

**EPISTEMOLOGY OF SAINTIFIC INTERPRETATION  
PROF. DR. ZAGHLUL AL-NAJJAR**

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**ABSTRAK**

Al-Qur'an mengandung 800 ayat yang memuat informasi tentang alam dan fenomenanya yang menjadikannya terus dikaji dengan berbagai disiplin ilmu, termasuk studi tafsir saintifik oleh Zahglul. Tujuan penelitian adalah menemukan epistemologis tafsir saintifik yang digagas oleh Prof. Zahglul Al-Najjar, ahli di bidang geologi yang kemudian menyusun tafsir Al-Qur'an berbasis saintifik. Jenis penelitian yang digunakan adalah kualitatif dengan pendekatan analisis deskriptif. Metode penelitian dilakukan dengan mengumpulkan data-data yang diambil dari buku, "*Tafsir Ayat Kauniah fil Qur'anil Karim*". Hasil penelitian menunjukkan bahwa sumber tafsir yang digunakan perpaduan antara tafsir *bil ma'tsur* dan *bil ma'qul* dan lebih dominan *bil ma'qul*, dan menggunakan penjelasan sains-sain baru sesuai bidang kajian. Metode penafsiran yang digunakan adalah *maudhu'i* (tematik).

**Kata Kunci:** Epistemologi, Tafsir Saintifik, Al-Qur'an

**ABSTRACT**

*Al-Quran contains 800 verses containing information about nature and its phenomenon makes it continuously studied in various disciplines, including the study of scientific interpretation by Zahglul. The research aims to find the epistemological scientific interpretation initiated by Prof. Zahglul Al-Najjar, an professional of geology who then compiled a scientific-based interpretation of the Qur'an. The type of research used is qualitative with a descriptive analysis approach. The research method was carried out by collecting data taken from the book, "Tafsir Ayat Kauniah fil Qur'anil Karim". The research results showed that the source of the interpretation used is a combination of the tafsir bil ma'tsur and bil ma'qul, and it is more dominant, and uses a new scientific explanation according to the field of study. The method of interpretation used is maudhu'i (thematic).*

**Keywords:** Epistemology, Scientific Interpretation, Al-Qur'an

**INTRODUCTION**

I'jaz ilmi which contains scientific facts that are following the

findings of scientists In the Qur'an contains 800 verses which contain information about nature and its

phenomena Purwanto, A. The Al-Qur'an which is the basis for thinking, can be approached with multiple scientific disciplines, by the times, especially it is said that the Qur'an contains the contents of all scientific disciplines, which then makes scientists study according to their maturity. Zaghul al-Najjar, a geologist who wrote about scientific interpretation. In his introduction, Najjār explained that scholars who started to think about the need to study the Al-Qur'an with a scientific approach. The attention related to scientific topics in the Al-Qur'an has always been dynamic from the past until now.

Who conducted a study Embryological theory in the Qur'an according to Abdul Majid al-Zindani, who concluded that al-Zindani emphasized that the flow of the embryological process is a scientific fact that is contained in the Al-Qur'an and can be proven by modern science. In addition, Maurice Bucaille emphasized the compatibility of scientific facts revealed in the Al-Qur'an with modern science. , & Zainuddin, ZI, which examined

scientific evidence of healing through voice reading. In that case, it is more dominated by the assumption that, qur'anic scientific is more like pseudosciens.

On the contrary, from eastern scientists, have the same understanding, but more agree with the concept of qur'anic scientific. This can be seen by the emergence of studies that review the facts contained in the Qur'an with new scientific approaches. Regardless of the pro and contra, research on scientific facts in the Al-Qur'an continues to be revealed by many scientists. Previous research, a new generation has also emerged who are concerned about developing scientific miracles in the Al-Qur'an, such as Zaghul Al-Najjar, Fahd A. Dr Zaghul al-Najjar as Al-Qur'an scientific interpretation who is experts in geology specialists.

Zaghul an-Najjar is an expert in the field of Geology who guided him in understanding the verses of the Al-Quran with a scientific approach and thinking scientifically based on the principle of freedom of thought. It is stated in the preamble of his book, «Madkhal ila Dirasah al-

I'jaz ilmi fi Al-Qur'an al-Karim wa as-Sunnah an-Nabawiyah al-Muthahharah» that the Al-Qur'an has miracles in terms of language and literature, akidah-worship-morals, historical information, and from the point of view of the scientific cues. Zaghul gave a conclusion based on a theological perspective, namely that all of this proves that the Al-Qur'an is the holy word of Allah SWT. Based on the theological above, the Al-Qur'an is a miracle throughout the ages, so that it must be able to extract its contents with an interpretation method that is in line with the spirit of the times.

