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Al-Qur'an dan Hadis

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TAFWĪD METHOD IN UNDERSTANDING MUTASHĀBIHĀT VERSES

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Abstract

mutashābihāt verse is a verse that has a vague meaning. This vagueness can occur in terms of lafaz, or in terms of meaning, or in terms of lafaz and their meaning. In the existing debate, this paper aims to examine the methods used by scholars in understanding the *mutashābihāt* verses. (a) How is the analysis of the interpretation of scholars in understanding the *mutashābihāt* verses? (b) What factors cause them to disagree? This paper is built from data collected through library research by tracing sources that relate directly to the theme. This paper uses the approach of interpretation and science. This paper shows that scholars use two methods in understanding *mutashābihāt* verses. *First*, *ta'wīl* method, they tend to understand the letter *waw* as *waw 'ataf* in the fragment of verse *wa al-rasikhuna fi al-'ilm* (Q.S.Ali Imran (3): 7), which connects the previous sentence, the connotation is that Allah and the people are firmly grounded in knowledge know the definite meaning. *Second*, *tafwīd* method, they tend to understand the letter *waw* as *waw al-isti'naf* functions as *mubtada'* which is a new sentence. The connotation is to give its definite meaning to Allah alone and to those whose knowledge is profound in their faith. Some *mutashābihāt* verses can be identified through scientific theory.

Keywords: *al-mufawwidah, al-mu'awwilah, huruf al-muqatta'ah, Interpretation*

Abstrak

Ayat *mutashābihāt* merupakan ayat yang samar maknanya. Kesamaran ini dapat terjadi dari segi lafaz, atau dari segi makna, atau dari segi lafaz dan maknanya. Dalam perdebatan yang ada, tulisan ini bertujuan untuk mengkaji metode yang digunakan ulama dalam memahami ayat *mutashābihāt* untuk menemukan analisa penafsiran ulama dalam memahami ayat *mutashābihāt* serta faktor apa yang menyebabkan mereka berbeda pendapat. Tulisan ini dibangun dari data yang dikumpulkan melalui riset kepustakaan dengan menelusuri sumber yang berhubungan langsung dengan tema. Tulisan ini menggunakan pendekatan ilmu tafsir dan sains. Tulisan ini menunjukkan bahwa ulama menggunakan dua metode dalam memahami ayat *mutashābihāt*. *Pertama*, *metode ta'wīl*, mereka cenderung memahami huruf *waw* sebagai *waw 'ataf* pada penggalan ayat *wa al-rasikhuna fi al-'ilm* (Q.S.Ali Imran (3): 7), yang menghubungkan kalimat sebelumnya, konotasinya Allah mengetahui maknanya dan orang-orang yang



mendalam ilmunya. *Kedua; metode tafwīd*, mereka cenderung memahami huruf *waw* sebagai *waw al-isti'naf* berfungsi sebagai *mubtada'* yang merupakan kalimat baru. Konotasinya, menyerahkan maknanya Allah semata, orang-orang yang mendalam ilmunya mereka mengimani. Sebahagian ayat *mutashābihāt* dapat diketahui maknanya melalui teori sains.

Kata Kunci: *al-mufawwidah, al-mu'awwilah, huruf al-muqatto'ah, Penafsiran*

Introduction

Al-Qur'an is the word of Allah as a miracle quoted *mutawātir* and *Qaṭ'ī al-wurūd* as the first and foremost source of Islamic law. Once al-Qur'an mentions that the verses are completely written, it means that all the verses are arranged perfectly, sturdy and strong,¹ that is, the verses are clear in meaning, as explained in His Word in Q.S. Hud (11): 1. Another time mentioning the verses of al-Qur'an are *mutashābih* are entirely, between one verse and another. The verses are similar in terms of the robustness of the verse, its *uslub*, its *balāgha*, its miracles and its lafaz.² In another verse it is mentioned in part *muhkam* and some are *mutashābih*, "He is the one who sent down to you (O Muhammad) al-Kitab, there is among His (verses) which are *muhkamat*, that is the main source of al-Kitab and there are others besides that *mutashābihāt*".

This study of *mutashābihāt* verses has been done by many scholars. There is categorizing the verses of al-Qur'an into fundamental (*muhkamāt*) clear or easily understood, and hence *qat'ī* (certain), and instrumental *mutashābihāt* (unclear) and karenanta *ẓanni* (uncertain). Basic verse agreement with fundamental issues, such as human equality regardless of gender, race, ethnicity (Q.S. al-Hujurat (49): 13), the importance of justice (Q.S. al-Nahl (16): 90), human equality before the law (Q.S. al-Māidah (5): 8), respect agreement together (Q.S. al-Isrā' (17): 34), gender equality in the family (Q.S. al-Baqarah (2): 187).³ According to Pasya and Rivai, the purpose of the *mutashābihāt* verse is the similarity or difference of the words in the Qur'an. The *Mufasssir* disagree with one another about the meaning of the *mutashābihāt al-lafẓi* verse. In addition, many hafidz of the Qur'an,

¹ Muhammad "Abd" al-Azim al-Zarqani, *Manāhil Al-'Irfa'n Fi 'Ulum Al-Qur'a'n*, II. (Beyrut: Dar al-Fikr, 1988), p. 271.

² M. Quraish Shihab, *Kaidah Tafsir Syarat, Ketentuan, Dan Aturan Yang Patut Anda Ketahui Dalam Memahami Ayat-Ayat Al-Qur'an*, I (Tangerang: Lentera Hati, 2013), p. 210.

³ Jajan Burhanuddin and Kees Van Dijk, *Islam in Indonesia: Constating Images and Interpretations* (Amsterdam: Amsterdam University Press, 2013), p. 111–12.

who are exchanged from one verse to another verse, or to another surah due to the similarity of verses of the Qur'an with other verses.⁴

This paper aims to complement the shortcomings of the study of the verses of *muhkam* and *mutashabih* in the Qur'an. This paper is focused on the discussion of *mutashābihāt* verses. This study specifically analyzes the interpretation of scholars and the methods used in understanding *mutashābihāt* verses. In line with that the question was formulated how the analysis of the interpretation of scholars in understanding *mutashābihāt* verses and what factors caused the emergence of differences in opinions of scholars in understanding *mutashābihāt* verses?

