

## Hudā versus Maqāṣid? Teleological Competition in Al-Hidāyāt Al-Qur'aniyyah: Dirāsah Ta'shiliyyah (Vols. I–II)

*Hudā versus Maqāṣid? Kompetisi Teleologis dalam Al-Hidāyāt Al-Qur'aniyyah: Dirāsah Ta'shiliyyah (Vol. I–II)*

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### Abstract

Purpose oriented readings of the Qur'an often articulated through *maqāṣid* (objectives) have become increasingly visible in reform-oriented discourse, yet the scholarly status of *maqāṣid Al-Qur'an* remains contested and still in the making. Against this backdrop, *Al-Hidāyāt Al-Qur'aniyyah*, a large institutional initiative affiliated with Umm Al-Qura University, proposes a guidance centered (*hudā*) program that systematizes verse level “guidance” (*hidāyāt*) as actionable outputs. This article offers a contrastive comparison between *hudā* and *maqāṣid* centered programs using a qualitative, text centered approach. The primary corpus is *Al-Hidāyāt Al-Qur'aniyyah: Dirāsah Ta'shiliyyah* (Vols. I–II), read as the project's programmatic self-articulation; the comparator corpus is *maqāṣid Qur'an* programmatic literature, with particular reference to *Al-Maqāṣid Al-Kubrā li-l-Qur'an*, which distinguishes major objectives from detailed Guidance (*tafṣīlī/ʿamalī*). The findings reconstruct four epistemological patterns in *Al-Hidāyāt*, *hudā* as telos, non-operationalization of a *maqāṣid* hierarchy, Salaf authorized epistemic layering, and an applicative output genre and show, via the comparator's own taxonomy, how *maqāṣid* and *hidāyāt* differ in object of inquiry, scale, inferential routes, and extensibility. A worked textual example (Q 2:275–279) demonstrates how each program scales normative output from the same passage. The article contributes a comparator grounded framework for studying teleological competition in contemporary Qur'anic hermeneutics and highlights the growing role of institutional infrastructures in shaping exegetical authority.

Keywords: *Al-Hidāyāt Al-Qur'aniyyah*; *hudā*; *maqāṣid Al-Qur'an*; teleological hermeneutics; institutional exegesis

### Abstrak

Pembacaan Al-Qur'an yang berorientasi tujuan sering dirumuskan melalui *maqāṣid* (tujuan) semakin menonjol dalam wacana reformis, namun status teoretis *maqāṣid Al-Qur'an* masih diperdebatkan dan belum sepenuhnya mapan. Dalam konteks ini, *Al-Hidāyāt Al-Qur'aniyyah* sebuah inisiatif institusional berskala besar yang berafiliasi dengan Umm Al-Qura University menawarkan program berporos *hudā* (petunjuk) yang menata *hidāyāt* pada level ayat sebagai keluaran yang operasional. Artikel ini menyajikan komparasi kontras antara program *hudā* dan program *maqāṣid* melalui pendekatan kualitatif berbasis teks. Korpus primer adalah *Al-Hidāyāt Al-Qur'aniyyah: Dirāsah Ta'shiliyyah* (Jilid I–II) sebagai artikulasi programatik proyek; korpus pembanding adalah literatur programatik *maqāṣid*



*Al-Qur'an*, terutama *Al-Maqāṣid Al-Kubrā li-l-Qur'ān*, yang membedakan tujuan tujuan besar dari hidayah rinci (*tafṣīlī/ʿamalī*). Temuan penelitian merekonstruksi empat pola epistemologis *Al-Hidāyāt, budā* sebagai telos, tidak mengoperasionalkan hierarki *maqāṣid*, otoritas berlapis berbasis salaf, dan genre keluaran aplikatif serta menunjukkan, melalui taksonomi internal pembandingan, perbedaan keduanya pada objek, skala, jalur inferensi, dan keterbukaan pengembangan. Sebuah worked example (Q2:275–279) memperlihatkan bagaimana masing masing program menskalakan keluaran normatif dari satu perikop yang sama. Artikel ini menawarkan kerangka komparasi yang berangkat dari pembandingan untuk membaca kompetisi teleologis dalam hermeneutika *Al-Qur'an* kontemporer, sekaligus menyoroti peran infrastruktur institusional dalam pembentukan otoritas tafsir.

Kata Kunci: *Al-Hidāyāt Al-Qur'aniyyah*; *budā*; *maqāṣid Al-Qur'an*; hermeneutika teleologis; tafsir institusional

## Introduction

Over recent decades, contemporary Qur'anic interpretation has witnessed a growing interest in purpose oriented approaches that frame interpretation in terms of *maqāṣid* (objectives) and their ethical legal implications for modern life.<sup>1</sup> Yet the scholarly status of *maqāṣid Al-Qur'an* is far from settled: it has been described as an emerging field still seeking a scholarly definition, and *maqāṣidī tafṣīr* has been characterized as “in the process of becoming” a theory in Qur'anic studies rather than a fully stabilized paradigm.<sup>2</sup> At the same time, scholarship distinguishes *maqāṣid Al-Qur'an* from *maqāṣid Al-sharīʿah* at least at the operational and semantic level, suggesting that “objectives of the Qur'an” cannot simply be reduced to legal theory alone.<sup>3</sup> More broadly, Qur'anic studies has never been a one-method field. Researchers move between philology, literary reading, historical context, and contemporary interpretation, so statements about a “dominant” framework only make sense when we specify *where*, *for whom*, and *in what kind of scholarship* it is dominant.<sup>4</sup>

Against this backdrop, an institutional initiative has emerged in Mecca under Umm Al-Qura University: The World Encyclopedia of Qur'anic Guidance (*Al-Mawsūʿah Al-ʿĀlamiyyah li-l-Hidāyāt Al-Qur'aniyyah*), affiliated with the Qur'anic Guidance Chair. Official university reports describe the project's global reach

1 Adis Duderija, ed., *Maqasid Al-Shari'a and Contemporary Reformist Muslim Thought* (Palgrave Macmillan, 2014), <https://doi.org/10.1057/9781137319418>.

2 Aksin Wijaya and Shofiyullah Muzammil, “Maqāṣidī Tafṣīr: Uncovering and Presenting Maqāṣid Ilāhī-Qur'anī into Contemporary Context,” *Al-Jami'ah: Journal of Islamic Studies* 59, no. 2 (December 2021): 449–78, <https://doi.org/10.14421/ajis.2021.592.449-478>; Tazul Islam, *Maqāṣid Āl-Qur'an: A Search for A Scholarly Definition*, Brill, April 26, 2011, <https://doi.org/10.1163/22321969-90000026>.

3 Tazul Islam, “Maqasid Al-Qur'an and Maqasid Al-Shari'ah: An Analytical-Presentation,” *REVELATION AND SCIENCE* 3, no. 01 (July 2013), <https://doi.org/10.31436/revival.v3i01.85>.

4 Anna Akasoy, “Qur'anic Studies: Bibliographical-Survey,” in *The Oxford Handbook of Qur'anic Studies*, ed. Mustafa Shah and Muhammad Abdel Haleem (Oxford University Press, 2020), 0, <https://doi.org/10.1093/oxfordhb/9780199698646.013.26>.

and planned scale, including the participation of 25 universities at its launch, the expectation of 60 volumes (each corresponding to a *ḥizb*), and a target of extracting more than 200,000 Qur'anic Guidance; related communications also indicate participation across roughly 30 countries and an intention to activate collaboration with about 40 universities worldwide.<sup>5</sup> Beyond publication, the project is also framed as an infrastructure of knowledge transmission, featuring training packages, a global portal for monitoring research outputs, and translation initiatives signalling a shift toward large scale, networked forms of exegetical knowledge production.<sup>6</sup>

Accordingly, rather than assuming a settled “dominance” of *maqāṣid* across Qur'anic studies, this article treats *maqāṣid* oriented hermeneutics as an influential and increasingly prominent reform discourse whose theoretical consolidation remains ongoing, and it examines how *Al-Hidāyāt Al-Qur'aniyyah* articulates a distinct teleological project centered on *hudā* (guidance). The study further argues that *maqāṣid* is a methodologically justified comparator because programmatic *maqāṣid* literature explicitly distinguishes comprehensive Qur'anic objectives (*kullī*), typically established through broader *istiḳarāṣ*, from more detailed and operationAl-Qur'anic Guidance (*hidāyāt*).