Dispute with the above argument, which is at the same time the foundation of the epistemology of scientific interpretation, Zaghul also makes a rebuttal of scientists who reject scientific interpretation. Assumptions are only a first step in scientific exploration, then theory is a method used to uncover phenomena, it will end up as scientific facts, which are fixed in the definition of man based on rationality, and in the end, it will become applicable laws because of conclusions between one

phenomenon with other phenomena that are related. Zaghul said that the prohibition on interpreting the Al-Qur'an is not general in nature, but is aimed at interpretations that are not based on a set of knowledge work, while that is done on the basis of knowledge, interpretation is an open thing. Zaghul builds arguments through his written works, such as in his introduction, which explains the linguistic and terminological reviews of miracles and their divisions, such as literary by classical scholars who have discussed argumentatively about science in the Al-Qur'an and the method used, Zaghul invited modern interpreters to use a scientific approach in explaining the contents of the Al-Qur'an.

This environmental foundation made him try to theorize the scientific Al-Qur'an based on the Burhani argument, namely scientific evidence and facts that have been obtained through experiments that have been carried out. Through the exploration of findings obtained in lectures and scientific-based work, all of which are measurable with accurate, rational terms, and in

fact all of these findings do not contradict the facts described in the Al-Qur'an, leading to the conclusion that Al-Qur'an brings scientific miracles. Then strengthen his ideas and thoughts, were written that reveal scientific facts in the Al-Qur'an, such as the relationship between bees and honey, geology and animals in the Al-Qur'an, including the historical accuracy that is told in the Al-Qur'an since Prophet Adam that no human could tell. In this research, will be revealed how the epistemology of scientific interpretation initiated by Zahlul.

## **METHOD**

Research type is qualitative by conducting library research, namely research techniques that collected primary sources from the book entitled, "Tafsir Ayat Kauniyah fil Qur'anil Karim," by Zaghul Al-Najjar, and other sources. Secondary research is from writings about the espritemology of scientific interpretation, Zahglul Al-Najjar's interpretation, and the scientific interpretations in the classical and modern era.

## **RESULT AND DISCUSSION**

### **A. Prof. Dr. Zaghul an-Najjar's Biography and Works**

Zaghul an-Najjar is a geologist. His family highly values education. His grandfather and father were scholars of al-Azhar who do delight of knowledge and books, especially related to Islam. This can be seen through the family library in their house. His grandfather, Shaykh Muhammad al-Naggar was an imam in Basyoun City, al-Gharbiya Province, Egypt. (Khoir, A. S. (2017).

Zaghul joined his father in moving to Cairo and entered elementary school in the capital of the State of the Prophets. In 2000-2001, Zaghul was elected Chancellor of the Markfield Institute of Higher Education England and since 2001, he has been chairman of the Commission for Miracles of Science in the Qur'an and Sunnah at the Supreme Council of Islamic Affairs Egypt. With his expertise in the science-based interpretation of the Al-Qur'an, he regularly writes articles in the "Min Asrar Al-Qur'an"

rubric and every Monday in the Egyptian Al-Ahram Daily, which has 3 million copies everyday.

It was stated by Zaghul that the Koran is a book that has miracles in terms of language and literature, creed-worship-morals (tasyri'), historical information, and no less important from the point of view of its scientific cues, which are so important to be the current context, which at the time of its descent was not yet understood.

The book Tafsīr Al-āyātul Kauniyah fil Qur'ānil Karīm which consists of 4 volumes consists of: The first volume, which starts from Surah al-Baqarah to Sura al-Isra which consists of 56 discussions of verses. The second volume, starting from Surah al-Kahf to Surat Luqman which consists of 42 discussions, the third volume, starting from Surat al-Sajadah to Surat al-Qamar which consists of 38 discussions, and in the fourth volume starting from Surat ar-Rahman to Surat al-Qari'ah which consists of 40 discussions so that the total number of discussions contained in this book is 176 in 66 letters. (Mughtar, M. R., 2017).

At the beginning of writing, Zaghul an-Najjar started by writing a book in his preamble which contained 4 subjects, namely: 1) the literal definition of I'jaz and its division, 2) the history of the development of I'jaz and methods of interpreting verses with scientific dimensions, 3) invitations to Islamic scholars, especially interpretation expert to interpret the Al-Qur'an according to the times, and 4) explanation of the rejection of some groups who reject the Al-Qur'an to be interpreted based on scientific findings and the accepted scientists.