This paper is based on two assumptions. (1) The *mutashābihāt* verses become a debate of scholars in understanding the nature of the meaning of *mutashābih*. Among the first group who gave up their true meaning to Allah, commonly called the *madhhab al-mufawwidah* namely no one can know the meaning except Allah. And the second group; the *mutashābihāt* verses can be understood by means of *ta'wīl* (interpretation) this group is commonly called the *al-mu'awwilah* school. There is a third group that takes the middle way which is commonly called the moderate *mutawassīṭah* group who takes the middle way between the first and second groups so that they are not trapped in misunderstanding. (2) Their differences of opinion are caused by differences in the meaning of the *waw* found in the fragment of the verse *wa al-rāsikhūna fī al-ilm* (Q.S. Ali Imrān (3): 7), which was mentioned above. Does the letter *waw* as *waw 'ataf* which function as a conjunctive to the previous sentence or the letter *waw* as *waw al-Isti'naf* functions as *mubtada'* which relates to the sentence after it has nothing to do with the previous sentence.

The Qur'an is universal which is often discussed, although not yet understood in its entirety, given the explanation of Allah's messages there is a mystery to many most humans, so Muslims must proclaim and exclude from all phenomena to suit various phenomena and traditions or scientific theories, so that the development of human science is more advanced and in accordance with the real reality,⁵ although not all *mutashābihāt* verses can be known through scientific theory. The meaning of *mutashābihāt* verses is vague and has a double meaning (ambiguous) so it is very urgent to do an in-depth study for the

⁴ Muhammad Iqbal Rivai Hikamatir Pasya, "Al-Ayah Al-Mutasyabihat Al-Lafzhiyyah Fi Surah Al-An'am 'Inda Al-Kirmani," *Studia Quraniika* Volume 2, no. No. 1 (2017): p. 97–134.

⁵ Muhammad Anwar Firdausi, "Membincang Ayat-Ayat Muhkam Dan Mutasyabih," *Jurnal Ulul Albab* 16, no. No.1 (2015): p. 80–88.

next researchers in order to obtain a proper and clear understanding for the progress and development of Islamic sciences, especially the science of the Qur'an, interpretation and science in general.

Nova Yanti, explained the position of the verse *muhkamāt* as the position of the mother for her child. To him verses *mutashābihāt* returned. He also expressed the view of al-Harani that the *ta'wīl* method is the only appropriate method for synchronizing between the verses of *muhkamāt* and *mutashābihāt*. According to him *ta'wīl* can be done using two methods, *ijmālī* (global) and *tafsīlī* (detailed) methods. The *ijmālī* method is widely used by the majority of salaf scholars in interpretation of *mutashābihāt* verse, namely by believing and believing that the verse is from God, and the meaning it contains is in accordance with the majesty and purity of Allah from the nature of the creatures, without specifying a specific meaning. They returned the meaning of these verses to the verse *muhkamāt*.⁶

Syamsu Nahar, further stated that the *mutashābih* verse is not only in the form of sentences but there are pieces of *hijaiyyah* letters found at the beginning of the surah called *al-muqatta'ah* (chopped letters) which are also included in the *mutashābih* verse. *Fawātiḥ al-suwar* consists of separate *hijaiyyah* letters and no explanation of their meaning. He also explained the forms of *fawātiḥ al-suwar*, namely: one letter, two letters, three letters, four letters and five letters.⁷ Ismā'īl Ali Sulaymān explained that *mutashābih* in the Qur'an is divided into two; *mutashābih bi al-hayah al-ma'na* (*Mutashābih* in terms of meaning) and *mutashābih bi al-hayah al-lafẓ* (*Mutashābih* in terms of word). *Mutashābih* in terms of meaning is a vagueness of meaning contained in a verse, including; *muqatta'ah* letters, attributes of Allah, about the apocalypse. The *mutashābih* in terms of lafaz is a similarity between the verses of the Qur'an with one another.⁸

Siti Badiah, explaining the wisdom and educational values of *muhkamāt* and *mutashābihāt* verses. Wisdom in relation to the world of education, at least God has taught the "teachings" of *muhkam* and *mutashābih*, to humans so that we recognize the existence of character education in each individual, so we must appreciate it. The difference between the ulama about *muhkam* and *mutashābih* between them did not make them hostile to one

⁶ Nova Yanti, "Memahami Makna Muhkamāt Dan Mutasyabihat Dalam Al-Qur'an," *Jurnal Pendidikan Islblab* 8, no. 2 (2016): p. 246–56.

⁷ Syamsu Nahar, "Keberadaan Ayat Muhkam Dan Mutasyabih Dalam Al-Qur'an," *Jurnal Nizhamiyah* VI, no. No.2 (2016): p. 1–18.

⁸ Ismail Ali Sulayman, *Safwah Al-Bayan Fi Mutasyabihat Al-Nazimfi Al-Qur'an* (Kairo: Ibad al-Rahman, 2015), p. 9.

another. Precisely with differences of opinion, they strengthen and complement each other.⁹

This research is a descriptive qualitative research. Therefore, the materials used as data sources are written materials. Primary data sources are *Ulūm al-Qur'an* books. Secondary data are books of interpretation, books of hadith, journals, other books that are relevant to the discussion as a source. This paper used interpretation science approach, since this paper examines the *mutashābihāt* verses in the Qur'an. It also used a scientific approach between Islamic knowledge and science has relevance. Then the data were analyzed by using content analysis (qualitative analysis), which seeks to analyze the contents of the message contained in written sources objectively and scientifically, both primary and secondary sources to find the meaning of the messages.

The Meaning of *Mutashabih*

The word *mutashabih* is lexically derived from the word *al-sibb* which is the equation or likeness of two or more things in terms and of the shape it. When equating something with something else can lead to doubt and astonishment, the result can fall into a meaningful understanding of the lafaz.¹⁰ *Mutashābih* means *al-mushārahah* (ambiguous) in terms of likeness and improbability.¹¹ *Mutashābih* can also mean the same (but not the same). This word refers to the similarity of two or more things that lead to disguise in distinguishing the characteristics of each so that it is difficult to find differences.¹² Based on this understanding it can be understood that the meaning of *mutashābih* in terms of language is similar but not the same can also be interpreted vaguely or improbable.