*Maqāṣid Al-Qur'an* is selected as the primary comparator not because it represents a dominant model of Qur'anic studies, but because it constitutes a purpose based (teleological) hermeneutic program that has become increasingly prominent in reform oriented discourse while remaining theoretically contested. The comparison is level matched: *Al-Maqāṣid Al-Kubrā li-l-Qur'ān* explicitly distinguishes comprehensive Qur'anic objectives (*kullī*) established through broader *istiḳarā* from more detailed, operationAl-Qur'anic Guidance (*hidāyāt*), making *maqāṣid* and *hidāyāt* analytically comparable as competing teleological projects rather than as unrelated interpretive vocabularies. This contrastive pairing is therefore methodologically justified to illuminate how different purpose centered programs construct authority hierarchies, delimit the role of reason, and generate normative outputs from scripture.

This study employs a qualitative, text-centered design grounded in critical epistemological analysis and operationalized through epistemological discourse analysis and contrastive comparison. The primary corpus consists of the methodological introductions and foundational statements of *Al-Hidāyāt Al-Qur'aniyyah*, particularly the two *Dirāsah Ta'shiliyyah* volumes.<sup>7</sup> For the comparator corpus, the analysis draws

5 <https://uqu.edu.sa/App/News/53980>

6 <https://uqu.edu.sa/App/News/53877>

7 Ṭāhā 'Ābidīn Ṭāhā, Yāsīn ibn Nājī Ḥāfiẓ Qārī, and Khālīd Al-Dīn Al-Zayr, *Al-Hidayat Al-Qur'āniyyah*:

on representative *maqāṣid Qur'ān* programmatic literature, with specific reference to *Al-Maqāṣid Al-Kubrā li-l-Qur'ān*,<sup>8</sup> which explicitly distinguishes Qur'anic objectives from Qur'anic Guidance, thereby providing an internal rationale for a level matched comparison of *maqāṣid* and *hidāyāt* as competing teleological projects.

What this article adds is not another debate about whether an approach is “traditional” or “modern.” Instead, it reconstructs how *Al-Hidāyāt* defines authority, reasoning, and interpretive outputs from its own foundational texts, and then reads that logic alongside *maqāṣid*-oriented hermeneutics. Doing so highlights two under-explored issues: how institutional projects reshape exegetical authority, and how we can compare purpose-centered programs without reducing them to simplistic binaries.

### The Epistemological Pattern of *Al-Hidāyāt Al-Qur'aniyyah*

Close reading of *Al-Hidāyāt Al-Qur'aniyyah: Dirāsah Ta'shiliyyah* (Vols. I–II) demonstrates that the project is built upon a coherent epistemic program with a stable internal logic. Rather than employing “*hidāyāt*” as a merely devotional label, the two volumes articulate *hudā* (guidance) as the organizing telos of revelation, specify a layered hierarchy of epistemic authorities, and repeatedly frame interpretive work as a *wasīlah* (means) toward actionable guidance. This section reconstructs four mutually reinforcing epistemological patterns that structure the interpretive paradigm of the *Al-Hidāyāt* project:

the centrality of *hudā* as the primary purpose of revelation.

the non-adoption of *maqāṣid Al-Qur'an* as a governing theoretical hierarchy.

the construction of epistemic authority anchored in the understanding of *Al-salaf Al-ṣāliḥ*.

an applicative orientation that links textual interpretation to practical guidance.

First, the volumes state explicitly that realizing guidance is the Qur'an's primary purpose and that this purpose should govern interpretive output. Vol. I formulate the premise in programmatic language:

“*Fatḥaḥiqqu Al-hidāyati bi-l-Qur'āni Al-karīmi ḥuwa Al-maqṣadu alladhī min ajlibi anzala Allāhu Al-Qur'ana Al-karīm.*”<sup>9</sup>

(Realizing guidance through the Noble Qur'an is the purpose for which God revealed the Noble Qur'an.)

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*Dirāsah Ta'shiliyyah*, I–II (Makkah: Nashr Hudā Al-Qur'ān, 2020).

8 Tāhā 'Ābidīn Tāhā, *Al-Maqasid Al-Kubrā Li-l-Qur'ān Al-Karīm: Dirāsah Ta'shiliyyah* (Makkah: nuskha elektroniyyah, 2020).

9 Tāhā, Qārī, and Al-Zayr, *Al-Hidayat Al-Qur'aniyyah: Dirāsah Ta'shiliyyah*, I–II.

This is not presented as a theological ornament but as an operational principle: it directs the project to organize interpretation around guidance yielding outcomes and to treat *hidāyāt* as the central unit of exegetical production.

Second, while the project occasionally acknowledges the language of “objectives” (*maqāṣid*), it does not operationalize *maqāṣid Al-Qur’an* as a structured hierarchy that governs interpretive extraction. Instead, *maqāṣid* appears as a general descriptor alongside the project’s *hudā* centered framing. For example, Vol. I notes that the enterprise

“*yuḥaqqiqu Al-maqṣada Al-aḥwala min maqāṣidi Al-Qur’ani Al-karīm*”,<sup>10</sup>

(It fulfills the first objective among the objectives of the Noble Qur’an.)

yet the methodological self-definition and organizational logic remain anchored in *hudā/hidāyāt* rather than in building a *maqāṣid* taxonomy. Accordingly, the most verifiable characterization is not “deliberate avoidance,” but the non-adoption of *maqāṣid Al-Qur’an* as the governing theoretical framework.

Third, the *Al-Hidāyāt* paradigm constructs epistemic authority through a transmission-oriented hierarchy in which the Salaf functions as a normative reference and interpretive filter. Vol. II defines the Salafi orientation as following the Salaf “*fī ṭarīqatihim fī Al-dīn*” (Vol. II, p. 464), framing the Salaf not merely as an historical community but as a privileged epistemic model. Consistent with this, Vol. I requires that research be conducted “*fī ḍaw’i Al-Qur’ani Al-karīm*,” with each point supported by “*adillatin min Al-sunnati Al-nabawiyyah*” and the statements of trustworthy specialists (Vol. I, p. 10), while also listing as an explicit aim the clarification of

“*ḥady Al-salaf fī Al-ta’āmuli ma’a Al-Hidāyāti Al-Qur’aniyyah*” (Vol. I, p. 10).