Zaghul Al-Najjar has worked on more than 150 articles and more than 50 books covering various scientific studies, including Islamic science, Al-Quran science, science in hadith, *I'jaz ilmi* and many more. However, the study that has increased Zaghul's authority as an expert on Islamic science in this modern century is a study that includes scientific findings in interpreting the verses of the Al-Qur'an.

## **B. Interpretation Source of Prof. Dr. Zaghul an-Najjar**

It is based on the interpretation of *bi al-ma'tsur* if the interpretation is broadly based on the Al-Qur'an, hadith, and the opinions of friends and *tabiin*. This source of interpretation is on sentences that can generally be found in classical commentary books, and if the number is analyzed is relatively small, considering that Zaghul in his interpretation focuses on verses that can be interpreted scientifically.

The themes included in the review of the interpretation of *bil ma'qul* include space, the creation of humans, animals, earth, plants, and the sky described by modern science. The interpretation that was limited to the classical era, prompted him to undertake a new interpretation that modern science could explain. By some scholars, this interpretation has come under sharp criticism, because according to them, this opinion collides with scientific facts.

#### **C. The interpretation method used by Zaghul an-Najjar**

Thematic interpretation (*maudhu'i*) is an interpretation based

on the interpreter's scholarship and the demands of community life. In terms of the interpretation method used by Zaghul, it is included in the *maudhu'i* (thematic) category, which is interpreting the verses chosen according to the purpose of interpretation. Not all verses are interpreted, but only verses that can be interpreted by modern science. Only certain verses are interpreted and based on the theme in each letter. This interpretation is arranged in accordance with the arrangement, as found in the Al-Qur'an which begins from the Surah al-Baqarah to the Surah al-Qāriah.

#### **D. Interpretation Validity of Zaghul an-Najjar**

Interpretation is subjective which does not have permanent legal force, in contrast to the text itself. However, subjective does not mean that it is not good or even wrong, subjective is an offer which is certainly not guaranteed to be true, but that does not mean that there is no truth at all. (Zulaiha, E. (2016).

The first is a scientific fact that has been revealed in the A-

Qur'an and is following natural phenomena. The second is the attempt by scholars to explain these facts, believing that errors in interpretation are pinned to the exegete, believing in the truth of the Al-Qur'an. At least, there are seven standards that need to be applied to avoid errors in interpretation. This is important considering that the interpretation will use a new interpretation that has not existed before. (Al Shueily, S., Mansouri, M &, Al Garbi, M., 2020; Osman, R. B. A. H., & Siddiqui, N. A., 2018).

#### **E. Interpretation Style Used By Zaghul an-Najjar**

The style of interpretation used by Zaghul is based on *'ilmi* (scientific), It is modern interpretation that is related to current scientific theories.

According to Husain Al-Dhahabi (2005) the scientific interpretation is an interpretation that uses scientific nomenclature in interpreting the Al-Qur'an to extract various knowledge and some philosophical views from it. Meanwhile, according to Al-

Muhtasib (1973) *'ilmi* interpretation is the author's interpretation to submit the verses of the Al-Qur'an to scientific theory and terms and trying to issue various scientific problems and philosophical views from them.

The type of interpretation used is reasoning or thinking, which is interpreting the Qur'an by providing information related to science, accompanied by pictures and modern scientific research. One form of the development of a scientific approach that Zaghul did, for example, in explaining 80<sup>th</sup> verse of Surah Yasin:

*“Who hath appointed for you fire from the green tree, and behold! ye kindle from it.”*

In explaining this verse, Zaghul uses the terms carbondioxide, oxygen, hydrogen, about the process of photosynthesis, which is chemical, while earlier scholars, such as Thanthāwi Jauhari, explained the technique of creating fire from green trees, which was commonly applied by Arabian when traveling far and resting in desert. While to clarify the reader's understanding, pictures of

ancient leaves and humans were presented while searching for fire.

(Khoir, A.S., 2017). It can be seen that the presentation of information between the two scientists is different, and Zahglul can present it with a new scientific perspective, namely the discipline of chemistry.

## CONCLUSION

Zahglul al-Najjar, who wrote arguments and scientific proofs of the miracles of the Al-Qur'an. From this foundation, Zahglul wrote books of scientific interpretation, related to geology, embryology, animals, and plants in the Al-Qur'an. Based on its background, it is concluded that epistemologically, Zahglul's interpretation uses the source of interpretation, a combination of the bil ma'tsur and bil ma'qul interpretation and is more dominant bil ma'qul. The method of interpretation used is maudhu'i, which is interpreting the verses chosen according to the purpose of the interpretation. Second, the linguistic approach, and third, the scientific approach.

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