

# The Development of Quranic Exegesis In Indonesia: *A General Typology*

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## KEYWORD

Tafsir  
Al-Qur'an  
Indonesia

## ABSTRACT

The development of the interpretation of the Qur'an in Indonesia is strongly influenced by the development of intellectual dynamics in this region. The characteristics of the development of interpretations are very significantly influenced by the socio-historical changes and intellectual development of the Indonesian people. In this context there are four interpretive typologies which are also stages of the development of interpretations in Indonesia, namely: the first period of interpretation of the translation, in which the interpreters of the archipelago rely heavily on Middle Eastern interpreters as a reference and most works are explored from Middle Eastern commentators. Second, the modern period, where the interpretation that developed was the influence of modern developments in Islam. Third, the period of contextual interpretation, that is, interpretations are written on certain topics.

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## INTRODUCTION

The discourse on Quranic exegesis within the Muslim Ummah in Indonesia emerged as social-intellectual dynamics developed in the country. Its characteristics have also been greatly influenced by fluctuation of socio-historical and intellectual development in the Indonesian communities.

In its early development, the emergence of Quranic exegesis in Indonesia was characterized by strong reference to works in Arabic—those written by ulama of exegesis during the classic time. According to Salman Harun, character of this dependence was heavily influenced by dominant intellectual atmosphere at the time. Strong tradition of *taqlid* (following without thoughtful consideration) and high appreciation toward knowledge on Tassawuf—which prioritized Islamic qualification of individuals accessing reference sources—were dominant. (Harun, 1988). Therefore, there existed a belief that works of Quranic exegesis should be dependent on these authoritative works. Peter Riddle notes that there are at least four exegesis books which became main references for Quranic exegesis at the time, namely: *Ma'alim al-Tanzil* by al-Baghawi, *Lubab al-ta'wil fi Ma'ani al-Tanzil* by al-Khazin, *Anwar al-Tanzil wa Asrar al-Ta'wil* by al-Baidlawi, and *Tafsir al-Jalalain* by Jalaluddin al-Mahalli and Jalaluddin al-Suyuthi. (Riddel, 1993)

*Tafsir Tarjuman al-Mustafid* and *Tafsir Marah Labid* are two examples of exegesis works in Indonesia that depended greatly on classic exegesis works. A.H. Johns provides some evidence in his research work that both of the works above rely mostly on *Tafsir al-Jalalain*, a classic work which uses global, brief, and simple language.<sup>3</sup>

However, the Dutch colonization in the 18<sup>th</sup> and 19<sup>th</sup> centuries and interactions of Indonesian intellectuals with issues of international politics changed their approach in formulating works of Quranic

exegesis. In the 20<sup>th</sup> century, for example, new developments in doing Quranic exegesis emerged in ways that were different from their predecessors.

Discovering characteristics and development of works on Quranic exegesis during pre and post Indonesian independence as well as during the contemporary period is an interesting study, albeit the fact that only very few people have attempted to do so. Therefore, this paper attempts to elaborate further on the development of the typology of Quranic exegesis within the Muslim ummah in Indonesia.

Most Islamic scholars believe that miracle of the Qur'an (*i'jaz*) do not consist only in the internal meaning implicitly but also can be seen in its wonderful literary structures. The literary structures of the Qur'an were regarded as the most perfect example of the Arabic language. Hence, Amin al-Khuli (d. 1966) called the Qur'an as a greatest book of Arabic literature (*kitab al-'Arabiyyah al-akbar*) because it has fundamental effect dimensions of art and the divine literature (al-Khuli, 1978). These literary structures can produce meaning in the Qur'an in an effective way (Boulatta, 2001). There are many studies on miracle of the Qur'an, from classic to modern, relating to its aesthetic aspect (Setiawan, 2006). The literary structures of the Qur'an as one of main aspects have influenced the development of Islamic literature. Hence, there are Qur'anic scholars who attempt to imitate the literary structures of the Qur'an in their translations and commentaries. They then also cited its structures in non-Arabic literary works (Kadi and Mir, 2001). It is not only Muslims, but also non-Muslims. Moreover, their efforts in many cases also have invited some polemics as in the case of H. B. Jassin's *Bacaan Mulia* (Rahman, 2005).