The scholars put forward the definition of the *mutashābih* verses including: Verses that are not clear in meaning and cannot be known either through the *'aqlī* (rational) and *naqlī* (text) propositions. The meaning is given to Allah like the time of doomsday and the letters *al-muqatta'ah* at the beginning of the surah and the exit of the Antichrist. Verses that cannot stand alone, even require explanation. The meaning in question is unclear,¹³ containing the absurdity of the *mushtarak* verse which has ambiguous double meaning. The *mansūkh* verse which is not practiced because it is null and void. *Mutashābih* verses must be

⁹ Siti Badiah, "Hikmah Dan Nilai-Nilai Pendidikan Adanya Ayat-Ayat Muhkamat Dan Mutasyabihat Dalam Al-Qur'an," *Jurnal Al-Dziker* XI, no. No.1 (2017): p. 107–23.

¹⁰ Nur al-Din 'Atar, *Ulum Al-Qur'an Al-Karim* (Damaskus: al-Sibl, 1996), p. 120.

¹¹ Muhammad "Abd" al-Azim al-Zarqani, *Manabil Al-'Irfan Fi 'Ulum Al-Qur'an*.

¹² Shihab, *Kaidah Tafsir Syarat, Ketentuan, Dan Aturan Yang Patut Anda Ketahui Dalam Memahami Ayat-Ayat Al-Qur'an*.

¹³ Nur al-Din'Itr, *Ulum Al-Qur'an Al-Karim* (Damaskus: al-Sibl, 1996), p. 122.

believed, then the meaning is submitted to Allah. The stories contained in the Qur'an. *Hijāyyah* letters found at the beginning of several surahs, for example Nūn, Ṭāsin, Ḥāmir, Yā sīn, Qāf.¹⁴

Based on these definitions it can be concluded that the *mutashābih* verses are an unclear verse whose meaning cannot stand alone, because of that they need an explanation, the meaning is given to Allah. For example *al-burūf al-muqattā'ah fī awāil al-suwar*. *Mutashābih* verses have a dual meaning (ambiguous), verses of nature, for example lafaz *al-yad*, *al-wajh*, and *al-yamīn*. In short the verses *mutashābih* are vague.

Al-Raghīb al-Aṣfahānī details the reasons for the emergence of *mutashābih* on three things:¹⁵ *First*; *mutashābih* in terms of lafaz, divided into 2 (two) parts; *first*, Shown in the recitation of the *mufrad*, sometimes the recitation of the *qharīb* (rare) such as the *Abbā* or the recitation of the *mushtarak* which has several meanings such as the lafaz *al-Yad* is interpreted by the hands and lafaz *al-yamīn* is interpreted with the right hand and oath. *Second*; shown in a *murkab* sentence composition, divided into 3 (three) parts. 1) aims to summarize sentences, such as Q.S. al-Nisā' (4): 3: "If you are worried about not being fair to orphans, then marry women who are suitable for you". 2) to extend the sentence, for example Q.S al -Surā' (11): 3 and to beautify the sentence structure, as in Q.S. Al-Kahfi (18): 1: It is estimated that there is an additional lafaz which is inserted, namely the lafaz *qayyimā* between the lafaz *al-Kitāb* and lafaz *wa lam yaj 'allahu' iwajā*.

Second; *mutashābih* in terms of meaning, the attributes of Allah and the attributes of the Day of Judgment, they cannot be described because they have never crossed our minds in the form of something that has never been felt. *Third*; *mutashābih* in terms of lafaz and meaning at once, divided into five parts: (a) In terms of *kammiyah*, such as lafaz 'am (general) and *khaṣ* (specific), example Q.S. al-Tawbah (9): 5, "Then kill those polytheists" (b) In terms of *kayfiyyah*, such as obligatory lafaz and circumcision. Example of Q.S. al-Nisā' (4): 3, "Marry the (other) women you like" (c) In terms of time, like *nāsikh mansūkh*, example of Q.S. Ali Imrān (3): 102, "Fear Allah truly with Allah" (d) In terms of place and problems that occur in it, example of Q.S. al-Baqarah (2): 189, "And it is not virtue to enter houses from behind" (e) In terms of legal requirements and cancellation of an action

¹⁴ Shihab, *Kaidah Tafsir Syarat, Ketentuan, Dan Aturan Yang Patut Anda Ketahui Dalam Memahami Ayat-Ayat Al-Qur'an*.

¹⁵ Al-Raghīb Al-Aṣfahānī, *Mu'jam Mufradat Alfaz Al-Qur'an* (Beirut: Dar al-Fikr, 2010), p. 191–92.

depends on these conditions, examples of the legal requirements for prayer and the legal requirements for marriage.

Kinds of *Mutashābihāt* Verses

Some scholars¹⁶ divide the *mutashābih* verses, when viewed in terms of the reach of human knowledge in understanding its meaning. *First*; verses that are totally unknowable to all humans, such as verses that talk about the substance of Allah and the nature of its properties, verses that talk about the time of the Day of Judgment and others that deal with supernatural matters only Allah who knowing the meaning. For example in Q.S. al-An'ām (6): 59 and Q.S. Lukman (31): 34. *Second*; the verses that can be known to all humans by studying and researching in depth, such as verses *mutashābih* due to sentences such as the *gharīb* lafaz or *mutashābihāt* verses whose disguises arise due to concise, long and orderly and the like. A brief example of a verse is mentioned in Q.S. al-Nisā' (4): 3. The meaning of the above verse is unclear due to its concise editorial. Actually the original sentence is "and if you fear that you cannot do justice to (the rights of) orphaned women if you marry them, then marry (other) women whom you like, two, three or four". Verses that use the *gharīb* lafaz and ambiguous lafaz such as the *Quru* lafaz in the Q.S. al-Baqarah (2): 228. The *quru'* can be interpreted as holy and menstruating. The verse instructs women who are barred for the waiting of the three *quru'*. Scholars disagree due to the obscurity of the lafaz. Women should wait for their menstruation three times and have bathed, or they should wait for their *iddah* three times even though they have not bathed. *Third*; the verses are only known by certain scholars, namely people who are very knowledgeable by purifying the soul and doing *jihād* in understanding al-Qur'an. They are termed *al-rāsikhūna fī al-'ilm* in Q.S. al-Nisā' (4): 162. According Quraish Shihab such verses cannot be revealed in terms of their true meaning only by reasoning alone.