(the Salaf’s way of dealing with Qur’anic guidances)

Within this epistemic order, reason functions primarily as an explanatory instrument bounded by transmitted authority rather than as an autonomous theory generating source.<sup>11</sup>

Fourth, the project’s axiological orientation is explicitly applicative: interpretation is positioned as a direct path to operational guidance in creed, worship, ethics, and social transactions. Vol. I frames one of the project’s aims as

“*ma’rifatu subulī taḥqīqī Al-Hidāyāti Al-Qur’aniyyah fī wāqī’i Al-ummah*” (Vol. I, p. 10),

(knowing the means of realizing Qur’anic guidances in the reality of the

10 Tāhā, Qārī, and Al-Zayr, *Al-Hidayat Al-Qur’āniyyah: Dirāsah Ta’šīliyyah*, I–II.

11 Tāhā, Qārī, and Al-Zayr, *Al-Hidayat Al-Qur’āniyyah: Dirāsah Ta’šīliyyah*, I–II.



ummah)

thereby tying exegetical work to practices of implementation rather than to abstract theorization. Vol. II reinforces this action centered orientation by highlighting the Salaf's sustained engagement with the Qur'an "*kathratu Al-tilāwah, wa Al- 'ukūfu 'alā Al-Qur'ani Al-karīm*" (Vol. II, p. 466) as a distinctive marker of their religious method. Taken together, these patterns show that *Al-Hidāyāt* constitutes an internally coherent interpretive system oriented toward *hudā 'amaliyyah* (operational guidance), with teleology, authority, and application mutually reinforcing one another.<sup>12</sup>

**Table 1. The Four Core Epistemological Patterns in *Al-Hidāyāt Al-Qur'aniyyah***

Pattern	Conceptual Focus	Manifestation in the Project	Textual Support (Vol. I & II)
Centrality of <i>Hudā</i>	<i>Hudā</i> as <i>Al-ghāyah</i> <i>Al- 'uzmā</i> of the Qur'an's revelation	Encyclopedic organization based on guidance derived from each verse	Vol. I, pp. 7, 12–13; Vol. II, pp. 10, 15–16
Non-adoption of a Maqāṣid hierarchy	Maqāṣid not operationalized as a governing framework	Verse purposes noted without a ranked hierarchy of universal objectives	Vol. I, p. 18; Vol. II, pp. 19–20
Salafi Authority	Salaf as the primary epistemic reference and filter	Layered exegesis: Qur'an–Sunnah–Salaf reports	Vol. I, pp. 20–21; Vol. II, pp. 21–23
Applicative Orientation	Tafsir as a path to practical guidance	Direct movement from text to operational directives	Vol. I, p. 22; Vol. II, p. 24

Qualitative data demonstrate that the pattern of *hudā* centrality is not merely implicit, but is explicitly and normatively emphasized throughout the text. Recurrent statements such as “realizing guidance through the Qur'an is the purpose for which God revealed it,” along with affirmations that Qur'anic guidance constitutes *Al-ghāyah* *Al- 'uzmā* and *Al-maqṣad Al-aṣwāl*, function not simply as theological declarations but as operational principles directing the entire interpretive architecture.<sup>13</sup> This principle determines how verses are understood, classified, and directly connected to the practical realities of the Muslim community.

12 Tāhā, Qārī, and Al-Zayr, *Al-Hidayat Al-Qur'āniyyah: Dirāsah Ta 'shīliyyah*, I–II.

13 Tāhā, Qārī, and Al-Zayr, *Al-Hidayat Al-Qur'āniyyah: Dirāsah Ta 'shīliyyah*, I–II.

The significance of these findings becomes more pronounced when situated within the institutional context and scale of the project. *Al-Hidāyāt Al-Qur'aniyyah* forms part of a global initiative launched by the King Abdullah bin Abdul Aziz Chair for the Holy Qur'an at Umm Al-Qura University in 2017, involving researchers from 27 countries and 40 universities, and aiming to produce 60 volumes of the *Al-Jāmi' fī Al-Hidāyāt Al-Qur'aniyyah* encyclopaedia. This scale indicates that the paradigm advanced by *Al-Hidāyāt* is not an individual initiative, but an institutional effort to construct an alternative epistemological current in contemporary Qur'anic studies.

### Contrastive Comparison with *Maqāṣid* Oriented Exegesis

To avoid imposing external comparative categories on two purpose-centered programs that operate at different analytical scales, this article anchors its contrastive comparison in distinctions articulated within *maqāṣid* programmatic literature itself. *Al-Maqāṣid Al-Kubrā li-l-Qur'ān* explicitly insists that Qur'anic objectives and Qur'anic guidance should not be conflated and that methodologically one must distinguish “objectives-oriented interpretation” from other modes of extracting meaning (pp. 51–52). On that basis, the author proposes a five-part internal taxonomy that differentiates major objectives (*maqāṣid kubrā*) from verse-based guidances (*hidāyāt*) as related but non-identical interpretive outputs.<sup>14</sup>

First, the taxonomy distinguishes the object of inquiry: *maqāṣid* work targets the Qur'an's recurrent “core subjects” and universal issues, whereas *hidāyāt* work focuses on what a particular verse yields through its wording, stylistic cues, and contextual indicators (p. 51). Second, it distinguishes the textual scale required to secure the claim: *maqāṣid* reasoning is typically established by reading across multiple passages or even an entire *sūrah* to demonstrate overarching coherence, while *hidāyāt* can be extracted from a single verse or a small cluster of verses sharing one meaning (p. 51). Third, it distinguishes the grain of output: *maqāṣid* yields comprehensive, integrative principles, whereas *hidāyāt* yields detailed and practice-facing directives (p. 52). Fourth, it distinguishes the dominant inferential route: *maqāṣid* derivation relies mainly on broad induction (*istiḡarā'*), while *hidāyāt* extraction employs multiple routes and may generate many distinct guidance from one passage (p. 52). Fifth, it distinguishes closure versus extensibility: the set of major objectives is treated as relatively bounded once established, while guidance remain open-ended and continually extensible as new contexts foreground new practical questions (p. 52).<sup>15</sup>

14 Tāhā, *Al-Maqasid Al-Kubrā Li-l-Qur'ān Al-Karīm: Dirāsah Ta'ṣīliyyah*.

15 Tāhā, Qārī, and Al-Zayr, *Al-Hidayat Al-Qur'āniyyah: Dirāsah Ta'ṣīliyyah*, I–II.

Operationalizing these internally defined distinctions allows the present study to level-match the comparison and avoid category error. In this article, *maqāṣid* is treated as a higher-order teleological output (*kullī*) typically secured through induction, while *Al-Hidāyāt Al-Qur'aniyyah* is analyzed as an institutionalized program of verse- and passage-level guidance extraction oriented toward actionable directives. The paradigmatic tension examined here is therefore not a claim that *maqāṣid* and *hidāyāt* are conceptually incompatible. Rather, it concerns *priority and governance*: which teleological output is positioned as primary, what kinds of authority authorize it, and how it is institutionalized and scaled for contemporary implementation.

**Table 2. Comparator grounded distinctions between *maqāṣid* and *hidāyāt* programs (*Al-Maqāṣid Al-Kubrā*, pp. 51–52)**

Aspect (as articulated in al <i>Maqāṣid</i> al Kubrā)	<i>Al-Hidāyāt</i> program ( <i>hidāyāt</i> output)	<i>Maqāṣid</i> program (major objectives output)
Primary object of inquiry	Āyah and passage level indicants: what the wording, syntactic structure, variant readings ( <i>qirā'āt</i> ), style, and contextual indicators ( <i>qarā'in</i> ) yield as Guidance.	Core subjects and universal issues (al <i>mawḍū'āt</i> al <i>asāsiyyah</i> ; al <i>qaḍāyā</i> al <i>kulliyyah</i> wa l <i>kubrā</i> ) that organize the Qur'an/sūrah at a higher level.
Textual scale / wholeness	Can be extracted from a single āyah or from a small cluster of āyāt sharing one meaning; Guidance may also appear as dispersed meanings across fields.	Privileges wholeness at the scale of the Qur'an or an entire sūrah ( <i>mawḍū'āt</i> al Qur'an aw al sūrah <i>kāmilah</i> ).
Typical grain of output	Detailed, operational, practice facing directives ( <i>tafṣīlī</i> / 'amalī / <i>taṭbīqī</i> ).	Comprehensive universals and foundational integrative principles ( <i>kulliyyāt</i> ; <i>asāsiyyāt jāmi'ah</i> ).