Poetic translation of the Qur'an in Indonesia Islamic intellectualism discourse is not a new phenomenon. Raden Adipati Aria Wiranatakoesoemah (1888-1965) has pioneered the *guguritan* of the Qur'an, *Soerat Al-Baqarah*, long before H.B. Jassin's polemical work, which was rejected by the Indonesian government and Majelis Ulama Indonesia (MUI). Wiranatakoesoemah has pioneered the *guguritan* of the Qur'an, *Soerat Al-Baqarah*. It is a poetic translation of the Qur'an in Sundanese metrical verses. It was published in 1949. Wiranatakoesoemah was known as *Dalem Haji* who wrote the story of his pilgrimage in 1924 (Dijk). *Soerat Al-Baqarah* is written in the form of Sundanese poetry (*guguritan* or *dangding*). It used the *pupuh* rules. The *pupuh* also used to arrange the song that called as *tembang Sunda*. The Wiranatakoesoemah's *Soerat Al-Baqarah* is almost unpopular in Indonesia. In addition to its language that used Sundanese, the government and *'ulama* were not too concerned with *menak's* works (Javanese: *priyayi*). They are considered did not have strong influence in Sundanese people especially in the post-independence period (G. Zimmer, 2000).

This paper try to analyze Wiranatakoesoemah's *Soerat Al-Baqarah*. It is focused on how the work can elaborate semantic meaning of the Qur'an into the form of *guguritan*. It is important to demonstrate the ideology of diglossia in the Qur'an and its influence to Sundanese literature. The study attempts to strengthen Zimmer's thesis on the Sundanese translation of the Qur'an. He stated that the translation was performed as a Sundanese resistance against Arabic and Islam through their cultural impulses (Anderson, 1990). It is like a puzzle. The Sundanese people tried to subdue and subordinate the translation of the Qur'an into the form of *guguritan*. The use of *guguritan* in translation of the Qur'an might caused a problem of inaccessibility of the meaning. It showed that inspired literary language can never be completely satisfactorily compared and translated into the others (Rahman, 1988).

## DISCUSSION

### The Development of Quranic exegesis in Indonesia

The discussion on early development of the study of Quranic exegesis in Indonesia cannot be traced easily through scientific written works. The reason for this is the dominance of oral tradition in transferring knowledge to others during the early development of intellectual activities in the region (Johns, 1989). Verses of the Quran have been used as references in intellectual activities, propagation, and in making people understand about Islam since the early presence of Islam in Indonesia. However, this account cannot be included as evidence of the development of Quranic exegesis in the country because it is not in the category of written tradition of Quranic exegesis study.

If compared to written tradition in other disciplines, especially to studies in *Tasawuf* that was dominant at the time, development of Quranic exegesis studies was not among the mainstreams (Federspil, 1996). Hence, it is not surprising that after a few centuries of the arrival of Islam in Nusantara, we cannot find

any significant development on the study of Quranic exegesis in the region. This account is true, according to A.H. Johns, who postulates that the tradition of Quranic exegesis studies emerged later than other disciplines. The evidence is that until the 17<sup>th</sup> century only one complete work on Quranic exegesis was found (Johns, 1989).

There are several issues to be considered regarding insignificant development in the studies of Quranic exegesis during this early period:

1. High appreciation of major Ulama toward the study of *Tasawuf*. This did not only affect state political activities but also led the Ulama to pay so much attention to this discipline that development of other disciplines were ignored.
2. The Ulama believed that translating verses of the Quran into languages other than Arabic was religiously unlawful.
3. Belief toward and tradition of *Taqlid* (following the Ulama) was dominant within Muslim ummah.