The Scholars Method in Understanding the Verses of *Mutashābihāt*

Scholars differ in their understanding of the meaning of the verses.¹⁷ Some scholars use the *tafwīd* method called the *al-mufawwiḍah* school, that is, they give the problem of understanding the nature of the verses of the *mutashābihāt* to Allah only after cleansing Him from impossible phenomena. They argued with *'aqli* and *naqli* arguments. *First*, with *'aqli* argument, they state that determining the nature of the *mutashābihāt* verses means to follow

¹⁶ Muhammad "Abd" al-Azim al-Zarqani, *Manabil Al-'Irfan Fi 'Ulum Al-Qur'an*; Shihab, *Kaidah Tafsir Syarat, Ketentuan, Dan Aturan Yang Patut Anda Ketahui Dalam Memahami Ayat-Ayat Al-Qur'an*.

¹⁷ Muhammad "Abd" al-Azim al-Zarqani, *Manabil Al-'Irfan Fi 'Ulum Al-Qur'an*.

the Arabic methods and uses, where the results are *ẓan* (presumption), while knowing the attributes of Allah is not enough with *ẓan*, but must be with *qaṭ'i* (belief) that there is no way to get there (knowing it), therefore we ask and ask for the essence of its meaning to Allah, the All-Knowing: For example of history Umm Salamah about the words of Allah in the Quran about *al-rahmān 'alā al-'arsy istīwa'*. He said, *al-kayf* (how) is that? the meaning cannot be known through reason, while *al-istīwa* the meaning is unknown to admit it means to trust (believe) in him and deny it including kufr. Another example is following Imam Mālik, a question was asked to him about the meaning of *al-istīwa'* in the *al-rahmān 'alā al-'arsy istīwa'*. He replied, *al-istīwa'* is known to *al-kayf* (how) is that? unknown and asking about this is a heresy. I suspect you are a bad person. Get him out of my group. Both of the narrations mentioned above signal to humans that no one can know the meaning of the nature of the attributes of Allah, but must believe in the *mutashābihāt* verses. According to Imām Mālik the meaning of the language is clear, but the effort to find the true meaning is heresy.

Second, naqli argument, they argued with several hadith, including: hadith history of 'Aisyah. From 'Aisyah, she said that Rasulullah reading this verse: "He is the one who sent down *al-Kitāb* (al-Qur'an) to you. Among the contents (there are verses that are final) that are the main points of the contents of the Qur'an and the other (verses) *mutashābihāt*. As for those whose hearts are inclined towards error, they follow some verses that *mutashābihāt* to cause slander and to search for his *ta'wīl*, even though no one knows his *ta'wīl* but Allah. And those who have deep knowledge say: "We have faith in verses that are *mutashābihāt*, all from the side of our Lord. And can not take lessons (from there) but those who are not intelligent". 'Aisha said, Rasulullah said: "When you see those who follow the *mutashābih* verses, they are those whom Allah calls, beware of them".¹⁸ Reported by Ibn Mardawih, Rasulullah said, al-Qur'an is not revealed to lie part of them on another part, what you understand from the Qur'an practice, and *mutashābih* (vague meaning), then rest assured.

Observing the arguments of the *naqli* stated can be understood that the history of Aisha Hadith based on verse Q.S. Ali 'Imrān (6): 7, explains that the verses of *mutashābihāt* no one can know the meaning except Allah. Therefore, it is urging every Muslim to be careful in interpreting the verses of the Qur'an, especially the *mutashābihāt* verses. While the

¹⁸ Abi al-Husein Muslim bin Hajjaj Al- and Qusyairi Al-Naisaburi, *Shahih Muslim*, II (Beirut: Dar al-Fikr, 1988), p. 560.

hadith history of Abū Mālik al-Ashyar, Rasulullah worrying about his Ummah in 3 (three) things: one of them is worrying for the believers to mentor the *mutashābihāt* verses, while no one can know the meaning except Allah. Those who are solid in their knowledge believe in and believe the verses of the Qur'an which are *muhkam* and *mutashābih* all from the side of Allah. Whereas the history of Ibn Mardawih means that the verses of the Qur'an are all *mutawātir*, not a single verse that contains lies including the *mutashābihāt* verse must be practiced and must be believed.

Some other scholars try to understand the *mutashābihāt* verses by using the *ta'wīl* method, called the school of *al-mu'awwilah*. The problem is what exactly meant by *ta'wīl* by them? *Ta'wīl* is a synonym of interpretation according to the meaning of *lughawiyah* (linguistics), in the dictionary it is said *anwala al-kalām-ta'wīlan-wa ta'awwalahu* which means to think, define and interpret it.¹⁹ *Ta'wīl* according to the term is turning lafaz from the meaning of *ẓāhir* (apparent) to its meaning which is accompanied by the argument of *qaṭ'i* (strong) because the meaning of *ẓāhir* is far from the desired meaning.²⁰ The purpose of *ta'wīl* is to divert lafaz from its clear meaning into the meaning that is clarified because of the existence of *qarīnah* which is possible, for example *yad Allah* (the hand of Allah) is changed its meaning into Allah's power.²¹

This *mu'awwil* group mentions nature verses (*mutashābih al-sifāt*), *gharīb lafaz* and the *hijaiyyah* letters which are located at the beginning of the surah (*hurūf al-Muqatta'ah*), because of the *gharīb lafaz*, the *hijaiyyah* letters which are located at the beginning of the surah, because of the *gafal lafaz*, *sifāt* verses and *al-Muqatta'ah fī awāil al-Suwar* letters including *mutashābihāt*. First, *fawātib al-suwar* (opening surah) which is also called *al-hurūf al-Muqatta'ah fī awāil al-suwar* namely; letters of the alphabet, such as *alif-lam-mim*, *qāf*, *yā-sūn*, *nūn*, *ṭā-sīn*, and the like. The abominable verses contained in the words of Allah are called *ayāt al-Sifāt* (verses of nature), or *mutashābih al-Sifāt*, such as lafaz *al-Yad*, *al-Yamīn*, *al-wajh*, *al-'Ain* and *al-rahmān 'alā al-'Ary istawa*, and the like.²²

Second, the verses of al-attributes (*mutashābih al-sifāt*) which are adhered to are as follows. The attitude of the scholars in understanding the verses of nature (*mutashābih al-*

¹⁹ Abd Qadir Muhammad Salih, *Al-Tafsir Wa Al-Mufasssirun* (Beyrut: Dar al-Ma'arif, 2003), p. 100.

