h. 144-157.

¹⁰Mardan, *Tafsir Karya 'A'isyah 'Abd ar-Raḥmān Bintu asy-Syāṭi'*, (Suatu Rekonstruksi Metodologi Tafsir kontemporer), h. 168-169.

¹¹Bintu asy-Syāṭi', *At-Tafsīr Al-Bayānī*, Juz I, h. 18.

professor in the study of the Qur'an and Arabic literature.

Amīn al-Khulī was not particularly prolific as a writer, unlike other Egyptian scholars such as 'Abbās Maḥmūd al-'Aqqād (1889-1964), Maḥmūd Syaltūṭ (1893-1963), and others. Nevertheless, Amīn al-Khulī's works, which are relevant to theories of Qur'anic interpretation, are often referenced by many researchers to this day, because Amin al-Khuli's ideas have been considered a new methodological framework, the application of which has been productively implemented by his student and wife, Bintu Asy-Syāṭi'.¹²

This explanation emphasizes that the distinctive feature of the book *At-Bintu asy-Syāṭi' Al-Bayānī Li Al-Qur'an Al-Karīm* by Bintu asy -Syāṭi' is its literary exegesis (tafsir al-ādabī), which is also influenced by the thoughts of her husband and professor, Amīn al-Kulī, a specialist in literary studies who believes that understanding the Qur'an must not deviate from its linguistic/literary aspects. In addition, the above explanation also confirms that the book uses a thematic method that differs from the methods of classical scholars.

In terms of interpretation methodology, Amīn al-Khulī greatly influenced Bintu asy-Syāṭi's interpretation in her tafsir book. This can be illustrated by several reasons.

1. The facts show that Bintu asy-Syāṭi' is a student and the wife of Amīn al-Khulī.
2. Bintu asy-Syāṭi' explicitly mentions on the dedication page (al-iḥdā') of his tafsir that he dedicated his work to his husband and lecturer.
3. Bintu aay-Syāṭi's direct statement that his interpretation is an implementation of the interpretation method proposed by Amīn al-Khulī in the introduction to the 5th edition of his interpretation.¹³

An exegete requires a specific method in developing and interpreting the explicit content of the verses of the Qur'an properly and accurately. According to an expert, methodology is defined as a discussion of theoretical concepts of various relevant methods within a system of knowledge. In various contemporary exegetical works, these methods are evident in the writing process. These methods are not separate from the analytical, comprehensive, comparative, and contextual methods. According to Mardan, it seems that the taḥlīlī and mauḍū'ī methods are more dominant in Bintu asy-Syāṭi's exegesis works, one of which is evident in her book *At-Tafsīr Al-Bayānī Li Al-Qur'ān Al-Karīm*, alongside other methods.¹⁴

Bintu asy-Syāṭi' summarized the principles of his interpretation method into several criteria, as concluded by Issa J Boulata,¹⁵ The principles of this method are found in

¹²M. Aunul Abied Shah, *Amin Al-Khuli Dan Kodifikasi Metode Tafsir : Sebuah Biografi Intelektual*, (Bandung: Mizan, 2001), h. 131.

¹³Fatimah Bintu Thohari, 'Ā'isyah 'Abd ar-Rah}mān bintu Syāṭi': Mufasssir Wanita Zaman Kontemporer, *Jurnal Dirosat* 1, no. 1, (2016), h. 96-97.

¹⁴Mardan, *Tafsir Karya 'Ā'isyah 'Abd ar-Rahmān Bint asy-Syāṭhi'*, h. 169.

¹⁵H. Muchlis Nadjamuddin, *Kontribusi Penafsir Wanita (Suatu Kajian Metodologis Tafsir Bintu Syathi')*, *Jurnal Musawa*, Vol. 6, No. 2, (2014), h. 323-324.



the book *Manāhij Tajdīd* by Amīn al-Khulī. Therefore, it is very likely that the method used by Bintu Asy-Syāṭī' in interpreting the Qur'an was inspired by her teacher and husband, and she herself has admitted this. The following are the methodological principles:

- a. The basis of the method is the use of the *mauḍū'ī* method to objectively understand the meaning of the verses of the Qur'an. This begins with collecting all the verses and surahs related to the topic to be discussed.
- b. To understand certain ideas contained in the Qur'an, according to their context, the verses surrounding those ideas must be arranged in chronological order of revelation in accordance with the estimated date of revelation based on knowledge of the time and place. as in the accounts of the reasons for revelation (*sabab an-nuzūl*), which, when relevant, should be linked to the reason for the revelation of the verse without neglecting the lessons contained therein, by considering the general meaning of the text rather than the specific reason for the revelation of that particular verse.
- c. Since the Qur'an is in Arabic, understanding it requires tracing the guidance based on the original language, which will give a sense of Arabic to the material in its various uses of senses and metaphors. Furthermore, the essence of the Qur'anic evidence must be purified by researching all forms of the words in the Qur'an, then considering the specific context of certain verses or surahs, as well as the general context of the Qur'an as a whole.
- d. To understand difficult statements, one must determine the context of the Qur'anic text that is accountable for what it conveys, both in terms of the text itself and its revelatory nature. He considers the words of the exegetes and only accepts those that align with the text. Then it avoids anything that could lead to tafsir books that include *Isra'iliyyah*, flawed interpretations that emphasize sectarianism, and ignorant *ta'wīl*.¹⁶

Based on the above principles, it can be seen that there are three basic principles of methodology developed and offered by Bintu asy-Syāṭī' as a new method for understanding the meaning of the Qur'an objectively, which also characterize his tafsir, namely:

- 1) The principle that the Qur'an must be in line with the explanations given by earlier (classical) exegetes, namely that "the Qur'an explains (interprets) itself."
- 2) The principle that the Qur'an must be studied and understood in its entirety as a whole with its distinctive characteristics of expression and style.
- 3) The principle of accepting the chronological order of the verses of the Qur'an, which provides historical information about the contents of the Qur'an without detracting from its existence.¹⁷

Fatimah Bintu Thohari explains that for Bintu asy-Syāṭī', the interpretation of the Qur'an only allows for a single interpretation that considers the overall context and integrity of the Qur'an. This will result in the rejection of information sources that are not part of the Qur'an, such as information from classical Christian and Jewish sources

¹⁶Bintu asy-Syāṭī', *At-Tafsīr Al-Bayānī*, Juz I, h. 11.

¹⁷Endad Musaddad, *Metode Tafsir Bintu Asy-Syāṭī' (Analisis Surat aḍ-Ḍuhā)*, *Journal al-Qalam*, vol. 20, no. 98-99, (2003), h. 56.

(isrā'iliyyāt), as well as scientific interpretations, which have also been discussed and explained by Amīn al-Khulī.¹⁸ Therefore, in the book *At-Tafsīr Al-Bayān*, you will not find Israiliyyah stories and scientific/scholarly interpretations.

Bintu asy-Syāṭi' deliberately established these strict rules so that the Qur'an could speak for itself truthfully without the interference of an interpreter and could be understood as it was understood by the companions. Therefore, reference sources such as those related to the explanation of *asbāb an-nuzūl* are understood solely as historical data, so that what Allah intends in a verse is truly a guidance encompassing a specific event. Similarly, the explanations of previous exegetes, especially renowned scholars of exegesis such as at-Ṭabarī (d. 923), az-Zamakhsharī (d. 1143), Fakhr ad -Dīn al-Rāzī (d. 1210), al-Aṣfahānī, Nizām ad-Dīn an-Naisabūrī, Abū Ḥayyān al-Andalusī (d. 1344), Ibn Qayyim al-Jauziyyah, as -Suyūṭī, and Muḥammad 'Abduh (d. 1905), who are frequently cited by Bintu asy-Syāṭi' in her exegesis, are not references to strengthen her argument. Rather, Bintu Asy-Syāṭi' does this to highlight the errors and the overly contrived reasons they present, as such references are irrelevant to the intended meaning of the Qur'an as they understand it based on the methodology they have developed.¹⁹

Based on the explanations above, it can be concluded that objectivity appears to be an ideal (hope) that Bintu asy-Syāṭi' always aspires to in his efforts to study and explain the verses of the Qur'an. The approach he applies is sometimes flexible, especially when he believes that the Qur'an cannot be interpreted by relying on a single method alone. Therefore, he views that the Qur'an must be understood on its own terms.

3. *The Interpretation Application of Bintu Asy-Syāṭi'*

Setelah After explaining in detail the book *At-Tafsīr Al-Bayān Li Al-Qur'ān Al-Karīm* Bintu asy-Syāṭi', from its methodology to its characteristics, the author will then explain the systematic approach or steps taken by Bintu al-Syāṭi' in applying the methodology of interpretation in her book.