Dominant inferential routes	Multiple extraction routes (ṭuruq kathīrah mukhtalifah), enabling many distinct Guidance from a passage.	Comparatively delimited routes (ṭuruq muḥaddadah), often relying on broad induction ( <i>istiḡarā'</i> ) across āyāt and sūrahs (frequently at the scale of a complete sūrah).
Epistemic closure / extensibility	In principle open ended: Guidance remain continuously extractable and extendable as scholarly reflection continues (madā al dahr).	Relatively bounded: the topic of <i>maqāṣid</i> is treated as more restricted and delimited (maḥṣūr wa muḥaddad).

### ***Hudā* as the Paradigmatic Axis and Its Challenge to *Maqāṣid* Based Tafsir**

The findings of this study revealed that *Al-Hidāyāt Al-Qur'āniyyah* positioned the concept of *hudā* (guidance) not merely as the final outcome of interpretation but as the primary ontological premise underpinning its entire epistemological construction. Normative statements in the foundational texts describing *hidāyāt Al-Qur'an* as *Al-ghāyah Al-'uẓmā* (the supreme objective) and *Al-maqṣad Al-awwal* (the primary aim) indicated a radical repositioning: *hudā* was treated not as a product generated through methodological elaboration, but as the starting point that determined how interpretation ought to be conducted.<sup>16</sup> The encyclopaedic organization based on the guidance of individual verses rather than on theological themes, historical chronology, or legal structures reflected a consistent scholarly commitment to this premise in practice. In this respect, *Al-Hidāyāt* aligned with broader understandings of the Qur'an as a comprehensive source of guidance encompassing moral, legal, and religious dimensions of life, rather than a text limited to prescriptive rulings alone.<sup>17</sup>

This understanding found strong theoretical grounding in semantic-philosophical studies of *hudā* in the Qur'an. Izutsu analyzed *hudā* as a key concept shaping the Qur'anic *Weltanschauung*, functioning not only in the ethical-practical realm but also at the ontological level. Within this framework, *hudā* was associated with the determination of a "correct existential path" through which reality was to be

16 Thaha 'Ābidin, Yasin Qāriy, Fakhrudin az-Zubair, *Al-Hidāyāt Al-Qur'āniyyah Dirāsah Ta'shīliyyah* (Makkah: Al-Naba' Al-'Adzim, n.d.). Vol. I, p. 12–13; Vol. II, p. 15–16

17 U M A Muhammad Ali, "Quranic Guidance Extracted and Induced from the Events of Uhud Battle in Surah of Ali-Imran," *Quranica* 12, no. 1 SpeciAl-Issue 4 (2020): 127–54.

understood and navigated.<sup>18</sup> Al Attas further developed this notion within Islamic metaphysics, arguing that *hudā* constituted a divine gift enabling human beings to recognize the true nature of the self, the world, and God, thereby liberating them from ignorance and existential disorder.<sup>19</sup> From this perspective, the centrality of *hudā* in *Al-Hidāyāt* could be read as an assertion that the Qur'an primarily functioned as a source of ontological illumination and an existential map before serving as a repository of norms or laws. This view resonated with contemporary scholarship emphasizing that Qur'anic guidance was often conveyed implicitly through symbols, narratives, and prophetic stories that required careful interpretation to extract lessons applicable to contemporary life.<sup>20</sup>

This epistemological stance generated fundamental tension with the *maqāṣid Al-Qur'an* paradigm that had come to dominate contemporary Qur'anic discourse. Al Raysuni defined *maqāṣid* as "higher objectives" (*Al-maqāṣid Al-'ulyā*) abstracted through rational analysis of particular texts and employed as a framework for understanding, systematizing, and developing Islamic law.<sup>21</sup> Similarly, Ibn 'Āshūr described *maqāṣid Al-shari'ah* as the meanings and wisdoms considered by the Lawgiver across all or most legal rulings.<sup>22</sup> Contemporary formulations further emphasized that the *maqāṣid* framework aimed at preserving core values such as religion, life, intellect, lineage, and property, thereby producing a comprehensive and structured normative system that extended beyond immediate practical guidance.<sup>23</sup> The contrast was thus evident: whereas *hudā* in *Al-Hidāyāt* was presented as the intrinsic and directly accessible objective of revelation, *maqāṣid* were framed as rationally constructed outcomes derived from the text through inferential and systematizing processes.

18 Toshihiko Izutsu, "God and Man in the Koran. Semantics of the Qur'anic Weltanschauung," preprint, Petaling Jaya, Malaysia: Islamic Book Trust, 2002. P. 147-163

19 Syed Muhammad Naquib Al-Attas, *Prolegomena to the Metaphysics of Islam* (Penerbit UTM Press, 2014). P. 45-48

20 S Bahri, Y Thahira, and D A Taqwadin, "Father's Role and Character Education: A Reflective Analysis of The Qur'anic Stories," *Jurnal-Ilmiah Islam Futura* (Universitas Islam Negeri Ar-Raniry, Aceh, Indonesia) 24, no. 1 (2024): 102–28, <https://doi.org/10.22373/jiif.v24i1.13785>.

21 Ahmad Al-Raysuni, *Imam Al-Shatibi's Theory of the Higher Objectives and Intents of Islamic Law* (International-Institute of Islamic Thought (IIIT), 2005). P. 89

22 Muhammad Al-Tahir Ibn 'Ashur, "Maqasid Al-Shari 'ah Al-Islamiyyah," *Amman: Dar Al-Nafa'is*, 2001. P. 103

23 H A Said et al., "Maqashid Based Qur'anic Interpretation: An Inclusive Approach for the Millennial Generation," *Samarah* (Universitas Islam Negeri Syarif Hidayatullah, Jakarta, Indonesia) 9, no. 2 (2025): 758–77, <https://doi.org/10.22373/pdjqc552>.

This tension was not merely methodological but paradigmatic in the Kuhnian sense. Drawing on Kuhn's concept of incommensurability, the two paradigms appeared to "see" the Qur'anic text through fundamentally different lenses, making direct communication between them difficult.<sup>24</sup> The *Al-Hidāyāt* paradigm operated within a matrix in which interpretive truth was measured by proximity to the understanding of the early generations (*salaf*) and their direct engagement with the guidance of the text. By contrast, the *maqāṣid* paradigm functioned within a matrix where truth was evaluated in terms of rational coherence and the capacity of universal objectives to accommodate new social and ethical demands, including contemporary concerns such as environmental preservation, human rights, and individual freedoms.<sup>25</sup> This divergence explained why *Al-Hidāyāt* implicitly rejected a core assumption of *maqāṣid* based tafsir: that Qur'anic guidance required mediation through a universal theory of objectives before it could be effectively operationalized.

Critical analysis suggested that this rejection carried deep epistemological implications. *Al-Hidāyāt* appeared to regard the *maqāṣid* approach as risking a shift in the orientation of revelation from its primary function as direct practical guidance (*hudā 'amaliyyah*) toward the construction of a complex "normative architecture." Such concerns echoed longstanding critiques advanced by traditionalist thinkers against the expansion of rationalism in Islamic studies. Winter documented a historical tension between rationalist tendencies that sought to systematize Islamic doctrine and law into coherent theoretical systems and traditionalist tendencies that emphasized transmitted authority and caution toward excessive theoretical construction.<sup>26</sup> Al Jabiri's critique of "Arab reason" similarly identified a propensity to build closed epistemic systems that risked distancing interpretation from the immediacy of the text and its original context.<sup>27</sup> Within this frame, *Al-Hidāyāt's* insistence on *hudā* could be read as a deliberate effort to preserve the immediacy of Qur'anic moral, ethical, and social guidance, including its emphasis on virtuous character, faith, and responsible living,<sup>28</sup> as well as its role in maintaining social order and justice through

24 Thomas S Kuhn, *The Structure of Scientific Revolutions*, vol. 962 (University of Chicago press Chicago, 1997).

25 A M Thabrani, "Maqashid Revitalization in Global Era: Istidlal Study from Text to Context," *Al-Ihkam: Jurnal Hukum Dan Pranata Sosial* (Faculty of Islamic Economics and Business, IAIN Madura, Jln. Panglegur Km. 04, Pamekasan, Indonesia) 13, no. 2 (2018): 310–33, <https://doi.org/10.19105/Al-Ihkam.v13i2.1814>.