Albeit the fact that the complete work on Quranic exegesis existed later than works in other disciplines, verses of the Quran were often included in sufistic poetry works of Ulama such as Hamzah and Syamsuddin. Hamzah often integrated verses of the Quran into his Malay-mythical poetics (Johns, 1993). An evident example is the following poetry:

*Laut itulah yang bernama ahad,  
Terlalu lengkap pada asy 'us Shamad  
Olehnya itulah lam yalid walam yulad  
Wa lam yakun lahu kufuwan ahad*

Like Hamzah, Syamsuddin also interpreted verses of the Quran in his *tasawuf* works, which were expressed in the form of poetries.

In addition to interpretation of parts of Quranic verses included in poetries, several incomplete works on Quranic exegesis of certain chapters of the Quran were also discovered. One example of these is the manuscript of Quranic exegesis work of *al-Kahfi* chapter (written in the 16<sup>th</sup> century), whose author has not been known yet. Based on their investigations, some people have argued that this work is a translation of *tafsir al-Khazin* (Ala al-Din). However, this argument is doubted since *Tafsir al-Khazin* is generally not sufistic. In other words, it is in contradiction with the character of *tafsir-al-Kahfi*, which tends to be sufistic. Some others also predict that it is actually the work of Hamzah or Syamsuddin. But, again, this prediction may not be true as it exemplifies sufistic natures that are different from those of Hamzah and Syamsuddin.

Another work on Quranic exegesis, entitled *Tashdiq al-Maarif*, was also found in Aceh, whose author has also not been known. This is a sufistic work that provides mythical interpretation of several verses of the Quran (Johns, 1989). In conclusion, until early in the 17<sup>th</sup> century, there was no complete work of Quranic exegesis written in Indonesia.

### ***Tafsir Tarjuman al-Mustafid***

In the 17<sup>th</sup> century, Abdul rauf Singkel wrote a more complete work on Quranic exegesis entitled *Tarjuman al-Mustafid* (Harun's, 1988). This work constituted the first Quranic exegesis written in Malay, and simultaneously became a complete and typical profile of the early development of the foundation of Muslim intellectual tradition in the area of exegesis work in Indonesia.

The language used in al-Singkili's work seems to be made global, brief, and simple for the purpose of facilitating beginners to understand Islam.

Some predicted that this work is also a translation from similar work in Arabic. Snouck Hurgronje, for example, without detailed investigation claimed that the work is a translation of *Tafsir al-Baidhawi* (John's, 1989). This claim has also been adopted by Rinkes and Voorhoeve. However, a more complete investigation by Riddel and Salman Harun disclaims the finding. According to Harun, Hurgronje's weakness is derived from his incorrect understanding of the first edition of the work published in Istanbul. In this edition, it was found a phrase which reads *al-juz'u al-awwal min Tafsir al-Baidhawi al-Syarif*, which led Hurgronje's to such a conclusion.

According to Harun, the work is mostly a translation of *Tafsir Jalalain*, and not that of *Tafsir al-Baidhawi*. However, there were quite many notes from the writer referring to several *Tafsir* works, including *tafsir al-Baidhawi* and al-Khazin. The inclusion of the phrase *al-juz'u al-awwal min Tafsir al-Baidhawi al-Syarif* was most probably done by Abu Bakar al-Tubani who re-edited the Istanbul edition. The intention of re-editing the work was done in order to increase its prestige and to appreciate the author (Harun, 1988).

In summary, al-Singkili's work exemplifies many similarities to *tafsir al-Baidhawi* and *tafsir Jalalain*, in spite of the debate whether it is an original work or a translation. Among these similarities are indicated in: (1) its brief, global, and simple discussions, (2) the use of *tafsir Jalalain's* interpretation technique, which interprete verse after verse in accordance with the order in *Mushaf Usmani*, and (3) the tendency to be neutral in its interpretation by avoiding reference to mythical and theological concept such as *wahdat al-wujud* or *wahdat al-syuhud* (Johns, 1989).