Bintu asy-Syāṭi', in her tafsir, when interpreting a surah, first lists all the verses of that surah from beginning to end, as is commonly done by mufasssir. After listing all the verses, Bintu asy-Syāṭi's methodology of interpretation in her tafsir becomes evident through the systematic structure of her discussion, which is divided into two parts: interpretation of the surah and explanation of the verses.

1. Interpretations surrounding the surah

Bintu asy-Syāṭi's interpretation of the surah in her book includes:

a. Naming Of Surahs

¹⁸Fatimah bintu Thohari, 'Ā'isyah 'Abd ar-Raḥmān Bintu Syāṭi': Mufasssir Wanita Zaman Kontemporer, *Jurnal Dirosat*, h. 96.

¹⁹Muhammad Ridho al-Fansuri dkk, *Tafsīr Al-Bayān Li Al-Qur'ān Al-Karīm Karya 'Ā'isyah Bintu Syāṭi'*, (Makalah yang dipresentasikan di UIN Syarif Hidayatullah, Jakarta, 2016), h. 10.



Every surah in the Qur'an, especially in the Muṣḥaf 'Uṣmānī, has been agreed upon in terms of its name, and there are only a few surahs that are disputed by scholars. In the tafsir (exegesis) of Bintu asy-Syāṭī, the names of the surahs are generally agreed upon by scholars. However, the name of Surah al-'Alaq is still disputed, so Bintu Asy-Syāṭī first explains the issue of naming this surah. She explains that QS. al-'Alaq, according to the widely accepted opinion, is named al-'Alaq, while some scholars name it Surah Iqra' or Iqra' Bi Ism Rabbik, including at-Tabari. Meanwhile, al-Razi names it Surah al-Qalam.²⁰

b. Category of surah

The categories of surahs referred to by the author are the Makkiyyah or Madaniyyah categories. If there is no disagreement among scholars regarding the naming of surahs, then Bintu asy-Syāṭī will explain the category of the surah after mentioning the entire verse. However, the surahs contained in his tafsir are not limited to those categorized as Makkiyyah and Madaniyyah alone. However, there are some surahs where some verses are Makkiyyah and others are Madaniyyah, such as Surah al-Qalam, which, according to him, generally consists of Makkiyyah verses, except for verses 17, 33, 48, and 50. These verses are Madaniyyah verses.²¹

c. Order of Descent

After explaining the categories of surahs that are interpreted, Bintu asy-Syāṭī then explains the order of the surahs. For example, Surah al-Duha, which she explains belongs to the Makkiyyah category without any contradiction. According to the widely accepted opinion, Surah al-Duha is the 11th surah in the order of revelation, following Surah al-Fajr.²²

d. The Reason for the Revelation of Surah

Az-Zarqānī explains that asbāb an-nuzūl or sabab an-nuzūl refers to the revelation of a single verse or several verses that address or explain the legal provisions pertaining to an event that occurred at the time of its occurrence. He explains that the event occurred during the Prophet's time or a question was posed to him, so Allah the Almighty revealed one verse or several verses to explain matters related to that event or to answer that question.²³ Therefore, it can be understood that sabab an-nuzūl is the reason behind the revelation of a verse or surah to explain an event or answer a question.

Basically, not all verses or surahs have a reason for their revelation. Sometimes the Prophet Muhammad recited a verse or surah without a specific reason. Similarly, the surahs found in the book *At-Tafsīr Al-Bayān Li Al-Qur'ān Al-Karīm* generally do not have a reason for their revelation. However, when a surah does have a reason for its revelation,

²⁰Bintu asy-Syāṭī, *At-Tafsīr Al-Bayānī*, Juz II, h. 13.

²¹Bintu asy-Syāṭī, *At-Tafsīr Al-Bayānī*, Juz II, h. 39.

²²Bintu asy-Syāṭī, *At-Tafsīr Al-Bayānī*, Juz I, h. 23.

²³Muḥammad 'Abd al-Aẓīm al-Zarqānī, *Manāhil Al-'Irfān Fī 'Ulūm Al-Qur'ān*, (Beirut: Dār al-Kutub al-'Ilmiyyah, 2003), h. 106.

Bintu asy-Syāṭī' will mention it. For example, in Surah al-Duha, she states: "The exegetes agree that the reason for the revelation of Surah al-Duha was the delay in the revelation of the Quran to the Prophet Muhammad during the early days of Islam, leading to various speculations. It was said to him that God had abandoned him and disliked him".²⁴ So that surah was revealed as a defense.