26 Timothy Winter, *The Cambridge Companion to Classical-Islamic Theology* (Cambridge University Press, 2008). P. 227-230

27 Mohammed Abed Al-Jabiri, *Naqd Al-'Aql Al-'Arabī: Bunyat Al-'Aql Al-'Arabī* (Beirut: Markaz Dirasat Al-Wahdah Al-'Arabiyyah, 2009). P. 312-318

28 M I Al-Samarai and S A Al-Maqdami, "Quranic Guidance is the Best Pursuit for Worshipping Allah the Almighty," *Quranica* 12, no. 2 Special Issue 5 (2020): 485–505.

divinely set boundaries (*hudūd*).<sup>29</sup>

The implications of this paradigmatic tension became clearer when situated within the broader context of contemporary Salafism as an epistemic framework. Haykel demonstrated that the authority of *Al-salaf Al-ṣāliḥ* in modern Islamic thought often functioned as a critique of post formative theoretical elaborations perceived as excessive or deviant.<sup>30</sup> Lacroix further showed how appeals to the salaf in contemporary Saudi religious politics were deployed to deconstruct established interpretive authorities, including traditions grounded in *maqāṣid* reasoning.<sup>31</sup> In this light, the *Al-Hidāyāt* paradigm could be interpreted as an institutionalized expression of a Salafi epistemic orientation offering a systematic alternative to the dominance of *maqāṣid* discourse in Qur'anic studies.

In sum, the centrality of *hudā* in *Al-Hidāyāt Al-Qur'aniyyah* represented not merely a methodological preference but an epistemological claim about the most legitimate way of engaging with the Qur'an. This claim directly challenged the foundational assumptions of *maqāṣid*-based tafsir by asserting that mediation through universal objective theories was not only unnecessary but potentially obscured the primary function of revelation as direct guidance. The resulting paradigmatic tension enriched the landscape of contemporary Qur'anic studies by foregrounding a plurality of approaches that critically tested each other's claims to validity and relevance.

## Methodology and Epistemic Authority in the Salaf Tradition Perspective

The dominance of *Al-salaf Al-ṣāliḥ* authority in *Al-Hidāyāt Al-Qur'aniyyah* represents a systematic reconstruction of a transmission cantered (*naql* centered) epistemological model within a contemporary scholarly framework. The study shows that the interpretive method in this project consistently begins with the Qur'an interpreted by the Qur'an itself, followed by the Sunnah, then the reports of the Salaf, with reason (*ʿaql*) functioning in a limited capacity as *bayān* (clarification) within a predetermined interpretive framework.<sup>32</sup> This construction is not merely a repetition

29 S Z Ismail, "Analysis of the Term Hudud in the Quran: The Application in Islamic Criminal-Law and Its Significance in the Modern Context," *AlBayan* (Shariah and Law Department, Academy of Islamic Studies, University of Malaya, Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia) 23, no. 2 (2025): 213–35, <https://doi.org/10.1163/22321969-20250172>.

30 Bernard Haykel, *Revival and Reform in Islam: The Legacy of Muhammad Al-Shawkani* (Cambridge University Press, 2003). P. 178-182

31 Stéphane Lacroix, *Awakening Islam: The Politics of Religious Dissent in Contemporary Saudi Arabia* (Harvard University Press, 2011). P. 89-94

32 'Ābidin, Yasin Qāriy, Fakhruddin az-Zubair, *Al-Hidāyāt Al-Qur'āniyyah Dirāsah Ta'shīliyyah*. Vol. I, p. 20–21; Vol. II, p. 21–23

of the classical *bi Al-ma'thūr* methodology, but an effort to develop an encyclopaedic interpretive system that institutionalizes Salaf authority as the primary epistemic filter. This approach emphasizes that proper understanding of Qur'anic guidance can only be achieved through continuous transmission linked to the generations who witnessed the revelation and understood its initial practical implementation.

This transmission based epistemological model places *Al-Hidāyāt* in sharp contrast with several mainstream contemporary tafsir approaches that grant a more central role to reason in hermeneutical processes. Fazlur Rahman, in his double movement method, proposes a dialectical approach in which the interpreter first understands the Qur'anic message in its specific historical context (Movement 1), then identifies the general moral principles it contains, and finally applies these principles to contemporary contexts (Movement 2).<sup>33</sup> For Rahman, reason plays a central role in this trans contextualization process, as general principles must be abstracted from particular texts and then realized in new forms appropriate for modern realities. *Al-Hidāyāt*, by contrast, rejects the need for such "movements," arguing that the understanding of the Salaf already contains principles that are applicable across all eras without requiring complex rational elaboration.

Comparison with al Ṭāhir Ibn 'Āshūr reveals subtler but significant differences. Although Ibn 'Āshūr is often regarded as a pioneer of contemporary *maqāṣid* oriented tafsir, his approach remains firmly rooted in Arabic linguistic tradition and Maliki fiqh methodology. In *Al-Tahrīr wa Al-Tanwīr*, Ibn 'Āshūr develops a rigorous linguistic textual analysis before drawing conclusions about the purposes and wisdoms of the verses.<sup>34</sup> Unlike *Al-Hidāyāt*, however, Ibn 'Āshūr allows greater space for contemporary *ijtihad* when applying Qur'anic principles to new issues. In *Al-Hidāyāt*, Salaf authority functions as a final boundary against such *ijtihad*, ensuring interpretation does not deviate from established understanding.

The sharpest contrast appears in comparison with Jasser Auda's systemic approach. In *Maqasid Al-Shariah as Philosophy of Islamic Law*, Auda applies systems theory to understand *maqāṣid* as an interconnected network of objectives within the complex system of Islamic law.<sup>35</sup> This approach represents the most ambitious effort to rationalize and modernize the *maqāṣid* framework using contemporary social science tools. From the perspective of *Al-Hidāyāt*, such an approach exemplifies a

33 Fazlur Rahman, *Islam & Modernity: Transformation of an Intellectual Tradition*, vol. 15 (University of Chicago Press, 2024). P. 5-9

34 Muhammad Al-Thahir Ibnu 'Asyur, *Tafsir alTahrir Wa Al-Tanwir* (Tunisia: Dar Shuhnun li Al-Nasyr wa Al-Tauzi', 1997). P. 23-35

35 Jasser Auda, *Maqasid Al-Shariah as Philosophy of Islamic Law: A Systems Approach* (International-Institute of Islamic Thought (IIIT), 2008). P. 45-67



potential epistemic risk: the use of modern rational frameworks as the main filter for understanding revelation, which may obscure its original meaning and practical function.

The strict limitation of reason in *Al-Hidāyāt* can be interpreted as a form of epistemic caution, responding to several fundamental concerns in contemporary Islamic studies. First, the risk of interpretive relativism in an era of methodological pluralism, where competing hermeneutical approaches claim authority without clear criteria for assessing validity. Second, the concern over covert secularization, where modern rationalist frameworks with epistemological and ontological assumptions potentially incompatible with the Islamic worldview become primary filters for interpreting revelation. Third, the fear of fragmentation of religious knowledge among increasingly segmented academic specializations, which undermines a unified understanding of Islam as a holistic system.<sup>36</sup>

Nevertheless, this limitation faces serious challenges in addressing modern social complexities unknown to the Salaf. Issues such as biotechnology (cloning, gene editing), the global digital economy (cryptocurrencies, platform economies), and ecological crises (climate change, environmental justice) require normative frameworks that may not be directly inferable from textual guidance without more creative rational mediation. This presents an epistemological dilemma: whether the restricted response to new issues is a justified trade off for preserving interpretive purity, or a sign of the insufficiency of a pure transmission epistemology in addressing evolving realities.