Despite weaknesses that have been forwarded to *Tarjuman al-Mustafid*, the decision to write such a work was indeed a courageous work at the time, considering the belief in Muslim society at the time which forbade the translation of the Quran into languages other than Arabic. In addition, strong tradition of *taqlid* at the time also discouraged creativity among *Ulamas*.

For at least three centuries, *Tarjuman al-Mustafid* became a dominant and hegemonic work, particularly in Malay-speaking regions. The work has been reprinted several times, among others in Istanbul (1884), Bombay, Singapore, Penang, and Jakarta (1981). These repeated reprinting indicates the significance and helpfulness of *Tarjuman al-Mustafid* for Muslim society (Harun, 1988).

There are several reasons why this work became influential. Firstly, it was disseminated through governmental agencies and commercial connections. The dissemination was initiated by the Sultanate of Aceh, which covered a wide territory and developed sound relationships with other sultanates in the Malay world. Secondly, its publication in Istanbul, Turkey in 1884 made it a very popular work in Muslim society. At the time, the *Usmani* dynasty was still powerful and considered by many as the representation of the last Caliphate in Islam. This work was also later distributed widely in Mecca and Medina. Lastly, and perhaps most importantly, al-Singkili had a big number of students in all over *Nusantara* (Azra, 1999).

### *Tafsir Marah labid*

It was only until a few decades toward the end of the 19<sup>th</sup> century that a major work on Quranic exegesis was written by an *Ulama* named Ahmad Nawawi al-Banteni (Ambari). The work, consisting of 2 volumes, is entitled *Marah Labid li kasyfi ma'na al-Quran* and was completed and published in Mecca in 1305 H after careful review by the *Ulamas* of Mecca (Hafifuddin, 1987). Later, in 1887, it was also published in Cairo.

The method employed by Nawawi in doing his work is similar to that of his predecessor, al-Singkili's, that is, by interpreting verse by verse as found in *Mushaf Usmani*. Every sentence is elaborated briefly, and occasionally inserting his lengthy comments in some parts of the work.

Similar to al-Singkili, Nawawi refers significantly to *tafsir Jalalain*. The tendency of both *ulamas* to refer to *tafsir Jalalain*, to some extent, is understandable due to its moderate and neutral stance toward differing sects in Islam. More importantly, this is the only *tafsir* that uses brief, clear, and simple interpretation procedure. With such these characteristics, they could place works on Quranic exegesis as learnable sources for understanding Islamic teachings. For that purpose *Marah labid*, was written in standardized Arabic to ease understanding of its users and students of the *ulamas*.

### General Typology of the Development of Quranic Exegesis in Indonesia in the 20<sup>th</sup> century

Works on Quranic exegesis in Indonesia have changed in accordance with development in quality of socio-historic and intellectual state of its society. Unlike the Egyptian context, in which works on Quranic exegesis can be classified into the following three styles of interpretation, namely *tafsir ilmy* (focusing on knowledge), *lughawi* (focusing on language), and *Ijtima'i* (focusing on daily life issues of the *ummah*) (Hairussalim and Hidayatullah, 1997), the Indonesian context of works on Quranic exegesis categorizes itself into the following typologies—each of which will be elaborated briefly below.

### *The Translation Period*

Realizing the importance of the Quran as guidance for mankind and the difficulty to understand Quranic exegesis works written in Arabic, Indonesian Muslim figurers felt it was crucial to write the Indonesian version of Quranic exegesis work. During this period, an author of Quranic exegesis work basically presented messages of the Quran in simple Indonesian/Malay, and readers were not necessarily involved interpreting details of the Quranic verses. Al-Dzahabi called this method *at-Tarjamah at-Tafsiriah* (al-Dzahabi, 1976).