1. Interpretation of Verses

After explaining at length the issues surrounding the surah, including its name, categorization, order, and reason for revelation, Bintu asy-Syāṭī then explains it verse by verse, beginning with an explanation of the vocabulary, functional words, style and literature, language, and content of the verse.

a. Verse by Verse analysis

Bintu asy-Syāṭī', in his interpretation, always mentions each verse when explaining themes or surahs, which he then explains in detail. After finishing discussing one verse, he mentions the next verse, which he also explains in detail, and so on until he finishes.

b. Explanation o Vocabulary

Based on the distinctive characteristics of Bintu Asy-Syāṭī', who is considered to be an expert in Arabic language, when interpreting the verses of the Qur'an, he often begins with an explanation of the meaning of the vocabulary, which has become a distinctive feature of his tafsir. This can be seen when Bintu asy-Syāṭī interprets the first verse of Surah az-Zalzalah, as follows:

إِذَا زُلْزِلَتِ الْأَرْضُ زِلْزَالَهَا

Translation:

When the earth is shaken with a violent quake.

Bintu asy-Syāṭī began his explanation of the verse by explaining the linguistic meaning of the word az-zalzalah as al-ḥarakah al-'anīfah wa al-iḍṭirāb asy-syadīd (a violent tremor that causes severe damage). He then continues with a rhetorical explanation that the word can be used in two aspects;

- 1) Used in sensory aspects, for example, it is said; zalzala al-ibl sāqahā bi 'unufin hattā yaḍṭarib sīrahā (a camel stamped its feet so hard that it disrupted its gait) and/or the earth shook, trembled, and shivered.
- 2) Used in the context of difficulty and anxiety. According to him, this may be the basic meaning of the word az-zalzalah, namely zalat aṣ-ṣifih (loss of characteristics).²⁵

c. Explanation of the Connection (Munasabah)Between Verses

After explaining the meaning of the vocabulary, Bintu Asy-Syāṭī' then explained its

²⁴Bintu asy-Syāṭī', *Al-Tafsīr Al-Bayānī*, Juz I, h. 23.

²⁵Bintu asy-Syāṭī', *At-Tafsīr Al-Bayānī*, Juz I, h. 81



connection to other verses. This can be seen when she explained that the term az-zalzalāh is mentioned in the Qur'an six times in the form of a verb (fi'l) or noun (ism maṣḍar). Three of these describe a terrifying and extremely devastating day, as mentioned twice in Surah az-Zalzalāh/99:1 and once in Surah al-Ḥāj/22:1, as follows:

يَا أَيُّهَا النَّاسُ اتَّقُوا رَبَّكُمُ إِنَّ زَلْزَلَةَ السَّاعَةِ شَيْءٌ عَظِيمٌ

Translation:

O mankind! Fear your Lord; indeed, the convulsion of the Hour is a tremendous thing.

According to him, the three terms zalzala in the verse discuss the events of the Day of Judgment that will occur in the future, as well as the meaning of a terrible and terrifying day, namely the occurrence of a devastating earthquake/shaking on earth.

Meanwhile, the other three describe the severe hardship and extraordinary panic in the horror of war, as in QS al-Baqarah/2: 214;

أَمْ حَسِبْتُمْ أَنْ تُدْخِلُوا الْجَنَّةَ وَلَمَّا يَأْتِكُم مِّثْلُ الَّذِينَ خَلَوْا مِنْ قَبْلِكُمْ مَسَّتْهُمُ الْبَأْسَاءُ
وَالضَّرَاءُ وَزُلْزِلُوا حَتَّى يَقُولَ الرَّسُولُ وَالَّذِينَ آمَنُوا مَعَهُ مَتَى نَصْرُ اللَّهِ

Translation:

Or do you think that you will enter Paradise before you have been tested as those before you were tested? They were afflicted with poverty, suffering, and shaken by various trials, so that the Messenger and the believers with him said, "When will Allah's help come?" Remember, indeed Allah's help is near.

The term zalzala in this verse is mentioned once with an explanation of a situation of poverty, suffering, and turmoil in the form of extraordinary trials. This verse is related to the commandment for Muslims during the time of the Prophet to participate in war. In addition, it is also found in QS al-Aḥzab/33: 11.

هُنَالِكَ ابْتُلِيَ الْمُؤْمِنُونَ وَزُلْزِلُوا زِلْزَالًا شَدِيدًا

Translation:

That is where believers are tested and shaken (in their hearts) with a mighty shaking.