Critiques of restricting reason can be framed through the lens of the need for responsive hermeneutics capable of bridging the gap between classical texts and contemporary reality. Nasr Hamid Abu Zayd, in *Maḥmūd Al-Naṣṣ*, argues that the Qur'anic text, while possessing stable meaning, requires dynamic interaction with readers' contexts to realize its full potential.<sup>37</sup> From this perspective, strict adherence to Salaf understanding may freeze the meaning of the text within a specific historical context, limiting its ability to engage with new realities.

*Al-Hidāyāt* may respond to such critiques by arguing that contemporary challenges can be addressed through careful analogical application (*qiyās*) of principles already embedded in Salaf understanding, without requiring new theoretical elaboration. The project seems to operate under the assumption that modern social complexity does not necessitate equivalent theoretical complexity in interpretation,

36 TalAl-Asad, *Genealogies of Religion: Discipline and Reasons of Power in Christianity and Islam* (Jhu Press, 1993). P. 210-215

37 Nasr Hamid Abu Zayd, *Maḥmūd Al-Naṣṣ: Dirāsah Fī 'Ulūm Al-Qur'an* (Bairut: Al-Markaz Al-Tsaqāfi Al-'Arabī, 1990). P. 178-185

but can be addressed through precise application of fundamental principles contained in the text and properly understood by the early generations.

This epistemological position should be understood within the broader context of the Salafist revival as an intellectual framework offering an alternative to both liberal and conservative traditionalist Islamic modernism. As Henri Lauzière notes in *The Making of Salafism*, a key characteristic of contemporary Salafism is the rejection of post Salaf intellectual traditions (such as scholastic theology, Islamic philosophy, and jurisprudential elaboration) perceived as obscuring the purity of early Islam.<sup>38</sup> Within this framework, *Al-Hidāyāt* can be seen as offering a systematic alternative not only to *maqāṣid* oriented tafsir but to the broader interpretive tradition that relies on post Salaf rational elaboration.

In conclusion, the methodology and epistemic authority of *Al-Hidāyāt* represent a consistent yet challenging epistemological choice: prioritizing the authenticity of transmission over the adaptive capacity of reason. This choice entails a significant trade off between maintaining continuity with early understanding and the ability to respond to unprecedented social innovations. The long term success of this paradigm depends on its capacity to demonstrate that a transmission limited epistemological model can generate guidance sufficiently relevant and applicable for navigating contemporary complexities without compromising its claim to authenticity.

## Operationalization of Qur'anic Meaning in a Contemporary Context

The relevance of the *Al-Hidāyāt Al-Qur'aniyyah* paradigm to the modern context is tested through its capacity to generate effective operational guidance in addressing contemporary realities. Research findings indicate that the paradigm's main strengths lie in its normative clarity and direct practical guidance. By rejecting mediation through complex theoretical abstraction, *Al-Hidāyāt* offers what may be described as a "hermeneutical shortcut" from text to application, which proves highly effective in contexts where the need for normative certainty and practical guidance outweighs the demand for philosophical elaboration.

Three core strengths of this paradigm consistently emerge. First, normative clarity, achieved through the rejection of excessive multiple interpretations. By returning every interpretation to the understanding of the *salaf* as the ultimate authority, the paradigm reduces ambiguity and limits the scope for wide ranging

38 Henri Lauzière, *The Making of Salafism: Islamic Reform in the Twentieth Century* (Columbia University Press, 2015). P. 212-218

disagreement. Second, direct practical guidance enables the swift translation of textual understanding into concrete action. Its linear applicative methodology (Text → Linguistic Contextual Analysis → Practical Guidance) eliminates extended theoretical elaboration stages that often complicate interpretive processes in other paradigms. Third, minimal theoretical speculation aligns with the practical tendencies of many Muslim communities, which prioritize actionable guidance over philosophical discussions of meaning.<sup>39</sup>

However, this approach has significant potential limitations. The most notable is the absence of an explicit and systematic value hierarchy. While the *maqāṣid* paradigm develops a structured framework of *darūriyyāt* (primary necessities), *hājiyyāt* (secondary needs), and *tahsīniyyāt* (complementary refinements) to address normative conflicts and establish priorities in complex situations,<sup>40</sup> *Al-Hidāyāt* appears to rely on intuitive understanding of priorities based on examples from *salaf* practice. This approach faces risk when guidance from different verses seems to conflict in specific contexts, without a systematic framework to resolve such tensions.

A second limitation is the risk of fragmented guidance when addressing complex structural issues. Matters such as human rights, public policy, or bioethics often require holistic and systemic approaches that integrate various principles and values within a coherent framework. In the absence of a theory of universal objectives (*maqāṣid kullīyah*) that provides integrative principles, *Al-Hidāyāt* risks producing ad hoc and fragmented guidance for each aspect of an issue without an overarching vision of how these aspects interrelate. As noted by Ebrahim Moosa in his study on ethics in contemporary *fiqh*, modern challenges are often systemic and interconnected, requiring approaches capable of perceiving interconnections among multiple dimensions of a problem.<sup>41</sup>

### Worked Textual Example: How *Hidāyāt* and *Maqāṣid* Scale from the Same Passage (Q 2:275–279)

To move beyond illustrative “hypothetical cases” and demonstrate the inferential mechanics of each program at the level of the Qur’anic text itself, this section offers a worked, passage based reconstruction using a single pericope as a controlled test case. This move is methodologically consistent with the article’s core

39 ‘Ābidin, Yasin Qāriy, Fakhruddin az-Zubair, *Al-Hidāyāt Al-Qur’āniyyah Dirāsah Ta’shīliyyah*. Vol. I, p. 22; Vol. II, p. 24

40 Al-Raysuni, *Imam Al-Shatibi’s Theory of the Higher Objectives and Intents of Islamic Law*. P. 67-73

41 Moosa E Ghazali, “The Poetics of Imagination,” preprint, The University of North Carolina Press, 2005. P. 134-148

claim that the two paradigms differ not simply in “topics,” but in their *epistemological trajectory* one proceeding in a linear, applicative direction from text to actionable guidance, and the other operating through a more abstract, hierarchical pathway that first articulates universal objectives and then translates them into practice.

The worked example focuses on Q 2:275–279 (the *ribā* passage) because it offers an analytically “dense” unit of Qur’anic discourse in which semantic demarcation (“sale is not *ribā*”), normative prescription (prohibition and the demand to desist), and moral–eschatological framing are tightly interwoven precisely the kind of configuration that enables us to observe how a teleology centered method *scales* its outputs from the same textual base.

In *maqāṣid* oriented terms, such a passage provides a strong “data point” for reconstructing *kullīyyāt* (higher objectives), but it does not exhaust those objectives on its own; rather, *maqāṣid* claims require broader induction (*istiḡarā*) across Qur’anic verses and sūrah. In contrast, guidance-oriented reasoning is explicitly characterized within the *maqāṣid* literature’s own typology as being more concerned with “detailed, practical, applicative dimensions” (*Al-jawānib Al-tafsīliyyah Al-‘amaliyyah Al-taḥbiḥiyyah*) of meaning, because *hidāyah* is “directive guidance” toward الخير and away from الشر. Methodologically, this makes Q 2:275–279 a controlled site for contrastive reconstruction: it allows a relatively direct “text → practice” extraction on the *hidāyāt* track, while simultaneously inviting a wider thematic synthesis on the *maqāṣid* track through induction and systematization.