The most courageous figure in this period was Mahmud Yunus (Yusuf, 1992), who wrote *Tafsir al-Quran Karim Bahasa Indonesia* (Yunus, 1938). He is considered courageous due to the belief among Muslims at the time that it was religiously prohibited to translate the Quran into languages other than Arabic, and because *ijtihad* was considered a taboo. In order to avoid severe conflict, Mahmud Yunus wrote the translation in *Pegon* (Malay written with Arabic alphabets). The motive of the work was to help people understand messages of the Quran.

Another figure following Yunus' path was Haji Rasul, who wrote a Quranic exegesis work entitled *al-Burhan: Tafsir Juz Amma*, in *Pegon* (The book was printed in 1935). It is a work on the interpretation of the last chapters of the Quran. A bit more advanced than Yunus, Haji Rasul incorporated opinions of classic and Muslims' Middle-age experts of Quranic exegesis such as al-Razi, Ibn Katsir, and al-Thibbi and opinions of modernists in the field such as Muhammad Abduh and Thantawi Jauhari into his work.

The work of Ahmad Surkati, written by his brother based on his lectures to a group of Arab descendants in 1937, is also another work during the period. Lectures on Quranic interpretation were devoted on the Chapter of *al-Fatihah*. Though he taught Arabic, his lectures were written and published by his brother. Surkati referred to the Abduh's notions of reformation in his work

Unlike Haji Rsul and Ahmad Surkati, Tjokroaminoto translated *The Holy Quran* by Maulana Muhammad Ali. In 1928, Muhammadiyah protested his work because the work he translated had some elements of Ahmadiyah's teachings. Consequently, publication of the translation had to be postponed for some time. It is important to note that his work in Dutch interested many Javanese in Suriname (Feener, 1998). The original work by Muhammad Ali later gained appreciation from intellectual groups in Indonesia. A Muslim scholar named Dawam Raharjo quoted quite significantly from the book and suggested that the book deserves to be "a model for Muslim scholars working in the field of Quranic exegesis" (Raharjo, 1996).

In general, all works during this period were written in *Pegon*. One exception is the work of A. Hasan entitled *al-Furqan Tafsir al-Quran*, which constitutes the first Quranic exegesis work written in Roman script and in modern lay-out. The work was begun in 1928, but could not be published until 1956. In the reviewed edition, A. Hasan stated that he emphasized more on providing notes for meaning of every Quranic verse to facilitate readers' understanding of the Quran's meanings (Hasan, 1962). If compared to the previous works, A. Hasan's work also seems to be more well-organized in terms of its translation method. In addition to that, he also included a rather lengthy introduction in his work to describe its interpretation methods (Hasan, 1986). These differences are related to A. Hasan's belief as a figure of *Persatuan Islam* (PERSIS) (Noer, 1980) which resisted the idea that opportunity for *ijtihad* had been closed.

### *The Modern Period*

A different model of Quranic interpretation emerged during this period, in which Quranic exegesis works aimed more to develop interpretations involving current and actual ideas, rather than to provide translation of the Quran.

The most remarkable character of this period is the spirit to integrate and socialize reformation ideas in Quranic exegesis works explicitly. The works were also influenced by the situation of Muslim society at the time, which experienced post-independence socio-political turmoil. The Muslim *ummah* were faced with choices of ideological and political principles to be adopted as the foundation of their nation and state's life, which in turn put them into a dilemmatic circumstance. On one side, they needed to respond appropriately to modernization movement, but on the other side, they also had to accommodate formulation of Islamic teachings, which unfortunately did not seem to be a ready-to-use concept. The debate over this issue led to

disagreement between the Modernists and the Traditionalists. Some *Ulamas* of the Modernists proposes that al-Quran is the only reference in making any improvisation of the formulation of Islamic teachings.