The term zalzala is mentioned twice in this verse, describing the violent shaking of the heart through various trials and tribulations.²⁶

Based on the classification of verses containing the term az-zalzalāh above, it appears that Bintu asy-Syāṭī' sought to reveal the meaning of az-zalzalāh by summarizing

²⁶ Bintu asy-Syāṭī', At-Tafsīr Al-Bayānī, Juz I, h. 82.

and examining the connections between all related verses. Thus, she identifies two meanings of the term “az-zalزالah,” namely: 1) a physical tremor that can be perceived by the senses through natural phenomena (earthquakes) and an inner tremor that can be felt by the soul.

d. Functional Explanation of words and style

After explaining the *munāṣabah* aspect of the verse to reveal the meaning of al-az-zalزالah, Bintu Asy-Syāṭi' then explains its functional aspect. This can be seen when she explains that three of the verses of az-zalزالah use past tense verbs in the *majhūl* form, namely in QS al-Baqarah/2: 214, al-Aḥzāb/33: 11, and az-Zalزالah/99: 1. The other three are in the form of nouns (objects), namely in QS al-Ḥaj/22: 1, al-Aḥzāb/33: 11, and az-Zalزالah/99: 1.

Before explaining his interpretation, Bintu Asy-Syāṭi' first quotes the opinions of previous exegetes when explaining the word *zulzilat*, which is a past tense verb that has been made unknown. Most exegetes hold the view that the subject (*fā'il*) is omitted because of the knowledge of it, without considering the fact that this is a linguistic phenomenon commonly found in discussions of end-time events. They focus on rhetorical issues (*balāḡah*), examining the countless verbs in the Qur'an that are used as information related to Allah, and so on, as a form of criticism toward earlier exegetes.²⁷

According to Bintu Asy-Syāṭi', what is easier to understand about the concept of the perpetrator is not the secret behind the explanation of the form of the word *zulzilat*, which is *majhūl*, but as we have mentioned earlier, it indicates a linguistic phenomenon that occurs in such events, namely focusing attention on the event itself, informing that the earth shakes on its own and as a response to perform automatic rescue. As for the verb being in the past tense, it affirms that the event (the Day of Judgment) will indeed occur. And since the verb is preceded by the conditional particle “*izā*,” I (Bintu Asy-Syāṭi') have changed it to the future tense without altering the revealed form in the past tense. The above explanation shows that Bintu Asy-Syāṭi' also criticizes previous interpretations by providing arguments that he believes to be correct and the attitude that should be taken when interpreting verses from the Qur'an. In addition, when he explains the function of a word, he also explains the style of language accompanied by literature and a sense of language.

Conclusion

After analyzing the book *At-Tafsīr Al-Bayān Lī Al-Qur'ān Al-Karīm*, written by 'Ā'isyah Muḥammad 'Alī Ābd ar-Rahman, who is better known by her pen name Bintu asy-Syāṭi' (the coastal girl), the author concludes that this book falls under the category of *tafsīr bi ar-ra'yī*, which is a *tafsir* based on the personal views/opinions of the *mufasssīr*. Additionally, the author also concludes that; Methodologically, *At-Tafsīr Al-Bayān Lī Al-Qur'ān Al-Karīm* uses the *mauḍū'ī* (thematic) method. However, Bintu asy-Syāṭi' appears to offer a different perspective on the thematic method compared to previous exegetes,

²⁷Bintu al-Syāṭi', *Al-Tafsīr Al-Bayānī Lī Al-Qur'ān Al-Karīm*, Juz I, h. 82.



who generally collected and discussed Qur'anic verses that shared common themes. Meanwhile, Bintu asy-Syāṭi presents a thematic approach in her tafsir by discussing one surah at a time, all of which are short surahs.

In practical terms, Bintu asy-Syāṭi uses the taḥlīlī method (detailed analysis) when presenting his interpretation of the surah in his book. This can be seen in his interpretation, which explains a surah by starting with the name of the surah, its category, order, and reason for its revelation. After that, she begins to explain each verse, starting with an explanation of the meaning of the words, explaining the relationship (munāsabah) between the verse being interpreted and other verses, and explaining the functional use of words, which is sometimes accompanied by rhetoric, literature, or linguistic nuances. The approach used by Bintu asy-Syāṭi' in interpreting the verses of the Qur'an is a linguistic approach (lugawī), which is also the characteristic of her interpretation. This aligns with Bintu al-Syāṭi's academic background as an expert in Arabic language and literature.

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