### **Step A (*hidāyāt* logic).**

A *hidāyāt* oriented reconstruction begins from the assumption that the Qur’an’s purpose is operational guidance (*hudā ‘amaliyyah*) and that interpretive legitimacy is anchored in transmitted authority. In the article’s synthesis of the *Al-Hidāyāt* program, this is operationalized through a consistent sequence: interpreting the Qur’an by the Qur’an, then the Sunnah, then the reports of the Salaf, while reason remains restricted to an explanatory, instrumental role rather than functioning as a primary engine for abstraction.

Applied to Q 2:275–279, the first “visible” move is to treat the passage as a bounded *unit of guidance* and to let the text’s own semantic demarcations control the output. The key demarcation is the refusal of equivalence between *ribā* and sale, culminating in the formula “God has permitted sale and forbidden *ribā*.” On a *hidāyāt* track, this generates an initial guidance that is not an economic theory but a *category-correction*: ordinary exchange (*bayʿ*) and usurious increase (*ribā*) are not interchangeable moral legal categories, and any discursive strategy that collapses

them is marked as a textual error.

From there, a *hidāyāt* reconstruction yields a cluster of directive level outputs that remain close to act level boundaries embedded in the passage: (i) a *normative rule* (trade/exchange is licit in principle; *ribā* is prohibited), (ii) a *disciplinary warning* that frames persistence in *ribā* as a grave rupture with divine command, and (iii) a *practical transition rule* for repentance ending *ribā* based gain and distinguishing between retaining principal versus continuing to extract surplus. These outputs are “fine grained” by design: they are formulated so that a reader can carry them into concrete conduct without requiring a prior step of theoretical universalization.

Q 2:275–279 (the *ribā* passage) provides a controlled textual site for demonstrating *how* each program scales its inferences, because the passage simultaneously (i) rejects a semantic equivalence (“trade is like *ribā*”), (ii) asserts a legal boundary (permission/prohibition), and (iii) intensifies the norm with theological moral warnings and repentance language features that allow us to observe how *directive-level* outputs and *objective-level* outputs are generated from the same textual base. This “worked example” format is designed to replace merely illustrative hypotheticals by making the inferential steps auditable on the level of wording, claims, and textual moves that the passage itself performs.

On the *hidāyāt* track, the goal is not to “theorize” *ribā* in abstract economic terms, but to extract practicable Guidance from the verse(s) through the verse’s own linguistic and contextual cues: what the passage *says*, what it *negates*, what it *permits*, what it *warns against*, and what it *requires as a response*. This logic aligns with the programmatic distinction that *hidāyāt* work at the level of what an āyah indicates *through its words, sentences, qirā’āt-variants, stylistic features, and relevant contextual indicators*, rather than through a comprehensive induction of universal themes. In this sense, *hidāyāt* are deliberately “fine grained” and operational: the same source distinguishes them from *maqāṣid* by noting that *maqāṣid* attend to comprehensive universals, whereas *hidāyāt* prioritize “detailed, practical, applicable aspects,” grounded in the very meaning of guidance as an indicative sign that leads to good and prevents evil.

The important analytic point is not whether each bullet is the “only” possible reading, but that the *kind* of output is structurally characteristic of a *hidāyāt* centered program: it keeps interpretive products tethered to the passage’s explicit claims, frames them as practicable directives, and presents them as the natural endpoint of interpretation. This matches the article’s characterization of *Al-Hidāyāt* as a paradigm oriented toward directly practical outputs moving “linearly from the text to practical guidance” and explicitly centering operational guidance as its axiological orientation.



### ***Step B (maqāṣid logic)***

On the *maqāṣid* track, by contrast, the interpretive output is intentionally “coarser grained,” because *maqāṣid* are defined as the *kullīyyāt* and “major issues” around which the Qur’an (or a sūrah) coheres what the text ultimately seeks to establish at the level of overarching purposes and universal themes. Methodologically, this output is not secured by a single passage taken alone but by induction (*istiḡarā*) across a broader evidentiary field: the same source explicitly notes that identifying Qur’anic *maqāṣid* relies heavily on inductive reading across āyāt and sūrahs, whereas *hidāyāt* operate through many diverse routes of extraction at the verse level. In the *maqāṣid* literature represented here, this inductive strategy is further spelled out through procedures such as (i) induction across Qur’anic evidence as a whole, (ii) inductive synthesis of what Qur’anic scholars and exegetes have stated about major objectives, and (iii) multi evidence corroboration through extensive textual proofs.

Within this *maqāṣid* logic, Q 2:275–279 functions as a high weight data point inside a wider Qur’anic discourse on wealth, justice, coercion, charity, and moral economy; it does not by itself exhaust the objective, but it anchors the objective strongly. From this wider field, one can articulate objectives such as: preventing unjust enrichment through exploitative exchange, protecting economic agency from coercive indebtedness, and cultivating distributive welfare via charity and social solidarity. This does not eliminate interpretive contestation; modern scholarship repeatedly notes that, while the Qur’an’s prohibition is emphatic, what counts as *ribā* and how the prohibition is operationalized has been debated across premodern fiqh, tafsīr, and modern contexts precisely the kind of problem space in which *maqāṣid* reasoning is often invoked to test new instruments against higher moral purposes rather than only inherited forms.

### ***Step C (contrastive contemporary application)***

The value of a worked example is completed when one tests each output type against a contemporary form that the classical text did not explicitly name here, digitally mediated consumer credit that automates repayment schedules and interest accrual. This is not an attempt to settle fiqh disagreement in a few paragraphs; modern scholarship shows that the *ribā*/interest problem is precisely one of contested translation from scriptural language into modern financial architectures, and this contestedness is the reason a program’s inferential “machinery” must be made explicit rather than assumed.

On a *hidāyāt* track, the contemporary instrument is assessed by act level boundaries: if the product structurally instantiates a stipulated surplus tied to a loan

like transaction, the analysis triggers classification as *ribā* and yields a direct practical upshot avoid the instrument and redirect practice toward non *ribā* alternatives that map onto inherited categories. In terms of program logic, this is consistent with the article's depiction of the *hidāyāt* paradigm as "directly practical," transmission anchored, and oriented toward guidance that moves from text to application without first constructing a hierarchy of universal objectives.

On a *maqāṣid* track, the same instrument is tested against objectives: does it generate exploitation through asymmetries of information and power, normalize debt traps, or undermine distributive welfare and can contractual redesign meet legitimate needs while better satisfying justice and public interest? This aligns with broader debates in Islamic finance scholarship, where *maqāṣid* reasoning is often invoked to critique form driven replication and to argue that compliance must be evaluated in light of intended ethical ends, even while scholars disagree over how *maqāṣid* should be operationalized in practice.

In this sense, the relevance of *Al-Hidāyāt* to the modern world may lie not in its ability to provide direct answers to every new problem, but in its capacity to maintain normative coherence within Muslim communities experiencing rapid social change. By providing a stable and reliable reference point the understanding of the early generations this paradigm helps preserve continuity in religious identity and practice amidst social transformation. Nevertheless, to remain relevant in the long term, the paradigm may need to develop internal mechanisms to address structural discontinuities without compromising its commitment to the authority of the *salaf*.

As observed by Charles Taylor in his analysis of secular societies, traditional institutions and normative frameworks often face pressures to adapt to new social realities while maintaining continuity with their sources of authority.<sup>42</sup> The challenge for *Al-Hidāyāt* is to find ways to respond to modern complexity without adopting rational elaborations considered threatening to the purity of early understanding. Success or failure in this endeavor will determine not only the academic relevance of the paradigm but also its influence in shaping contemporary Muslim practices and understandings.