²⁰ Al-Tahir Amir, *Al-Ta'wil Inda Al-Mufasssirin Min Al-Salafi* (Beyrut: Dar Ibnu Hazm, 2011), p. 59–66.

²¹ Salman Harun, *Mutiara Al-Qur'an Menerapkan Nilai-Nilai Kitab Suci Dalam Kehidupan Sehari-Hari* (Jakarta: Qaf, 2018), p. 333.

²² Muhammad "Abd" al-Azim al-Zarqani, *Manabil Al-'Irfaq Fi 'Ulum Al-Qur'an*.

sifāt), they obeyed lafaz as follows: *al-Rahmān ‘alā al-’ Arsh al-istawa’*. Ibn ‘Abbās put forward several meanings *istawa’* as follows: permanent meaning, this requires *ta’wīl*, that it remains known by the form of *jism* (thing). *Istawa’* means in power, that Allah has power over two places namely heaven and hell and their inhabitants. Meaning *sa’ida* (high or up). According to Abū Ubaydah that Allah was purified from a height. In *ta’wīl* with the meaning Allah is Most High namely lifted up from the height. The meaning of *istawa’* is accepting the creation of the throne and holding fast to His creation. Ibn al-Lubban argued that *al-istawa’* was attributed to Allah by means of acting fairly.²³

Term *al-wajh* in Q.S. al-An’am (6): 52, Ibn al-Lubban argues the sentence *al-wajh* understood with the meaning of substance. Ali al-Ṣabūnī interpreted *al-wajh* with the one substance of Allah,²⁴ and other opinions in Q.S. al-Baqarah (2): 115. *al-Wajh* understood with the meaning of the direction directed towards it. Term *al-yad* in Q.S. al-Fath (48): 10 and Q.S. al-Hadīd (57): 29, said *al-yad* was interpreted with the meaning of power. Lafaz *al-Saq* in Q.S. al-Qalam (68): 42, in *ta’wīl* means hard meanings and great things, as said by the war raging loudly/violently. Lafaz *al-janbi* in Q.S. al-Zumar (39): 56, understood with the meaning of obedience to Allah. The nature of *al-Qarīb* (near) Q.S. al-Baqarah (2): 186 and Q.S. Qaf (50): 16, understood with *al-’ilm* (knowledge). The nature of *fawqiyah* (above) in Q.S. al-An’am (6): 18, understood *fawq* with high meaning has no direction (place). Term *al-majī’u* Q.S. al-Fajr (89): 22 and Q.S. al-An’am (6): 158, understood with the meaning of His command, because the ruler (king) comes with the command over his authority.²⁵ The books of tafsir such as *Tafsīr Ibn Kathīr*, *Tafsīr al-Qurṭubī*, *Tafsīr al-Marāghī* and others, interpret the verses *mutashābihāt*. For example, al-Marāghī interprets term *yad Allah* with favor of Allah.²⁶

Likewise the interpretation of the Malay interpretation book is much influenced by the interpretation method of the khalaf scholars compared to the tafwīd method, namely giving up the proper meaning for Him. Interpretation of lafaz *وجه* dita’wil with the meaning of Qibla and transgression, *الإستوا* with the meaning of mastering, *بيده* with the meaning of his power, and *جاء* with the command tawil. These commentaries are much influenced by the interpreters of the flow of al-Ashariyah through tafwid and ta’wil

²³ Jalal al-Din Al-Suyuti, *Al-Itqan Fi Ulum Al-Qur’an*, III (Cairo: Dar al-Hadis, 2006), p. 16.

²⁴ Muhammad ‘Ali al-Sabuni, *Safwah Al-Tafasir*, Juz 3, III (Beyrut: Dar al-Fikr, 2001), p. 278.

²⁵ Al-Suyuti, *Al-Itqan Fi Ulum Al-Qur’an*.

²⁶ Ahmad Musthafa al-Maraghi, *Tafsir Al-Maraghi*, 24th ed. (Beyrut: Dar Ihya’ al-Turath al-‘Arabi, 1985), p. 91.

methods. Thus the application of the interpretation of *mutashābihāt* verse in the Malay interpretation is in line with the method used in the interpretations of mu'tabar, such as Jalalain, Ibn Kathir and others.²⁷

The attitude of the scholars in understanding the letters of the alphabet, (*hurūf al-muqāṭṭa'ah*) they read letters like the following Ibn' Abbās. Ibn Abba.s interprete term *alīf lām mīm* with the meaning of *anā allāhu a'lam* (I, Allah know), *alīf lām mīm ṣad* with *anā allāhu afṣilu* (I, allah explained), *alīf lām ra* with *anā allāhu arā* (Allah see), *nūn* and *ḥa mīm* with *hurūf al-rahmān mufarriqah* (names of the most loving God who are separated). And according to al-Dahhāq, ta'wil *alif lām mīm ṣad* is *anā allāhu al-ṣādiq* (I am a true god). Ibn 'Abbas interpreted *kaf ha ya ayn sad* with the letter *kaf* from *al-kaṣīm* (the Most Glorious), the letter *hā* of *al-Hādī* (the Most Giving Guide), the letter *yā* of *al-Hakīm* (the All-Wise), the letter 'ain from' *al-'Alīm* (the All-Knowing) and the letter *ṣād* from *al-Ṣādiq* (the Most Righteous).²⁸