The presence of Islamic Higher education institutions in the middle of the century also became a particular stimulation for the development of Quranic exegesis work. This was because most of writers in the period were from academic activists of IAIN.

An example of Quranic exegesis work in this period is *Tafsir an-nur* and *Tafsir al-Quran al-Bayan*, by Hasbi Ash-Shiddieqy (Jalal, 1986). He was an expert on *Fiqh* and Quranic exegesis at IAIN Sunan Kalijaga Yogyakarta. Hasbi Ash-Shiddieqy wrote the second work, *Tafsir al-Quran al-Bayan*, because he was not satisfied with the first work, *Tafsir an-Nur*. The first work was published in 1956, and the second was published in 1971 (Yusuf, 1992).

Hasbi's teachers at al-Irsyad were instrumental in providing him with innovative ideas on Islam (Noer, 1980), which later contributed to his commitment to incorporate reformative ideas in exegesis works from the Middle East. Hasbi acknowledged, right from the very beginning of his work, that he referred to selected works on Quranic exegesis. Some major works such as *Tafsir Ibn Katsir*, *Tafsir al-Manar*, *Tafsir al-Qasimy*, *Tafsir al-Maraghi*, and *Tafsir al-Wadhih* became the guidance for Hasbi in writing his own work (Ash-Shidieqy, 1976), which later led others to view him as merely the translator of similar work. According to Hasbi, his work exhibits the concern to reformative ideas forwarded by Muhammad Abduh. His special attention to *tafsir al-Maraghi* was due to similarities of ideas in socializing Abduh's reformative ideas and clear and simple method of discussion.

*Tafsir al-Azhar*, the work of Hamka, was undoubtedly a dominant Quranic exegesis work during the period (Tamara, 1983). Hamka's work displays similarities of vision to that of Hasbi's *tafsir an-Nur*. Both works reflect modern and reformative thoughts when interpreting verses that are relevant to current situation. The difference is that Hasbi presented more reformative ideas in *Fiqh*, while Hamka emphasized more on socio-cultural issues. In his work, Hamka demonstrated his insightfulness in almost every aspect of Islamic teachings. His work also reflects that he was more innovative than his predecessors of the translation period. His interpretation style is flexible, and that helps him to improvise his interpretation more widely. An implication of this style is that he sometimes included his personal life experience and current realities in the society in order to facilitate understanding of a Quranic verse.

According to Howard M. Federspil, the approach employed by Hamka is one that was never considered by his predecessors who tended to provide global interpretation (Federspil, 1996). Hamka's enthusiasm to present more flexible interpretations of Quranic verses is identical to the interpretation style of Muhammad Abduh in his *Tafsir al-Manar* (Abduh is a reformation figure of the Muslim world from Egypt). Al-Dzahabi commented that an interpretation model that employs the use of beautiful language and exemplifies current societal problems is an interpretation typology of *Adab al-Ijtima'i*. In Egypt the pioneer of this approach is Muhammad Abduh, and as indicated earlier, in the *Nusantara* region Hamka is the leading figure in using the approach.

The above discussion indicates that there is a change of paradigm in the way writers of Quranic exegesis approach their work. Writers in the modern period referred mainly to sources from Egypt, especially from the University of Al-Azhar, rather than to sources from Mecca, as was done by writers of Quranic exegesis during the translation period (Azra, 1999). As widely known, since 1920, there was increasing number of students from Indonesia studying at Al-Azhar University, Egypt, and returned to Indonesia after their graduation. Unlike, students graduating from *Haramain* (Mecaa and Medina), al-Azhar graduates were modernists (Azra, 1999).

### ***The Contextualization Period***

Since 1980s there has been a new tendency in Quranic exegesis work, that is, a tendency to be independent from literal Quranic texts to facilitate understanding. The approach employed in Quranic exegesis was to emphasize more on completing discussion on a certain topic, or better known as *Tafsir Maudhu'i* (Freener). It is an interpretation method in which the work begins by deciding a theme, and then followed by gathering all relevant verses to be elaborated comprehensively based on verses of the Quran (Shihab, 1992).