## Competing Teleologies and What They Clarify for Contemporary Qur'anic Studies

One payoff of framing *Al-Hidāyāt* and *maqāṣid* oriented exegesis as teleology centered programs is that it gives Qur'anic studies a cleaner comparative unit than the usual binaries of "traditional vs modern" or "textual vs rational." Major field surveys

42 Charles Taylor, *A Secular Age* (Harvard university press, 2007). 423-428

stress that Qur'anic studies has long been methodologically plural and historically layered, moving between philology, literary analysis, historical contextualization, and contemporary ethical readings so claims about a single “dominant” framework are only meaningful when carefully scoped.<sup>43</sup> By focusing on teleological outputs what an approach treats as the Qur'an's primary purpose and what kinds of interpretive products it privileges this article turns plurality from a problem into an analytic resource: different programs can be compared without forcing them into a single method template.

Methodologically, the most important move is to let the comparator define the axis of comparison. In *maqāṣid* programmatic literature, *maqāṣid Al-Qur'an* is often presented as an emerging “science” still seeking a stable scholarly definition,<sup>44</sup> and *maqāṣidi* tafsīr has even been described as “in the process of becoming” a theory rather than a fully stabilized paradigm.<sup>45</sup> Against that background, *Al-Maqāṣid Al-Kubrā li-l-Qur'ān* is particularly useful because it offers an internal taxonomy that differentiates “major objectives” from “guidance” across five dimensions object of inquiry, textual scale, grain of output, inferential routes, and extensibility.<sup>46</sup> Operationalizing those distinctions allows this study to level-match the comparison and avoid a category error: the question is not whether one side is ‘more textual’ or ‘more rational,’ but how each side scales from scripture to normative output.

The findings also sharpen a theme Qur'anic studies increasingly has to address: how authority is produced when interpretation becomes institutional infrastructure. *Al-Hidāyāt* is programmatically explicit that “realizing guidance through the Qur'an” is the purpose for which the Qur'an was revealed, and it embeds interpretation within a Salaf authorized hierarchy of evidence and exemplarity.<sup>47</sup> This is not just a methodological preference; it is a theory of interpretive legitimacy. It also resonates with scholarship that describes Salafism as an orientation centered on emulating *Al-salaf Al-ṣāliḥ* across spheres of religious life<sup>48</sup> and on the transnational projection of doctrinal and educational institutions.<sup>49</sup> In this light, the “competition” explored

43 Mustafa Shah et al., eds., *The Oxford Handbook of Qur'anic Studies*, Oxford Handbooks (Oxford, New York: Oxford University Press, 2020); McAuliffe ed, *The Cambridge Companion to the Qur'an* (2006), 332, <https://doi.org/10.1017/CCOL0521831601>.

44 Islam, “Maqasid Al-Qur'an and Maqasid Al-Shari'ah.”

45 Wijaya and Muzammil, “Maqāṣidi Tafsir.”

46 Ṭāhā, *Al-Maqasid Al-Kubrā Li-l-Qur'ān Al-Karīm: Dirāsah Ta'ṣīliyyah*.

47 Ṭāhā, Qārī, and Al-Zayr, *Al-Hidayat Al-Qur'āniyyah: Dirāsah Ta'ṣīliyyah*, I–II.

48 Joas Wagemakers, “Salafism,” in *Oxford Research Encyclopedia of Religion* (n.d.), accessed January 6, 2026.

49 “Haykel, Bernard. 2009. ‘Global-Salafism: Islam’s New Religious Movement.’ In Roel Meijer (Ed.), *Global-Salafism: Islam’s New Religious Movement*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

in this article is partly about institutional capacity: which program can stabilize authority, train readers, and standardize outputs at scale.

At the level of applied ethics, the worked example suggests that neither output type is simply superior; they are built for different tasks. Guidance centered extraction tends to deliver clarity and immediacy, especially where communities want stable directives and low latency normativity. *Maqāṣid* centered abstraction, meanwhile, tends to increase portability across novel socio technical conditions by turning verses into higher order evaluative criteria. This is one place where the tension can become productive: *hidāyāt* style outputs can prevent abstraction from drifting into free floating moral slogans, while *maqāṣid* style outputs can help integrate verse level directives into coherent priority-setting when real life presents conflicts and trade-offs. Contextualist hermeneutics offers one bridge here: by treating revelation as a communicative act with both an initial horizon and later horizons, it invites interpreters to articulate principles and value hierarchies for application without severing ties to the text's first context.<sup>50</sup> Read this way, the paradigmatic tension is less about mutual exclusion and more about what gets to govern application: fine-grained directives or higher-order criteria.

Finally, these findings point to a clear agenda for what comes next. First, because this article is program-text driven, it should be complemented by reception research that examines how guidance items circulate, are taught, and are contested in classrooms, sermons, and online platforms especially when encyclopaedic projects aim to shape 'how Muslims should live with the Qur'an.' Second, "living Qur'an" scholarship provides one pathway for testing how guidance claims travel into everyday practice and how communities reframe Qur'anic meaning through ritual, healing, and social life.<sup>51</sup> Third, future comparative work can widen the set of comparators beyond *maqāṣid* to other purpose or value centered programs, while keeping the core methodological discipline of level-matching and auditable inferential steps. Taken together, these steps would turn 'competition' into a cumulative research program: not a debate over labels, but a map of how different teleological logics produce different kinds of Qur'anic reasoning in the contemporary world.

50 Abdullah Saeed, *Interpreting the Qur'an: Towards a Contemporary Approach* (Routledge, 2006).

51 Supriyanto and Akhmad Roja Badrus Zaman, *Living Quran in the Context of Rural-Communities: A Study on the Miracle of the Quran in Gentasari, Kroya, Cilacap*, Brill, July 19, 2023, <https://doi.org/10.1163/22321969-20230132>.

## Conclusion

This study set out to clarify how *Al-Hidāyāt Al-Qur'aniyyah* constructs a guidance centered (*hudā*) epistemic program and how that program compares at a level-matched scale with *maqāṣid*-oriented Qur'anic hermeneutics. Working with the project's foundational self-articulation in the *Dirāsah Ta'shiliyyah* volumes and a programmatic *maqāṣid* comparator (*al-Maqāṣid al-Kubrā li-l-Qur'ān*), the analysis treated 'teleological output' as the key unit of comparison rather than importing external binaries.

The findings show that *Al-Hidāyāt* stabilizes a distinctive epistemic architecture: it frames realizing guidance as the telos of revelation, privileges a Salaf authorized hierarchy of interpretive authority, and aims to generate practice facing Guidance as the primary output of interpretation. The comparator grounded framework clarifies that *maqāṣid* programs work through broader induction and produce higher-order objectives designed to govern downstream application across contexts. The worked example (Q 2:275–279) demonstrates how these different inferential scales shape what counts as a legitimate "result" of interpretation.

This article is limited by its focus on foundational and methodological volumes and by a single worked example. Future research should extend the analysis to published al-Jāmi' volumes and additional thematic entries, and it should combine program text analysis with reception studies that track how institutional Guidance circulate and are negotiated in diverse settings. More broadly, the article suggests that teleology-centered comparison when grounded in the comparator's own taxonomy offers a promising way to map contemporary Qur'anic hermeneutics as a field of competing, overlapping, and institutionally mediated research programs.

## Supplementary Materials

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## Authors' contributions

All authors contributed to the study conception and design. Material preparation, data collection and analysis were performed by Muhammad Hariyadi, Zuhripatul Jannah, Ainun Nadzifah and Zakiyatul Fitriyah. The first draft of the manuscript was written by Muhammad Hariyadi and all authors commented on previous versions of the manuscript. All authors read and approved the final



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## Conflicts of Interest

The authors have no relevant financial or non-financial interests to disclose

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