Paying close attention to the interpretation of the group that adheres to the *ta'wil* method, the verses that are read are *al-hurūf al-muqāṭṭa'ah fī awā'il al-sūwar* and verses of nature (*mutashābihāt al-ṣifāt*), while verses about the unseen problems, when the Day of Judgment did not enter the field that could be monitored, these problems are beyond the reach of human reason, so the meaning is left to Allah. While according to al-Ṭaba'taba'ī that the letters of *al-muqāṭṭa'ah* are included in *mutashābihāt* verses only Allah knows the meaning.²⁹

Besides these two groups there is a moderate group, called the *al-mutawassīṭah* school. Jalāl al-Dīn al-Suyūṭī argued that Ibn Daqiq al-'Id said, if ta'wil is close to the Arabic method it is undeniable, but if it is far away, it is true that we will ask questions and believe in the meaning as desired and purify Allah from something that is not feasible for the Arabic language. Something whose meaning of lafaz is real and can be understood from Arabic conversation, can be accepted without questioning, as an example of the word of God in the Q.S. al-Zumar (39): 56.

The causes of scholars differ in opinions from scholars in understanding the meaning of *mutashābihāt* verses based on Q.S. Ali 'Imrān (3): 7. The difference in opinion of

²⁷ Mohd Faizulamri Mohd Saad & Wan Nasrudin Wan Abdullah Norsyafiaah Thoifun, "Aplikasi Kaedah Penafsiran Ayat Mutasyabihat Dalam Tafsir Melayu," *Jurnal Al-Turath* Vol.4, no. No.1 (2019): p. 32–39.

²⁸ Al-Suyuti, *Al-Itqan Fi Ulum Al-Qur'an*.

²⁹ Muhammad Husein al-Ṭaba'taba'ī, *Tafsir Al-Mizān*, XVIII (Teheran: Dar al-Kutub al-'Ilmiyah, n.d.), p. 7–8.

scholars is due to differences in understanding the meaning of the letter *waw* contained in the fragment of the verse *wa al-rasikhūn fī al-'ilm*, after previously fragmenting the verse *wa mā ya'lam ta'wīlab illa Allah* (nobody can know the ta'wil except Allah). Namely whether the letter *waw* is *waw al 'aṭaf* (functions connecting between the two fragments so that it is meaningful, no one knows its ta'wil except Allah and those who have deep knowledge),³⁰ or the *waw* letter is *waw al-isti'nāf*, functions as a *mubtada'* which makes the fragment thereafter new sentence that is not related to the previous fragment, but the sentence after that becomes *kbabar lil mubtada* ie *yaqūlūna amannā bibi kullun min 'indi rabbina*. So that it means, as for those who are firm in their faith, they say: “We believe in it, all of which (*muhkam* and *mutashābih*) are sourced from our Lord”.³¹ Which means that those who have deep knowledge of them trust and believe in the verses of *muhkam* and *mutashābih*, there is no difference between them in terms of faith and submission, they both justify each other over each other and there is nothing from the side of God to be together hand.

Scholars who interpret the letter *waw* as the letter *'aṭaf* in a fragment of the verse (*wa al-rasikhūna fī al-'ilm*) which functions to connect the previous sentence, they understand that the *mutashābihāt* verses only Allah knows the meaning of its essence and those whose knowledge deep can also find out its meaning through judgment. This opinion is held up by the *al-mu'anwilah* school. While the group that understands the letter *waw* as *waw al-isti'nāf*, which must stop (*waqf*) in the lafaz *illā Allāh*. This means that the sentence *wa al-rasikhūn fī al-'ilm* is a new sentence that functions as a *mubtada'*, has nothing to do with the previous sentence, which means “as for those who are knowledgeable”. But related to the sentence after that what functions as *kbabar mubtada'* is understood from the fragment of the verse “they say, they believe in the verses *mutashābihāt* and *muhkam*, all from the side of Allah”. They understand that the *mutashābihāt* verse is submitted to God, the intrinsic meaning that no one is able to know its meaning, including those who are capable of their knowledge. This opinion is held up by the *al-mufawwidah* school.

Al-Raghib al-Aṣfahānī takes the middle path by concluding verses of *mutashābihāt* into three clusters; *First*, *mutashābihāt* verses that have absolutely no way to find out. Like the verses that talk about the occurrence of doomsday, and knowledge about things unseen and the issuance of *dabbat* (creeping things) to the earth and its methods and beyond.

³⁰ Badar al-Din al-Zarkashi, *Al-Burban Fi Ulum Al-Qur'an*, II (Kairo: Dar al-Turath, 1984), p. 72–75.

³¹ Al-Suyuti, *Al-Itqan Fi Ulum Al-Qur'an*; Shihab, *Kaidab Tafsir Syarat, Ketentuan, Dan Aturan Yang Patut Anda Ketabni Dalam Memahami Ayat-Ayat Al-Qur'an*.

Second, the verses of *mutashābihāt* all humans have a way to find out, like the lafaz *gharīb*. *Third*, *mutashābihāt* verses whose meaning can be known by certain scholars or *al-rāsikbūn fī al-'ilm* (whose knowledge is profound) and cannot be known besides them. This is a sign from the hadith of the Messenger of Allah, as a prayer for Ibn 'Abbas: "O Allah, give understanding in religion and teach ta'wīl".³²

Looking at the views of the ulama gives the impression; *First*, *mutashābih* verses can be known the meaning of their meaning through judgment, except the verses relating to the supernatural, and the time of the Day of Judgment no one can know for sure except Allah Almighty. While the verses of nature, the letters of *hijaiyyah* (*hurūf al-muqatta'ah*) as an opening of some surahs and *lafaz-gharīb* can be known their meaning by way of researching and examining in depth through the judgment. Quraish Shihab in his comment that their purpose of searching for his *ta'wil* was to show a sign that they did not do it with knowledge or ability, they really did that, even though no one was able to know his *ta'wil* except Allah. The verses in question are the first group of verses above. Their attitude is contrary to *al-rāsikbūna fī al-'ilm*, people who are very knowledgeable and are confident in their faith saying "we have faith in him both *mubkam* verses and *mutashābih* verses all from the side of Allah".³³ Opportunities for *mujtahid* in their scientific knowledge to be able to restore vague meanings to clear meanings.³⁴

Second, verses *mutashābih* in terms of lafaz, namely lafaz *gharīb*, examples of lafaz *al-abb* and verses of nature, examples of lafaz *al-yad*, *al-wajh* and besides can be known the meaning of their meanings, as studies conducted by scientists (*al-rāsikbūn fī al-'ilm*) who is very knowledgeable. While the verses *mutashābih* in terms of their meaning can not be known even by using *ta'wil*. For example verses about supernatural things and the occurrence of doomsday can not be described and unreachable to something that has never been felt and has not yet happened.