Normally, the writers using this approach elaborate Quranic verses in accordance with current societal problems. They begin from the context of the problem, and then solve the problem based on Quranic perspectives. The background of the birth of this interpretation style was increasing need on the part of many Muslim readers toward Islamic materials which were based on the Quran. These readers usually did not have adequate educational capability on Quranic science.

It is interesting to note that during the contextualization period the topics discussed in Quranic exegesis works expanded to areas beyond *Fiqh* or worshipping matters such as social, politics, economics, law, etc. Even the writers did not only come from Islamically-educated groups but also from groups of other disciplines of knowledge. This type of thematic interpretation was applied by classic Muslim writers, but only until the recent time that it has been developed fully by Fazlur Rahman, a Muslim world contemporary figure in his book *Major Themes of the Qur'an*. His ideas have been largely introduced by Nurcholis Madjid and Syafi'i Ma'arif, and they have been influential in the development of intellectualism, particularly in IAIN (Fazlurrahman, 1983).

An example of work during this period is *Tafsir Ayat-ayat Haji: Telaah Intensif dari Pelbagai Mazhab* (Interpretation of the Hajj/Pilgrimage Verses: An Intensive Analysis from different Sects of Islam) by K.H. Mukhtar Adam. There are two methods used in this work, namely interpretation method of *maudhu'i* and interpretation method of sects comparison or *Muqaranat al-Madzahib*. Both methods were used by Syekh Mahmud Syaltut (1963) in his Quranic exegesis work (Indonesian version) entitled *Pendekatan Syaltut dalam Menggali Esensi al-Quran* (Syaltut's Approach in Analyzing the Essence of the Quran).

Works by Quraish Shihab have also been very popular in this period. Shihab is best known from his work entitled *Membumikan Al-Quran* (Bringing the Quran to Reality). This book introduces the concept of *maudhu'i* method in Indonesian. Shihab's other works such as *Wawasan al-Quran* (Insights of the Quran), *Tafsir al-Quran al-Karim: Tafsir atas surat-surat pendek berdasarkan urutan turun wahyu* (Interpretation of the Holy Quran based on the order of the Revelation), *Lentera Hati* (Light of the Heart), *Yang Tersembunyi* (The Hidden), *Tafsir Amanah*, etc. All of his works are rich in classical notes and contemporary Arab references. His discussion is actual, and themes such as arts, economics, politics, science and technology, poverty, etc are accommodated (Shihab, 1996).

Jalaluddin Rahmat, an expert of communication science and writer of Islamic books, contributes a work entitled *Tafsir bil-Ma'tsur: Pesan Moral al-Quran* (Tafsir bil-Ma'tsur: The Moral Message of the Quran) in this period. Rahmat adopted the method used in *Tafsir al-Ma'tsur*, in which relevant verses of the Quran are interpreted and discussed thematically (Rahmat, 1994).

Still in the same period, Dawam Raharjo contributed a work entitled *Ensiklopedi al-Quran* (The Quranic Encyclopedia). Raharjo discussed major and actual themes such as justice, religion, knowledge in his work. His social and economic educational background led him to the use of a new approach in understanding the Quran. As he acknowledged, he does not possess any authority in Arabic and Islamic science, and therefore did not want to get involved in discussing technical and philological aspects of the work. He concentrated more on conveying the spirit of Quranic messages and their relevance to problems faced by Indonesians (Raharjo, 1996).

## CONCLUSION

Quranic exegesis is not an intellectual product that is sterile from socio-economic and socio-political situations surrounding it. Its characteristics have also been greatly influenced by fluctuation of socio-historical and intellectual development in this country. This can be shown from development of Quranic exegesis work in the 20<sup>th</sup> century, which experience innovations and changes in response to development of intellectuality in the society.

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