***Mutashābihāt* Verses in the Term of Science**

al-Mufawwidah group surrenders the meaning of the nature of the *mutashābih* verse to Allah alone. The logic (*'aqli*) argument put forward about the following and use of Arabic methods which results are *ẓan*. According to him, knowing the nature of God is not

³² Al-Asfahani, *Mu'jam Mufradat Alfaz Al-Qur'an*.

³³ M.Quraish Shihab, *Tafsir Al-Misbah Pesan Kesan Dan Keserasan Al-Qur'an*, Volume 2 (Jakarta: Lentera Hati, 2009), p. 22.

³⁴ Manna' Qattan, *Mabahith Fi Ulum Al-Qur'an* (Kairo: Maktabah Wahbah, 2000), p. 205.

enough with *ẓān*, but must be with *qatī* (belief) that is impossible to know. The use of Arabic in understanding the meaning of the verse is very much needed as a condition for both the *mufassir* and *mu'awwil*. Arabic sometimes has one, or two, three or more (ambiguous) meanings in terms of language. Al-Qur'an which is in Arabic has a meaning *majāz*, in addition to the intrinsic meaning (actually). Some verses of al-Qur'an cannot be understood if the meaning is interpreted with the meaning of *ẓābir* (essence), because there is no other way except interpreted with the meaning of *majāz*. For example the word of God in Q.S. Fuṣṣilat (41): 40, *i'malū mā syi'tum* (do what you want), the meaning of this verse is the command to do what you want. If this meaning is understood, it is contrary to the intended meaning, which is the opposite prohibition to do as you wish. In term of *ilm al-Balāghah*, the composition of this sentence is *al-tahdīd* (threat) for those who do it. Another example in Q.S. al-Raḥmān (55): 60, *hal jazā 'al-iḥsān illā al-iḥsān*. The letter thing is *adat istifham* (question mark) which means "what", according to the meaning of *harfiyah* (textuality). However, if interpreted by this meaning will obscure the intended meaning ie the letter here means "no" not "what". So the meaning of this verse is there is no reciprocity except goodness anyway. One cannot do *ta'wīl* without knowing Arabic and his descent (*nahwu, ṣaraf and balaghah*) as one of the conditions that must be possessed by a *mufassir* and *mu'awwil*. Quraish Shihab, if he does not know the Arabic method he will be led by his superficial knowledge or subjectivity to divert the meaning of the verse according to his preconceptions.³⁵ Thus, the verse *mutashābihāt* including verses of nature can be known the meaning of the *majāz* (metaphoris) not with the intrinsic meaning (*al-ma'na al-ḥaqīqī*).

The statement that the verses of nature (the attributes of Allah) cannot possibly be known through an automatic (alleged) judgment are not necessarily certain to be certainly not true if the characteristics of Allah are likened to the nature of His creatures. As has been known that humans who have knowledge that are qualified (deep knowledge) have the opportunity and potential to know *mutashābihāt* verses, although of course it is impossible to know the true meaning (*ḥaqīqī*) of *mutashābihāt* verses which by some commentators have termed metaphorical verses, because *mutashābihāt* verses can only be known the meaning of metaphorical (*majāzī*),³⁶ that is the sense of being not actually not

³⁵ Shihab, *Kaidah Tafsir Syarat, Ketentuan, Dan Aturan Yang Patut Anda Ketahui Dalam Memahami Ayat-Ayat Al-Qur'an*.

³⁶ Harun, *Mutiara Al-Qur'an Menerapkan Nilai-Nilai Kitab Suci Dalam Kehidupan Sehari-Hari*.

with its true meaning. The Qur'an firmly states that the verses of the Qur'an are part of the *mutashābih* verses in addition to some of the verses of *muḥkamat*. Verse *muḥkamat* is a verse whose meaning is clear does not require an explanation through *ta'wīl* as the antithesis of the verse *mutashābih* is a vague (unclear) meaning that requires explanation through *ta'wīl*. While *ta'wīl* is understood to be synonymous with interpretation by some scholars³⁷ namely interpreting the verse al-Qur'an with the meaning of *majāz* (metaphorically) rather than its true meaning (transferring the meaning of *ẓahir* to another meal it contains) because there is a *qarīnah* (the proposition) that requires it, this has been found in many interpretations. The problem of the repudiation of verses has been done by many mufassir, even given the title of his work with, *al-Jāmi fī Ta'wīl al-Qur'ān* by Ibn Jarīr al-Ṭabarī and *Mabāsīn fī Ta'wīl al-Qur'ān* by Muḥammad al-Qāsimī.

In the Qur'an there are words called *majāz*, words that generally relate to the attributes of Allah and His deeds, Q.S. Ṭāha (20): 5, *al-rahīmān 'alā al-'arsy istawa'*. 'al-Rahman is enthroned above the Throne, Q.S. al-Qaṣaṣ (28): 88, *kulla syai'in hālikun illā wajhahu* (his face), Q.S. al-Faṭḥ(48):10, *yadun allāh fawqa aidīhim* (the hand of Allah on their hands), Q.S. al-Fajr (89): 22, *wa jā'a rabbuka* (Come your Lord). The word *majāz* which relates to the nature and deeds of Allah includes *mutashābihāt*. *Hijaiyyah* letters at the beginning of some surahs, words about the occurrence of the Day of Judgment including *mutashābihāt* verses.³⁸

During the time of the Prophet, *ta'wīl* cannot be separated from interpretation. The Prophet interpreted the meanings of the Quran which were impossible to the companions, they understood that the Qur'an did not need an explanation or *ta'wil* that came out of the composition of the lafaz and its intended meanings. Therefore there are scholars who do not distinguish between interpretation and *ta'wīl* and others argue between interpretations and *ta'wīl* are different. Humans who have knowledge that is qualified actually examine and study the verses of the Quran, including verses of nature, because there can be no verses of the Quran (except verses about supernatural things and the Day of Judgment) that cannot be studied and examined its meaning, or it is impossible for Allah to reconcile with his incomprehensible servant. Finding *ta'wīl* from verses of nature is certainly far from the form of likeness to the qualities of His creatures. *Ta'wīl* verses of the nature and the letters *hijaiyyah* is not a definite meaning, because no human being is able to know the true

³⁷ Muhammad "Abd" al-Azim al-Zarqani, *Manabil Al-'Irfaq Fi 'Ulum Al-Qur'an*.

³⁸ Harun, *Mutiara Al-Qur'an Menerapkan Nilai-Nilai Kitab Suci Dalam Kehidupan Sehari-Hari*.

meaning of nature, the results of the evaluation of the attributes, *lafaz̄ gharīb* and *hijaiyyah* letters are out of the true meaning (its essence). Thus the *ta'wīl* verses of nature certainly do not resemble the attributes of His creatures, as it is well known that it is impossible for Allah to have the same properties (limbs) as His creatures, for example Allah has eyes, hands and faces. Clerics *ta'wīl* vers *mutashābihāt* certainly have some science expertise as a requirement for *mu'annwil*. Ibrāhīm 'Awd said that it is not permissible to interpret the Qur'an solely as a personal opinion or based on lust and to perform jihad without any basis in his views.³⁹

Science develops on the basis of *al-matluwab* verses (al-Qur'an) and *al-majluwab* verses (universe). Both of these verses are the knowledge of Allah which are interrelated to each other and are a source of unlimited knowledge, otherwise this would not occur in the paradigm of the unity of science in Islam and forever will be a dichotomy of science between religious knowledge based on the Qur'an and al-Sunnah and general science based on the results of the intellectual empirical work of scientists after observing, researching, experimenting with the phenomena of the universe. Whereas both religious knowledge and empirical knowledge are sourced from Allah, namely *al-matluwab* verse and *al-majluwab* verse,⁴⁰ often called the *qanliyah* verse and the *kawniyah* verse.

Qanliyah verse and *kawniyah* verse are very closely related, interconnected with one another. Verses of the Qur'an are a justification of the theory of science. *Mutashābihāt* verses when related to science, as explained in the previous discussion that *mutashābihāt* verses are divided into three types namely; *mutashābihāt* verse group which can be known by all human beings through *ta'wīl*, *mutashābihāt* verse groups only Allah knows the meaning, *mutashābihāt* verse groups can only be known by people who have deep knowledge. *Mutashābihāt* verse group all humans can find out their meaning through in-depth research. This shows that science can find out the meaning of *mutashābihāt* verse through scientific theory as Islamic science can know through the *ta'wīl* method.

However, the other two verse groups are not included in the field of scientific science to examine, because it concerns the verses of the attributes of Allah, doomsday and supernatural, no one is able to know the meaning of their nature. This is beyond human reason. This is where the wisdom of the *mutashābihāt* verses proves human limitations in

³⁹ Ibrahim 'Awd, *Masir Al-Tafsir Wa Al-Manhaj Wa Al-Ittijabat* (Kairo: Jazirah al-Warad, 2010), p. 39.

⁴⁰ Ling Misbahuddin, "Epistmologi Al-Qur'an Dalam Membangun Sains Islam," *Theologia* Volume 26, no. No. 1 (2015): p. 3–15.

knowing everything. The results of *ta'wīl* are *ẓān* (uncertain), therefore some scholars do not read *mutashābihāt* verses because the results do not indicate certainty. In line with this Sayyid Qutb stressed that the discovery of modern science should not be held up as a definite interpretation of the Qur'anic text, the results of human expression may be wrong and may be true, may be changed.⁴¹ Nevertheless it did not reject absolutely the discovery of modern science only very carefully.

Conclusion

The *Mufawwidah* school gives the meaning of the *mutashābihāt* verses to Allah alone. According to this school there is no human being, including *al-rāsikhūn fī al-'ilm*, who is able to know the meaning of the *mutashābihāt* verses. While the school of *al-mu'awwilah*, they try to understand the meaning of the *mutashābih* verses by using *ta'wīl*. According to them the *mutashābih* verses can be known by their profound (steady) knowledge (*al-rāsikhūn fī al-'ilm*). They mentored the verses of nature and *hijaiyyah* letters or *al-muqatta'ah fī awa'īl al-sūwar* (letters which were truncated at the beginning of the surah). The difference of opinion between the two groups of scholars can be compromised, the school of *al-mu'awwilah* only mentions verses of the nature or attributes of Allah and *hijaiyyah* letters contained at the beginning of the surah, but verses about the substance of Allah and matters other supernatural like the time of the Day of Judgment cannot be known its meaning. Thereby giving the impression that the *mutashābihāt* verse no one including *al-rāsikhūn fī al-'ilm* can know the meaning of its nature (definitely) other than Allah Almighty, both nature's verses, the letters *al-muqatta'ah* at the beginning of surah, especially verses about the time of the Day of Judgment and occult matters.

Mutashābihāt verse means abstruse, because it requires in-depth study of both Islamic knowledge and science, except the verses of the nature of Allah, doomsday and supernatural matters outside the field of science research. The attributes of *jism*, for example the face of Allah, the hands of Allah and other limbs cannot be examined using scientific theory, nor is the time of the Day of Judgment which is the secret of Allah. Although in the Islamic science the ulama try to study the meaning of the verses of nature using the *ta'wīl* method, but the result is not absolute truth, they only find the meaning of *majz*, not the meaning of its essence. Thus the research of science in understanding the

⁴¹ Sayyid Qutb, *Fi Zilal Al-Qur'an*, V (Mesir: Dar al-Shuruq, 2011), p. 3541.

meaning of *mutashābihāt* verse is limited to other than the verses of the nature of Allah in doomsday, supernatural and al-muqatta'ah at the beginning of the surah.

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